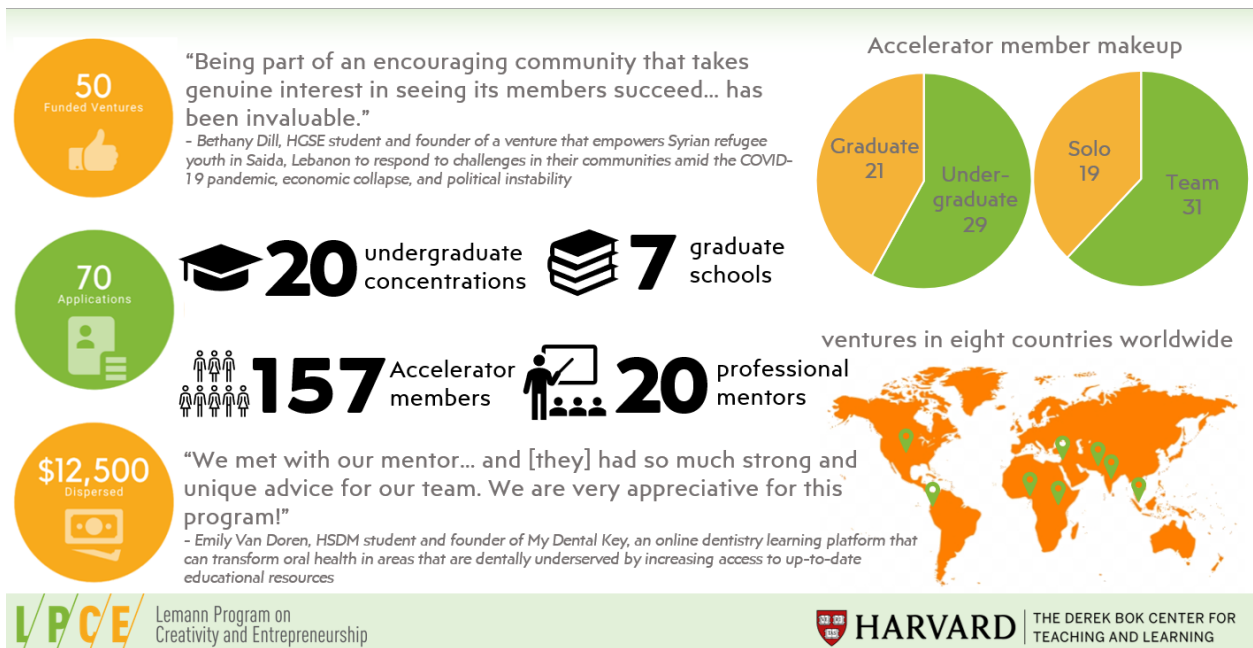


Lemann Program on Creativity and Entrepreneurship

NOVEMBER 2020 REPORT

LPCE Accelerator Seed Fund 2020 at a Glance



INTRODUCTION

Thanks to the boldness of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the philanthropic generosity of Jorge Paulo Lemann ‘61, this fall Harvard College launched a groundbreaking initiative for undergraduate students to make the liberal arts even more actionable at a crucial moment in history. The Lemann Program on Creativity and Entrepreneurship (LPCE) is preparing Harvard graduates to lead in a society that is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic, health care disparities, and systemic racism.

Premised on the transformative vision of late Harvard professor Robert Lue, Richard L. Menschel Faculty Director of the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, the LPCE empowers undergraduate students to solve global challenges. With this addition to our liberal arts offerings, Harvard College’s mission to educate future leaders and to inspire every member of our community to strive toward a more just, fair, and promising world continues unabated and has grown even stronger.

The ethos behind our program was articulated beautifully by Lue: “The era of academics being somehow separated from the world of work is long gone,” he said. “It has been replaced by a society where individuals change their careers multiple times and often move between the spheres of

academia and the workplace or have feet in both. The rate of change in both academia and the workplace is also faster than any other time in human history. So it is essential that higher education integrate the knowledge and skills from both domains to equip our students for a more dynamic world where they are not constrained intellectually to what has traditionally been in one or the other.”

