

# Urban Labs for Youth Innovation in Jamaica & DIA Youth Innovation Lab Trinidad and Tobago

2021 - 2022

Citi Foundation

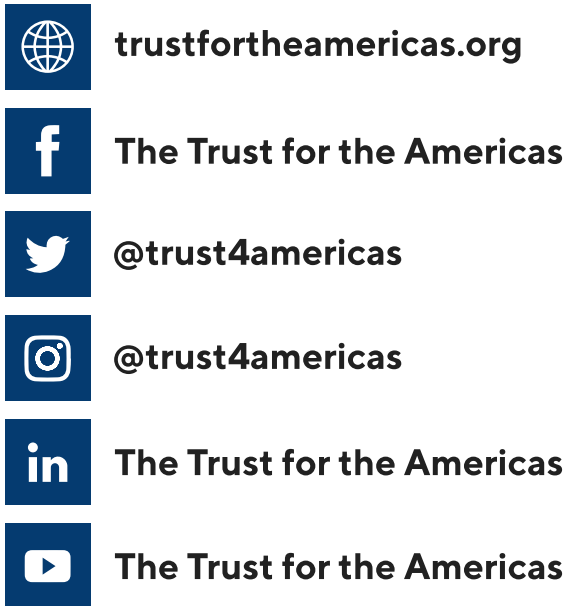


Democratizing  
Innovation in  
the Americas



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# Program Summary

*“Oh wow, the DIA Lab was amazing, it gave us so much information, so much guidance, it really helped to grow the business and ourselves as entrepreneurs”*

**Jamie Martin**, creator of the project -Rvffian- and active participant of the DIA Lab in Jamaica.

The DIA Labs serve as community spaces for innovation where youth are provided with training and opportunities to develop their creative and inventive potential. The objective is to support them in their search for better labor and entrepreneurship skills and career paths.

The DIA Urban Lab for Youth Innovation in Jamaica (active since 2016) and the DIA Youth Innovation Lab Trinidad and Tobago (active since 2020) have supported the creation of groups of young innovators working to solve socio-economic problems, while creating micro-enterprises and innovative solutions for problems in their communities.

## **Throughout these years:**

- Over **3,400** Caribbean youth and people have been benefited by the DIA Labs through training and awareness-raising activities.
- **248 participants** have undertaken entrepreneurship projects or have developed digital apps.
- **155 participants** have received funding to start and strengthen their projects or ventures through our insignia Pitch Tank Competitions
- **37 training courses** available for youth.



This program is implemented by the Trust for the Americas of the Organization of American States (OAS), with the financial support of Citi Foundation and the operative support of the Jamaican Institute of Law and Economics (ILE) in Jamaica and the Caribbean Industrial Research Institute (CARIRI) in Trinidad and Tobago.

**This program is aligned with six of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals:**



# January 2021 - April 2022: Results and Achievements

## Training and Sensitization Efforts

344 youth completed their 40-hour training curricula, including a set of courses tailored according to the needs and interests of the participants: Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Financial Literacy, Digital Skills, Prototyping, Pitching Skills, Business model Canvassing, Computer Science, Data Science, among others.



**226** youth trained  
**622** people sensitized

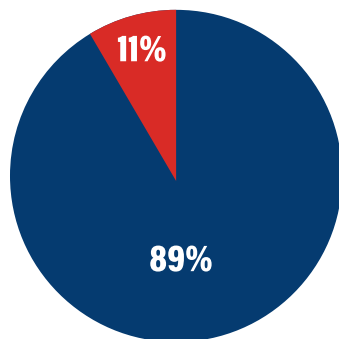


**118** youth trained  
**68** people sensitized

## Gender Distribution

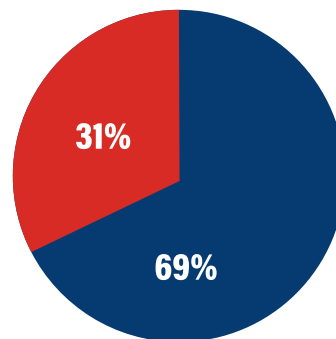
### Trained

■ Women ■ Men



### Sensitized

■ Women ■ Men



## Empowering the Caribbean Youth



**62 business or social ventures were created, improved or expanded** (31 in Jamaica, and 31 in T&T) during the training program and interaction of participants with the DIA Labs.



