

Brazilian Internationalization Mission to Web Summit brings over 280 innovative companies to the world's largest technology event

The largest Brazilian delegation in the event's history highlights the regional diversity of Brazilian entrepreneurship and sustainable solutions

Edutechs, fintechs, healthtechs, biotechs, and innovative companies from various sectors and regions. This diversity characterizes the delegation of the Internationalization Mission to Web Summit 2024, organized by the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (ApexBrasil) in partnership with Sebrae, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE), and Serpro, which will bring 82 startups and over 200 innovative companies to the event.

“The Brazilian delegation is representative of our innovation ecosystem. Brazil has more than 20,000 startups and is steadily climbing the Global Innovation Index. That is, we are a reference in innovation in Latin America, with scalable technological solutions in various market segments that attract worldwide interest. And our delegation, which brings an unprecedented number of Brazilian companies to the event, will help consolidate Brazil's image as an innovation hub,” said ApexBrasil president Jorge Viana.

The evolution of Brazil's ecosystem is evident on many fronts. Brazil has become the top destination for startup investments in Latin America. According to the Distrito innovation platform, Brazilian startups raised \$1.46 billion in venture capital since early 2024, up 9.5% from the same period in 2023. The country has increasingly advanced innovation hubs, more mature startup support programs, and new business models being implemented by both entrepreneurs and investors. All of this creates more opportunities, exchanges, and competitiveness. Together, ApexBrasil and Sebrae aim to open doors in the international market to showcase and expand the potential of Brazilian startups in global innovation ecosystems, attracting investment and new business partners.

Showcasing Brazil's Full Potential

This year, the Brazilian delegation prioritized regional diversity and the inclusion of women-led companies. The initiative seeks to promote greater representation of Brazil's different regions on the international stage and strengthen female presence in the innovation ecosystem.

One example is Amazon Bioprotein, led by CEO Antônia Bezerra, age 76, who found a solution for natural protein supplementation in traditional Amazonian cuisine. Cariru, also known as caruru, is a leafy vegetable known for its rich nutritional properties.

Dona Antônia began her entrepreneurial journey in Amapá over 40 years ago, but it was last year that a nutrition professor asked her, “Do you know what a startup is?” That question sparked her interest in the innovation world.

Now, Amazon Bioprotein is preparing to take off. “Going to Web Summit will be a game changer. I have high expectations and know what Amazon Bioprotein is aiming to achieve. I gave it my all in training, events, and now, in this opportunity to show the world a product that promotes family farming, is pesticide-free, and has many benefits,” says Dona Antônia.

Another high-potential startup is Eduvem from Ceará, a digital platform focused on building corporate universities. In October this year, the company raised R\$15 million in investment, and its participation in Web Summit is strategic for its international expansion.

According to CEO Vladimir Nunam, “One of our goals in raising funds was international expansion, and Apex has been our partner in this process. They not only take us to events like Web Summit but also offer consulting, courses, and mentorship.” He adds that ApexBrasil’s support has been essential for the business’s development. “I remember that for an edition of Gitex in Dubai, we even received tips on dress code. That’s the level of preparation detail. Now, at Web Summit 2024, we will showcase all our growth since our first participation in 2022. We already have a company in Portugal with clients, and after consolidating there, we want to expand into Europe, so we’re seeking partnerships and showing what we have to offer.”

Vô Contigo will debut at Web Summit this year. The startup was created to facilitate mobility for elderly people, connecting them with carefully selected and trained drivers. “The idea is for our solution to be a passport to freedom for seniors,” says Ivonete Guerino, who founded the startup. Her startup was selected for Expo Favela 2023, an event that gives a platform to entrepreneurs from vulnerable backgrounds across Brazil. To participate in this innovation ecosystem, Vô Contigo completed a qualification process at the Favela Business School, which offers entrepreneurial management content in accessible language, free mentorship, and connections with market investors.

Ivonete traveled from Cuiabá, where her startup began, to Expo Favela. Now, with the partnership between ApexBrasil, the Central Única das Favelas, and the Favela Business School, Vô Contigo will reach the world’s largest technology event. “I am a Black woman from the periphery leading an impact-driven business for an invisible audience. There are many layers to my experience, and when I looked at the system, I felt extremely intimidated,” Ivonete shared about her early journey. “Now, I am going to Web Summit to explore the Portuguese and European markets, where

aging is a more prominent process than in Brazil, which could make my business even more meaningful,” she concludes.

The Brazilian delegation includes ten startups created in Brazilian favelas. “ApexBrasil is committed to connecting Brazilian entrepreneurs with the world, and favelas are a rich source of creativity, innovation, and talent that we need to foster so that Brazil can reach the world,” said ApexBrasil’s Director of Corporate Management, Floriano Pesaro.

Building on Last Year’s Success

At Web Summit 2023, Brazilian startups shone brightly. Inspira won the event’s pitch competition, while startups like Buddieapp, HIT, and Luckie Tech were selected to participate in showcases on the Web Summit stages.

Buddie.ai uses artificial intelligence (AI) to provide a “24-hour therapy buddy” with a feature that calms anxiety attacks in under five minutes. Ana Quiroz, Buddie’s representative at Web Summit 2023, said the company’s participation was instrumental in its internationalization. “We showcased our app to the world, and testing our chatbot live with such success was incredibly rewarding.”

According to Ana, ApexBrasil opened doors to the world of internationalization, and the results are already showing. “We had meetings with potential investors, individuals, and corporations interested in partnerships to offer our products as employee benefits.” She also highlighted the showcase selection. “The showcase was amazing. Without a doubt, one of the best parts of the event. We participated in ‘The Future of Medtech’ showcase, where we could prominently present our mental health project for employees,” she said.

During the three days of programming at Web Summit 2023, Brazilian companies identified partnerships, attracted investment, and explored opportunities to expand their presence in the European market. SUTHUB, which participated in ApexBrasil’s international expansion track, aimed to identify and connect with potential clients. “We spent the whole day non-stop, attending to interested people. We gathered over 50 leads, and later, we had a lot of work establishing partnerships and talking with potential investors,” said João Paulo Valli, who represented the company at the previous edition.

According to Maria Paula Velloso, ApexBrasil’s Industry and Services Manager, Web Summit is a major showcase for Brazilian entrepreneurship. “I’m confident that, in the 2024 edition, we’ll have even more Brazilian startups shining, establishing partnerships, and attracting investments to scale their businesses,” said Velloso.