In March 2020, Harvard College transitioned to virtual learning in response to public health concerns posed by the pandemic. At the same time, the LPCE team pivoted too. For this academic year we focused the LPCE on ideas and ventures and products that help build a “better normal” related to one or more of the following: the COVID-19 pandemic, racial injustice, and climate change. In addition, we strategically chose to build community remotely across the fall semester of 2020 and launch our first novel hands-on course, the Entrepreneurship StudioLab, in spring 2021.

This report covers the LPCE’s ongoing success in developing and strengthening the impulse toward innovation within Harvard undergraduate students. It does so by describing:

- our community events, which take place via Zoom and thrive on the cross-pollination of creativity among students, faculty, industry experts, and practitioners.
- students’ venture ideas, which are funded by our new accelerator to inspire innovation and develop student cohorts for our spring courses while also growing the community.
- the StudioLabs, which are hands-on courses to help students hone key skills, including media development and the proper use of data, to further develop their entrepreneurial and creative mindsets.
- our team and partnerships, which are instrumental to the success of the LPCE and our ability to amplify our efforts and engage with stakeholders across the Harvard community and beyond.

We are so pleased by the depth of student enthusiasm for this new program. Here we provide extensive evidence that Harvard undergraduates are ready and willing to apply their collective horsepower to actionable ventures that transform society for the better. They want to take center stage as change agents and only ask that we provide them with an abundance of tools and resources to deliver on that dream.

Mining ideas from the classroom to make real-world change

In the spring of 2018, Lemann gifted Harvard with funds to create new curricular offerings and expand current courses that focus on areas of innovation and entrepreneurship. The funds enabled Harvard College, the Harvard John A. Paulson School for Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS), and Harvard Business School (HBS) to expand their collaboration on interdisciplinary courses in experiential learning, engineering, design, and systems thinking. The intensified focus on building an entrepreneurial mindset

proved immensely popular with students across Harvard. Over the past two years, the Lemann gift has supported 13 courses.

For example, Tarun Khanna, the Jorge Paulo Lemann Professor at Harvard Business School, integrated societal problem-solving into his course GENED 1011 (previously SOCWORLD 47), “Contemporary Developing Countries: Entrepreneurial Solutions to Intractable Problems.” Real-world projects emerged from the course. For instance, MacLean “Mac” Sarbah ‘19 MDes, was inspired to help young people in West Africa reach their entrepreneurship goals via an education foundation and fellowship program. From a rural town in the south of Ghana, Sarbah graduated last spring with a master’s degree in design studies from the Graduate School of Design. While at Harvard, he ran a pro bono advisory service that has helped students from his homeland and other countries apply to universities around the world.

The innovation-focused course earned rave student reviews. “This is the best class that I’ve taken at Harvard so far. It leaves you with knowledge and skills that you can use for the future,” wrote one participant. Another student observed, “This class is valuable because of its application to the real world and current events.” A classmate agreed, “This course opens your eyes to the real-world problems and leaves you with hope that with good intention and some creativity, even seemingly intractable problems can be solved.” Another student simply advised, “Dive into your project like nothing you ever have.”

Building synergies in Harvard’s creative and entrepreneurial community

This fall, we kicked off the LPCE with community-building events designed to create a multi-generational exchange of ideas and expertise. Over the course of the fall semester, we have offered 9 events, attracting a total of 80 students. Our offerings covered key areas such as ways to pitch an idea to stakeholders and funding sources; mentoring and networking; team building; website creation; the power of community; and building the artist’s mindset with an emphasis on creativity, public health, and equity. (For more details, including a description of each event, see **Appendix 1.**)

Each of these events generated momentum and provided hands-on strategies and skills. For instance, Jeff Bartel ‘88 AB, chairman and managing director of Hamptons Group LLC, a private capital, real estate, and strategic advisory firm based in Coral Gables, Florida, with assets, investments, and projects totaling nearly \$5 billion across the country and the world, led a workshop on the art of making connections and networking. “I am thrilled Harvard has created the Lemann Program and honored to be a part of it,” says Bartel, an LPCE advisory board member who will also act as a mentor to students.

