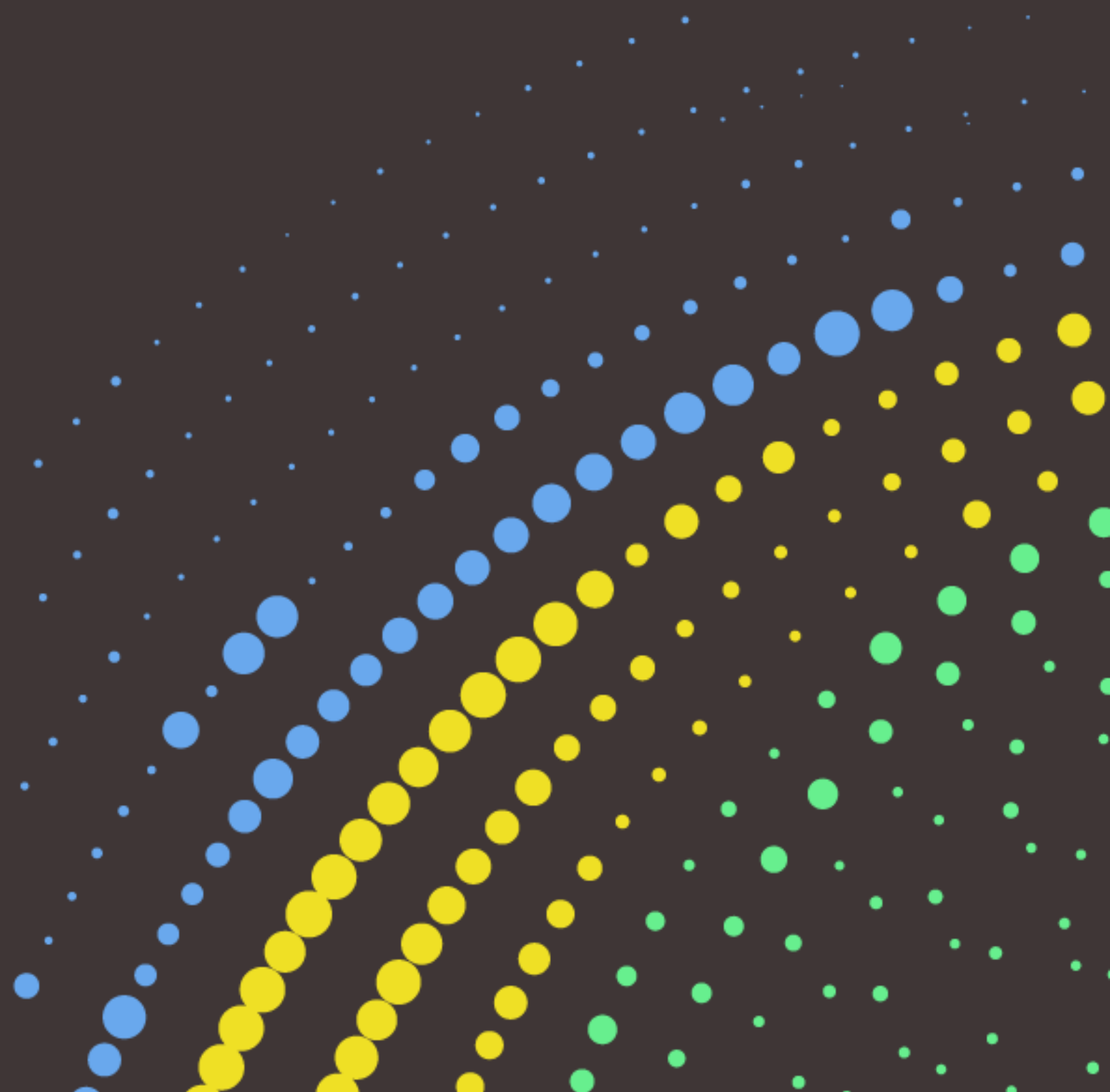




Iniciativa Proxima





THE INITIATIVE

With the support of Yale University, Iniciativa Proxima leverages the power of science and education as a driver of social change. Although Iniciativa Proxima was launched in 2020, the desire to contribute to science and education manifested years ago with the creation of the 'Seminars in Biomedical Sciences.' This is a scientific event aiming to connect talented young Brazilian scientists with outstanding researchers from around the world. We now created a formal mentoring program -- the Yale-Proxima Mentorship Program -- to support Brazilian students in developing the necessary skills to pursue a career in biological and biomedical sciences. Through these programs, Iniciativa Proxima seeks to provide young Brazilians with world-class training and create an environment that fosters scientific discussions and high-quality science in Brazil.

By supporting and training young talented scientists, we seek to reduce opportunity and achievement gaps in Brazil and foster the next generation of science leaders for the betterment of our societies and local communities.



1. FEATURES

Yale-Proxima is a free mentorship program for young Brazilians in the pursuit of knowledge and excellence in the field of biological and biomedical sciences. We are looking for aspiring scientists who are not only committed to their own professional success but who also seek to understand how their empowerment can promote long-lasting changes in their communities.

This 10-month (March-December) virtual mentoring program will culminate with the in-person Seminars in Biomedical Sciences (SBS) in Brazil. Through interactive discussions, this program will introduce students to critical practices, skills and strategies necessary to become leaders in their research field. The 3-day in-person Seminars will create meaningful connections between these young talents and leading scientists from around the world and will allow them to consolidate the networking skills learned along the virtual program.



