Λ Lambda

Lambda School Outcomes Report

H1 2019 Cohorts | Released Q1 2020

Contents

Letter From the CEO

We started Lambda School just over 30 months ago to give people a lower-risk path to rewarding, well-paying careers – regardless of their circumstances.

In that time, our student body grew from the first beta cohort of 10 students to about 2,900, our team grew from two to 200, and we moved from our beloved 100 square foot office in San Ramon to our San Francisco headquarters in an actual office building downtown.

As I reflect on this report, I think about all the people behind these numbers, individuals who successfully shifted into higher paying careers. The focus, grit, and dedication of these students enabled them to make meaningful changes in their lives and the lives of their families and it is a privilege to be able to help make that happen.

Here are just a few of the student stories that stood out to me:

Sara Fritz

"I started Lambda when my youngest son went to kindergarten. It was perfect timing because I could do it from home while my kids were in school or even while they were in the other room destroying the house. I had zero self-confidence before Lambda. All of the instructors were so caring and really went out of their way. They showed me what I could do."

Joshua Vandergriff

"I got the offer when I was crying at my grandmother's table. They said, 'Josh, we were beyond impressed with your dedication to the auto industry and the tech you have learned in such a short amount of a time; we would love to have you join us!' I froze, dropped my phone and almost passed out. I could not believe it."

Leianne Louis

"I graduated from Lambda School in July and I applied to the Twitter apprenticeship and got it. To not have that traditional background and schooling background and be able to get a job and an apprenticeship with Twitter and have such an increase in my pay has been amazing. And I know now the sky's the limit."

Our mission from day one has been to **align the incentives of school and student**, giving more people the opportunity they deserve to land a great job with a higher income. If our students don't succeed, our school shouldn't either.

To that end, we designed every part of our school to keep incentives aligned:

- **Our curriculum is mastery-based,** meaning students repeat sections if needed and we don't hold students to specific graduation dates. We care about mastering material over checking a box.
- **Career support starts at week two,** and in 2019 we hired an additional 17 full-time employees to focus on securing students interviews and building partnerships with companies hiring tech talent.
- **We offer Income Share Agreements (ISAs),** so students have the option to pay nothing upfront, and only pay a set percentage of their income when they land a job making $50k or more. We also recently announced a new ISA financing model that allows us to support long-term the costs of running the school while keeping incentives aligned.

We're proud of the results we've achieved thus far, but we'll never stop pushing ourselves to be better. Our students place great trust in Lambda School when they enroll, and they make incredible investments of time and energy while engaged in our programs.

This report is the first in a new process we're building to improve transparency, consistency, and accountability around outcomes reporting at Lambda School. We plan to release this report every six months, and we hope to continuously improve it, based on the feedback we receive. Until then, thank you for joining us on this journey.

— Austen Allred | Lambda School Co-Founder & CEO

Our Model | How it Works

Going to School

- **Remote, Interactive & Live:** Lambda School is an intensive, full-time program of 40+ hour weeks with approximately nine months of coursework and labs for the average student. We also offer a part-time program, which is approximately 18 months of coursework and labs done in 15+ hour weeks. The school is remote, live, and interactive. We deliberately chose to make Lambda School remote so that anyone can attend, regardless of location or access to transportation. It also makes attending class easier for people with dependents or a job.

- **Mastery-Based:** At Lambda School, students progress based on their individual needs and pace, meaning they have the flexibility to repeat units as necessary. It's not about checking boxes; it's about making sure students master the skills they need to succeed on the job.

- **Curriculum Informed by Industry Leaders:** Lambda School's curriculum is designed with input from real hiring managers. Our teams ask hundreds of employers what specific skills they look for in candidates, and we design our programs with learning activities that help students master these skills.

- **Instructors + Team Leads:** At Lambda School, experienced practitioners lead the curriculum development and day-to-day class instruction. When hiring instructors, we look for the right mix of technical acumen, teaching ability, and real-world experience to ensure that our curriculum is delivered in a way that meets the diverse learning needs of our students. We also use near-peer learning via our Team Lead program. The Team Lead program is an optional, paid student leadership experience that gives students an opportunity to further their technical learning while gaining valuable leadership skills they'll need throughout their career. In addition to their instructors, students have access to someone who just went through the material they're currently learning to lean on and learn from.