“This remarkable program serves to cross-pollinate creativity and entrepreneurship among students within Harvard’s curricular structure,” says Bartel. He notes that under the rubric of Harvard’s world-leading Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the LPCE leverages the combined value of ideation, idea-lab work, an accelerator, and practitioner mentors. “Students can turn their best ideas into application and societal impact,” he says. “This program embodies Harvard’s mission to lead higher education and foster citizen-leaders of the world.” In short, Bartel expects great things. “By providing a place and

purpose for inspired Harvard College students to tap Harvard's vast resources, the potential impact of the LPCE's outcomes on the real world is unprecedented and unmatched."

Seeding student ideas: a new accelerator equipped with multiple resources

This fall, we invited students from all years and concentrations to apply for funding from the LPCE accelerator. The accelerator drew applications from more than 70 student ventures designed to create a better normal in the face of today's unprecedented challenges. We awarded 50 ventures \$250 in seed funds along with access to targeted resources, expert mentors, and a vibrant and creative community. Students also have the opportunity to apply in November to win \$10,000 to launch their venture. In addition, teams are encouraged to join the Projects Track of the new StudioLab courses.

It was inspiring to witness the scope and substance of the venture ideas. Ideas ranged from building STEM workshops for underprivileged students in Ecuador to equipping young people in Nigeria with the civic skills to fight government corruption. Other ventures focused on building the mental health workforce, equalizing college access for high school students in underprivileged communities, and teaching communities how to dispose of food and package waste. (See **Appendix 2** for more details.)

Novel hands-on courses to activate student ventures in the real world

Over the past six months, we have developed a novel set of courses that anchor the LPCE programming. Our two-credit StudioLabs are designed to cultivate student ideas from conception to launch. This spring, students may enroll in LPCE100 for our Skills Track, which is designed to acquaint them with the entrepreneurial landscape. In the fall of 2021, we will add the Projects Track for individual students or teams who are actively seeking to move forward with a venture.

Here we provide more detail on each track, which will be taught by Harvard faculty and industry practitioners:

- **Skills Track.** The focus is on generating ideas, building teams, developing business plans, organizing strategically, communicating persuasively, and attracting human and capital support. The lectures range from cultivating fundamental pitching and presentation skills to best practices around engaging community and gathering data. Students use the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a framework to address key challenges faced by our society.

Within each of the 12 lectures, we provide activities to help students identify the core challenges they'd like to address and match them with classmates with similar interests. Each lecture is also modular. We use the learning pathways on the [LabXchange](#) platform to provide a targeted and flexible curriculum that is responsive to student needs. This spring, the LPCE100 Skills Track will be taught by Alain Viel, senior lecturer in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology at Harvard and co-founder of the interdisciplinary [Biopolis](#) summer program.

The overarching goal of this track is to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset in our students. Activities emphasize both skills development and community building. For example, we ask students to improvise a pitch from a fun and randomly assigned topic to familiarize them with thinking on their feet and provide advice on navigating under pressure. We tested this exercise at LPCE's pitch event this fall to great success and received positive feedback from participants.

