

Annual Report 2024



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Introduction

Statement from the President and Co-CEOs

The future of learning is now

As we reflect on 2024, one thing has become crystal clear: the urgency of our mission has never been greater. At the current rate of global investment in education, 300 million students will lack basic numeracy and literacy skills by 2030. What sets this year apart is our renewed motive to address this as we shape the future of education and its financing while driving groundbreaking research into learning variability.

The results we've seen are encouraging. Our global partnerships have demonstrated that when we combine cutting-edge research with practical implementation, we can create learning environments that don't just adapt to change—they thrive on it. In our work across Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Switzerland, we've observed how evidence-based approaches can transform educational outcomes.

Perhaps most significantly, 2024 has solidified our long-standing belief that the traditional boundaries of education are dissolving. Learning now happens everywhere, at any time, and the Foundation has evolved to support this reality. We've expanded our focus to include informal learning spaces, digital platforms, and community-based initiatives that complement traditional schooling.

As we look to 2025 and beyond, we're not just continuing our work—we're accelerating it. The challenges in learning facing today's children require us to be bold in our vision while remaining grounded in evidence. As the world's leading funder of rigorous evidence on learning, our commitment to scientific rigor remains unwavering, but we're also embracing the agility needed to respond to rapidly changing educational needs.

The path forward is clear: we must invest in learning systems that prepare children not just to navigate the future, but to shape it. With our partners' continued support and dedication, we're confident that we can help create a world where every child's potential can flourish through the power of learning.

To everyone who has contributed to this mission—thank you. The future of learning is being written now and, together, we're ensuring it's a story of opportunity, innovation, and success for all children.

Lavinia Jacobs
President

Fabio Segura
Co-CEO

Simon Sommer
Co-CEO

Activities



Year in review: transforming education around the world

Global highlights

As part of our Strategy 2030, we aim to make a bigger impact on education, both globally and locally. In 2024, we focused on shaping the future of education and its funding while exploring how children learn in different ways. By supporting new ideas and strengthening education systems around the world, we are helping make sure every child can get a quality education.



LEVANTE: building the first global dataset focused on children's individual learning and development

Childhood is marked by variability, with children's abilities differing within classrooms, social groups, regions of a country, and across the globe. Despite this, education systems often adopt a one-size-fits-all approach, failing to address these diverse needs. To bridge this gap, the **Learning Variability Network Exchange (LEVANTE)** is a global research initiative focused on understanding how children learn in different ways across various times, places, and contexts. In 2024, we announced the first call for proposals for this flagship initiative, with a vision to unite researchers worldwide to create the first cross-cultural, multidisciplinary, open dataset, capturing the complexity and diversity of child development and learning.

[Explore the collaborative network →](#)



The International Finance Facility for Education (IFFEd): an innovative solution to financing education worldwide

Through the International Finance Facility for Education (IFFEd)—a financing solution that makes education financing more affordable to countries that need it most—we are working with other philanthropic organizations and donor countries to multiply financing for education funding. IFFEd has already secured \$1.5 billion in new education funding and aims to become the most effective way to advance evidence-based solutions on a global scale. We are delighted to support this innovative initiative, delivering the largest surge in education funding seen in decades.

[Learn more about our support of IFFEd →](#)



Jacobs Foundation Research Fellows: top researchers representing global excellence join the prestigious fellowship

We are the world's leading funder of rigorous evidence on learning. One pillar of this is the Jacobs Foundation Research Fellowship Program which identifies and supports the most innovative early-career researchers whose work is dedicated to improving learning and development. With over 700 applications for 12 places, it has become the most competitive global program of its kind, which is why we extended our fellowship to 13 for the latest cohort. This cohort's work ranges from research focusing on using technology to make science and mathematics learning more accessible and welcoming for everyone, to strengthening language and literacy skills among learners from linguistically diverse communities.

[Meet our 2024 cohort →](#)

2024 Annual Conference: embedding evidence in education

Efforts to weave rigorous research into education policy and practice have grown over recent years, but evidence use in education still lags behind other fields. The 2024 Jacobs Foundation Conference tackled this challenge, exploring bold strategies and sustainable frameworks to generate, apply, and embed evidence in decision-making for policy and practice. Global experts and national leaders converged to share insights on embedding evidence into education—including funders who were encouraged to reflect on their role in meeting the demands of policymakers and practitioners for evidence.

Read some of the highlights →

Best Practice Prizes: celebrating ground-breaking Colombian, Brazilian, and Pan-African education initiatives

Change in education is possible if we believe in the transformative power of evidence. This was something our Co-CEOs—Fabio Segura and Simon Sommer—emphasized at the 2024 Best Practice Prize ceremony in Zurich, Switzerland. Selected from over 200 applications, the three winners—Imagine Worldwide, Laboratório de Educação, and Fundación Escuela Nueva—were unveiled at the ceremony, joined by education leaders from around the world. They were recognized for their innovative use of scientific evidence, clear results-driven frameworks, and potential for global scalability. The winners showcase transformative, evidence-based solutions to some of education’s most urgent challenges, paving the way for impactful change.

Meet the finalists and the winners →

Local highlights

Locally, we bring evidence-based practices into education policies in Colombia, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Switzerland. We focus on countries where there is strong potential for impact, a commitment to using evidence in decision-making, and where partnerships across public, private, and philanthropic sectors can thrive. These diverse settings, ranging from low-income to high-income, provide valuable opportunities to learn about how to best support systemic change at scale.



ACTIVITIES

Colombia: a new coalition for quality education



We began the year in South America with a significant milestone: the launch of Colombia Evidencia Potencial en Educación (CEPE). This initiative unites researchers, policymakers, and educators to transform Colombia's public education system. Addressing challenges like learning gaps, dropouts, and uneven teaching quality, CEPE promotes evidence-based decision-making at the regional level. By helping communities implement tailored, research-backed teaching practices, CEPE aims to drive lasting change.

