### Company name:

Agora L3C

### Company url, if any:

[http://agorateach.com](http://agorateach.com/)

### If you have a demo, what's the url? For non-software, demo can be a video.

(Please don't password protect it; just use an obscure url.)

<https://youtu.be/6ouZGxmIMgc>

### Describe your company in 50 characters or less.

### Accelerates the effectiveness of K-12 latino teachers

### What is your company going to make?

Agora L3C brings accessible, affordable and highly effective K-12 professional development courses to k-12 schools and teachers serving latino communities in California and LatinAmerica.

Our business model is lean and programs are sold through a platform that creates an international community of learning connecting international experts, local coaches and teachers.

### Which category best applies to your company?

Education

### Is this application in response to a YC [RFS](http://email.email.ycombinator.com/c/eJwVjcGKxCAQRL8mHkVbjebgYS77G0trOhNBk2B6CfP360BB1SsKao3WwuZEiQ6Th2CcVnbZfq1WGZI2kNCGzVo9zwiTVeVg6gdW2bBUscesIKTZeTAzkvaK3OrJhEXTkog8iRp35msyrwl-hp7nkZ98tlQO5LPLEUfbt1vu3KrosWEvKC9i_ow7fJ8dmTDv36XgiNdVS0Yu53EPvEHp8PW_1Aozrf9C70KO)?

No

### Where do you live now, and where would the company be based after YC?

(List as City A, Country A / City B, Country B.)

Palo Alto, USA

## CONTACT

### Email address of the founder who is filling out this application:

[maria.petty@agorateach.com](mailto:maria.petty@agorateach.com)

### Phone number(s):

9252784014

## FOUNDERS

### Founders

| **HACKER NEWS USERNAME** | **NAME** | **EMAIL** | **PROFILE UPDATED** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mpetty | Maria I Petty | [maria.petty@agorateach.com](mailto:maria.petty@agorateach.com) | Yes |

### Please enter the url of a 1 minute unlisted (not private) YouTube video introducing the founders. ([Follow the Video Guidelines](http://email.email.ycombinator.com/c/eJwVjcGKxCAQRL8mHoO2bcY5eNjL_MbQGt00JDGYng35-3Wg4FUVBTUHRChOcXAUH-CtMxqf5Y1GJ4jGQiT0BdFME8GAmnfJbad13IhXtYQH2Jg9GkcplmwJY5lsMk9fki4OZrWGReQ4B_szwKvruq7xTnWLvJPUNnbb2z-ec-1ULWzUmMYji9z9j35rI8mUlu9SSaDjWDmRcN3PHk_Qxn_5iRuL5PkftYtDBg" \t "_blank).)

<https://youtu.be/6ouZGxmIMgc>

**Please enter the url of a 1 minute unlisted (not private) YouTube video introducing the founders. (**[**Follow the Video Guidelines**](http://email.email.ycombinator.com/c/eJwVjcGKxCAQRL8mHoO2bcY5eNjL_MbQGt00JDGYng35-3Wg4FUVBTUHRChOcXAUH-CtMxqf5Y1GJ4jGQiT0BdFME8GAmnfJbad13IhXtYQH2Jg9GkcplmwJY5lsMk9fki4OZrWGReQ4B_szwKvruq7xTnWLvJPUNnbb2z-ec-1ULWzUmMYji9z9j35rI8mUlu9SSaDjWDmRcN3PHk_Qxn_5iRuL5PkftYtDBg)**.)**

<https://youtu.be/6ouZGxmIMgc>

**Please tell us about an interesting project, preferably outside of class or work, that two or more of you created together. Include urls if possible.**

Organized three International Conferences in Latin America: Transforming Teaching. With a fun and innovative message and international partners from the US and Latin America we were able to attract the most innovative educators and innovative schools from across Peru.

**How long have the founders known one another and how did you meet? Have any of the founders not met in person?**

We attended the same university Universidad del Pacifico in Lima and met through the Entrepreneurship Center. What united us was our concern and passion about democratizing quality education for latino students. We collaborated in the organization of three International Conferences.

**PROGRESS**

**How far along are you?**

We have been operating for 3 years. The first 1.5 years we were working with international partners, investing in R&D and the creation of professional development programs that best fit the market needs, and testing their effectiveness of our programs in different school settings. To date we have sold in person services for $150K. We have built international partnerships and network in the US and Latin America for content and technical assistance, partners that implement all across the region and in California. We have built capacity and have trained 20 train the trainers that are now delivering professional development services in Peru. We are working with 20 schools and 1000 teachers.