- **Real-world Experience:** Our curriculum includes project-based work to give students experience that mirrors what they'll encounter in the workplace. For example, every fourth "sprint" (one week for full-time students, two for part-time) in Lambda School's core curriculum is a Build Week, in which students work on projects in cross-functional teams to hone their technical skills and develop critical team skills. In addition, at the end of the program, students participate in Lambda Labs, an in-house apprenticeship program where students gain practical, real-world work experience and build a ready-to-ship product.

- **Community, Support & Services:** Students have access to support and services throughout their Lambda School experience, including free mental health support from Modern Health. Our Mentoring and Alumni Programs as well as local, in-person meet ups keep our Lambda community connected.

Preparing For Career Success

- **Career-Centric Curriculum:** Starting in week two, every student is introduced to our Career and Professional Development program and has access to online office hours hosted by Lambda's expert career coaches. Our students work with these career coaches throughout the program and after graduation, until they are placed in their first job. Students also complete assignments to help prepare them for the job search throughout the program, including resume building, networking prep, and mock interviews. In addition, we offer a mentorship program, in which each student has the opportunity to be paired with a local mentor who can provide career guidance and help the student make connections at companies within the local community.

- **Hiring Partnerships:** We work with companies who need fresh talent across the country to create pipelines for our graduates to get hired. Our career placement teams are in continual discussion with employers to understand their needs and share how our students have the hands-on practice, theory, and personal determination to make them prepared, skilled and tenacious employees.

- **Lambda X:** In 2018, we launched Lambda X, a student support arm that takes the same full-time structure, guidance, and direction we give during the curriculum portion of Lambda School and applies it to helping students with their job search.

Aligned Incentives: Income Share Agreements

We started Lambda School with one overarching goal: to align the incentives of the School with the incentives of the student. Instead of utilizing student debt, Lambda School offers income share agreements (ISAs), so our students only repay tuition when they land a job making at least $50,000 a year. This means our school can only succeed if our students succeed.

Students in the United States who choose the ISA payment option agree to pay 17% of their post-Lambda School salary for 24 months. The Lambda School ISA is designed to shift the risk burden from being completely on the individual to being shared. To that end, we've built several protections for students into the model. For example, students only begin making payments if they're earning more than $50,000 per year (payments are calculated monthly). The ISA is also capped at a maximum repayment amount of $30,000, and if a student's income in a given month drops below $50,000 per year, payments are paused. Once a student has reached 5 years' worth of paused payments, the ISA is then cancelled, regardless of how much the student has paid to date.

We are aware that not all income share agreements are created equal, and with the same levels of consumer protection. Lambda School is actively working with industry partners, policymakers, and lawmakers to create regulation that protects students and their interests, while making higher education more accessible for individuals of all circumstances.

Outcomes Data | How We Got Here

This is the first time we're reporting our data in this format. Below, we'll go into detail about this new method and how we plan to report our student outcomes in the future.

Where We Started:

Our first outcomes report showed the performance of 71 students who graduated in H1 2018. At the time, we chose to report our student outcomes data through the Council on Integrity in Results Reporting (CIRR). CIRR is a non-profit organization whose "members believe that prospective students should know a school's outcomes before deciding whether to enroll." We value and share that commitment to transparency, and, as a consequence, we decided to participate in CIRR's reporting at the time.

Why we changed our approach:

As we completed the reporting process with CIRR in 2018, we realized that some of the CIRR parameters aren't a great fit for Lambda School's unique model.

Specifically, CIRR requires schools to classify themselves as "fixed length" or "self-paced." For "fixed length" programs, schools must define a "published program length" and share metrics based on that "published program length."

However, we designed Lambda School to accommodate multiple pathways to graduation, rather than taking a "one-size-fits-all" approach – and that means that the length of time a student spends in the program can vary considerably, although coursework, total program hours, and tuition will, of course, remain the same for every student that is enrolled. There are four aspects of our program that result in variable time lengths for our students:

- **Mastery-Based Progression:** Mastery-based progression means that students progress based on their individual needs and pace. If someone needs to repeat a section to demonstrate mastery, they will do so. It's not about checking boxes; it's about making sure students master the skills they need to land and succeed in a job.

- **Team Lead Program:** We encourage many of our students to apply to our Team Lead (TL) program during their time at Lambda School. This program is an optional, paid student leadership experience that gives students an opportunity to further their technical learning while gaining valuable leadership skills they'll need throughout their career. Some students who are accepted as Team Leads will choose to proceed with their Lambda School program concurrently, while others will pause their coursework to focus on their Team Lead responsibilities for a period of time.