[Learn more about CEPE →](#)

Côte d'Ivoire: public-private-philanthropy partnership for acceleration



In Côte d'Ivoire, we are working closely with the government to increase school enrollment and improve learning outcomes. The Child Learning and Education Facility (CLEF) is the first public-private-philanthropy partnerships dedicated to expanding investment in quality education. One key initiative is the creation of "bridging classes," which provide accelerated learning for children who have never attended school or who have dropped out. These classes help students catch up and transition into the formal education system.

[Learn more about CLEF →](#)

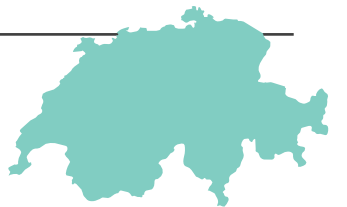
Ghana: improving foundational learning at scale



In Ghana, we are expanding the impact of public-private-philanthropy partnerships. Building on the successes of our work in Côte d'Ivoire, including TRECC and CLEF, we introduced the System Change Architecture for Learning Excellence (SCALE). This initiative refines and adapts proven strategies to transform foundational learning outcomes in Ghana. SCALE reflects the financial commitments and shared vision of its partners to bring evidence-based education initiatives to scale.

[Learn more about our work in Ghana →](#)

Switzerland: calling for prioritization of education in Swiss aid



Friends of Education—a coalition of 40+ Swiss foundations working in education—strongly advocated to maintain education as a priority in Switzerland's 2025-28 international cooperation strategy. In an op-ed, leaders from the Fondation Botnar, Jacobs Foundation, Roger Federer Foundation, and UBS Optimus Foundation emphasized education's role in fostering global stability, economic growth, and equity. They called for stronger public-private partnerships to drive systemic change and reinforce Switzerland's commitment to education as a catalyst for sustainable development.

[Read the joint letter →](#)



Stories of change

The Jacobs Foundation has spent over 35 years supporting research initiatives that drive impact around the world. From closing harmful orphanages to influencing U.S. juvenile justice reform, and securing parental leave for fathers in Switzerland, our work continues to inspire change at both policy and practice levels. As global advocates for evidence-based decision-making, we strive to influence individual countries as well as global institutions and multilateral organizations. Below, we highlight key areas of impact that we will continue to build upon.

From groundbreaking research to real-world impact

At the Jacobs Foundation, we believe that rigorous research is a cornerstone of educational progress. By supporting world-class researchers and fostering connections between research and real-world action, we help shape policies and create better learning opportunities for every child.

A prime example of this approach is the work of Laurence Steinberg, recipient of the 2014 Klaus J. Jacobs Research Prize. His pioneering research on adolescent development has driven major shifts in child labor laws, juvenile justice, and healthcare policies. Notably, in 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court cited his findings to abolish the death penalty for juveniles, reshaping the legal approach to young offenders.

Similarly, the Bucharest Early Intervention Project (BEIP), supported by the Jacobs Foundation, revealed the long-term effects of institutional care on children in Romania. This groundbreaking research has reshaped child welfare policies worldwide, advocating for more child-centered care.

Our commitment to the power of research continues through initiatives such as the Learning Variability Network Exchange (LEVANTE), launched in collaboration with Stanford University. LEVANTE aims to deepen our understanding of how to support every child's unique potential. Similarly, the Jacobs Foundation Research Fellowship (JRF) supports over 130 early-career researchers tackling urgent issues such as the role of digital tools in education and the impact of childhood mental health on learning. The 2024 cohort of 13 exceptional researchers addresses these and many other critical challenges with potential to drive real-world change.

[Meet our 2024 cohort →](#)

Jacobs Foundation Research Fellowship

Our fellowship identifies and supports the most innovative early-career researchers whose work is dedicated to improving learning and development.

Today, the interdisciplinary network represents the most competitive program of its kind. Academics are generating and sharing research into evidence-based best practices in learning and development,

and we are proud to help bridge the gap between academia and policy. Our 2024 cohort consists of 13 researchers exploring a wide range of topics, from inclusive technology to improving mental health support for children. Take a closer look at some of these ground-breaking researchers:



The screening tool for developmental dyslexia will provide direction for stakeholders to develop targeted interventions to support these learners, hence helping many children learn how to read who may have been overlooked or misunderstood before.

Strengthening language and literacy skills among learners from linguistically diverse communities

Focusing on learning variability and developmental dyslexia in Kiswahili, **Dr. Brenda Wawire** is building evidence on how factors outside of school influence and shape children's educational outcomes. She will examine individual differences among learners with dyslexia by developing and pilot-testing a tool to screen for developmental dyslexia in Kiswahili. Her research will contribute to educational policies and practices that aim to better meet the diverse needs of children in Kenya.

Understanding brain development and mental health

Dr. Brenden Tervo-Clemmens' research focuses on understanding how the adolescent brain develops and how this relates to mental health and decision-making. His work particularly examines executive function (EF)—the brain's ability to plan, focus, and control impulses—and how it fluctuates in daily life. For his fellowship, he will use smartphone-based assessments and advanced brain imaging to track how EF changes in real-world settings. This can help tailor educational and mental health interventions for adolescents. His goal is to make brain research more reliable and useful for policies that support young people's learning and well-being.



Our open science and improved within-person methodological efforts, together with an expanded collaborative network through the Jacobs Foundation, can provide key tools for a range of additional applications in development and learning.





I am honored to join the Jacobs fellowship community, which offers an unmatched venue to learn from and work with leaders across fields—from neuroscience to public policy—to promote youth wellbeing at scale.

Building, testing, and sharing scalable, evidence-based mental health solutions

Schools can lack the resources needed to provide quality mental health support to all students. However, schools are in a unique position to connect them with resources they might not have access to elsewhere. Through her fellowship, **Dr. Jessica Schleider** is developing a digital, open-access platform and co-designed toolkit to help students, teachers, and staff address gaps in school-based mental health support in an efficient and affordable way. Single-session mental health interventions (SSIs) have shown promise for improving the scalability and effectiveness of services in schools, but they haven't yet been systematically integrated. Her project aims to create and test an evidence-based SSI platform tailored for middle school students, offering a practical, cost-effective solution to strengthen school mental health systems.