- **Projects Track.** The focus is on developing student projects by providing hands-on tools, resources, and access to influential networks. We provide project-specific support via LPCE staff and the innovative facilities at the Bok Center's Learning Lab. While our Skills Track is not a prerequisite, we expect our Projects Track to serve as a natural next step. In addition, the Projects Track is designed to attract students who have applied and been accepted into the LPCE accelerator program. It is tailored to the individual needs of specific ventures and the curriculum emphasizes networking and the refinement of a strong business model. Students are encouraged to provide brief pitches on a weekly basis to polish their presentation style and messaging.
- **Mentor Council.** Students in the LPCE100, particularly individuals or teams within the Projects Track, will gain access to a mentor network of experts to help guide their idea to activation. These talented mentors will include subject-matter experts, industry practitioners, academics, influential members of the LPCE Advisory Board, and peers in complementary fields. Each student or team will be matched with a targeted mentor. The Mentor Council currently includes 20 mentors with a diverse set of skills and wide-ranging experience. We'll continue to deepen and expand our Mentor Council as we prepare for our launch of the Projects Track in fall 2021.

Our curriculum will also include the Salon, a novel feature that benefits students in both the Skills and Projects Tracks. As of fall 2021, the Salon will draw together students from both tracks for 30 minutes during each class session to enable collaboration and foster creative synergies and deepen connections across the innovation community. (The Skills Lab will run for the first 90 minutes of a 2.5-hour class, and the Projects Lab will run for the second 90 minutes. The Salon will occur during the 30 minute overlap between them.) Salons include guest speakers of benefit to both tracks and provide a broader audience for student presentations. We envision our salons as a popular feature because they'll provide space for lively discussion of student projects and the mutual exchange of fresh perspectives and insights. (For students in the Skills Track this spring, the Salon will overlap with our community-building events to provide broader exposure to guest speakers, spark conversation, and continue to grow the LPCE community.)

In addition, the LPCE will host a widely publicized Festival of Ideas at the culmination of each semester to showcase the work accomplished in the Skills Track and the Projects Track. At this festival, students will have an opportunity to win additional funding as well as to network with LPCE mentors and our influential board members and even connect with potential investors.

A dynamic team lays the groundwork for a transformative program

Faculty director Rob Lue conceived of and led the LPCE until his illness and death in November 2020. In the near term, we are relying on the strong senior leadership that Lue set in place at the program's outset, which includes oversight by Tamara Brenner, executive director of the Bok Center, as well as the LPCE Steering Committee, which consists of leadership from the College, OUE, and SEAS. The LPCE program is managed full-time by its Associate Director on Creativity and Entrepreneurship, Sam Magee, who was previously the Entrepreneur in Residence at Harvard's Initiative for Learning and Teaching following more than a decade working with student startups at MIT and growing the Institute's arts-focused innovation community. He is joined by the other full-time senior staff member Maria Guo, Senior Fellow, who was a Fellow at the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research. She oversees our part-time Student Fellows, takes a lead role in guiding the mentoring component of our program, directs our daily operations, and assists with every other aspect of the program.