- **Hiatus Option:** Lambda is designed to accommodate the "life happens" pause that some students may need, and we do allow students to go on "hiatus" on a case-by-case basis. These students do not pay any additional tuition for this flexibility.

- **Switching Between Full-Time and Part-Time:** At times, we have students who request to switch from a full-time program to a part-time program. We often grant these change requests when they arise, as we understand that some students may need to maintain a job for financial stability while in school. On occasion, we also have students who are hired *before* their original anticipated graduation date, but who would like to finish the course material in our part-time program while engaged in their new jobs.

If a student repeats a section, serves as a Team Lead, goes on hiatus for personal reasons, or switches to a part-time program, their *actual graduation date* will be later than their *original anticipated graduation date.* We have purposefully designed our model to allow this type of flexibility, as we understand that each student will have different needs over the course of their educational experience.

Because the CIRR reporting method did not provide us with the opportunity to share this nuance around how we've designed our model, we decided to instead invest in publishing our own report. In publishing a report on our own, we're able to share some of the same critical key data points that are included in the CIRR report - and we can also provide necessary commentary about our school model to help prospective students understand these numbers in context.

Where we are now:

We're excited to be providing greater transparency into the results we've been able to achieve through this report. Going forward, we'll be publishing this report every six months. We'll also add more detail to this report as we expand our ability to capture new data points and build sufficient sample sizes to analyze some of our smaller programs. Over time, we'll continue to improve our approach, and we'll explain our methodology clearly around any future adjustments.

We believe in the power of transparency, and we're committed to providing the data our students need to make informed decisions about the path that is right for them.

Methodology | Behind the Numbers

Overview:

There are four things that we believe are important for students to understand when evaluating a school like Lambda:

- **Graduation rate:** What percentage of students who start a program go on to complete the program?

- **Job placement rate:** What percentage of students who complete the program are placed into jobs?

- **Time to placement:** How long does it take students to be placed into a job after graduation?

- **Salary expectations:** What is the median annualized salary of placed graduates? What is the distribution of annualized salaries among placed graduates? Who hires Lambda graduates?

To complete our analysis of each of these metrics for H1 2019, we had to use distinct populations of full-time students. These populations have been defined in a manner consistent with the methodology used by CIRR, and each population is described in detail below.

Please note that part-time students are not included in this report given the small sample size of less than 10 students who graduated in H1 2019. However, we should have sufficient data to include part-time students in our next report.

Additionally, given the small size of some of our H1 2019 cohorts, we have decided to report all programs together in this report. In the future, when the specific programs are of sufficient sample size, we will break them out individually.

Please read on to understand how we identified the student populations for this report. If you'd prefer to skip straight to the data, click here.

Graduation rate:

The population of 448 students used to compute the graduation rate is the set of students whose *original anticipated graduation date* occurred during H1 2019, regardless of when these students actually graduated. In other words, when these 448 students started their Lambda School program, they would have been expected to graduate in H1 2019 *if they moved through the program without repeating a unit, going on hiatus or becoming a Team Lead.*

This population of 448 students is then broken down into three categories:

- Those who graduated (includes students who were hired prior to graduation)
- Those who withdrew from the program
- Those who are still enrolled at Lambda School, as of the time at which this report was published

As mentioned above, we designed the Lambda School model to accommodate multiple pathways to graduation, rather than taking a "one-size-fits-all" approach - and that means the program length can vary from one student to the next. In the "How we got here" section of this report, we shared that there are several factors that can result in a student's *actual graduation date* being later than their *original anticipated graduation date*, such as repeating a section, serving as a Team Lead, going on hiatus for personal reasons, or switching to a part-time program. We have purposefully designed our model to allow this type of flexibility, as we understand that each student will have different needs over the course of their educational experience.

Job placement rate:

To compute the job placement rate, we started with the population of all 284 full-time students whose *actual graduation date* was in H1 2019. This group includes two types of students:
- Students whose *original anticipated graduation date* was in H1 2019, and who *actually graduated* in H1 2019 as originally expected.
- Students whose original anticipated graduation date was *before* H1 2019, but who took longer to complete the program and *actually graduated* in H1 2019.

We calculated the job placement rate based on this overall population of 284 students. However, we were unable to reach 29 of the 284 students who graduated in H1 2019 to verify their placement data, so we also calculated the job placement rate for the population of 255 students, excluding the 29 students that we were unable to reach.

Students who graduated *after* H1 2019 will be included in future reports.