Examining the role of fathers in promoting early child development in Tanzania and Kenya

Through collaborating with community-based organizations, international organizations, and governments in Tanzania and Kenya to test different interventions aimed at enhancing nurturing care and improving early child development, **Dr. Joshua Jeong** will expand this research with help from the fellowship. Professor Jeong's research goes beyond the traditional focus on mothers in parenting, offering new insights into the important role fathers play in supporting the development and well-being of young children and families, particularly in low-resource settings.



My intervention research can inform the design and delivery of more gender-sensitive and family-inclusive parenting programs that engage not only mothers but also fathers to maximize program impacts on child and family outcomes.



I plan to help students improve academic skills and build their confidence.

This approach is especially important for girls and students from underrepresented groups who often face barriers in STEM fields.

Setting students up for success in a technology-driven world

With the dramatic rise of digitization and AI in education, it is essential that the tools used in education are accessible to anyone, regardless of their background. **Dr. Nia Nixon** focuses on harnessing technology to make science and mathematics more inclusive and engaging for all, with a special emphasis on empowering girls and students from diverse backgrounds. She will use her fellowship to integrate AI to tailor learning experiences in order to ensure students not only improve their academic skills, but also build confidence.



My goal is to provide a shift in the way we think about developmental disorders and about the environments that enable youths with neurodevelopmental and disruptive behavior disorders to thrive.

Pinpointing environments that can narrow the educational and developmental gap between children with different neurodivergent and behavioral profiles

Globally, 15% of children are affected by neurodevelopmental and disruptive behavior disorders, and, despite sharing similar features, the overlap between both is critically under-researched. By studying commonalities across multiple disorders and their combined impact on learning outcomes, development psychologist **Dr. Margherita Malanchini** hopes to generate new knowledge that will benefit children, their educators, and their families. She will use her fellowship to investigate how genetic and environmental factors interact to shape educational outcomes for children with diverse neurodivergent and behavioral profiles.

Understanding how household factors, abuse, and neglect influence memory and learning in the brain

Dr. Sofie Valk will explore how early life experiences shape brain development, focusing on how factors like household environment, abuse, and neglect affect the hippocampus—a part of the brain that helps with learning and memory. Her research could lead to improved interventions and policies for supporting healthier childhood development. By identifying at-risk children earlier, Sofie's work aims to provide resources for better mental health and cognitive growth. She will also develop programs to educate children on the connection between brain health, mental well-being, and their social environment.



Our neurobiology and the social world we live in are deeply intertwined.



Research on children's social cognition in extradyadic settings—those beyond one-on-one interactions—is crucial for supporting the diverse environments that shape child development outside of Western communities.

Exploring the impact of group size on childhood learning

Dr. Roman Stengelin's research explores how group size and cultural factors influence childhood learning and social behaviors. By comparing children from diverse communities, including rural Namibia and urban Germany, he examines how cultural and situational factors shape behaviors like collaboration and social learning. During his fellowship, Roman will focus on the impact of group size on these behaviors across different cultural contexts.

Pioneering public-private-philanthropy partnerships to amplify our investment

In 2022, the Child Learning and Education Facility (CLEF) was launched in Côte d'Ivoire to improve education in cocoa-growing regions. This public-private-philanthropy partnership, involving the Ivorian government, philanthropic foundations, and the cocoa industry, aims to reach 4 million children by 2027. Recognized by the World Bank as the largest education coalition in Africa, CLEF serves as a model for financing and public-private-philanthropy collaboration.

In 2024, CLEF achieved significant milestones, including a 64% activity completion rate for training regional trainers and teachers in the use of digital resources supporting a new foundational learning program, as well as conducting hybrid training sessions for over 10,000 teachers. The program also facilitated the successful transition of 4,277

out-of-school children, 44.3% of who were girls, into formal education after completing a seven-month accelerated learning program delivered through 165 bridging classes across the Lôh-Djiboua and Nawa regions. These interventions are part of CLEF's broader efforts to improve access to quality education, especially for children in marginalized cocoa-growing communities.

Building on this experience, in 2024, we helped develop Colombia Evidencia Potencial en Educación (CEPE) and System Change Architecture for Learning Excellence (SCALE) in Ghana, uniting governments, philanthropies, and the private sector to expand evidence-based education initiatives. By 2030, these programs will benefit 8 million children, fostering resilient, sustainable models for education financing and system-wide transformation.

[Learn more about CLEF →](#)

Innovative public-private-philanthropy partnerships

Child Learning and Education Facility

The focus of the CLEF program is on improving the education landscape in cocoa-growing regions of Côte d'Ivoire, through evidence-based teacher training, infrastructure investments, catch-up programs, parent involvement, and childcare.

Impact - expected results

- 60% child reading proficiency
- 80% numeracy proficiency
- 4 million primary students introduced to evidence-based teaching
- 27,000 teachers trained
- 420 equipped classrooms
- 18 childcare facilities
- 18,800 out-of-school students in bridging classes
- 1.6 million parents engaged via SMS
- 2,250 parents in training
- 200,000 children in school feeding programs
- 2,250 children in childcare
- 4 research studies on learning and early childhood development

Expected

27,000

teachers trained



Funding volume

CHF 78'634'114

CHF 25'000'000 Government of Côte d'Ivoire

CHF 31'104'114 Foundations

CHF 22'530'000 Industry



Expected

420

equipped classrooms



Key partners

Côte d'Ivoire Ministry of Education, Jacobs Foundation, UBS Optimus Foundation, Global Partnership for Education, Cocoa Industry Funders



Colombia Evidencia Potencial en Educación



The CEPE Program is designed for long-term systemic change in the education sector. It includes a Co-funding Mechanism, that pools funds to sustain the system change; a Communities of Change program, implementing evidence-based initiatives at the child, school, and community levels; and an EdLab, integrating evidence into national and local policy and practice.