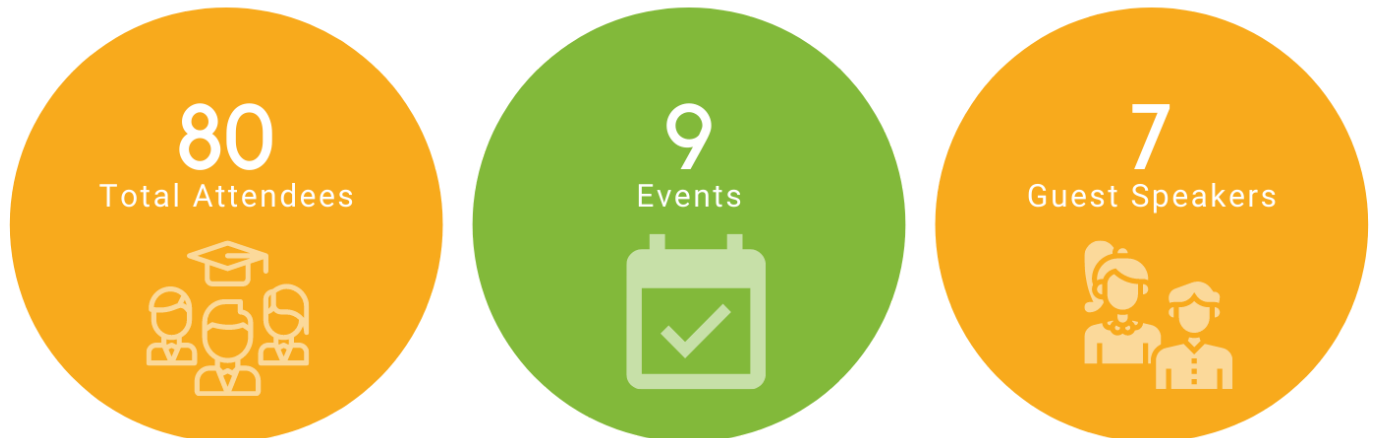
Our Student Fellows have been instrumental in launching our fall events, running our new accelerator, building our social media presence, and designing the curriculum for our spring StudioLabs. Katrina Hagedorn '20 and Rowen VonPlagenhoef '21 both majored in Integrative Biology with a secondary in Energy and Environment. They are joined by Marina Watanabe, a PhD student in Harvard's Biological and Biomedical Sciences program.

Our engaged and productive team has created numerous partnerships to help amplify LPCE in the greater Harvard community. We co-hosted several community events with the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Innovation and Design Club, which led to multiple applications to our new accelerator. We designed and co-hosted a workshop series with the Harvard ArtLab to tackle data-driven entrepreneurship, art thinking, and lead conversations around new ideas for social impact using the arts and entrepreneurship. Each of these ongoing partnerships helps to accelerate student ventures. (In **Appendix 1**, see full descriptions of the guest speakers and events.)

As LPCE originator Lue told the [Harvard Gazette](#) this fall, "Let's apply the collective horsepower of Harvard undergraduate students to actionable ventures that transform society for the better." Lue urged students to take center stage as change agents and he set the groundwork to empower them to transform ideas into reality. We are privileged and determined to carry forward his vision and redefine the power and possibilities within a liberal arts education in the modern era.

Appendix 1

Community-Building Events



Innovate Through Ideation - September 26, 2020

Guest Judge: Jerald Cooper, a multidisciplinary artist and researcher focusing on black identity and its connection to pop culture, addressed the importance of creativity in ideation. He rated video submissions of new ideas generated during a workshop to address COVID-related issues.

Team Building - October 7, 2020

Gwendolyn Lee, the co-founder of [Students vs Pandemics](#) and chief operating officer at [First GrAID](#), spoke to attendees about creating a group-oriented mindset within a new venture. Lee, a dual-degree MD,MPP candidate at UCLA Medical School and Harvard Kennedy School, emphasized how to build a sense of community on a team.

Mentoring and Networking - October 15, 2020

Jeff Bartel '88 AB, chairman and managing director of Hamptons Group LLC, a private capital, real estate, and strategic advisory firm, offered valuable tips and best practices to help attendees make authentic and valuable connections when networking. During the final 30 minutes, student applicants to our accelerator joined a more focused discussion on mentoring and networking that referenced their own ideas.

The Pitch - October 27, 2020

Josh Roy, the vice-president and creative director at C Space, a global customer agency that works with some of the world's best known brands, including Walmart, Samsung, IKEA and more, shared key points on how to best present your venture. During the final 30 minutes, student applicants to our accelerator received personalized help on how to optimize their pitch.

How to Build a Website on Wix with HGSE IDC - November 10, 2020

Ohad Bolotin, the head of academic partnerships for Wix, a software company that provides web development services that allow users to create web and mobile sites, took attendees step-by-step through how to build a website for their ventures.

