



Brazilian entrepreneur launches female leadership project at Harvard

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Fernanda de Almeida



In the year it completes five years, Free Free, an organization that works for the physical, emotional, and financial freedom of girls and women, is expanding its work and launching the Free Free Club, at Harvard, one of the best in the US, to encourage female leadership. "Leadership is very related to women's freedom, because it comes with self-confidence and knowing and accepting their history," says Yasmine Sterea, CEO and founder of the organization.

Yasmine founded Free Free at the age of 32, after a career in fashion journalism. Since then, the NGO has directly involved 16,000 women and girls and indirectly impacted 40 million people worldwide with projects that involve support, education, and encouragement through workshops and campaigns. In three years, Free Free's impact on women and their communities was evaluated at \$50 million.

The Free Free Club, launched last week, is aimed at Harvard students, with the goal of encouraging female leadership and raising awareness among young women about issues related to self-esteem, career, financial freedom, emotional health, and abusive situations.

The meetings will be taught by Yasmine herself, who will also receive guests from around the world, and conducted in a hybrid manner. In the second half of this year, the initiative is also expected to reach schools and universities in Brazil and other countries, with young people from different places being able to apply to lead a Club in their college. "The Free Free Club in schools is similar to that in colleges, that is, it aims to not let barriers prevent girls from becoming leaders," says Yasmine, who will start the project at a school in Portugal in April.

In schools, the idea is to promote activities that stimulate girls' creativity. And during the course at universities, young women will be encouraged to carry out projects that will compete for Free Free's support. "We understand the need to raise awareness among girls as early as possible and help reduce harm in the future."

The initiative was conceived by Free Free's CEO, with the support of Dr. Joan Johnson-Freese, a Harvard professor and member of the NGO's advisory board, as well as university bodies dedicated to studies of Africa and women.

In her work with Free Free, Yasmine works alongside the Public Prosecutor's Office and in partnership with companies. Last year, the NGO expanded its work beyond Brazil and is now also present in Europe, in countries such as Portugal, Spain, England, and the United States, and launched a collection of non-fungible tokens (NFTs). "Our international operation also aims to go to London, Italy, and then to countries in Africa and the Middle East."

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