



## The Bicester Collection announces the winners of the Unlock Her Future Prize 2024 LATAM Edition

*The start-up competition for women social entrepreneurs empowering positive impact in Latin America awards Thamires Pontes (Brazil), Valentina Agudelo (Colombia), Annie Rosas (Mexico) and Leydi Cruz (Bolivia) its prize, including individual grants of up to US\$100,000.*

### Press Release

19 June 2024, Madrid

The Bicester Collection, a family of 12 distinctive shopping destinations across Europe, China, and soon the US, in partnership with Tecnológico de Monterrey and Ashoka Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, announced the winners of the Unlock Her Future Prize 2024 LATAM Edition during a prize-giving ceremony in Madrid's Galería de Cristal.

The Unlock Her Future Prize, which launched its first edition in the MENA region in 2023, is a cornerstone of The Bicester Collection's philanthropic programme, DO GOOD, unified by the shared mission to empower women and children across the globe. With the support of key regional partners, Tecnológico de Monterrey and Ashoka Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, the 2024 edition of the Unlock Her Future Prize identifies and supports women social entrepreneurs across Latin America, regardless of age, who possess inspiring, early-stage start-up ideas (less than three years in operation) that drive positive social, cultural or environmental impact aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

From an outstanding talent pool of 954 applicants embodying the entrepreneurial drive of the LATAM region, an International Selection Committee identified eight finalists who embarked on an intensive skills accelerator with Tecnológico de Monterrey in Mexico City before traveling to Sao Paulo to pitch their start-ups to a panel of distinguished judges, including: Elena Foguet, Business Director at The Bicester Collection; Maria-Noel Vaeza, Regional Director for the Americas and Caribbean at UN Women; Gilda Perez-Alvarado, Chief Strategy Officer and CEO Orient Express at Accor S.A; Mireya Cisneros, Philanthropist and Businesswoman; Paola Rojas, journalist and television news anchor; and Luiza Helena Trajano, Chair of the Board at Magazine Luiza.

At the prize-giving ceremony in Madrid's glistening Galería de Cristal, the evening's Master of Ceremonies; renowned Mexican TV news anchor, and Prize judge, Paola Rojas, announced the winners of the Unlock Her Future Prize 2024 LATAM Edition, recognising the exceptional talent of:

#### *Thamires Pontes, Brazil*

*PHYCOLABS: Develops products and technologies, harnessing the potential of seaweed as an alternative to replace petrochemical materials.*

#### *Valentina Agudelo, Colombia*



*SALVA HEALTH: Develops portable devices with AI to analyse breast tissue, helping detect breast cancer early and making it accessible to women in remote areas.*

*The third prize, presented by Grupo Banorte Financiero, is shared by:*

While there are three prizes on offer, the judges, inspired by the talent and innovation displayed by the finalists, unanimously agreed to split the third prize between two impressive candidates. This prize, which is sponsored by Grupo Financiero Banorte, will be shared by:

***Annie Rosas, Mexico***

*BLUEKALL: A social enterprise utilising technology to clean oceans and rivers, addressing challenges in recycling plant material collection and uplifting scavenger jobs.*

***Leydi Cruz, Bolivia***

*AGRIMET: Aids climate resilience for small farmers through a specialised data subscription and consultancy service, enabling them to improve their agricultural practices in irrigation management and generate higher yields.*

Each winner will receive a grant of up to US US\$100,000, accompanied by a programme of expert mentorship and ongoing education to nurture their entrepreneurial skills and accelerate the successful launch and growth of their start-up ventures. The programme is presented with the generous support of Grupo Financiero Banorte and Creel, García-Cuellar, Aiza y Enriquez, and UN Women.

Additionally, **Kristal de Valle, 17 from Guatemala** was recognised as the Unlock Her Future Prize Young Game Changer for MINDVERSE, with the mission to empower students to discover and develop their full potential through personalised education, supported by a virtual avatar tutor powered by artificial intelligence, offering 24/7 access to education beyond the classroom and embracing the diverse skills and needs of students.

Chantal Khoueiry, Chief Culture Officer at The Bicester Collection, commented: *“Empowering these visionary women is about more than celebrating their individual successes; it’s about fostering ecosystems of innovation and resilience that can transform societies. Today, we celebrate the remarkable achievements of the four Latin American women who have won the Unlock Her Future Prize 2024 LATAM Edition. They are architects of a brighter future, inspiring us all with their unique visions for sustainable, equitable, and inclusive growth.”*

The winners were joined by the additional four finalists of the Unlock Her Future Prize 2024 LATAM Edition:

***Andrea Nunes, Venezuela***

*EASY CLEAN WATER: Provides drinking water to Latin American communities through solar purification systems, promoting health, local development, and environmental preservation.*

***Florencia Sosa, Argentina***

*ANDINA: Empowers women who work with vicuña wool in the Puna de Catamarca, combining ancient craft techniques with modern technology. Each piece tells a story, enhanced through Web 3.0, a triple impact enterprise that reinvests profits in community training.*

***Gabriela de Sá, Brazil***



*COLORAR: A mobile application supporting women in Brazil and Latin America facing domestic violence, offering comprehensive assistance from reporting to education, to achieving financial independence.*

*Shirley Matos, Panama*

*INFONIMADOS: Transforms education into an entertaining experience through the creation of animated content for people of all ages, bridging the gap between learning and entertainment.*

In honour of the achievements of all of these remarkable women, the star-studded prize-giving ceremony in Madrid featured a keynote address from Unlock Her Future Prize judge Maria-Noel Vaeza, Regional Director for the Americas and Caribbean at UN Women, a dance performance by Spain's Got Talent finalists, Lola's Girls, in celebration of the cultural richness of Madrid, a reading by Mexican poet Maria Milo, and the European debut of nineteen-year-old Mexican singer, Lucerito Mijares.

A global initiative celebrating a different geographical region each year, The Bicester Collection has announced that in 2025 Unlock Her Future Prize will travel to South Asia.

To learn more about the prize, visit [www.UnlockHerFuturePrize.com](http://www.UnlockHerFuturePrize.com)

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## NOTE TO EDITORS

### About The Bicester Collection

The Bicester Collection is a family of 12 distinctive shopping destinations in Europe, China, and soon the US, defined by extraordinary experiences while offering remarkable value. The Collection, created and operated by Value Retail, brings together the world's most discerning guests and the world's most renowned brands – often for the first time – on a journey of discovery. The Villages are located close to some of Europe's and China's most celebrated cities: London, Paris, Milan, Barcelona, Madrid, Dublin, Brussels, Munich, Frankfurt, Shanghai, Suzhou and, opening in September 2024, New York. Collectively home to more than 1,300 boutiques, The Bicester Collection offers guests an ever-evolving curation of fashion and lifestyle brands, world-famous restaurants, exciting pop-ups, and imaginative art installations throughout the year. For more than a quarter of a century since its founding, The Bicester Collection's mission has been to make the lives of others better – from the communities it serves to its guests, brand partners and its people. Through its DO GOOD programme, The Bicester Collection aims to drive sustainable social change in support of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, with a focus on unlocking futures for women and children, wherever they're born. Discover more at [TheBicesterCollection.com](http://TheBicesterCollection.com)