Impact - expected results

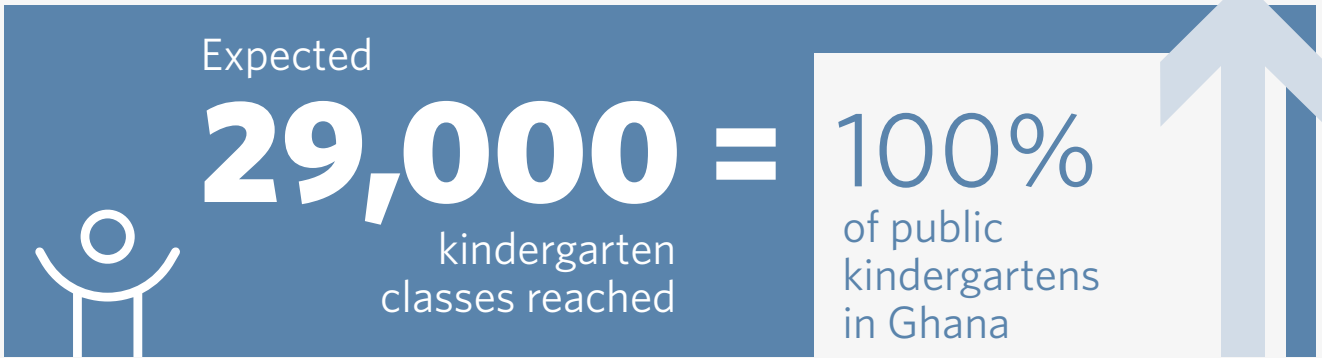
- Secured major co-funding for evidence-based education
- Trained education leaders to enhance decision-making
- Shared research insights with national and regional stakeholders
- Expanded pilot initiatives, benefiting more students
- Increased school adoption of proven practices
- Improved student performance in reading and math
- Implemented social-emotional skills tracking in schools

Funding volume

USD 25 million
Pooled from foundations. Communities of Change additional pooled funding is still in progress. Regions will contribute a varying % of JF-funded initiatives.

Key partners

Colombia Ministry of Education, Fondation Botnar, Fundación Bancolombia, Fundación Santo Domingo, Fundación Vélez Reyes, Jacobs Foundation, UBS Optimus Foundation



System Change Architecture for Learning Excellence



The SCALE program combines industry and philanthropic funds with the Global Partnership for Education multiplier grant to enhance foundational learning in Ghana. Additional funding to the Ministry of Education led Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcomes Project program invests in a variety of programs around differentiated learning, teacher training, resource provision, and system strengthening in Ghana.

Impact - expected results

- **15,000** beneficiary schools reached
- **29,000** kindergarten classes reached (100% of public kindergartens in Ghana)
- **2 million** primary school children will benefit from evidence-based interventions
- **64,000** teachers will have improved skills, support, and accountability at the school and district levels
- **60%** of Primary 2 learners will achieve basic proficiency or higher in literacy
- **100** Ghanaian districts reached, including select cocoa districts prioritized by industry funders

Funding volume

USD 118.8 million
Additional financing mobilized for GALOP. A US\$40 million contribution from SCALE Funders (foundations, and cocoa and industry partners) has been matched by a US\$40 million GPE Multiplier Grant. Other contributions include US\$31.4 million from the GPE Systems Transformation Grant and US\$7.4 million from the Early Learning Partnership Multi-Donor Trust Fund.

Key partners

Ghana Ministry of Education, Cocoa Industry Funders, Early Learning Partnership Multi-Donor Trust Fund, Fondation Botnar, Global Partnership for Education, Jacobs Foundation, UBS Optimus Foundation, World Bank

Building evidence-based education in Switzerland



The Jacobs Foundation is pioneering an approach that connects research directly with education policy and practice in Switzerland—a country known for its innovation and creativity. The Swiss Evidence in Education Lab (Swiss EdLab), launched in 2024, seeks to foster innovation and creativity in future generations and centers on the developing child. It examines which pedagogical practices help uncover children’s developmental potential across a wide range of skillsets and ability profiles. Ultimately, the Swiss EdLab aims to transform how scientific evidence influences decision-making in education nationwide.

From research to policy

The Swiss EdLab, a joint initiative of the Jacobs Foundation and the Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development (JCPYD) at the University of Zurich, creates a national platform where scientific evidence becomes accessible to policymakers, education authorities, and other key stakeholders. Working closely with our established partners including DEEP, ProEdu, and Staatslabor, the Swiss EdLab builds on successful initiatives that have already demonstrated the power of evidence-based approaches to education.

"The Swiss EdLab bridges a long-standing gap between research and policy. By translating research into practical insights, we're equipping education stakeholders with the evidence they need to make informed decisions that advance children's learning and support their development, ensuring that educational policies and practices are grounded in what works." **Doris Hanappi and Moritz Daum, Co-leads of the Swiss EdLab**

The Swiss EdLab focuses on three key areas: building evidence capacity through accessible platforms, visualizations, and trainings; facilitating evidence-to-policy translation through targeted events that connect researchers with policymakers; and bridging the gap between evidence production and practical application in educational institutions and public administration.

Connecting local insights with global excellence

By aligning the Swiss EdLab with the international EU LEARN EdLab—part of the EU Horizon Project "Longitudinal Educational Achievements: Reducing iNequalities (LEARN)"—we're positioning Switzerland within a broader European network for educational evidence. This ensures that Swiss education policies benefit from both contextual insights and global best practices.

"Being embedded within the Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development (JCPYD) at the University of Zurich provides the Swiss EdLab with two key strengths that offer a distinctive advantage: expertise across multiple disciplines and sustainability, leveraging the established resources and research networks of the JCPYD." **Elisabeth Stark, Vice President of Research, University of Zurich**

Through the Swiss EdLab, the Jacobs Foundation and the Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development are systematically strengthening Switzerland's education landscape—creating the evidence infrastructure needed to ensure every child benefits from learning opportunities grounded in rigorous research.



