ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARY FOR INSTITUTIONAL FUNDERS

HISTORY

1. **Mission statement**: To unlock and maximize the power of young women to lead transformational change.
2. **Vision statement:** We believe in empowerment, equality, and opportunity for all.
3. **When was the organization started?** Registered in the US in 2007 and in Guatemala as an Asociación in 2010.
4. **Who is the founder?** Organizational Founders: Ted and Connie Ning, Mimi Schlumberger. MAIA Impact School Founders: Travis Ning, Norma Baján, Vilma Saloj, Andrea Coché, and Roselia Toj.
5. **Why was it founded?** Based on many years of experience in women's microcredit, MAIA was founded to explore what would happen if young women could continue their education beyond secondary school. *How far could she go?*

PROGRAM

1. **What population does your program serve? (age, gender, geography, challenge):** MAIA connects the talents of girls born into situations of quadruple discrimination (female, Indigenous Maya Kaqchikel, economically poor, and from rural communities) with the opportunities of the 21st century. We call our students Girl Pioneers because many are the first in their families to continue their education and begin to break cycles of generational poverty. MAIA Girl Pioneers come from 40+ rural highland villages in the department of Sololá, Guatemala, a state that is 98% Maya and has the second-highest poverty level in Guatemala.
2. **How many direct clients are served?** MAIA serves nearly 2,000 people, including 250 Girl Pioneers and their families.
3. **How many indirect clients are served?** Since 2016, 65+ organizations and schools have benefitted from innovative, girl-focused training through our collaborative efforts.
4. **What are your organization's primary goals?**
   a. Economic autonomy— MAIA graduates become formally employed and earn above the minimum wage. All Girl Pioneers live below the poverty line when they join the MAIA program.
   b. Lifelong learning—MAIA graduates achieve at least 15 years of education. The average Indigenous adult in Guatemala has 3.5 years of schooling.
   c. Her family, on her terms—MAIA graduates will delay marriage and pregnancy until they are an average of 25 years old and in a stable position to support a family. 57% of young Indigenous women are married or have become mothers by age 18.

d. Empowered to empower—Guatemala has the lowest level of female political participation in the hemisphere. We are working to change that by increasing women's leadership at all levels of society.

5. **What are your primary programs?**
   a. MAIA Impact School: Launched in 2017, the MAIA Impact School is a secondary school (grades 7-11) designed specifically for Indigenous girls. We focus equally on academics, culture, student well-being, sexual and reproductive health education, and socioemotional intelligence. Every Girl Pioneer receives a full academic scholarship, two nutritious meals daily, books and school supplies, uniforms, and personal sanitary kits.
   b. Launch Program: a program for MAIA Impact School graduates that provides Girl Pioneers with vocational orientation, university preparation, workplace readiness training, and internship experiences in the formal economy.

6. **What are the key indicators that guide your program?**
   a. Annual retention rates measure MAIA's family engagement program tasked with keeping parents informed and motivated.
   b. Academic performance among Girl Pioneers. The Impact School demands almost 200% more time/rigor than public schools.
   c. Life post-graduation is measured by the four institutional goals (mentioned previously) and specifically by the number of university scholarships, internships, and formal employment offers to Girl Pioneers.

7. **What are your organizational strengths?**
   a. Growth mindset: The concept of "pioneering" demands continual stretching beyond the comfort zone.
   b. Congruency: MAIA has set out to design itself so a Girl Pioneer could one day occupy every position in the organization. We put our vision and values into tangible actions and impact.
   c. Proximate Leadership: Local leaders who reflect the same race and gender mirroring as Girl Pioneers ensure critical empathy and cultural relevance at every juncture.

8. **What are your top organizational challenges?**
   a. We are mapping the path as we walk it. MAIA graduates often enter spheres many staff can no longer relate to, like attending a US university.
   b. Power dynamics in a stratified country with high levels of racism and misogyny. As an organization led by Indigenous women, we face doubts about our capabilities and leadership because we do not look like the "traditional" non-profit/NGO leader.
   c. There is never enough time. MAIA has high ambitions and goals for Girl Pioneers and ourselves as an organization, but we don't have enough hours or resources to carry out all the programs and ideas we wish we could. We have to accept that we can't do it all.

9. **What are your most important inter-organizational partnerships (not funding relationships):**
    a. [The Colectivo](#): Established in 2019, The Colectivo unites four like-minded organizations, sharing size, philosophy, and mission, focusing on developing and implementing a multicultural leadership pathway and nurturing a new generation of female Maya leaders.
    b. Ellas al Frente: An initiative of [She's the First](#), which focuses on building the capacity of girl-focused community-based organizations in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador.
    c. [The Guatemala Hub](#), part of the START Network, supports cohesive communities with mutual solidarity and actively advocates for their rights to disaster preparedness and humanitarian response. It is grounded in a vision of the holistic, integral, and harmonic connection between people, the planet, and everything surrounding us.

