**Latin America vs. COVID-19 Participant application form**

Please describe your experience and skills. Limit: 500 characters

I am currently pursuing a mechanical engineering degree, with a masters’ thesis in robotics. I am interested in integrated innovation – how design, engineering and business come together to create humane and useful products and services. I have done internships in the fields of finance and investment banking and a product design bootcamp. I have travelled internationally for conferences and profoundly enjoy meeting new people. I am a good listener, I think on my feet, work hard and work smart, think logically and as a basketball player have the team player mentality ingrained in me.

What motivates you to participate in this event? Limit: 500 characters

With the growing alarm created by the COVID19 in developing nations like Brazil and India due to a high population density and lack of qualified workers, financial resources and medical equipment, I feel it is imperative that people who can help find solutions, do something. Anything. I hope to contribute to this uphill battle by bringing my varied experiences and skills to the table, collaborate with individuals from different parts of the globe with different proficiencies and produce a solution worthy of escalation to bring back a sense of normalcy and safety in the world.

Is there anything else you would like to share?

I have been living in a lockdown for the past 81 days. My family is staying at home since my father is working from home, my mother is keeping her orthodontic clinic closed, my brother pursuing classes online, and I am without a job opportunities despite defending my masters’ thesis, I am experiencing first-hand the changes brought by the COVID19 pandemic to my family dynamic. These issues seem trivial when I consider the hardships being faced by people ousted from their houses during these times because they couldn’t pay rent, students who cannot learn due to lack of internet access, businesses which have shut down due to lack of revenue, and that is just the tip of the iceberg. The global ecosystem has collapsed.

COVID19 has transformed every single aspect of every individual’s life. Irrespective of whether one is a world famous celebrity living in LA, or a minimum wage migrant worker in Mumbai, the threat posed by an invisible virus has pushed everyone back to their homes and problem-solvers at business corporations, governments, universities and more to the drawing boards. The need of the hour is to learn as much as we can from what has been successfully accomplished (for example - by South Korea’s effective tracing and testing system and New Zealand’s well implemented lockdown which makes it coronavirus free with just 1500 cases and 22 deaths) modify and implement it according to the region’s needs and resources, or come up with entirely new solutions.

Human trials of vaccines have already begun, but scientists have projected that the earliest we can have a fully functioning version is December 2019, and even post that we don’t how much time it would take to reach the public. Additionally, countries have eased lockdown restrictions to restart the economy, only leading to an increasing chance of being vulnerable to the coronavirus as community transmission rises. I believe in this scenario, even the smallest idea could change the world, literally. I have travelled to Germany, Singapore, Thailand and USA, and I feel it is my duty as a global citizen to make a contribution to the fighting this invisible enemy. I don’t know if I myself will/can come up with a great idea, but I hope an interaction with me ignites the thinking process in someone else’s brain and he/she has the life-changing idea the world needs. I wish to participate in this virtual hackathon as it is a means to get in touch with people with the ideas, abilities, and resources to work towards the change we need in the world right now