2024 Best Practice Prize Winners

Promoting best practice models of teaching and learning

At the heart of the Jacobs Foundation's mission is a commitment to evidence-based practices that transform education. This is embodied by the Best Practice Prize, which honors outstanding teaching and learning models with the potential for widespread adoption.

A standout success is the "Let's All Learn to Read" program, launched by the Luker Foundation in Colombia which won the prize in 2022. This literacy initiative has significantly improved reading comprehension among young learners, becoming public policy in Colombia and Panama and impacting over 700,000 children and teachers across Latin America.

In conflict zones like Ukraine, previous winners such as War Child's "Can't Wait to Learn" (CWTL) program, which won in 2017, uses offline technology to ensure education continues despite war and displacement. By providing self-paced learning content, CWTL enables children to continue their education, regardless of their environment.

These models, along with many others that have received the Best Practice Prize, serve as powerful examples for others aiming to adapt and implement similar approaches. Additionally, these best practices will serve as key sources of inspiration for scaling evidence-based practices in our partner countries, particularly through our co-funding partnerships, where these models can be further refined and expanded to maximize impact.

Translating evidence into learning outreach

At the Foundation, we drive world-class research on what works best for children's education, but how do we pass on this evidence to the ones who need it most? We believe driving meaningful change starts with sharing academic insights and best practices with those shaping children's future firsthand—teachers and caregivers. The Foundation's two dynamic digital platforms—the **Digital Museum of Learning** and **BOLD**—are free to access for anyone, anywhere. By bringing education to life and empowering educators and caregivers across the globe to elevate learning experiences, the quality of children's education can be improved.

BOLD

Supporting evidence-based education through BOLD

BOLD—our global, digital platform for scientific knowledge that is changing children's lives—is a source of free, easy-to-access knowledge, empowering caregivers and educators with the information and tools they need to help every child learn and develop. We are translating science into accessible resources for everyone and, in 2024, we produced almost 100 articles, podcast episodes, interviews, and videos. All of these are freely available on our online platform, ensuring the latest insights on child development and learning reach those who need it most.

Learning through play

As stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, every child has the fundamental right to engage freely in play. To coincide with the first International Day of Play in June, BOLD launched the **Learning through Play** hub. In this new hub, we compile the latest evidence on play, highlighting its importance and ways to incorporate it into daily activities.

Translating science for children and teachers

How can adults support children's well-being? What is the impact of stress on teenagers? How significant are healthy relationships in child development? As part of a series on the science of growing up, BOLD partnered with the **Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development** to explore these key questions and more. BOLD has also provided bespoke content for our other digital strand of learning outreach—The Digital Museum of Learning—translating the science of learning for children.

Inclusive education and embracing neurodivergence in the classroom

We are committed to ensuring our learning outreach is accessible to everyone. To make BOLD more inclusive, we created audio versions of all new articles to make content more accessible for the visually impaired. Centering those with lived experiences, particularly when it comes to mental health, is essential to ensure support is meaningful. We collaborated on a **four-part series of articles** co-written with young people who have experienced mental health challenges, valuing their lived experiences alongside scientific insights and amplifying new perspectives and voices. On our podcast **Teachers' Voices**, we spotlight conversations with experts examining topics from how stigma impacts young people with serious mental health conditions to understanding the ways in which students differ from each other in their learning.

360,000

website users

98

articles, interviews, podcasts and videos published

57

narrated articles published

61

interviewees

28

authors published

Bringing the history and science of learning to life on screen for children at the Digital Museum of Learning

Launching our brand new global exhibition

Across the globe, children are denied access to schools where they rightfully belong due to factors such as disability, race, language, religion, gender, and poverty. Now more than ever, children should be educated on the importance of equality, inclusivity, and cultural diversity. In today's globalized, digital, and interconnected world, many schools and educators are seeking the best ways to teach students about cultural diversity. As September ushered in a new school year for many students around the world, the Digital Museum of Learning's brand new global exhibition, **'Fabrics of Identity'** launched, celebrating diversity in the classroom and beyond.

Playfully understanding cultural identities

Fabrics of Identity is a new, creative, and playful way for students and teachers to understand cultural diversity and identity, fostering meaningful learning experiences and broadening their understanding of the history and science of learning. The exhibition invites you on an exciting, interactive journey through a rich selection of stories on cross-cultural identity. From the history of school uniforms to the meaning behind the #BlackLivesMatterAtSchool movement, these engaging digital stories open a world of discovery. Teachers are able to use the exhibition's stories and resources in lessons for students aged 7 to 12 and the free teacher zone is designed as a tool for interactive learning. It allows teachers to customize activities, including guidance, quizzes, and worksheets, to enhance student engagement.

Collaborating with world-class museums and experts

As with BOLD, collaboration is essential for the Digital Museum of Learning. To create 'Fabrics of Identity,' the Digital Museum of Learning partnered with experts worldwide including several museums of education—such as the MUNAÉ Musée National de l'Éducation and the Schulmuseum Bern—researchers, and an author of children's books, to inspire curiosity and wonder in learners of all ages. **Explore the exhibition today**, where learning artefacts have been carefully digitized from museums across the globe.

Bringing 'Fabrics of Identity' to life at the Long Night of Museums

At the heart of the Digital Museum of Learning is the goal of sparking children's curiosity and stimulating important discussions on significant topics in today's globalized and digitalized world. In September, we opened the door to the Johann Jacobs Museum—the Digital Museum of Learning's physical home—to the residents of Zurich and brought the online museum's second exhibition **'Fabrics of Identity'** to life. Over 600 'explorers' joined the family-friendly interactive exhibition, created and developed with local partners in one of our core geographies—Switzerland. Visitors were invited on an adventure to explore a variety of interactive installations, from quizzes on deepfakes to dressing up and understanding how textile heritage shapes identity. The evening was an engaging learning experience, celebrating fabrics, diversity, and identity.