**3 Pitch Tank Competitions,** held in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.



**32 innovative projects received funding** (22 in Jamaica and 10 in Trinidad and Tobago) at the Pitch Tank Competitions.



**35.200 USD** awarded to innovative business and social ventures to promote their growth and development.

# Implementation and Events

2021 and 2022 were years of renovation and expansion: the DIA Lab in Jamaica underwent a strategic process to continue developing offerings and opportunities to new and former participants, and in Trinidad and Tobago the first DIA Lab was launched.

Additionally, the labs started offering three self-paced virtual courses in English available permanently at the Trust's Virtual Classroom: [Introduction to Entrepreneurship](#), [Introduction to Innovation](#), and [Introduction to Artificial Intelligence](#).

**Some highlights:**

## **March 2021**

The [Caribbean Industrial Research Institute \(CARIRI\)](#) was selected as the new implementing partner for the first DIA Lab in Trinidad and Tobago after an exhaustive selection process.

## **April 2021**

The DIA Program underwent a rebranding process and the visual identity of the new DIA Lab in Trinidad and Tobago was created.

## **May 2021**

The first Ideathon and [awards ceremony](#) in Jamaica was held. 29 young participants received training to prepare them for this innovation experience.





**June 2021**

Celebrated the [official Launch of the DIA Lab in Trinidad & Tobago](#) with the presence of multiple organizations and partners from Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica, and high-profile executives from Citi and Citi Foundation. In this event, we presented the facilities of the new DIA Lab and shared with the public the goals for its first implementation phase.

[See press release](#)

Additionally, in the framework of Citi's Global Community Day, 10 DIA participants from both labs joined 10 executives from Citi and Citi Foundation to brainstorm ideas to address common community issues, share experiences and talk about thoughts on the DIA Labs. [See press release](#)

Lastly, the DIA Lab in Jamaica celebrated the first Pitch Tank Competition of the year ([day 1](#) and [day 2](#)), in which participants pitched for the first time their innovation projects. A total of 14 new graduates received seed funding for their business and social ventures after this pitching process.



## July 2021

From the 22nd to the 24th, the yearly virtual regional Hackathon between Trinidad & Tobago, Jamaica and Belize was held in collaboration with several public and private organizations from the three countries. The event was titled [“Byte the  \$\pi\$ : Caribbean Hackathon”](#), honoring Pi approximation day, and brought together 60 participants (divided into 18 teams). Participants had 48 hours to come up with solutions to address local challenges around two areas of work: economic recovery through tourism, and access to health care, in particular COVID-19 testing and vaccination facilities. [See press release](#)

Held the [Pitch Tank Competition “Reinvestment Edition”](#) at the DIA Lab in Jamaica on July 15th, open exclusively for former Pitch Tank Competition winners as an opportunity to earn reinvestment for their already established ventures. 12 former winners presented their venture updates to a panel of judges, and 8 of them received a second round of funding.



## August 2021

Celebrated the Pitch Tank Competition's Award Ceremony on the 12th. This online event rewarded the best ventures that participated in both Pitch Tank Competitions in the DIA Urban Lab in Jamaica. A total of 22 youths received recognition and seed funding for their initiatives. [See press release](#)

On the 26th, an orientation session took place for participants enrolled in the Caribbean School of Data's (CSOD) Digital/Data Literacy, Data Management, Data Visualization, Data Integration and Big Data Analytics training.

## September 2021

Hosted a [graduation ceremony](#) for the first 2 cohorts of participants of the T&T DIA Lab on September 30th. This event celebrated the successful completion of 46 participants in our training offering and counted with the participation of the Honorable Minister of Youth Development & National Services of Trinidad & Tobago, and the Trinidad and Tobago Officer to the Organization of American States. [See press release](#)



## October 2021

Celebrated a new partnership agreement with Fortinet Academy, to provide training on Network & Cyber security to our participants, set to begin on January 2023. [See press release](#)

## November 2021

Celebrated the [graduation of cohorts 3 and 4](#) of our DIA Lab in Trinidad & Tobago, and the [DIA Summit 2021](#) that took place in a virtual format in Jamaica, Belize and Trinidad and Tobago from November 18th-19th, 25th – 26th, and through December 1st – 3rd. The summit addressed topics on the Evolution of Work & the Digital Future of Labor Markets, Caribbean Women in Tech, Career Diversity and Overcoming Geographic Limitations, and Youth in Tech, among many others.

