



OpenAvenues

2024

ANNUAL REPORT

We build career pathways for everyone,
no matter where they are from.

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OpenAvenues

A letter from our Executive Director

Dear Friends, Partners, and Supporters,

As I reflect on this past year, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude. What began as an ambitious vision—to create new career pathways for global talent while expanding opportunities for the next generation of U.S. students—has grown into a vibrant, national movement.

Through the Open Avenues Foundation and The Build Fellowship, we continue to prove that immigration and education are not separate issues, but interconnected solutions to some of our country's most pressing workforce challenges.

This year, we helped more companies retain the talent they need to grow, we supported more international professionals in contributing their skills to the U.S. economy, and—most inspiring— we impacted more students than ever through high-quality, experiential learning led by our Fellows. Together, we have created thousands of moments where mentorship, innovation, and opportunity converge.

None of this would be possible without the trust and collaboration of our partner companies, universities, and the dedicated community of Fellows who believe in our mission. You've helped us show what's possible when we rethink the boundaries of immigration and education.

As we look ahead, our commitment remains strong: to scale equitable solutions that unlock talent and expand access to opportunity—no matter where someone comes from.

Thank you for believing in this work and for being part of our journey.

With gratitude,

Danielle Goldman



OUR MISSION



We **open career pathways** for everyone, no matter where they are from.

Fill Talent Gaps of Today

We fill the talent gaps of today through our immigration Fellowship program, which **opens pathways for foreign national innovators, entrepreneurs and experts** from around the world to work and thrive in the U.S.

Build the Workforce of Tomorrow

We build the workforce of tomorrow by employing top global talent to **train students from our partner colleges and universities for jobs** in high-demand fields throughout the country.



OUR PROGRAM

At Open Avenues Foundation, we play a crucial role in shaping immigration solutions that fuel innovation and economic growth in the U.S.



Through **our partnership with The Build Fellowship**, we provide high-skilled international talent the chance to work and thrive in the U.S. through a cap-exempt H-1B visa.



Build Fellows are dually employed by Open Avenues Foundation and their full-time company where they contribute to groundbreaking research, innovation, and development across academia and industry.



As part-time employees at Open Avenues Foundation, Build Fellows **develop hands-on, resume-building experiences for students in the U.S.**, including Build Projects (8-week industry projects led by Build Fellows), 1:1 Sessions, workshops and panels.

All our initiatives aim to support U.S. students from our partner schools and universities. In this way, students **gain the skills, mentorship, and real-world experience they need to thrive in today's workforce.**



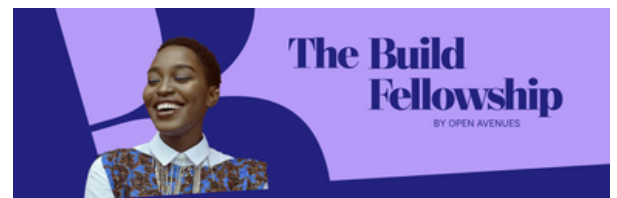
Danila Blanco Travnicsek
Director of Programming

"All education initiatives at Open Avenues share a common goal: empowering the next generation of U.S. leaders and professionals. We believe building social capital and bridging the gap between academia and industry are key to unlocking opportunity and long-term success."

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

During 2024, the education programming pivoted from micro-internships to Build Projects. This change led to accepting more students to projects:

- **6,208 applications received from 2,190 students**
- **1,184 slots given to participate in projects to 959 students**
- **218 projects successfully implemented**



Join Build Projects

to gain hands-on experience with Build Fellows from fast growing industries

Build Projects are 8 week, resume-building projects that will help you launch a successful career in your field of interest.

Click on your field of interest to explore Build Projects

 Computing & Data Science	 Physical & Life Science	 Business	 Engineering
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56%

of selected students successfully completed projects

84% of students said they would recommend Build Projects to a friend—highlighting its impact and relevance.