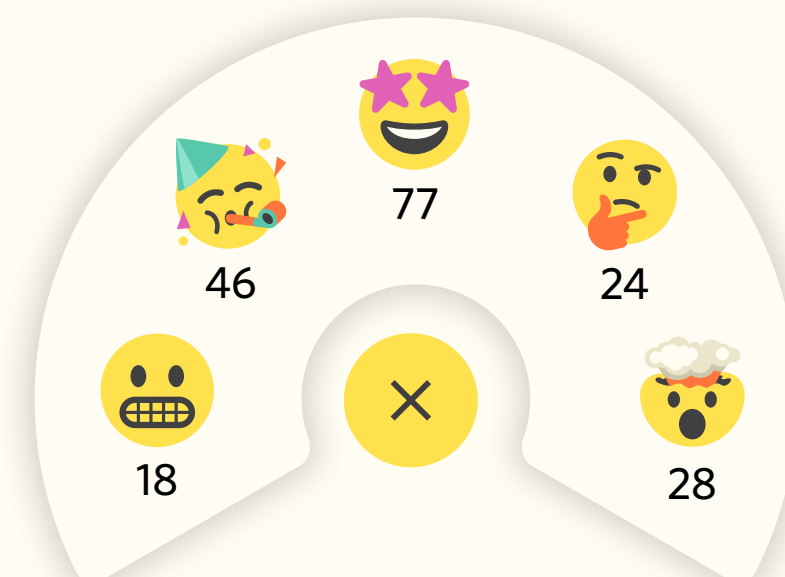
226,000+

website visits from
194 countries

1400

teachers using the
Teacher Zone

Users can react to the Digital Museum of Learning stories with these emotions. Most users think the stories are beautiful, fun, and surprising.





A learning organization, in theory and in practice

At the Jacobs Foundation, continuous learning and adaptation are central to our work. As we reach the midpoint of our 2030 strategy, we conducted a thorough review in 2024 to assess our progress and refine our approach. The review confirmed that our strategy is on track, while also identifying areas where we can simplify our structure, strengthen connections between global and local efforts, and increase our long-term impact.



Unifying our approach

Our commitment to rigorous research and translating evidence into policy and practice remains a cornerstone of our strategy. However, the original structure—dividing efforts across three separate portfolios—created unintended silos. To amplify our impact and improve coherence, we have streamlined our efforts into two interconnected portfolios: Global and Local. This new structure strengthens programmatic connections, ensuring that research directly informs action and contributes to systems-level change.



Global relevance, local anchoring

We invest globally in generating evidence on child learning while working locally in four countries to transform education systems. Our review emphasized the need to better link global research with local needs, while maintaining space for foundational research. To align evidence with country priorities and enhance its practical application, we are strengthening our Education Evidence Labs and improving data literacy among policymakers and educators. By embedding evidence capacity-building in our programs, we aim to bridge the gap between research and real-world decision-making.

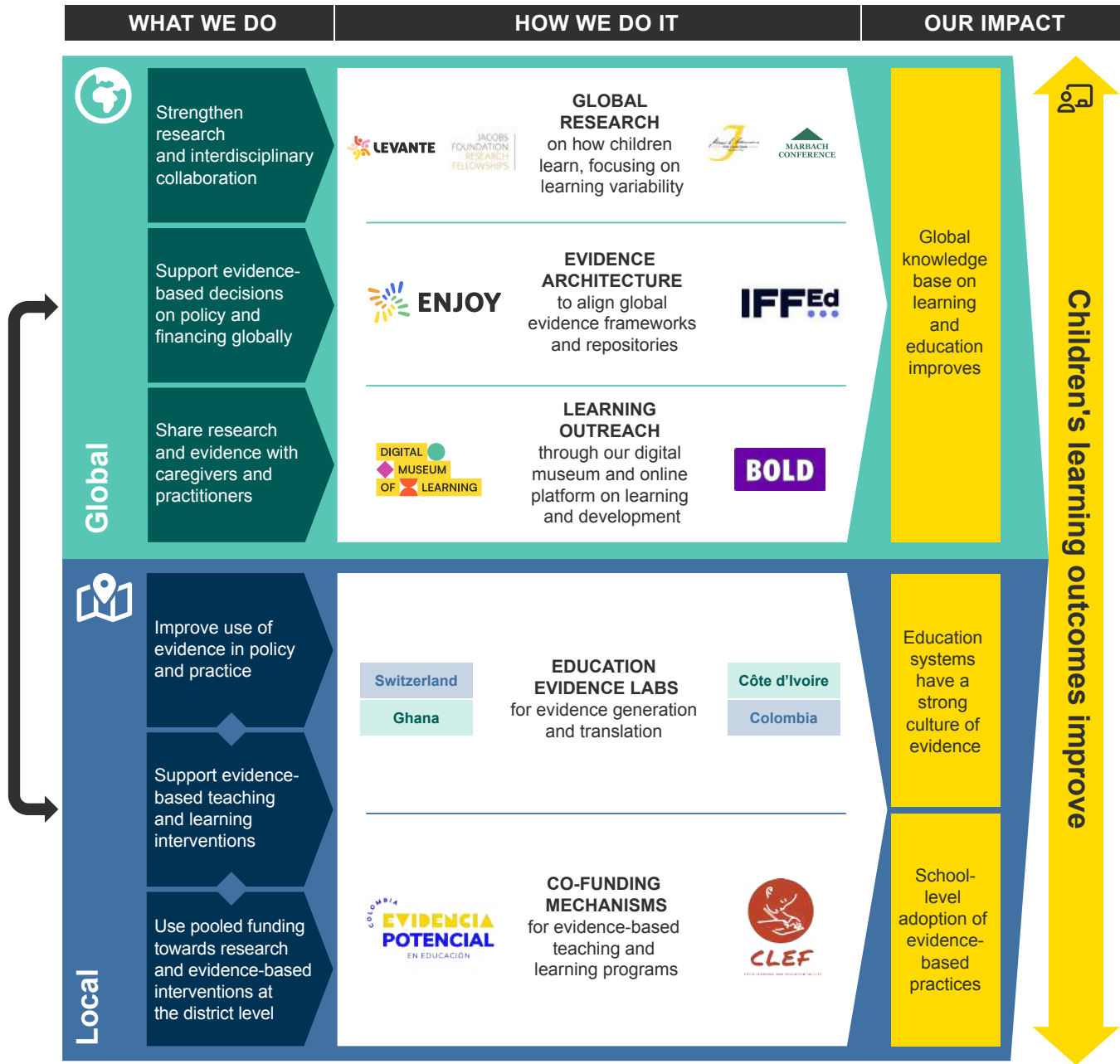


Filling the “missing middle”