In the framework of this event, the first [Pitch Tank Competition](#) in Trinidad and Tobago took place. Subsequently, an event was celebrated to highlight the Pitch Tank Competition winners of both DIA Labs in 2021. During that ceremony, the signature DIA Motivated Millennial Award was presented.

Lastly, all DIA Labs and collaborators joined the celebration of the [DIA Program 5th anniversary](#).

## February 2022

All DIA Labs underwent a rebranding process in the facilities and communicational spaces.

## April 2022

Celebrated two Closing Events for the 2021 implementation phase. The [TT DIA Lab's event](#) took place on April 7th and the [JA DIA Lab's event](#) on April 8th. This event was attended by our partners, representatives from the public and private sectors, DIA Lab participants and the DIA team.





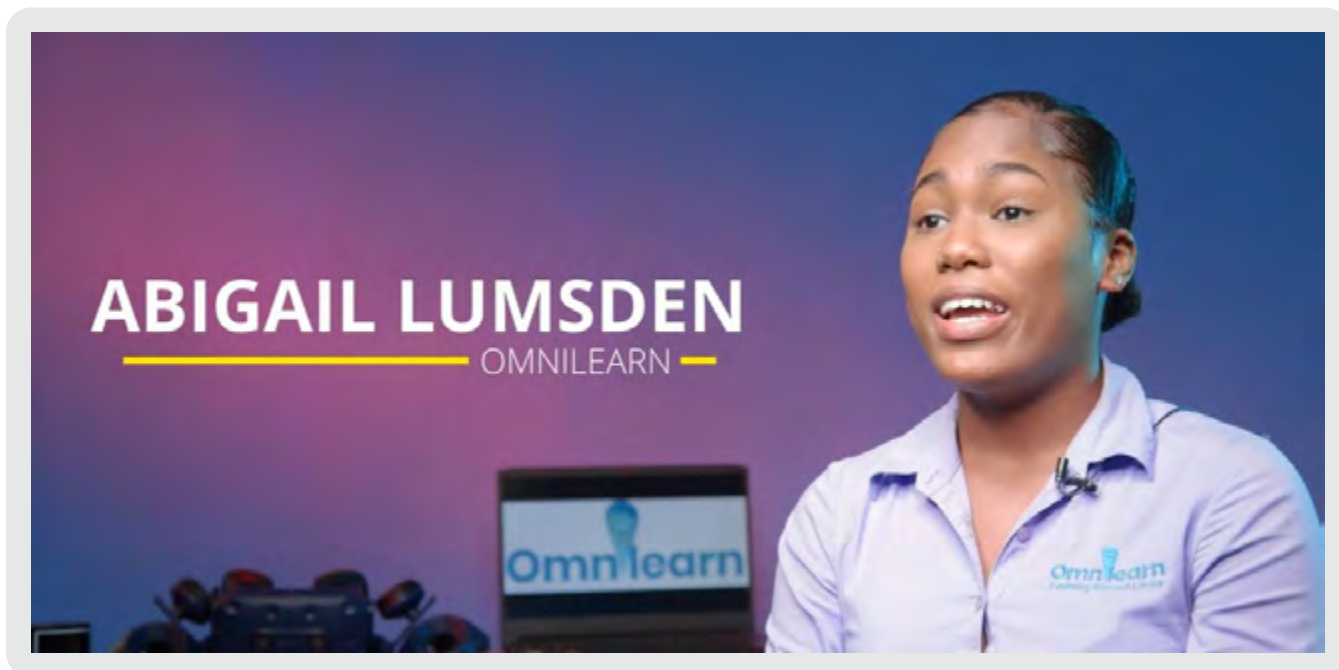
# Success Stories

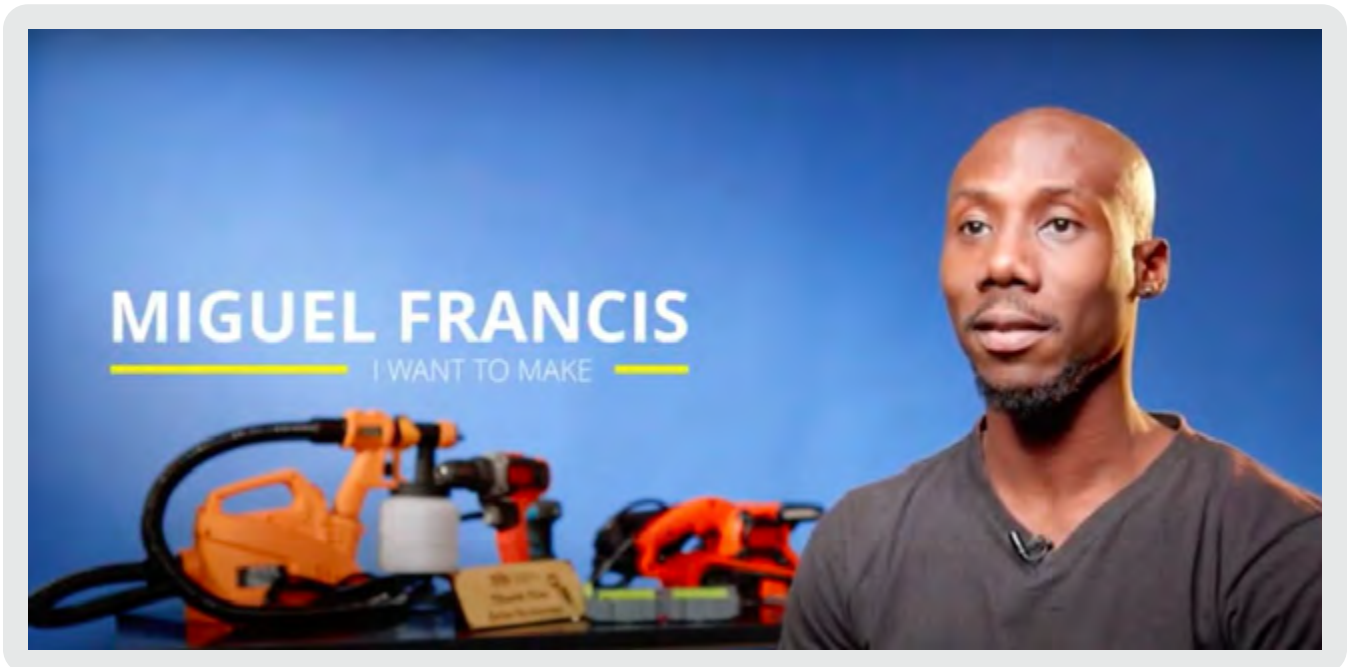
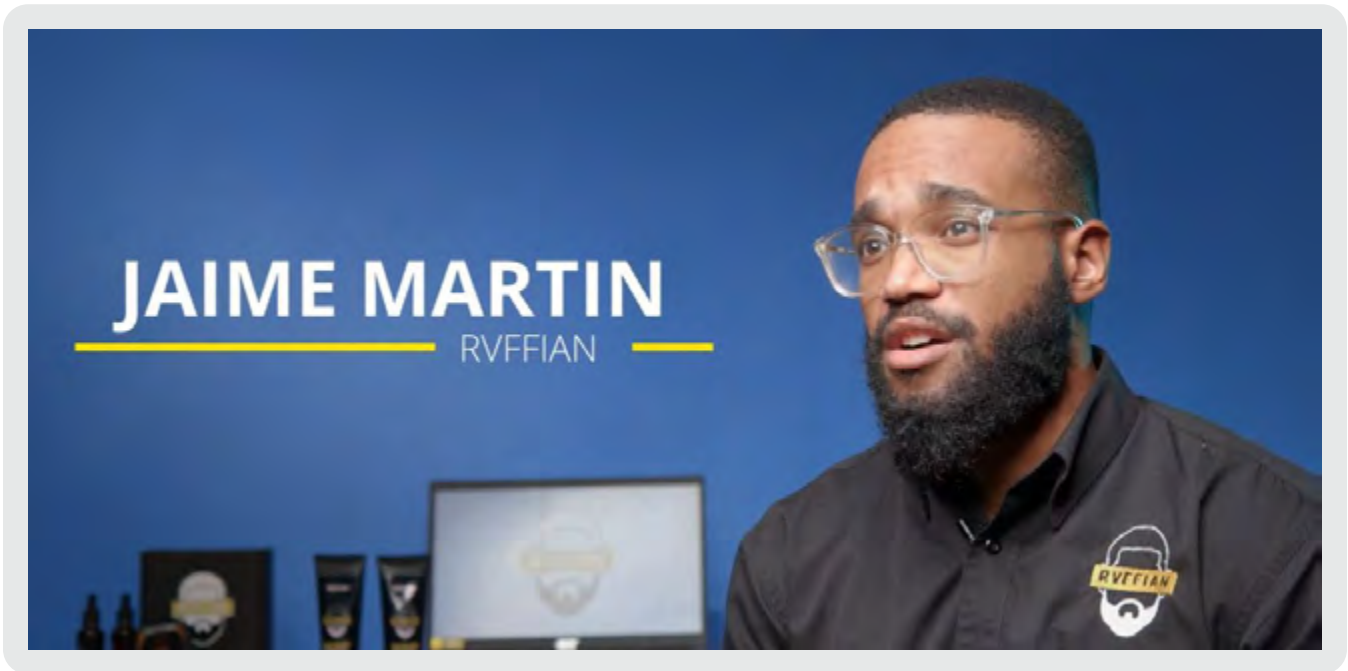


