

CASE STUDY

MARIA SPRINGER

Maria grew up in a part of Los Angeles known as Little Ethiopia. Exposure to different cultures didn't end there. She's also lived in Chile, Spain, Portugal, Kenya, Liberia, and now the UK. She's pursuing her MBA at Oxford - and knows just how lucky she is to be there.

AN OXFORD MBA IS MORE THAN BUSINESS CLASSES

After six years in the non-profit sector, Maria knew an MBA was the right path for her as she began to explore the impact commercially-viable social enterprises can make. That's exactly what she hopes to achieve after graduation – the development of businesses that make a difference.

“When I walk out of the MBA, I want to speak confidently to investors and have them take

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me seriously.” Given her background, it's not surprising Maria wanted a programme with a global approach to business. “I chose Oxford for this reason. In my study group alone, I have someone from India, Australia, Japan, Turkey, and myself, from the United States.”

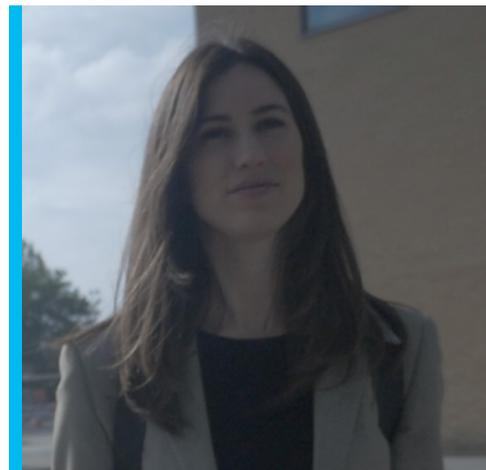
With 56 countries represented in her class, it's Maria's chance to question perceptions. It's both a dream and a responsibility she takes very seriously.

FINDING THE NEEDED FINANCES

Maria completed her undergraduate degree as an American in the United States. Finding the finances needed to study wasn't difficult. When looking for the funds necessary to pursue her MBA at Oxford in the UK, she faced challenges.

Even large, well-respected US lenders couldn't assist. Some couldn't offer the amount required even after subtracting the amounts covered by scholarships. Almost unbelievably, another provider didn't have Oxford in its list of known institutions.

Maria then came across Prodigy Finance and the insecurity of funding began to slip away.



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PRODIGY FINANCE APPLICATION AND COMMUNITY

Maria quickly discovered the ease of Prodigy Finance's loan process.

“The process for getting the funding with Prodigy Finance was quite simple. It reminded me of filling out my first Facebook profile, in the sense that there were open boxes, and if you got it wrong, they let you know. It was just really seamless and easy.”

Dealing with the operations team made it clear that she was more than a number attached to file on a computer. “I think that that adds a bit of humanity to the otherwise rather cold, student loan industry.”

Knowing a lot of other Prodigy Finance-funded students on campus also draws Maria closer to the community. When she's successful in her career, she hopes to become an investor, providing finances for the future generations of MBA candidates to achieve their goals.

POST GRAD PURSUITS

It's not easy to transition from a non-profit career to starting a commercially viable venture. But, Maria will surely be someone that makes it seem effortless. With her talent for communicating with those around her and an Oxford MBA backing her, she plans to make a difference – even in a commercial world. Her goal is the creation of a business that delivers a needed, socially-viable service.

“I'm hoping that after this year, I'm going to have the financial skills, and potentially a founding team to go out and get that started.”