HUMAN RESOURCES

1. **Number of staff:** 74
2. **Number of foreign staff:** 4
3. **Percentage of foreign staff in leadership positions:** 25%
4. **Number of staff from the community/population you serve:** 73% Maya
5. **Gender breakdown of staff:** 63 women and 11 men, 85% female
6. **Gender breakdown of leadership staff:** 100% female
7. **How many offices do you have and how many staff in each?** MAIA's central operations are in Xolbe, Sololá. A small office for two employees is located in a co-working space in Antigua. One employee works from home in the US and a mailbox in a co-working space in Denver, CO.
8. **What is the leadership philosophy of the organization?** MAIA is driven by the slogan *"If she can see it, she can be it."* For that reason, MAIA places significant emphasis on proximate, empathetic leadership supported by a robust international network.
9. **What is the composition and role of the Board of Directors of the organization?** MAIA's Board of Directors unifies the Guatemalan Asociación with the 501c3, legally registered in both Guatemala and the US. There is one governing board with several committees. The Board is diverse and includes members from the US and Guatemala, as well as graduates of MAIA.
10. **What is the professional development process for your staff?**
    a. Given MAIA's firm commitment to local leadership and implementation, professional development is crucial in achieving and sustaining the organization's impact. MAIA draws from global innovators who train MAIA staff, who then contextualize and apply cutting-edge tools in Guatemala's rural, Indigenous context.

FINANCIAL

1. **Annual budget:** $1.9 million (US and Guatemala combined)
2. **What are your top major donors?**
   a. Luis von Ahn Foundation, The Ward Foundation, Obama Foundation Girls Opportunity Alliance, She's the First, Wayfarer Foundation
3. **Approximately how much in organizational reserves?** 6-7 months
4. **Links to most recent audits and annual reports:**
   a. Link to audit
   b. Link to Annual Report

CULTURE

1. **What are three aspects of your organizational culture that donors should know about?**
   a. MAIA is among the very few (perhaps only) organizations of its size in Guatemala with 100% Indigenous Maya female leadership.
   b. 27% of the current MAIA staff are graduates of the program.
   c. MAIA identifies itself as a learning organization. We source global innovations, contextualize them into the rural Maya context, and continually hone them in pursuit of continual improvement.
2. **What are three links to resources that you want donors to see that highlight the essence of your organization?**
   a. Video - "We are MAIA"
   b. Video - When we empower women, we become stronger
   c. Video - MAIA Family Engagement Program

DONOR ENGAGEMENT

1. **What are the top characteristics of your "ideal funding partnership"?**
   a. A partnership that embodies the concepts of Trust-Based Philanthropy in which relationships start from a basis of shared principles and trust.
   b. A relationship of curiosity, open mind, and intentional engagement. MAIA's local leadership is Indigenous and female. We are a pioneering organization that sometimes does things differently, and this is sometimes unfamiliar to many foundations. We connect most with foundations embracing that learning journey who want to learn and grow together with us.
   c. MAIA believes firmly in the power of local leadership. MAIA's best partnerships exhibit shared trust and confidence in the ability of local leaders to make key decisions.

2. **What are your "non-negotiables" when it comes to donor engagement?**
   a. As an organization that is led by Maya women, we struggle with institutions with practices and policies rigidly rooted in the cultural values of the Global North. We thrive in spaces with dialogue around cultural differences and building cross-cultural understanding.
   b. As a rights-based organization, MAIA holds Girl Pioneers and families as the central figures in the organization. Donors are crucial in supporting the efforts, but girls and families are MAIA's primary partners. We, therefore, avoid funding relationships that emphasize the donor's experience and recognition.
   c. MAIA struggles with partnerships that emphasize the role and importance of non-local expertise. MAIA often innovates via external experts, but we know that the local talent possesses the essential context, empathy, and knowledge to achieve lasting impact.

3. **What should potential donors know about the cause your organization is designed to address?**
   a. Breaking through generations of generational poverty is not always a linear process but rather one with steps forward and sometimes backward.

4. **What is one thing potential donors should know about how your organization addresses it?**
   a. MAIA embraces a quality-over-quantity mindset. The number of direct beneficiaries (approx 2,000) is not massive; however, the transformation represents a generational leapfrog that means 2-3 generations of incremental change.

5. **What is one of your funding challenge?**
   a. Some well-intended donors encourage MAIA to create a model for "sustainability" through charging fees or creating a business. The concept of generating revenue to subsidize donations for operational expenses is, of course, attractive to MAIA. Given the ambition of the goals and the baseline starting point of girls and families, the idea of putting students to work ("earning" their scholarship) while they also juggle domestic responsibilities and rigorous studies is not viable.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

6. **Institutional donor references:**
   a. Travis Ning, The Ward Family Foundation
   b. Rodrigo Barillas, The Luis von Ahn Foundation
   c. Kathy Hall, The Summit Foundation

7. **Links to additional resources:**
   a. [MAIA Strategic Plan 2022-2024](#)
   b. [Elle Magazine](#) - Girl Pioneer, Ingid Tuy, conversation with Michelle Obama and Marsai Martin

c. [HundrED.org and the Inter-American Development Bank](#) recognized MAIA as one of Latin America's top innovations fostering 21st-century skills.

Contact information for institutional funding:
Lidia Oxí, Co-Executive Director - External Relations, lidia@maiaimpact.org
Andrea Coché, Co-Executive Director - Direct Services, andrea@maiaigt.org
Jenny Dale, MAIA US Country Director, jenny@maiaimpact.org