Time to placement:

Time to placement was calculated for the 201 students whose *actual graduation date* was in H1 2019 and who were subsequently placed in jobs. This is a subset of the full population of 284 students who graduated in H1 2019 (or 255 students, excluding the 29 students that we were unable to reach).

You can see that we have a long tail for job placements. There are many factors which can drive the length of time it takes for a student to accept and begin working in a new role – including the student's level of confidence, interview preparation, and portfolio readiness. In addition, students often make choices which extend their time to placement. For example, many of our students live in remote areas and decide to seek jobs in their local communities, though they recognize that job availability is more limited in these locations. In general, these students will see a longer lead time to placement than those who live in major cities. Similarly, many students choose to finish out their time in our Team Lead program after graduation. This paid, remote role can relieve some of the stress of finding a new job. However, it does extend the time to in-industry job placement for students. Because the Team Lead role is a temporary position, we do not count Team Leads as 'placed' in our reporting.

Salary expectations:

This analysis pertains to the 201 full-time students whose *actual graduation date* was in H1 2019 and who were subsequently placed in jobs. This is a subset of the full population of 284 students who graduated in H1 2019 (or 255 students, excluding the 29 students that we were unable to reach).

However, we did not have salary data for all of the 201 graduates in this data set, due to our data collection methods at the time. Therefore, we used all of the data we did have, which includes 179 students from the full population of 201 students that graduated in H1 2019 and were placed thereafter. This group of 179 students represents the total set of students from this population for whom we have salary information.

This analysis includes full-time salaried positions, as well as other types of work including full-time apprenticeships and contract positions. To annualize salaries for short-term roles, we've used a methodology consistent with CIRR.

H1 2019 Outcomes Data

Graduation rate: What percentage of students who start a program go on to complete the program?

Of the 448 students in this population, 318 **(71%)** graduated, 98 (22%) withdrew, and 32 (7%) are still enrolled at Lambda School, as of the time at which this report was published.

Graduation rate (H1 2019)		
	Total #	Total %
Total full-time students	**448**	-
- Withdrawals	98	22%
- Still enrolled at time of publication	32	7%
- Graduates	318	**71%**

Job placement rate: What percentage of students who complete the program are placed into jobs?

Of the 284 full-time students who graduated in H1 2019, the job placement rate was **71%.**

However, we were unable to reach 29 of the 284 students who graduated in H1 2019 to verify placement data. If you remove those 29 students and look at the remaining 255 students, the job placement rate was **79%**.

Job placement rate for graduates with verified placement data (H1 2019)		
	Total #	Total %
Total number of graduates	**284**	
- Graduates with verified placement data	255	90%
- Graduates whom we were unable to contact to verify placement data	29	10%
Total number of graduates with verified placement data	**255**	
- Graduates placed in jobs	201	**79%**
- Graduates who are still searching for their next job (includes those who were employed in Lambda's Team Lead program after graduation)	54	21%

Time to placement: How long does it take students to be placed into jobs after graduation?

Of the 201 students who graduated in H1 2019 and were placed in jobs, 116 (58%) accepted jobs within 90 days of graduation, 68 (34%) accepted jobs between 90 and 180 days after graduation, and 17 (8%) accepted jobs 180 days or more after graduation.

Time to placement (H1 2019)		
	Total #	Total %
Total number of graduates placed in jobs	**201**	
- Accepted a job within 90 days of graduation	116	58%
- Accepted a job between 90 and 180 days after graduation	68	34%
- Accepted a job 180 days or more after graduation	17	8%

Salary expectations: What is the median annualized salary of placed graduates?

The median annualized salary for H1 2019 placed graduates was $70,000.

Even after students are placed, we encourage them to continue building their skill sets and networks, and many of our students go on to earn promotions and/or significantly increase their salary in their second job post-Lambda School.

Median Annualized Salary from H1 2019:

$70,000

What is the distribution of annualized salaries among placed graduates?

Of our H1 2019 placed graduates who reported salary information, a total of 85% reported an annualized salary over $50,000, a total of 46% reported an annualized salary over $75,000, and a total of 20% reported an annualized salary over $100,000.

Annualized salary distribution (H1 2019)		
	Total #	Total %
Total placed graduates by annualized salary	**179**	
- Less than $50,000	26	15%
- $50,000 - $75,000	71	40%
- $75,000 - $100,000	46	26%
- $100,000 - $125,000	28	16%
- $125,000 - $150,000	6	3%
- Over $150,000	1	1%

Note: This analysis is based on the 179 students for whom we had salary data available. See methodology section for detail. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Who hires Lambda graduates?

