

# 2U Builds Talent Pipeline With Andela

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2U partners with leading colleges and universities to deliver the world's best online degree programs so students everywhere can reach their full potential. 2U's cloud-based Software-as-a-Service platform provides schools with the comprehensive operating infrastructure they need to attract, enroll, educate, support, and graduate students globally.

## Case Study



### THE CHALLENGE

2U needed additional support to free up the bandwidth of their senior engineers. While the 2U team had extensive experience working with a variety of remote contractors, their previous results were mixed. "We had a tough time maintaining a strong relationship with people that were not regularly in the office," admitted Sarah Salenger, Web Developer and Analyst for 2U. "Part of the problem was how they approached the job. They would come in, do a one-off project and leave. We would be left with a piece of software that no one understood very well.

"So when my manager proposed working with Andela, I was immediately skeptical," she admitted. "I wanted team members, not coders on the other side of the world."

But what made the Andela approach stand out was their developers' commitment to building a long-term relationship, along with their ability to learn quickly. Obie Fernandez, Senior Vice President of Engineering, explains, "**I found that Andela's selection process and learning curriculum were very rigorous, and that gave me peace of mind.** It's not so much about the specific skillset they have when they start; it's that I trust that they know how to learn. Also, we have reasonable assurances that we won't have turn-over—this is a very important part of the Andela model."



### THE TECHNOLOGY STACK

- A variety of formats including Open-Source, JavaScript, Python, Ruby and Amazon services
- Agile Process including Test-Driven Development, Continuous Integration and Delivery
- 50-60 developers spread across 10 teams, including 7 Andela developers in two paired teams and others in support functions.

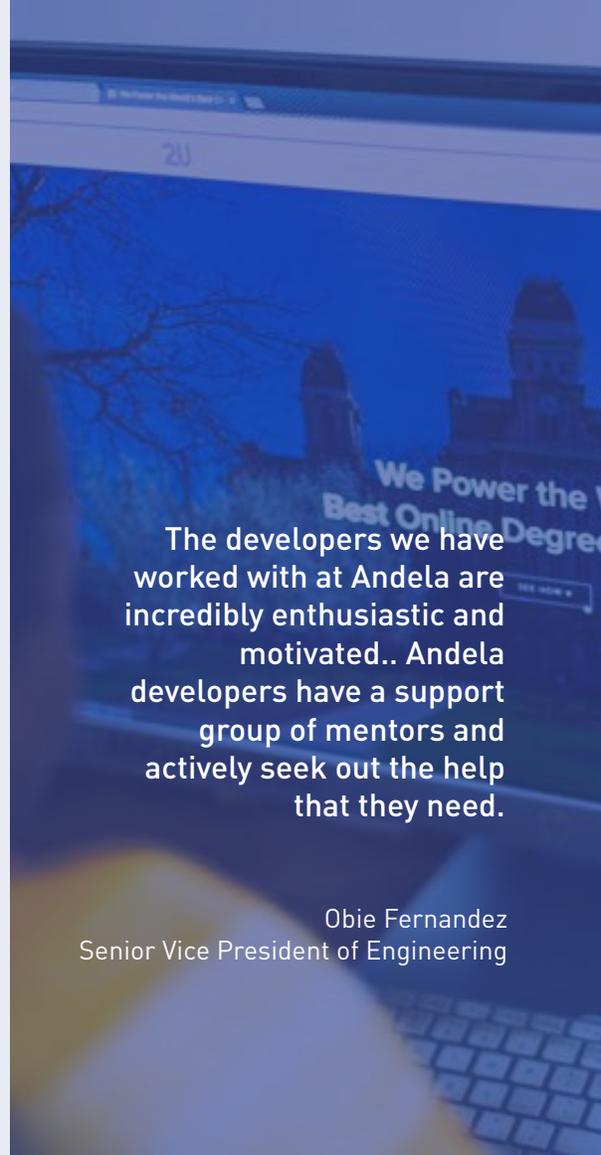


## THE ANDELA DIFFERENCE

The Andela developers worked within 2U's marketing services group to build websites for the 2U platform and enhance the content management system. The developers supported well over 35 different sites for 2U's university partners. With the ever-expanding list of university partners and custom functionality related to our business, Andela developers play a critical role in maintaining these systems.

Salenger quickly realized that working with Andela was an entirely different experience. "We started working with the first two Andela developers and it was immediately clear that this was going to be a different kind of relationship," she explained. "Their understanding of code was exactly where it needed to be. Simple concepts did not need to be explained. They were motivated, social and funny. We all got along well very quickly."

Fernandez agreed, stating that "The developers we have worked with at Andela are incredibly enthusiastic and motivated. With a typical developer, you're worried that they will get paralyzed if they do not know how to work through a problem. But Andela developers have a support group of mentors, and actively seek out the help that they need. They realize that it's as much about team dynamics as it is about the product's code base."



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Senior Vice President of Engineering



## THE RESULTS

The working relationship between Andela and 2U has been so successful that it has grown from two developers on one team to eight developers deployed across four teams. Andela developers serve as 2U's on-demand talent pipeline for full-time team members across the entire engineering organization. They have taken on full-scale projects and provided bandwidth to more senior team members.

In one project, an Andela developer set up the 2U platform in six cases across different partner university applications in a single month. In another example, the 2U website experienced an outage that was resolved quickly by one of the Andela developers. Working in a different timezone enabled the Andela developer to deal with a late-night problem.

Fernandez says, "The number one predictive factor of success in this field is problem-solving ability. "This ability comes from a combination of raw intelligence and creativity—and a big part of creativity is overcoming fear of failure. In an Agile environment, there are not strong limitations on what an individual can do, as developers are only limited by their imagination and drive.

“The Andela curriculum focuses heavily on improvisation skills because that sets the framework for tearing down any preconceived notions of the definition of success. Andela is unleashing on the world developers that can become anything they want to be.”