Students reported significant growth in their ability to apply **hard skills** in real-world STEM/Business settings, **rising from 55% before the project to 73% after its completion.**

664

students completed projects (some have completed more than one project)

Key soft skills also improved: **networking skills increased from 60% to 74%**, and **communication skills from 79% to 88%.**

42%

of students who completed projects are gender-diverse

26%

of students who completed projects are first generation

As of today,

1600+

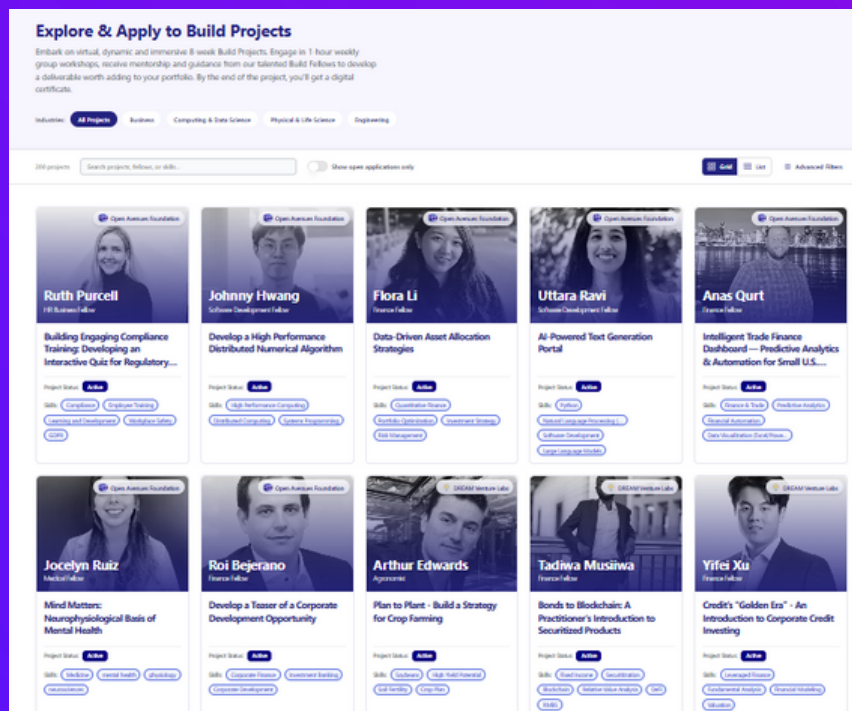
students completed projects



2024 NEW TECHNOLOGY

We developed a centralized, innovative Education Hub—a digital platform designed specifically for students at our partner schools to explore and apply to Build Projects. The Hub offers a **user-friendly interface with smart filtering and detailed project descriptions**, allowing students to easily identify opportunities that align with their academic background and career aspirations.

THE EDUCATION HUB



78% of students said the Build Project introduced them to STEM or Business career paths they hadn't known before.

96% of students agreed their school should offer more Build Projects like the one they completed.

HEAR FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Fellows, students, companies and universities that belong to our ecosystem find value in the program.

We are empowering international professionals to thrive



Srutartha Bose

Build Fellow

"Through the Build Fellowship by Open Avenues, I've had the chance to **mentor incredible talent and watch them transition into industry roles**. Seeing their growth has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my career."

We are fueling innovation and growth in our nation



Fathima James

Program Chair of Computer Information Technology at Franklin Cummings Tech

"This **collaboration continues to empower our students with the skills and experience needed for their future careers**. It has provided our Computer Information Technology students with invaluable opportunities to bridge the gap between academic learning and real-world application."

We are shaping the future U.S. workforce



Maham Abrar

Student at Calvin University

"I had the incredible opportunity to work on two distinct and impactful projects through Open Avenues, guided by outstanding industry mentors. The Build Projects challenged me, expanded my technical skills, and gave me access to mentorship that's hard to find elsewhere."

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

As of 2024, Open Avenues Foundation partnered with 14 schools across the U.S., **strengthening its national presence and impact.**

This year, four new institutions were welcomed to the partner network: **Vanderbilt University, The Ohio State University, Suffolk University, and Grand Valley State University.**



ILLINOIS TECH



City College of San Francisco and CUNY Queens College stood out this year by contributing over 100 student applications each, demonstrating high student interest and strong engagement.



Open Avenues Foundation has been **awarded the “Employer of the Year” recognition by Grand Valley State University** given that more than 49 students have been offered a spot in Build Projects.