Art + Health Equity - November 19, 2020

Art + is a workshop series organized in collaboration with Harvard's ArtLab that features conversations with the artists and innovators working on today's biggest challenges. Our first virtual workshop was with Dawn Simmons, the artistic director for The Front Porch Arts Collective, a new Black theater company committed to advancing racial equity in Boston through theater, and Dan Chonde, MD, PhD, from the MGH Department of Radiology. Our moderator was creative producer Nicholas Medvescek, the founder of Medvescek Ventures, which fosters next-generation artistic projects ranging from full-scale interactive performance events to miniature plays. Attendees were invited to connect with a community of creative entrepreneurs who are building a better normal by putting an artist mindset to work.

LPCE Fellows' Drop-In Office Hour - November 23, 2020

A number of Harvard students took advantage of this drop-in office to learn more about the LPCE. They learned more about best practices when applying to our accelerator, future opportunities, and received input about their specific ideas.

The Power of Community - November 23, 2020

This group was small enough for seminar-style intimacy as students brainstormed their venture ideas with fellow entrepreneurs. As with other events, we benefited from the presence of an LPCE mentor, in this case, Calisha Brooks, PhD, the founder of Soul Care LLC, a high-impact initiative that champions the cause of social justice and mental health awareness in African American communities. The ideation session helped students flesh out their ventures.

Art + Co-Design - December 14, 2020

Art + is a workshop series organized in collaboration with Harvard's ArtLab that features conversations with the artists and innovators working on today's biggest challenges. Our second virtual workshop is with Harvard graduates Saad Rajan and Vivek Hv, both MDE '19, the co-founders of Naya Studios, an online platform for the co-creation of custom furniture. Naya's clients include Google, Wayfair, and Herman Miller. This booming venture grew out of Rajan and Hv's Independent Design Engineering Project, a year-long project that requires MDE students develop and prototype a solution to a complex problem..

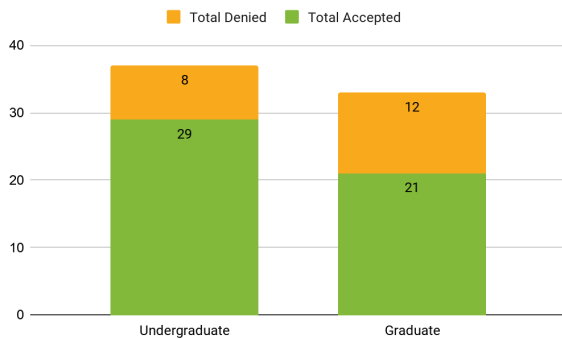
This Art + event, as before, will be moderated by Nicholas Medvescek, a creative producer and consultant working across divergent disciplines to upend paradigms and inspire new connections. He has served as the co-director of the MIT Hacking Arts festival, a hackathon and convening at the intersection of technology, entrepreneurship, and the arts. His events and projects have been covered in *Take Magazine*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The New Yorker*.

