

MEDIA RELEASE**LUKER FOUNDATION'S LITERACY PROGRAMS IN COLOMBIA RECOGNIZED AMONG TOP 10 FINALISTS FOR CHF 600,000 (\$602,000) KLAUS J. JACOBS BEST PRACTICE PRIZES 2022**

- ***Luker Foundation, based in Manizales, Colombia, recognized for reading programs for school children in Colombia and beyond***
- ***Three Best Practice Prize recipients will be awarded CHF 200,000 (\$201,000) each and announced on 30 September at a ceremony taking place in Zurich***
- ***All 10 finalists will convene for a co-creation event on 1 October, and are also eligible for follow-on funding of up to CHF 150,000***

Zurich, June 22, 2022: The Luker Foundation has been named a top 10 finalist for the Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes 2022, a set of three awards each worth CHF 200,000 (\$201,000) that honor outstanding achievement and practice in advancing quality education.

Created in 1994 in the Colombian city of Manizales, Fundación Luker is a social innovation laboratory whose creative solutions, particularly in the education space, are helping transform literacy among school children in Colombia and increasingly more widely in Latin America.

The three recipients of this year's Best Practice Prizes will be announced at a ceremony in Zurich on 30 September 2022. For the first time, the 10 finalists will convene for a co-creation event, taking place on 1 October 2022. They will exchange knowledge and ideas on advancing learning, and will have the opportunity to partner with other shortlisted applicants to develop proposals for new projects. Two concepts will receive follow-on funding of up to CHF 150,000 (\$151,000) each.

Awarded every other year, the Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes recognize non-profits, businesses, and social ventures that are bringing forth innovative solutions to some of education's biggest challenges.

Fabio Segura and Simon Sommer, co-CEOs of the Jacobs Foundation, said:

"We want to warmly congratulate Fundación Luker on becoming a top 10 finalist for the Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes 2022. These prizes were created to showcase the groundbreaking work that businesses, social ventures, and non-profits all around the world are doing to ensure children have access to quality education. There is not a moment to lose. By bringing to light the evidence of what works we can use it to implement solutions that can be tailored to learners' diverse individual needs.

"In the age of COVID, it is also important to share ideas and evidence of what works on the ground to help shift policy, particularly as education systems adapt to a new and unfamiliar terrain. That is why we are launching this new follow-on collaboration funding of up to CHF 150,000. We look forward to bringing together all 10 Best Practice Prize finalists for our co-creation event, and we can't wait to see what inspiring concepts they come up with together."

Pablo Jaramillo Villegas, CEO of the Luker Foundation, said:

“We are so thrilled to be recognized as a top 10 finalist for this prestigious award, particularly as it is based on such rigorous criteria. We would like to thank the Jacobs Foundation for shining a light on the important work that organizations around the world are doing to advance education, and we look forward to exchanging ideas with all the amazing 2022 Best Practice Prize finalists.

“We hope to use this incredible platform to share our learnings, and help boost children’s literacy in Colombia and around the world.”

The Luker Foundation

The Luker Foundation’s ‘Let’s All Learn to Read’ flagship literacy program, which incorporates experimental evaluation, began in Colombia’s mid-size city of Manizales, in alliance with the Inter-American Development Bank, which, joined by Harvard University, has helped evaluate it. It is now a public policy in Colombia and Panamá, benefiting more than 700,000 children and teachers, helping generate an educational transformation in Latin America. This teaching and learning model uses the phonetic method to improve literacy in Colombia and Panama.

The program includes face-to-face and high-impact digital strategies, such as classroom management, and the synthetic phonics method. It provides fun learning materials to help children improve their reading and socio-emotional skills. It also offers personalized tools for struggling students, and tailored evaluations to identify learning gaps.

The Foundation believes a proper implementation of the program for five years would increase reading performance on standardized tests by 30%. This model has all the potential to transform Latin America’s education in unprecedented ways. Schools in Guatemala, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic have expressed an interest in joining the program, which the Luker Foundation hopes to extend to all Latin American countries.

If the Luker Foundation is named a recipient of one of the Best Practice Prizes, it will use the winning funds to digitize training content in gamified, interactive learning platforms that allow students to develop their autonomy. The strategy would be complemented with the distribution of low-cost, long-lasting tablets ensuring access to a virtual training platform. The virtual content would reinforce synchronous classes and remediation activities for students who need it. The integrated monitoring system would give teachers real-time information on student progress to implement more personalized guidance.

Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes

Applications for the Best Practice Prizes 2022 opened on 6 January and closed on 10 February 2022. Recipients must demonstrate outstanding achievement in advancing learning and education, and embrace variability in learning. Their projects should draw on scientific evidence, use a clear results framework, and must be sustainable, scalable, and financially viable. Finally, they must build on strong leadership and partner networks.

In memory of its founder, the entrepreneur Klaus J. Jacobs, who passed away in 2008, the Jacobs Foundation presents two awards every other year for exceptional achievements in research and practice in the field of child and youth development and learning. The Klaus J. Jacobs Research Prize rewards scientific work that is highly relevant to society, and the Klaus

J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes honor exceptional commitment and innovative solutions of institutions or individuals.

Notes to editors:

The Jacobs Foundation is active worldwide in promoting child and youth development and learning. The Foundation was founded in Zurich by entrepreneur Klaus J. Jacobs in 1989. As part of its Strategy 2030, it has committed 500 million Swiss francs to advance evidence-based ideas for learning, to support schools in offering quality education, and to transform education ecosystems around the world. <https://jacobsfoundation.org/en/>

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