In the last six months we have been preparing to scale our products. We have standardized our product offering to 2 month course modules and have already piloted and tested using technology with our teachers which has represented great success in terms of teacher collaboration and peer learning. Technology will allow us to

**How long have each of you been working on this? Have you been part-time or full-time? Please explain.**

I have been working at this enterprise 2 years on a part time basis. Since the beginning of 2018, I have been doing working full time in order to accelerate our growth.

**Which of the following best describes your progress?**

Launched

**How many active users or customers do you have? If you have some particularly valuable customers, who are they?**

20 schools, 1000 teachers that are transforming their classrooms using Agora methodologies in Peru. This year, we started working with the government selling and training teachers from public schools.

**Do you have revenue?**

Yes

**What was your revenue in the last full calendar month?**

(Please use USD. If none, enter '0')

15000

**Your revenue 2 months ago?**

15000

**Your revenue 3 months ago?**

17,000

**Your revenue 4 months ago?**

3,000

**Your revenue 5 months ago?**

13,000

**Your revenue 6 months ago?**

16,000

**Anything else you would like us to know regarding your revenue or growth rate?**

We have sold professional development programs mostly in person which has been limiting in terms of our reach and cost. To get ready to deploy our programs using technology, In the last six months we have piloted our programs using a google based collaboration tool that have enhanced our programs allowing peer learning and on-line collaboration with users across Peru. Technology will allow us to scale rapidly, bringing our costs down to serve a larger portion of the market.

**How much money do you spend per month?**

3500

**How much money does your company have in the bank now?**

12000

**How long is your runway?**

(e.g. 5 months)

2.5

**If you've applied previously with the same idea, how much progress have you made since the last time you applied? Anything change?**

In the last six months we have been getting ready to scale using technology. We have standardized all our programs to a basic standard format, a 2-month course modules with collaboration and peer learning. We piloted our programs using a google based collaboration tool that have enhanced our programs allowing peer learning and on-line collaboration. We have seen increase learning, involvement and the formation of community of learning among the teachers we serve. With the help of Y combinator we would like to scale our solution.

**If you have already participated or committed to participate in an incubator, "accelerator" or "pre-accelerator" program, please tell us about it.**

I have participated in the Agora Partnership program for latin american social enterpreneurs from August to December 2017. We received the investment readiness stamp. We developed the strategic planning for the next 3 years. We were selected and completed the GSBI Miller Center early stage program for social impact entrepreneurs and completed a pitch deck. We are now in search of seed funding and support to use technology to provide our products with greater access, affordability and effectiveness.

**IDEA**

**Why did you pick this idea to work on? Do you have domain expertise in this area? How do you know people need what you're making?**

A few years ago, while I was working as an expat in Switzerland, I saw through my son’s education going through the public school system how engaging, fun and challenging his education was. I compared it with the education I received growing up in Lima and I saw then the big access and opportunity gap. I decided then to leave my career in the corporate sector in the Silicon Valley to start Agora to increase teacher effectiveness and provide latino students with the XXI century skills to be successful.

in the last decades 80 million people have been raised out of poverty in Latin America, Government, private schools and families in Latin America are investing in education, and people are hungry to learn. We have validated the product fit and have been selling in the region, and we see great demand for our services.

**What's new about what you're making? What substitutes do people resort to because it doesn't exist yet (or they don't know about it)?**

Our professional development programs for teachers are project based and use coaching and peer learning to improve teacher practice, and skills to apply those methodologies. We use methodologies that are innovative and have transformed educational systems worldwide, and that foster XXI skills such as project based learning, reading and writing workshop and Singapore Math. Through partnerships and technology, our programs provide access to international experts in the US and Latin America.

The professional programs that currently exist are very theoretical, superficial and ineffective because they are removed from teacher practice. Classrooms for latino students is still memoristic, boring and do not foster the skills need to be successful. Currently schools and teachers buy books but they don’t help much to change teacher practice.

**Who are your competitors, and who might become competitors? Who do you fear most?**

Universities are our current competitors. However, professors lectured, are very theoretical and far removed from practice. Practical training or in-service training is very poor. We have found a blue ocean. We operate in a market where there is little supply of high quality professional development services for K-12 teachers. Part of what we have been doing in the first years have been increasing adoption of our methodologies creating the demand for our services.

**What do you understand about your business that other companies in it just don't get?**

Product fit - Because I grew up in Latin America, and I have been an immigrant in California, I understand well the skill gap, the way teachers teach and the reasons of low student achievement. Our products centered around building XXI century skills using proven teaching methodologies.