Appendix 2

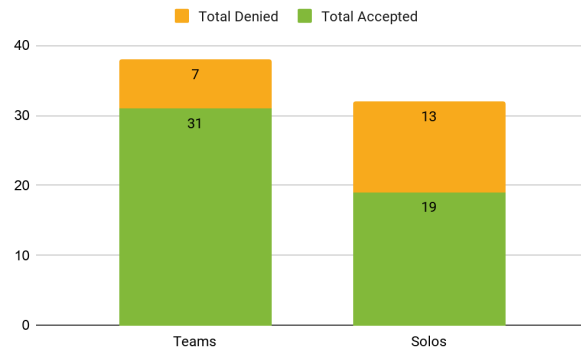
The LPCE Accelerator Seed Fund



Graduate and Undergraduate Applications



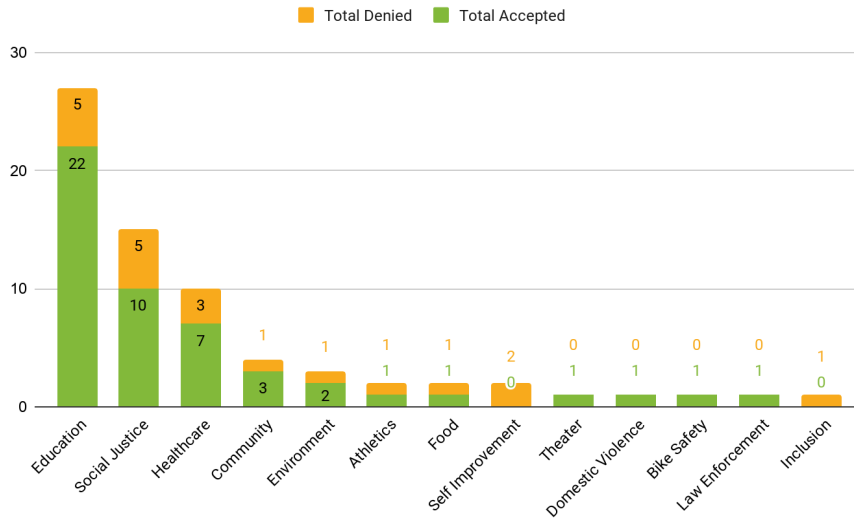
Team and Solo Applications



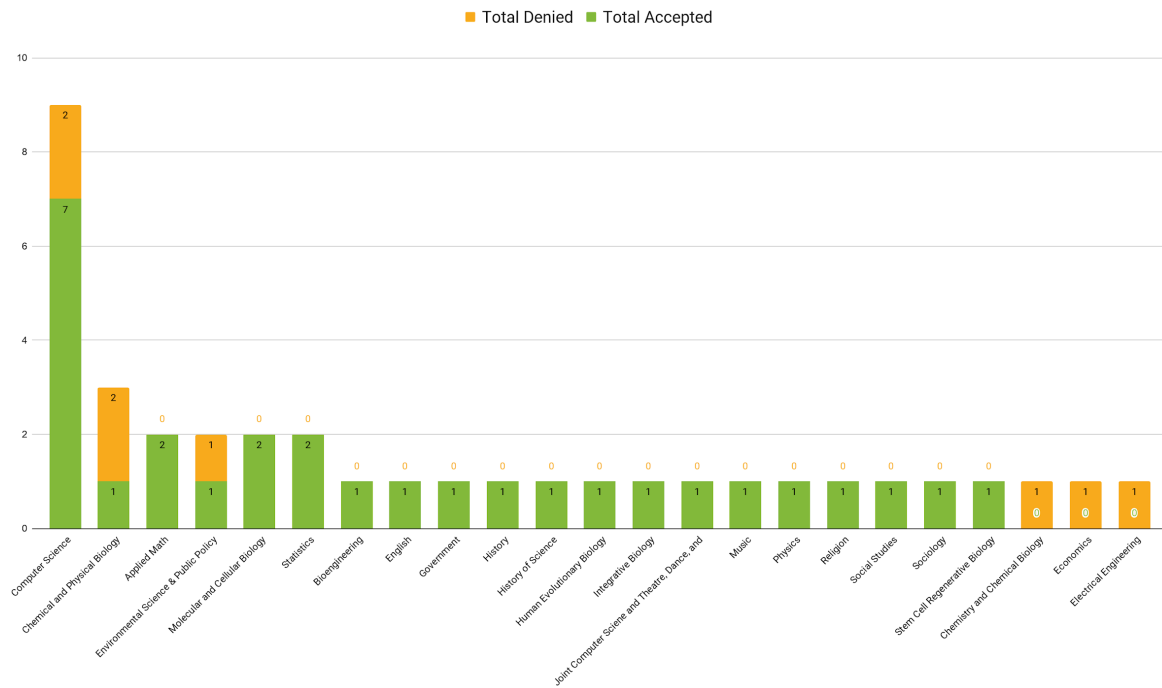
Our accelerator has awarded 50 ventures with funds of \$250 apiece. While making selections, the LPCE team reviewed the applicants' ideas and discussed their ventures, missions, and potential impacts within our community and beyond.