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2024, Open Avenues supported a **211 Fellows** from over 55 countries – the most Fellows in the history of the Foundation. These international professionals not only brought specialized knowledge across disciplines—from Data Science to Biomedical Engineering—but also served as inspiring mentors and project leaders for students across the U.S.



Fellows led **over 200 Build Projects**, mentored **more than 600 students**, and **contributed significantly to their employers' innovation pipelines**—leading product launches, automating workflows, conducting biomedical R&D, and expanding market reach.

99% APPROVAL RATE ON CAP-EXEMPT H-1B PETITIONS FILED

The Fellowship program maintained an exceptional **99% approval rate on cap-exempt H-1B petitions**. This reaffirms Open Avenues' role as a reliable pathway for international talent stay, work, and contribute in the U.S.



BUILD FELLOWS IN ACTION



Leon Staubach

Leon Staubach is a **Data Science Build Fellow at Open Avenues and a full-time data scientist**, holding a Master's in Industrial Engineering with a focus on Information Technologies. While seeking a legal path to continue his professional journey in the U.S., Open Avenues Foundation provided Leon with a critical lifeline: a reliable immigration pathway through a cap-exempt H-1B visa.

Through his fellowship, **Leon leads intensive Python boot camps for college students, equipping them with the tools to tackle real-world data science and software engineering challenges.** His training emphasizes not just coding, but key industry practices such as scalability, maintainability, and collaborative problem-solving skills often overlooked in traditional academic settings. **Under his mentorship, students developed impactful projects like a music recommendation engine, a job listing tracker, and an AI-based irrigation scheduler.**

His story reflects the mission of the Build Fellowship—supporting global talent to stay, contribute, and thrive in the U.S. workforce while building bridges to the next generation of professionals.



Gauri Kulkarni

Gauri Kulkarni is a **Molecular Biology Build Fellow at Open Avenues and an Associate Scientist at Obsidian Therapeutics**, where she supports efforts to develop clinical treatments for cancer patients by working on Tumor Infiltrating Lymphocytes (TILs) in cell therapy. After earning her Master's degree in biomedical engineering in the U.S., Gauri faced uncertainty around continuing her professional path due to the H-1B visa lottery. **Open Avenues Foundation provided a pivotal solution that allowed her to remain in the U.S.** and contribute her expertise to the biotech industry while mentoring emerging talent.

As a Fellow, **Gauri leads a hands-on student project centered on flow cytometry, a key technique used in the biotechnology field.** She introduces students to panel design, data analysis, and real-world applications, helping them build technical skills relevant to careers in biotech. Through this experience, Gauri mentions **she honed her communication and project management abilities while developing confidence as a mentor.**

Beyond teaching, the Fellowship deepened her exposure to the broader biotech field and affirmed her role as both a contributor to medical innovation and a guide for the next generation of U.S. professionals.

BUILD FELLOWS IN ACTION



**Ranganath Narayanan ,
Fellow**

Ranganath Narayanan is **a Life Sciences Build Fellow at Open Avenues and a Consultant in the life sciences industry**, where he supports pharmaceutical brand strategy, salesforce development, and market research for healthcare clients. Originally from India, Ranganath earned his Master's degree in Healthcare Management from Johns Hopkins University. While seeking options to continue his professional path in the U.S., his company introduced him to Open Avenues Foundation.

Ranganath describes OAF's guidance as "timely, reliable, and highly effective."

As a Fellow, **Ranganath mentors students in healthcare strategy and consulting, guiding them through real-world business research and presentation techniques.** He focuses on building students' skills in storytelling, communication, and strategic thinking—key competencies for success in both consulting and healthcare. One of his standout projects involved analyzing GoodRx and Cost Plus, giving students a hands-on opportunity to explore business models that address drug affordability.

Ranganath not only helps students grow professionally, but also sharpens his own leadership and teaching skills. He sees the Fellowship as a deeply meaningful opportunity to give back while advancing his career in the U.S.



**Maria Rocha,
Fellow**

Maria Rocha is a **Finance Build Fellow at Open Avenues and a full-time finance professional at i5growth Inc.**, where she supports tech companies with Corporate Finance and M&A advisory services. She holds a Bachelor's in Business Administration from Católica Lisbon School and a Master's in Management from EADA Business School Barcelona. When exploring legal pathways to continue her professional journey in the U.S., Open Avenues Foundation offered Maria a vital solution—providing a cap-exempt H-1B visa that allowed her to stay, contribute, and grow.