Understand great professional development - I worked for global corporate companies for more than 15 years, where there is great professional development and skill building. I would like to bring that kind of professional development to transform teaching for latino students.

Market validation and understanding - We have validated profuct fit and have rolled out professional development for schools in person. We piloted our services using technology and are convinced that we will need to use a blended learning approach delivering our services using 60% technology; however, due to our market we will still deliver a portion of our training in person.

Partnerships in education reform and innovation in the US and Latin America – What has been critical has been the international partnerships to bring innovation and professionalize the educational sector. With the help of Y combinator we would like to expand our networks in Edtech and school innovation in the US.

**How do or will you make money? How much could you make?**

(We realize you can't know precisely, but give your best estimate.)

We are selling to schools 2-month course modules that contain training, coaching and peer learning. We will be selling those modules through a platform to make our product more accessible, affordable and effective. Using our instructional design and project based approach, trainers will be able to create new programs at the intermediate and advance level and sell them through our platform.

Agora will earn a 50% commission and will provide trainers access to sell to thoese users in Latin America. This model will be similar than Udemy. Our trainers are great trainers but they are not business people so they need a solution to market their professional development services. There are 7.5 million teachers in Latin America, spending $500 per person per year in professional development, representing approx. 3.75 Billion target market. With a low initial investment, by 2021, we will reach 10,000 representing $10 million in revenue, the growth will be exponential after that.

**How will you get users? If your idea is the type that faces a chicken-and-egg problem in the sense that it won't be attractive to users till it has a lot of users (e.g. a marketplace, a dating site, an ad network), how will you overcome that?**

Users are teachers that need professional development every year. To generate new leads Agora develops content for teachers (newsletters and blogs) regarding the innovative methodologies and uses social media platforms such as facebook and applications such as whatsup to make this content sharable. Teachers are consumers of online applications and social media.

We plan to build a mobile app that will allow the integration of the social media platforms and LMS existing system to access our services and start the course overview. The course overviews as well some courses will be free to help with the awareness and adoption of the new methodologies.

**EQUITY**

**Have you incorporated, or formed any legal entity (like an LLC) yet?**

Yes

**What kind of entity and in what state or country was the entity formed?**

(e.g. Delaware C Corp)

LLC

**Please describe the breakdown of the equity ownership in percentages among the founders, employees and any other stockholders.**

90%, 5% founder in Lima.

**List any investments your company has received. Include the name of the investor, the amount invested, the premoney valuation / valuation cap, and the type of security sold (convertible notes, safes or stock).**

Self funded $110K + sweat equity.

**Please provide any other relevant information about the structure or formation of the company.**

The US LLC company owns 100% of the Peruvian subsidiary.

**LEGAL**

**Are any of the founders covered by noncompetes or intellectual property agreements that overlap with your project? If so, please explain.**

No.

**Who writes code, or does other technical work on your product? Was any of it done by a non-founder? Please explain.**

Through the referral of the GSBI Miller Center of University of Santa Clara, we have started working with the Frugal Innovation Lab and the school of Computer Science, and are working with a team of 3 senior students assigned to our project.

We have been offering our services in person and piloted our programs using a free google based platform. We will be using existing technology for our platform and will develop a mobile app to better reach our customers, and automate the matching of teacher or school profiles with our platform content.  We will use data analytics to understand high demand courses areas to drive new course generation or specialization. Also there will be a system to rank the best courses and trainers.

**Is there anything else we should know about your company?**

(Pending lawsuits, cofounders who have left, etc.)

[BLANK]

**OTHERS**

**If you had any other ideas you considered applying with, please list them. One may be something we've been waiting for. Often when we fund people it's to do something they list here and not in the main application.**

Eventually we would like to automate a diagnosis of schools effectiveness and teacher effectiveness, this will help schools and teachers find the best products on our platform.

**Please tell us something surprising or amusing that one of you has discovered.**

(The answer need not be related to your project.)

I learned through my son having Aspergers, the importance of good teacher training and differentiated learning in classrooms.

**CURIOUS**

**What convinced you to apply to Y Combinator?**

I think it is a great opportunity for Agora to work with Y Combinator because its experience in Ed Tech. I think that Y Combinator will be a great partner to develop the best platform that fit our market needs. There are great solutions out there such as Udemy, Coursera, Skillshare, Teachable but they are not designed to build the Community of learning to transform teaching for latino students. Combining Agora knowledge of market fit with Y Combinator EdTech experience and networks will be very powerful to transform teaching not only in Latin America but also in California where 54% of students are of latino descent, and a high percentage first generation.

**How did you hear about Y Combinator?**

other entrepreneur