

aring Youth to Enter  
the Modern Workplace



## *Preparing Youth to Enter the Modern Workplace*

The International Youth Foundation (IYF) and the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) of the Inter-American Development Bank are joining forces to prepare workers for the jobs of the new economy in Latin America and the Caribbean. Together we have created a US\$20 million program — **entra 21** — to co-finance youth employment projects in information technology (IT). This four-year collaboration aims to:

- Support local projects that train young people and assist them in securing jobs that require IT skills
- Create partnerships among nonprofit organizations, governments, and businesses to meet the IT training and employment needs of the region
- Identify, document, and disseminate best practices in training, job placement, and collaboration among participating organizations



## *The Challenge*

More than half the population of Latin America and the Caribbean is under the age of 24, with youth unemployment rates on the rise in most of the countries of the region. Existing educational systems are failing to equip youth with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in a fast-changing marketplace. At the same time that more and more youth are unprepared for the workforce, businesses have an urgent need for workers equipped with the technical skills to contribute to the region's growing information-based economy. Demand for IT skills is expected to rise sharply in the region

as more organizations migrate toward the Internet and automate their businesses with application software.

Young people possess the creativity and adaptability to thrive in the IT area; yet more programs are needed to provide youth with the knowledge and skills to take advantage of growing opportunities. Greater investment in such programs will help narrow the growing gap between the supply of and demand for skilled workers, while helping to bridge the digital divide between developed and developing countries.



## *The Response*

To achieve its goal of providing businesses with skilled IT workers and providing young people with jobs, **entra 21** capitalizes on the dramatic impact of information technology on the world economy. The network revolution is not only creating a new marketplace, but is also profoundly affecting how business is conducted. Societies need skilled knowledge workers in order to grow local economies and attract foreign investment. **entra 21** is intended to make a significant contribution to building a bridge between labor market needs and youth whose interests and capabilities make them ideal candidates

to fill the IT skills gap. Specifically, **entra 21** seeks to:

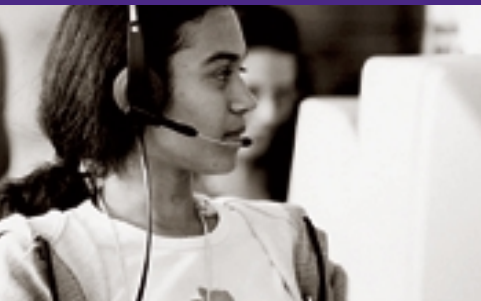
- Provide training in job and employability skills for 12,000 youth, ages 16 to 29
- Make grants ranging from US\$300,000 to US\$700,000 to up to 40 nonprofits by the end of 2003
- Increase knowledge throughout the region and the world of best practices in training youth, placing them in productive jobs, and sustaining these efforts over time



## *How the Program Operates*

**entra 21** provides grants and technical assistance to nonprofit organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean. Grants will be awarded for training and job placement projects that target youth and impart IT skills, enabling trainees to work with computers, the Internet, and other workplace technologies and equipment. The projects need to meet a demonstrated demand in the labor market and teach the skills necessary for trainees to find and hold a job.

Funding for the Program will come from several sources. The MIF has pledged US\$10 million. IYF will match the MIF contribution on a one-to-one basis by forming partnerships with multinational corporations, foundations, and governmental agencies in the Americas, Europe, and Japan.



## *Who Can Receive a Grant*

Eligible grantees include organizations that work with youth, educational institutions, training institutes, business associations, chambers of commerce, and other nonprofit entities. To receive a grant, an organization must submit a proposal for a one- to three-year training and job placement project. We encourage partnering with other organizations and the subcontracting of training firms in order to deliver the best possible services. To enhance

sustainability and local ownership of the project, nonprofit organizations will be required to contribute matching funds equivalent to 25 percent of the grant funds awarded. In addition to project funding, grantees will receive technical assistance and opportunities to participate in project-strengthening conferences. For details on the Program requirements, please request the **entra 21** Application Guidelines.



## *How Others Can Participate*

**entra 21** offers donors a unique opportunity to maximize their social investments in the region. In order to meet the matching requirements of the MIF challenge — and succeed in realizing the Program's vision and scale — **entra 21** seeks the participation of corporations, foundations, and governments as funding partners. In supporting **entra 21**, donors will leverage their resources through a one-to-one match, thereby achieving greater impact, cost efficiencies, and higher returns on their investment. In addition to providing financial support, donors may participate through the provision of training services, job opportunities, and technical assistance to participating nonprofit organizations.

We believe that only through the collective resources of the business, nonprofit, and government sectors can we achieve the scale necessary to have a long-term, sustainable impact on the region's labor needs and escalating youth unemployment. The economic growth of Latin America and the Caribbean depends on having a workforce that is prepared to meet the needs of the region's growing information-based economy. Young people entering the job market with better qualifications and skills will in turn be a resource to businesses as they adopt new technologies.



## *Founding Partners*

*The International Youth Foundation*, founded in 1990, is one of the world's largest foundations supporting programs that improve conditions and prospects for young people. Operating in 60 countries, IYF and its global network of partner organizations have helped 21 million young people gain access to life skills, education, and job training. Each year, the IYF network invests over US\$110 million in children and youth around the globe, partnering with foundations and corporations such as Cisco Systems, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Lucent Technologies, Merrill Lynch, Microsoft, and Nokia. IYF works with a network of 11 partner foundations in 9 Latin American and Caribbean countries.

*The Multilateral Investment Fund* is a special fund, administered by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), whose mission is to strengthen the private sector in Latin America and the Caribbean. In partnership with governments, business organizations, and NGOs, the MIF provides a mix of technical assistance grants and investments to promote the growth of micro and small enterprise, support market reforms, and build the capabilities and skill standards of the workforce. Over the past seven years, the MIF has supported some 430 projects, with a total investment of US\$700 million.



## *Our Commitment*

As the administrator of **entra 21**, the International Youth Foundation will work actively to ensure the success of each project funded. IYF brings to this effort its expertise in managing grants, forging partnerships, and engaging the youth development specialists of the region. This experience, coupled with the creativity and flexibility demanded by a program of this nature, will do more than serve the technical needs of projects. They will enable IYF and its partners to serve the youth and societies of Latin America and the Caribbean.





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