Maria leads **immersive, beginner-level finance projects focused on mergers and acquisitions**, helping students grasp financial modeling, valuation techniques, and strategic decision-making. By combining real-world case studies with academic theory, **she enables students to gain practical, industry-relevant skills that prepare them for careers in finance.** Maria's sessions not only make complex financial concepts accessible but also empower students from diverse backgrounds to navigate the finance world with confidence and clarity.

Through the Build Fellowship, she leverages her expertise to guide students in corporate finance, while building her own capacity as a mentor and industry leader.

HEAR FROM OUR STUDENTS



Javis Foster • 2nd

Full-time student at Queens College majoring in Data Science and minoring i...
1d •

I'm excited to announce that I've successfully completed the build project "Run User Research and Propose App Features to Develop" led by [Akhil Ambani](#).

In this project, I designed and conducted surveys, analyzed and cleaned data in Excel, and created interactive dashboards in Tableau to generate actionable insights. These data insights allowed me to propose features that could be added to improve the Fizz app.

In this project, I honed skills in survey design and data collection to gather accurate and meaningful information. Using Excel, I cleaned, analyzed, and summarized data to reveal key patterns and insights. I then created interactive Tableau dashboards, strengthening my ability to visualize data and communicate actionable findings effectively.

Thank you, [Build Fellowship by Open Avenues](#) and [Open Avenues Foundation](#), for collaborating with [Queens College](#) and providing me with this opportunity to develop my skills.



Rishika Neelarapu • 2nd

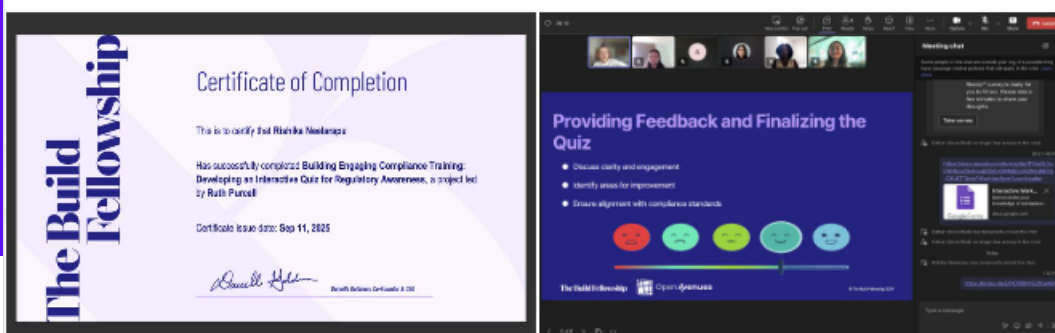
Marketing Analytics student at Illinois Institute of Technology | Tata Institute o...
6d •

Excited to share that I've completed [Build Fellowship by Open Avenues](#) as a Student Consultant this Summer!

During this fellowship, I worked on "Building Engaging Compliance Training: Developing an Interactive Quiz for Regulatory Awareness" with @Ruth purcell. I've designed learning material to help employees understand and comply with workplace regulations, including data protection, anti-harassment policies and workplace safety.

Grateful for the experience to apply my skills in creating impactful and interactive solutions that enhance regulatory awareness.

[#StudentConsultant](#) [#BuildFellowship](#) [#OpenAvenuesFoundation](#)
[#IllinoisInstituteofTechnology](#) [#StuartSchoolofBusiness](#) [#RishikaNeelarapu](#)



HEAR FROM OUR STUDENTS



Manpreet Kaur • 2nd

Actively Seeking Opportunities in Data Science & Analytics | M.S. Data Scienc...
4w •

🌟 Exciting Milestone! 🌟

🚀 I'm excited to share that I have successfully completed the **Build Project – Pixel to Point Cloud: Building a 3D Vision Pipeline**, led by industry expert [Martin Ingvaldsen](#) through [Build Fellowship by Open Avenues](#) and [Open Avenues Foundation](#)! 🎉

Through this experience, I gained hands-on exposure to the fascinating world of 3D computer vision, learning how to transform 2D images into 3D point clouds using Python, Jupyter Notebooks, and computer vision techniques.

