

Conservation International Ventures and Hatch Blue seek applications for blue foods innovation program for women

A unique opportunity for female founders to grow their blue food businesses in Latin America

KONA, HAWAII, USA, November 7, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Conservation International Ventures](https://www.einpresswire.com/news/conservation-international-ventures) and Hatch Blue are inviting applications for their third Women in Ocean Food

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Yolanda Herrera

Innovation Studio, which is set to take place in La Paz, in the beautiful region of Baja California, México, from 15-26 January 2024.

Ten places are available for up to two participants from each team, and the studio - which is titled “It's time for more Women in Ocean Food” - aims to help female founders with the development of their businesses and there is one month left before the application deadline.

Participants will be paired with industry leaders and introduced to dedicated venture philanthropists and impact investors. There is also the potential for companies

to attract follow-on investment from Hatch Blue and CI Ventures. All costs pertaining to accommodation, food, and travel will be covered to remove barriers to participation.

A translation service will be provided, to allow participants to take part in both Spanish and English, and the organizers are inviting applications from Latin American and Caribbean-based female entrepreneurs from across the seafood sector – be they involved in startups or established SMEs. Successful applicants will be given support to build their business models, improve their pitching skills, validate the opportunities in their markets and grow their networks across the blue economy.

“We are seeking women who are building commercially successful businesses that promote the prosperity of our oceans and local food systems. These could include blue food producers, companies that are advancing climate friendly production methods and those providing economic opportunities for coastal communities – especially the women in these communities,” explains Wayne Murphy, co-founder of Hatch Blue, who will be leading the studio.

This Latin American-focused programme comes three years after the inaugural Women in Ocean Food studio, which took place in 2021. It will be followed by a fourth such event, which will take place in Africa in 2025.

“Following the success of the inaugural studio we are looking forward to working with a cohort of female Latin American entrepreneurs and are excited to engage with some of the most talented and innovative people involved in the region’s blue economy. Aquaculture is booming in Latin America – from the growing seaweed sector, to Brazil’s burgeoning tilapia business, to Ecuador’s remarkable shrimp industry – and we look forward to working with the local blue food community in México’s Baja region and the future female leaders of Latin America who are developing sustainable ways of operating in the seafood sector,” reflects Gracie White, lead of global oceans investments at Conservation International.

The programme in Bali led to a number of tangible gains for the participants. Indeed, one of the attendees was Yolanda Herrera, the CFO and co-founder of Blue Pond Group – a startup that has developed a range of seaweed-based feed supplements that reduce the prevalence of EHP, WFS and EMS in shrimp farming – and Hatch Blue have since invested in her company, including it in their latest accelerator programme.

As Herrera reflects: “The programme gave me insights into the aquaculture industry in Asia and worldwide, a better understanding of the process of raising funding, directions for how to find the best investors for my business and guidance relating to the specific qualities they look for. Training sessions with a range of specialist mentors helped me to improve everything from IP to pitching. Through access to contacts from around the world, Hatch Blue also helped my business and influence grow, and continues to do so with its post-studio support. I would recommend the WIOF studio to any woman with a transformative idea, a small growing business, or a working business ready to scale up.”

Who can apply?

Applicants based in Latin America and the Caribbean who are involved in any of the following fields can apply:

Seaweed value chain innovation and improvement.

Aquaculture health, genetics, feed, technology.

Downstream solutions, such as seafood processing, upcycling seafood waste and cold chain solutions.

Conservation technologies, sustainable fisheries or regenerative aquaculture. Netherlands

This Innovation Studio is sponsored by:

Builders Initiative

iAlumbra

Schmidt Marine

Aquaculture Stewardship Council
The Beyster Foundation
Conservation International

How to apply

The application deadline is 24 November and [the application process can be accessed](#) here.
Learn more about [the program here](#).

About HATCH Blue

Hatch Blue is an early-stage aquaculture VC that is on a mission to rapidly advance innovation in cultured seafood through investment, expertise and insight. Hatch Blue runs an annual aquaculture startup accelerator for global high potential aquaculture and alternative seafood startups.

Hatch Blue offers customized innovation services to industry, investors and governments through its Innovation Services division.

Hatch Blue has offices in Norway, Singapore and the US and its multinational team is dedicated to making the aquaculture industry and global food production more sustainable.

About Conservation International Ventures

CI Ventures is an investment fund that provides loans to small- and medium-sized enterprises that operate in the forests, oceans and grasslands where Conservation International works. Whether in sustainable agriculture or forestry, ecotourism or wild fisheries, these businesses share one thing in common: a commitment to practices that benefit ecosystems and human well-being.

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