While the Foundation has made significant investments in systems-level initiatives, it is crucial to deepen our understanding of how these efforts translate into tangible teaching and learning outcomes. Policy changes alone are not enough; it is essential for evidence to imbue the system and effectively influence classroom practices and student performance. As we refine our strategy, we are focusing on strengthening the connections between policy decisions, educator engagement, and student learning outcomes. By improving how we measure these relationships, we aim to ensure that evidence-based reforms create lasting improvements in children’s education.

Pathway to Change

By 2030, we aim to create a measurable impact on children’s learning. Learning has always been at the heart of our strategy, but we are evolving our approach to better leverage our strengths and adapt to emerging challenges. By bridging the gap between global insights and local realities, we are ensuring that evidence-based practices don’t just inform policies—they reach classrooms, equip teachers with effective tools, and improve learning outcomes for every child.



Big bets for 2030 and beyond

As we pass the midpoint to the 2030 deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is crucial to accelerate efforts towards inclusive, high-quality education for all (SDG 4). Every child deserves a quality education, yet by 2030, 300 million students may still lack basic literacy and numeracy skills. We are working with governments and partners worldwide to address this challenge. Here, we highlight three big bets that have the potential to transform the global education system through better evidence and financing.



EdLabs connect research and action

Education Evidence Labs (EdLabs) generate locally relevant evidence and strengthen the link between global knowledge and local education systems. Operating in Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Switzerland; by 2030, EdLabs aim not only to improve how evidence is used but also to help ensure that new evidence-based practices are put into action. This approach will lead to measurable improvements in educational outcomes, as the evidence is translated into better policies and practices in these countries.



Evidence-based investment in education

Currently, low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) face a \$100 billion annual financing gap. To address this, we are supporting the International Finance Facility for Education (IFFEd), an innovative financing model that directs multilateral and domestic funds toward high-impact, evidence-based educational interventions. By leveraging philanthropic and donor investments, IFFEd can multiply financing, increasing the flow of resources for education.



A global education data bank

In line with global efforts in sectors like health and climate change, the creation of a Global Education Data Bank is an exciting frontier. The data bank would allow for “living evidence synthesis,” and provide policymakers and practitioners with real-time, accessible evidence to drive faster adoption of proven practices. With the help of AI, the aim is to create an infrastructure where evidence is continually updated, ensuring that educational interventions are informed by the most current data, ultimately accelerating improvements in outcomes across countries and contexts.



Institution



Board of Trustees

As of April 2025

The Foundation's Board of Trustees serves as the ultimate decision-making body, offering strategic guidance for our initiatives and bringing extensive experience and knowledge to our key areas of activity.

Board Members also participate in at least one of four Board Working Groups – Global Program, Switzerland Program, Colombia Program, West Africa Program, and Investments.

The Board of Trustees has two committees:

1. Audit Committee with Olaf von Maydell (Chairman), Lavinia Jacobs, and Sandro Giuliani.
2. Nomination and Compensation Committee with Hans Ambühl (Chairman), Lavinia Jacobs, and Ulman Lindenberger.

Emiliana Vegas (Ed.D)

Appointed to the Board in January 2021. Emiliana is a professor of practice at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE). She holds a Doctor of Education degree from HGSE and a Master's of public policy degree from Duke University.

Hans Ambühl

Vice Chairman

A member of the Board of Trustees since October 2013. He served as General Secretary of the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education in Bern until 2017.

Jenny Abramson

Appointed to the Board of Trustees in 2021. Jenny is Founder and Managing Partner of the venture capital fund Rethink Impact. She has a master's degree in sociology and holds an MBA from Harvard Business School.

Joh. Christian Jacobs (PhD)

Honorary Chairman

Joined the Board in 1995 and was appointed Chair in 2004. Today he is active as an entrepreneurial investor. Since April 2015, he has held the position of Honorary Chairman.

Lavinia Jacobs

Chair

A member of the Board of Trustees since April 2007, and Lavinia has held the position of Chair since April 2015. She completed a degree in law at the University of Basel in 2005.

Olaf von Maydell (PhD)

A member of the Board since May 2013. He is a tax consultant with a PhD in agricultural economics, and a partner in the Schomerus & Partner tax consulting firm in Berlin.

Sandro Giuliani

Former Managing Director of the Jacobs Foundation, he has been a Member of the Board since January 2020. He is Senior Advisor of the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator GESDA.

Ulman Lindenberger (PhD)

Joined the Board in January 2012. He is a German psychologist and Director of the Center for Lifespan Psychology at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin.

William Egbe

Joined the Jacobs Foundation Board of Trustees in April 2015. An engineer who holds an MBA degree, he was Group Director of Strategic Planning and Sustainability for the Coca-Cola Eurasia and Africa Group.