I was able to strengthen my skills in:

- ◆ Camera modeling
- ◆ Stereo vision
- ◆ 3D geometry & projections
- ◆ Image processing & data visualization

This project not only deepened my technical expertise but also reinforced the importance of applying computer vision to real-world challenges in robotics, AR/VR, and spatial computing.

A big thank you to [Open Avenues Foundation](#), [Build Fellowship by Open Avenues](#) team, [DREAM Venture Labs](#) for creating such impactful experiential learning opportunities in collaboration with [Illinois Institute of Technology](#). 🙌



HEAR FROM OUR STUDENTS



Mohammad Eusop Rahman ✓ • 2nd
Computer Science Student at Queens College | Prev SWE Intern ...
1w • Edited • 🔄

[+ Follow](#) [...](#)

🚀 Excited to share that I've built a full-stack personal finance management application through the [Open Avenues Foundation](#) workshop series!

I'm incredibly grateful to the [Open Avenues Foundation](#) for this amazing opportunity, and to [Parug Demircioglu](#) for his guidance, support, and mentorship throughout these workshops.

This tool helps users manage their personal finances by allowing them to track transactions, organize expenses into categories, and view a financial summary for better decision-making. 🍋

The project focused on:

- 🖥️ Designing and developing a full-stack web application with a Node.js / Next.js backend and a React frontend
- 🗄️ Constructing and managing a PostgreSQL database for secure storage of financial data
- ⚡ Building RESTful APIs to handle budgeting and expense tracking functionalities
- 🎨 Creating a responsive and interactive UI with React
- 🔗 Using GitHub for version control and collaboration

Along the way, I also implemented:

- 🔒 User authentication and account management with Supabase for personalized and secure access
- 📊 A financial summary dashboard that provides users with insights into spending patterns and transaction history
- ⚡ Improved data validation and error handling across APIs for reliability and security

👉 Check out the live project here: <https://lnkd.in/ejAmXYT4>

Excited to keep learning, building, and tackling new challenges, and I hope to add even more features and updates to this project soon as I explore new opportunities and experiences.

CHECK OUT HIS PROJECT

LEARN FROM OUR SUCCESS STORIES



Srutartha Bose,
Fellow



Nairita Guha,
Student

Srutartha Bose, a Biomedical Engineering Build Fellow and Senior Research Associate at CRISPR Therapeutics, crossed paths with **Nairita Guha**, a talented student with a background in cancer research and a desire to gain real-world experience in biotechnology.

Building social capital to create opportunities

Nairita was selected to participate in Srutartha's project "Cytometry Data to Evaluate CAR-T Cytotoxicity", which focuses on analyzing flow cytometry data to evaluate the efficacy of CRISPR-based cancer therapies. For Srutartha, leading the project sharpened her ability to break down complex scientific concepts and manage student-led research—skills that are essential for future leadership roles in Biotech industry. For Nairita, the experience bridged the gap between academic research and industry practice, offering her hands-on exposure to data interpretation, regulatory compliance, and scientific communication. More than just a technical training ground, the project enabled Srutartha & Nairita create a meaningful mentorship connection that continues to enrich both their professional journeys.

After completing the project, Nairita secured an internship at Beam Therapeutics, a major milestone that moves her closer to her long-term career goals.

This success story reflects the dual impact of what Open Avenues does: while Fellows like Srutartha grow as mentors and leaders, students like Nairita gain the tools and confidence to launch impactful careers. Together, they exemplify how these initiatives empower emerging talent and foster the next generation of innovators.

LEARN FROM OUR SUCCESS STORIES



Ed Sioufi,
Fellow



Maham Abrar,
Student

While Build Fellow **Ed** sharpened his leadership and teaching skills, **Maham** gained real-world experience and a career breakthrough.

Their collaboration showcases the core of Open Avenues' mission: unlocking opportunity for international talent while opening doors for students to thrive in emerging industries.

Preparing students to land their first jobs

As a Software Development Build Fellow, Ed leads a Build Project to help students build a data analytics pipeline to unveil trending open-source projects on GitHub, providing deep insights into project health, community engagement, and technology adoption patterns.