Our H1 2019 graduates were hired by over 150 employers in more than 30 states. These employers represent a range of industries, including Financial Services, Healthcare, Retail, Logistics, and Technology.

Employers who hired H1 2019 Lambda students include:

Hiring Spotlight

Divvy

Divvy, the Utah-based business expense management platform, has become a leader in the fintech industry in three years. In that time, the company has grown its engineering team from a handful of senior developers to over 100 engineers, many of whom joined as junior-level employees.

As Divvy scaled its team, every engineer needed to know how to work collaboratively, be self-motivated, and take a project from ideation to completion. It proved challenging to find junior-level engineering talent with all of those capabilities, and it became clear they had to seek nontraditional channels to fill demand. That's when they partnered with Lambda School.

> "The big difference between Lambda School grads and bootcamp grads is that they're more serious and dedicated about their career, due in large part to the length and grit of their program. Lambda affords their students more opportunity to learn hands-on and in teams, intentionally diversifies their experience, and instills a foundation of learning how to learn. In all, Lambda does a better job preparing engineers for the real world."
>
> – **Paul Chatterton,** Divvy Director of Engineering

One such graduate is Antonio Melendez, who spent five years finishing a CS degree and working part time before Lambda School. His biggest fear was earning a degree and still not feeling prepared for a job, but Lambda gave him the technical skills as well as career coaching, something he felt his university lacked. Antonio has been an engineer at Divvy for over a year and a half. He was able to contribute from day one, but it was his growth mindset that set him apart.

> "At Divvy, culture is huge. If someone joins the team and has the motivation and drive to learn, that's all we need. Lambda has been able to quickly recognize what teams are looking for and built it into their curriculum. Antonio is comfortable facing hard challenges, learning new languages quickly, and seeking opportunities to show leadership. Like many other Lambda grads, Antonio had the opportunity to mentor younger developers and he brought that invaluable skill set to our team here."
>
> – **Greg Larson,** Divvy SVP of Engineering

Antonio recently helped Divvy launch Bill Pay, a solution that provides better visibility into budgets along with total company-wide spend. It's a critical feature that required a lot of work to deploy, but the team had only four developers available at the time. With technical skills from Lambda School and the supportive culture at Divvy, Antonio led the team to a successful launch.

> "I really enjoy work every day. I have great coworkers. I feel really excited about where the company is going. I feel accomplished each day. It feels like every merge request makes a big impact on the product."
>
> – **Antonio Melendez,** Software Engineer

Note: Lambda School is also a Divvy customer. We love and use Divvy to track expenses across our business, and we're proud that they've chosen to hire Lambda graduates.

Lambda School Fast Facts

Company

- **Employee count:** Approximately 200 full-time employees – and growing.

- **Timeline:** Lambda School was founded in 2017. Our first student cohort was in April 2017. Our first cohort using an ISA was in July 2017.

- **Our student-facing staff:** We have 93 full-time employees on the learning/instruction team, 29 contract instructors, and a 20-person job placement team.

Student Body

- **Concurrently enrolled students** As of March 2020, we have approximately 2,900 students concurrently enrolled.

- **Geography:** Lambda's model organically results in a student body from all 50 states.

Programs

- **Courses Currently Accepting Students:** Data Science, iOS, and Full Stack Web Development – we offer both part-time and full-time options for all courses.

- **Coursework:** Lambda's full coursework is about 1,200 hours.

  - Each student attends 32 weeks of live, online instruction that includes computer science fundamentals, followed by another 8 weeks of intensive career preparation. This makes Lambda more than three-times longer than the average bootcamp. Every student is required to show mastery of the material and have 95% live class attendance to graduate.

Income/Placement

Of the 284 full-time students who graduated in H1 2019, the job placement rate was 71%. However, we were unable to reach 29 of the 284 students who graduated in H1 2019 to verify placement data. If you remove those 29 students and look at the remaining 255 students, the job placement rate was 79% in total.

Of our H1 2019 placed graduates, a total of 85% reported an annualized salary over $50,000, a total of 46% reported an annualized salary over $75,000, and a total of 20% reported an annualized salary over $100,000.

More Questions?

Check out our **online FAQ**. We are here to help: **lambdaschool.com/contact**

Media Inquiry: **press@lambdaschool.com**