## Success Stories from the Urban DIA Lab: Jamaica

Abigail Lumsden: OMNILEARN

[Meet Abigail and her success story](#)







## Success Stories from the DIA Youth Innovation Lab: Trinidad & Tobago

Chelsea Fraser: Sudphoria

[Meet Chelsea and her success story](#)



Jonathan Roach: The Seasoning Source

[Meet Jonathan and his success story](#)



# Communications

2021 and 2022 were years of much learning, taking advantage of new opportunities, and enduring old ones. In this sense, the DIA Urban Labs in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago continued to foster multi-stakeholder collaboration and support a long-term process to spur innovation while strengthening the skills of young people to participate in the economy of the future. Accordingly, the communication strategy defined consists of leveraging the successes and goals reached and disseminating the best practices learned.

## **Communications Strategy Highlights:**

The Trust for the Americas provides visibility to its programs and projects through different channels. These include [The Trust's institutional website](#), social media accounts ([Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube channel](#)), and institutional newsletter. Therefore, our main objective is to craft a comprehensive communications strategy so that our audience can witness the evolution of our work in different formats and perspectives.

## **The communications strategy implemented for our DIA Urban Labs included the following activities:**

**Social media and press room:** focused on documenting the project's activities and milestones. Through our social media profiles, we reached approximately 123,770 users. As part of our content strategy, we always identify external users to tag. This effort allows us to have more significant interaction with the audience. In fact, during the launch of the new DIA Urban Lab for Youth Innovation in Jamaica, we had the presence of the Jamaican influencer and entrepreneur Terri Karelle, who uploaded a Reel on Instagram, achieving +61,700 views. **As in document:** [See document here](#)

**Email marketing:** highlighted the most relevant news of the DIA Urban Labs in our external newsletter, distributed in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, with a peak reach of 65,000 readers.

**External media coverage:** our partnerships with local organizations allowed us to gain coverage with local media, generating visibility in some of the top local media outlets, such as the Jamaica Observer and the Trinidad and Tobago Newsday. **As in document:** [See document here](#)



**Graphic Design:** focused on creating a unique identity for each Lab and customizing the physical spaces.

**Events:** demonstrate the Labs' achievements and reflect the project's progress, especially of the participants. During this period, we coordinated with our local partners nine events in Jamaica, four in Trinidad and Tobago, and four binational ones.

**Communications capacity-building:** we have trained our local partners to use the Trust's brand correctly and guide them on best practices for communicating milestones, events, and success stories. The following videos tell the stories of two of our DIA Lab participants, Abigail Lumsden and Jaime Martin, whose entrepreneurial projects were impacted by our joint efforts.



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