# Project for the Promotion and Articulation of Innovation Ecosystems in Latin America (2020-2022)

**Date**: 2023-03-23

**Location**: San José, Costa Rica

## Executive Summary

The Project for the Promotion and Articulation of Innovation Ecosystems in Latin America, launched by CAF and OEI in 2020, aimed to enhance collaboration between academia and SMEs across seven countries. Over three years, the project trained over 1,600 participants, including university faculty and SME representatives, and facilitated the formulation of 427 innovation challenges. Key achievements included the delivery of 15 Innovation Challenges courses and the establishment of a regional network committed to ongoing collaboration. Lessons learned emphasized the importance of co-creation and trust-building between stakeholders. Moving forward, CAF and OEI are considering a second phase to scale successful initiatives. The project concluded with a closing event in San José, Costa Rica, on March 23, 2023.

## Characteristics

* **Collaboration Focus**: The project aimed to strengthen partnerships between academia and businesses to address innovation challenges in Latin America.
* **Capacity Building**: It emphasized building human capital and institutional capacities for open innovation within emerging ecosystems.
* **Training Initiatives**: Over 1,600 participants were trained through various courses, enhancing innovation skills among university faculty and SME representatives.
* **Regional Network**: The initiative established a network of universities and SMEs committed to ongoing collaboration and knowledge sharing.
* **Future Prospects**: Plans for a second phase are underway to scale successful innovation challenges and expand the training model’s reach.

## Actors

| Category | Actor |
| --- | --- |
| Political Actors | Organisation of Ibero-American States |
| Research and Innovation Actors | Universities; Academic Institutions |
| Economic Actors | Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean |

## Main Themes

| Category | Subcategory |
| --- | --- |
| Regional & International Cooperation | Bi-regional Cooperation; Global Digital Cooperation; Digital & Technological Partnerships |
| Digital Transformation & Strategy | Digital Ecosystem; Digital Skills Development |

## Practical Applications

* Project for the Promotion and Articulation of Innovation Ecosystems in Latin America launched by CAF and OEI, targeting universities, SMEs, and innovation agencies across seven countries (Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, Paraguay, and Uruguay) from 2020 to 2022.
* 15 editions of the Innovation Challenges course delivered, designed and certified by the Polytechnic University of Valencia.
* Partnership with SENA (Colombia) to co-finance pilot cohorts for training.
* 1,600+ participants trained, including 500 university faculty and students, and approximately 1,000 SME representatives.
* 661 companies received training support, and 427 innovation challenges were formulated, with several obtaining national science-agency funding.
* A regional network of universities and SMEs has been consolidated for ongoing collaboration, with plans for participants to replicate the training model to widen indirect beneficiaries.
* Exploration of a second phase by CAF and OEI focused on scaling successful innovation challenges.

## Commitments

No specific quantifiable commitments or targets identified.