In December, the LPCE accelerator will award three student teams \$10k apiece to help launch the most transformational ventures. A panel of judges will include multidisciplinary faculty, industry practitioners, and influential Harvard alumni who will select winners based on a video presentation by the student team and the quality of their pitch decks and infographics.

Primary Category of Venture



Undergraduate Student Concentration



Below are excerpts from a few of the creative and entrepreneurial pitches submitted by the LPCE accelerator's first successful cohort:

Erevna (Greek for research) is an intercollegiate nonprofit for, by, and to the education and empowerment of impactful students. We create a BETTER NORMAL by matching passionate students with institutional resources from universities and startup accelerators.

Submitted by Lucas Chu '23, Harvard College

The **Mentorship Project** is a nonprofit that equalizes college access for underprivileged high school students, by providing them with a high quality and dedicated mentor to aid them through the college admissions process. As part of our program, each student is paired with a mentor and provided access to resources including free online courses, webinars we host on our topic, drop-in essay revision sessions with our mentors, a community of over 600 peers, and much more.

Submitted by Abigail Romero '23, Harvard College

Embodying Justice is a group of university students and recent graduates that seek to strengthen the capacity of grassroots racial justice organizations in the Boston area through remote volunteering efforts. Our goal is to launch our first fellowship in the spring or summer of 2021. Fellows will receive an education in the history of racial justice and grassroots organizing in Boston and join a fellows' community.

Submitted by Rebecca Thrope '21, Harvard College

STEAMid is a curated, and crowd-sourced database of competitive opportunities in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Mathematics for high school, undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral students.

Submitted by Roodolf St Pierre '21, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

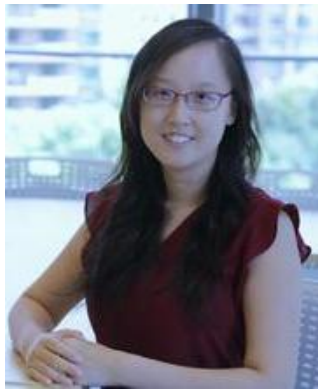
A group of Syrian refugee youth in Saida, Lebanon will be supported and resourced to respond to challenges in their communities amid the COVID-19 pandemic, economic collapse, and political instability. Youth will participate in leadership and mentorship workshops. Participants will be guided in identifying challenges their families and communities are experiencing. Agency, creativity, and possibility will be emphasized.

Submitted by Bethany Dill '21, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Appendix 3



Sam Hunter Magee works to connect education-innovation and creative-entrepreneurship communities. He is the Associate Director on Creativity and Entrepreneurship for Harvard University. Previously, he was the Entrepreneur-in-Residence at Harvard University for Operation Impact, an arts administrator at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a Creative Entrepreneurship lecturer at Boston University, and a school teacher and arts department chair. He independently consults on innovation best practices via his arts and education startups, he advises multiple arts and education ventures, and serves on several startup and arts-admin boards. Sam joined the Lemann Program on Creativity and Entrepreneurship in March of 2020.



Maria Menglin Guo is the Senior Fellow on Creativity and Entrepreneurship at the **Bok Center for Teaching and Learning**. She helps design, develop, and implement seminars and courses for the undergraduate student community. She also collaborates extensively with Bok staff, who focus on pedagogy and course innovation. Previously, she was a Fellow at the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research, Academic Advisor at NYU Shanghai, and Program Assistant at Columbia Law School. She earned her Master's degree in Education Policy and Social Analysis from Columbia University. Maria also founded the Jackson School Mentor Program at the University of Washington, where she received her Bachelor's degree in International Studies. She has previously lived in Beijing, Seattle, New York, and Shanghai with study abroad experience in London and Brussels.