2. ELIGIBILITY

A maximum of 25 scholars and 50 associates will be selected each year. Participation is limited to students who:

- demonstrate past or future interest in biological and biomedical sciences;
- are currently undergraduate (from 5th semester onwards) or master students or have recently earned a master's degree;
- have not yet enrolled in a PhD program and do not plan on starting a PhD throughout the duration of the Mentorship Program;
- do not hold a Doctorate degree;
- currently live in the Brazilian territory and plan to remain in the country throughout the tenure of the program;
- Research experience is not mandatory, but it is a plus, even if in a different field.



3. APPLICATION

Registration is free, will open on September 7th and close on November 15th. The registration form can be accessed on the following [link](#).

Applications that do not follow the requirements (language, length), are incomplete, and/or are submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

The following documents are requested for the application:

- 1) A short bio in video format (2 minutes maximum in English). Tell us something about yourself that you would like to share with us. Copy and paste link for a private upload to YouTube (do not forget to select the 'unlisted' option on the video sharing settings!) *NOTE: the quality of the video will not be evaluated, therefore, it does not need to be professional but good enough for us to see your face. We strongly recommend it to be recorded in a quiet place and in landscape mode. Be creative!*
- 2) An essay sharing an example of something that you have been part of, created, led, or joined that you consider unique in *your* life. Tell us why you think it is unique and how it might have impacted your life and/or your community (maximum of 250 words in Portuguese);



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- 3) A brief essay describing your previous experience with science and education and how participating in this program would impact your career (maximum of 300 words in English);
 - 4) A brief description of your current and future interests (maximum of 50 words in English);
 - 5) The link for your Lattes CV;
 - 6) Your CV (free format, in Portuguese or in English). *NOTE: your Lattes curriculum can also be uploaded here if you prefer,*
 - 7) Official academic transcript(s) (in Portuguese). *Note: During the application, you can upload an unofficial version of your academic transcript. However, if selected, you will be requested to send an academic transcript issued and signed/stamped by your university. If you are pursuing a Master's degree, please attach a copy of both transcripts (Master's and bachelors') in one single file.*



4. BENEFITS

Selected **Scholars** will:

- Participate in interactive sessions on career development, effective communication and networking.
- Receive guidance on how to choose and apply to graduate school.
- Explore different career paths.
- Become part of a community of peers, role models and world leaders in biological and biomedical sciences.
- Receive a Fellowship to cover registration and accommodation for the SBS meeting (limited need-based scholarships covering transportation costs will be available).
- Receive recognition as a lifelong Fellow.

Selected **Associates** will:

- Have free access to real-time workshops broadcasted on Youtube;
- Receive education and professional developmental resources also shared with the scholars;
- Have 50% registration discount to the SBS meeting.



5. EXPECTATIONS

Selected scholars will be expected to engage in discussions, interact with mentors and have an attendance of **at least 85%** in the virtual activities offered throughout the period of the program, and must attend the in-person scientific meeting.



6. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The program will start in March/2022 and end in December/2022. It will be divided into four main components:

(1) virtual workshops with world-renowned scientists; (2) virtual mentorship with Brazilian PhD students and post-docs conducting research at Yale University; (3) career development guidance; and (4) in-person participation in the Seminars in Biomedical Sciences (SBS), an international conference held annually in Brazil.

6.1 VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

The workshops will be held on Wednesdays from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm (Brasília time). There will be 1 to 2 meetings per month, from March to December. Some topics might include (but are subject to change):

- Establishing a good mentoring relationship
- Building support and community
- Combating Impostor Syndrome
- Funding opportunities - hearing from young peers
- How to write your personal essay: what to do and what not to do



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- Soft skills in science
 - Creative thinking in arts and science
 - Bedrocks of science: essential practices in the lab
 - Successful stories in academic and non-academic careers
 - Being a foreigner in science
 - Outreach projects - impact of science
 - How to choose the right program and lab for you
 - Career planning: setting goals and developing strategies

6.2 MENTOR AND MENTEES DISCUSSION GROUPS

The discussion groups are designed to address the diversity and specific needs of Brazilian mentees. Mentors are Brazilian PhD students and Postdocs who are far enough along in their academic journey that they can provide valuable insights and advice.

Pairings will be made at the beginning of the academic year based on a survey of participants' expectations and interests. Each mentor will be paired with a maximum of 5 mentees.



Throughout the 10-month program, the mentoring component will include four scheduled meetings on Saturdays (from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm Brasília time) as well as a weekend Q&A session. Scheduled meetings are an opportunity for a mentor to gather together with all of their mentees in a small group setting. Typical agendas for scheduled meetings might include tips for graduate school applications, discussion about challenges, among others.

The weekend Q&A session is an opportunity for mentees to schedule a one-on-one meeting on a topic of their choice with their mentor. Weekend Q&A sessions can be scheduled by sending the chosen topic to our staff at least a week in advance of the desired session.

6.3 CAREER DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

The scholars will receive guidance from an experienced career development specialist over the course of the program.

Development sessions will be offered to help our mentees on how to better plan their careers. There will be individual and group sessions.

Some goals of this component of the program are:

- Performing individual profile analysis and skills mapping;
- Setting individual goals and strategies;
- Structuring a career and an individual action plan;
- Conducting collective activities for shared learning.



6.4 SEMINARS IN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES (SBS)

SBS is an annual meeting held in Brazil since 2014 which provides a unique opportunity to connect young talented scientists with world-renowned researchers from a diverse range of scientific areas.

By combining talent with opportunity, the aim of the symposium is to inspire and empower a new generation of scientists to pursue their scientific interests. This meeting will include the participation of both 2021 and 2022 scholars.



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