One of those students who stood out was Maham Abrar. Through weekly group workshops and one-on-one mentorship, Ed guided her through core data engineering practices and Git workflows. She developed a functional ELT pipeline, showcased in a GitHub repository with a comprehensive README file. This hands-on project, coupled with Ed's dedicated mentorship, helped Maham build confidence and technical fluency.

The project experience and the final deliverable helped Maham land a part-time internship, her first work experience in the tech industry.

Ed was navigating the complex U.S. immigration system and he describes discovering Open Avenues as finding a "guardian angel". Now, Ed not only drives innovation in his field but also empowers students like Maham to explore their full potential. Maham mentioned "I highly recommend it to any student eager to take on real-world problems and grow alongside professionals in the field."

OUR TEAM



Danielle Goldman

Co-Founder & Executive Director

"Open Avenues Foundation's is a game-changer for the U.S. economy —not only does it create new immigration pathways for talented professionals, but it also fuels the next generation of American innovators. It's a win-win for talent, education, and the future of American innovation."



Danila Blanco Travnicek

Director of Program Strategy & Evaluation

"Being able to contribute to the Fellows, to our students and to our partner schools is truly rewarding. The impact of our programming motivates me to keep doing what I've always worked for: empowering people to become more equipped, active global citizens."



Elena Semeyko

Director of STEM Education

"Helping students to put in practice their knowledge and witnessing their growth and success is a dream job for any educator. It's incredibly fulfilling to see how our projects make a difference in students' lives. I always get a FOMO looking at the list of opportunities that we offer - there're so many cool projects I wish I could join!"



Rua Hamid

Senior Program Coordinator

"I am passionate about working with OAF because it allows me to empower students in STEM and business fields, equipping them with the tools they need to succeed in their careers. By shaping their journey, I'm helping them access opportunities and resources they may have never considered. Our programming is something I wish I had access to when I was a STEM undergraduate!"



Tanashya Batra

Program Coordinator

"Working at Open Avenues has been the most rewarding experience of my life! I have been a part of the team for almost 4 years and every day I get to work with talented individuals from around the world. Open Avenues shows us the power of creating a global workforce."

OUR BOARD



Amy Stephens

President of the Board

"2024 was a big year for OAF that allowed us to really focus on our educational mission and make connections to universities, students and each other. I couldn't be prouder to be part of an organization that values different pathways and experiences and the opportunity to learn from each other, no matter where we come from."



Nicholas Sykes

Board member

"The most important thing in a market like this is networking. A student that does a Build Project with Open Avenues Foundation is getting professional experience and professional social capital which is major differentiator."



Leia Ruseva

Board Member

"I first met Danielle when she and Jeff were just starting Open Avenues and was instantly impressed by her passion, empathy and commitment to create life- changing career pathways for both students and foreign nationals. Over the last year I've seen OA grow from a small Boston nonprofit organization changing the lives of thousands people. Being a part of this journey has been incredibly exciting and fulfilling and I couldn't be prouder to support OA's incredibly talented team."



Dr. Marvin Loiseau

Board Member

"It has been an honor to be a part of the Board of Directors with Open Avenues during the time of transition. Open Avenues is doing amazing work and really changing lives in technical career space."

LOOKING AHEAD

As we look to the future, **Open Avenues remains committed to expanding access to real-world, industry-aligned learning experiences** led by international talent for students across the U.S. In the year ahead, we will focus on scaling our Build Projects, deepening partnerships with schools, and piloting new models of experiential learning that connect talent to opportunity.

We aim to not only increase the number of students and Fellows we serve but also to enhance the quality and relevance of each engagement, ensuring that all participants leave our programs with stronger skills, clearer career goals, and expanded networks.

At the same time, we are investing in the technology and infrastructure needed to support sustainable growth. From improving the Education Hub to launching new tools for data analysis and project matching, we are building a foundation that will allow us to grow significantly.

Together with our Fellows, students, partners, and supporters, we are shaping a future where access to opportunity is not limited but driven by potential, purpose, and preparation.



OpenAvenues

Opening career pathways for everyone,
no matter where they are from.