Team

As of April 2025

Ana Cubillo

Global Lead Learning
and Evidence

Anabel Altenburg

Program Manager

Angela Holzer

Assistant to Co-CEOs

Anna-Lisa Lundberg

Program Associate,
Knowledge and Communications

Annie Brookman-Byrne

Deputy Editor, BOLD

Christina Thurman-Wild

Program Specialist

Daniela Lozza

Program Manager and Curator

Donika Dimovska

Chief Knowledge Officer

Fabio Segura

Co-CEO

Gelgia Fetz Fernandes

Global Lead Learning
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Gemma Wirz

Editor-in-Chief, BOLD

Hans Rudolf Schumacher

Facility Manager

Hinah Mian

Program Associate,
Knowledge and Communications

Inês Charro

Global Program Manager

Kathrin Hassler

Finance Manager

Libby Hills

Senior Advisor Learning Ventures

Lone Le Floch-Andersen

Program Manager and Curator

Michelle Weber

Office and Event Manager

Nataliia Markhobrod

Junior Associate, Administration

Nelson Amaya

Knowledge and Learning Lead

Kartal Haskalkan

Finance Specialist Accounting
and Controlling

Roland Hügli

Chief Financial Officer

Samuel Kembou

Global Lead Learning
and Evidence

Simon Sommer

Co-CEO

Tanja Kotz

People and Culture Manager

Tina Cassidy

Program Director, Switzerland

Yasmine Bekkouche

Global Program Manager

Projects list

2024



Project	Description	Partner	Funding (CHF)	Term (Start-End)
Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development (JCPYD)	A scientific center at the University of Zurich focused on youth development, established as a joint venture with the Jacobs Foundation.	University of Zurich	14,000,000	2024
LEVANTE	Deployment of data infrastructure facilities for the development of LEVANTE, which will implement the transformative questions of the Jacobs Research Agenda through a global research network.	Stanford University	4,600,000	2024-2027
Swiss Education Evidence Lab (EdLab)	A collaborative initiative by the Jacobs Foundation and the Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development to translate educational research evidence in Switzerland for better accessibility by education authorities, policymakers, and stakeholders, bridging the gap between research, policy, and practice.	Jacobs Center for Productive Youth Development	3,204,000	2024-2027
Chance Digitalität - Consolidation Phase	Data and Evidence Advisory Service for Swiss Education Authorities.	Staatslabor	3,120,000	2024-2027
Jacobs Research Fellowship	Fellowship supporting excellent and innovative early- and mid-career researchers in child and youth development and learning.	Awarded to individual fellows annually - JF Program	3,000,000	2024-2027
Impact-Linked Finance Fund (ILFF)	Innovative finance model co-funded by the Jacobs Foundation and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, linking financial payments to verified education outcomes. ILFF strengthens data and evidence literacy, generation, and use capacities of impact-driven educational organizations, with targeted support for organizations in Colombia.	iGravity	3,000,000	2024-2029
Côte d'Ivoire Education Evidence Lab (EdLab) Technical Assistance	Supporting the Côte d'Ivoire EdLab for 2025-2026.	Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA)	653,492	2024-2026
Côte d'Ivoire Education Evidence Lab (EdLab) Research Fund	The Côte d'Ivoire EdLab enables national and decentralized education authorities to create and use rigorous data and research to design, implement, and scale evidence-based programs and policies to improve student learning.	CLEF	1,500,000	2024-2026

PROJECTS

Project	Description	Partner	Funding (CHF)	Term (Start-End)
Learning EdTech Impact Funds (LEIF) 1	Strengthening the EdTech ecosystem by encouraging greater use of evidence in investment decisions and product development.	Emerge Education	2,000,000	2024
Learning EdTech Impact Funds (LEIF) 2	Strengthening the EdTech ecosystem by encouraging greater use of evidence in investment decisions and product development.	To be determined	2,000,000	2024
Learning EdTech Impact Funds (LEIF) 3	Strengthening the EdTech ecosystem by encouraging greater use of evidence in investment decisions and product development.	To be determined	2,000,000	2024
The Klaus J. Jacobs Best Practice Prizes	Recognizing outstanding institutions or individuals implementing evidence-based solutions to improve child development and learning, with the final awards presented in 2024.	Awarded to Imagine Worldwide, Fundación Escuela Nueva, and Laboratório de Educação. Operations by Jacobs Foundation.	1,700,000	2024
LEARN Research Capacity Strengthening in Ghana and Colombia	Strengthening research capacity in Ghana and Colombia through training, networking, and collaboration to enhance global contributions to child development and education.	New York University	1,500,000	2024-2027
Performance and Impact Research	Comprehensive assessment and research to evaluate and improve the effectiveness and impact of the Foundation's programs and initiatives.	Mathematica, IPA	1,400,000	2024-2026
BOLD Digital Platform	Digital platform translating complex scientific findings on child learning and development for a broader audience.	Operated by Jacobs Foundation	500,000	2024
Digital Museum of Learning	Championing educators and increasing the impact of their work through a digital learning platform.	Operated by Jacobs Foundation	450,000	2024
Impact Communications	Strategic communications to amplify mission, enhance digital presence, and foster global engagement.	Atalanta, Athlon, other service providers	400,000	2024
Chance Digitalität	Proof-of-concept phase supporting education authorities in testing and refining engagement mechanisms for scalable impact.	Staatslabor	359,000	2024-2027



PROJECTS

Project	Description	Partner	Funding (CHF)	Term (Start-End)
Ghana Backbone Team	Dedicated team overseeing implementation of Ghana country strategy and managing ongoing projects.	Individual consultants	221,548	2024-2025
International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD) and Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) supporting LEARN	Supporting research and capacity building in child development and education.	ISSBD, SRCD	200,000	2024
Los Chicos de San Ramón	Improving the living conditions of families in Estancia San Ramón by providing educational activities for their children.	Los Chicos de San Ramón	200,000	2024
Learning Sciences Exchange (LSX)	Fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and advancing impactful learning solutions in child development and education.	New America Foundation	95,200	2024
Côte d'Ivoire Backbone Team	Operational management of Jacobs Foundation's portfolio in Côte d'Ivoire.	Catalytica Consulting	74,158	2024-2025
SCALE Design Support	Leveraging industry and philanthropic funds with the GPE multiplier grant to boost foundational learning in Ghana through differentiated learning, teacher training, and system strengthening.	SCALE	22,000	2024-2030
Grundlagenpapier Digitale Lernplattformen	Research paper on digital learning platforms.	BKZ / PHSZ	20,000	2024-2025
Cartoneros y sus Chicos	Providing educational support for children of the cartoneros in Buenos Aires.	Cartoneros y sus Chicos	1,000	2024

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