Lambda School Outcomes Report

H1 2019 Cohorts | Released Q1 2020

Contents

Letter from the CEO

It's been just over 30 months since we founded Lambda School.

In that time, our student body grew from the first beta cohort of 10 students to about 2,500, our team grew from two to over 150, and we moved our San Francisco headquarters out of a (much-loved) house in Hayes Valley and into an actual office building downtown. Most importantly, we saw hundreds of students receive offer letters in 2019.

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

Right now, traditional higher education doesn't offer that. Nearly 70% of students take on debt for education, and 44 million borrowers in the U.S. owe a collective $1.6 trillion. The system is broken. The status quo places undue risk on students without incentivizing educators to ensure that students succeed.

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 how our school runs to keep incentives aligned:

- **Our curriculum is mastery-based,** meaning students can 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 people to specifically 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 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 not perfect. There's a lot we still need to improve and, honestly, we'll never stop pushing ourselves to be better. We know that people invest their lives in Lambda School when they enroll, and we care about your feedback deeply. 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 know trust can't exist without transparency.

We plan to release this report every six months and 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 Founder & CEO

Our Model | How it Works

Going to School

- **Remote, Full-Time:** Lambda School is an intensive, nine-month full-time program of 40+ hour weeks. We also offer a part-time program, which is eighteen-months of 15+ hour weeks. The school is remote, live, and interactive. Staying remote is a deliberate choice so 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:** Mastery-based means students progress based on their individual needs and pace. If someone needs to repeat a section, they can. It's not about checking boxes, it's about making sure students master the skills they need to land and succeed in a job.

- **Instructors + Team Leads:** We hire instructors based on industry experience and teaching ability. We also use near-peer learning via our Team Lead program. It's 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 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:** The 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) at Lambda School is Build Week, in which students build a more robust project in a cross-functional team from different cohorts. Lambda Labs is an in-house apprenticeship program in which teams build a product during the last five weeks of the program.

- **Support & Services:** Students have access to support and services throughout their Lambda experience, including free mental health support from Modern Health.

Landing a Job

- **Career-Centric Curriculum:** Career guidance and the job hunt is wrapped into the curriculum starting in week two. All along the way – even after graduation – students have the support of our Student Success and Careers teams.

- **Hiring Partnerships:** We partner with companies across the country who need talent in order to create ready pipelines for graduates to get hired.

- **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 classroom portion of Lambda School and applies it to helping students with their job search.

Income Share Agreements

- **ISA Option:** We offer Income Share Agreements (ISAs) so students have the option to pay nothing upfront. Students agree to pay 17% of their post-Lambda School salary for 24 months. Student protections include the fact that they only begin making payments if they're making more than $50,000 per year. The ISA is capped at a maximum repayment amount of $30,000, and if income 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.

- **ISA Financing:** We recently announced a new model for ISA financing for Lambda School operations. Via an ISA marketplace Edly, Lambda School gets a limited, weighted advance from investors to cover some basic costs. We invest money of our own, and the remainder is dependent upon outcomes. Because a student's payment obligation is governed by the ISA, this structure does not affect the student experience and keeps the school's success still completely dependent on student success.

Outcomes Data | How We Got Here

Below, you'll find our most recent data detailing outcomes from full-time students from H1 2019. Part-time cohorts were not included in this analysis as an insufficient number have graduated at this time. However, that data will be included in the next report. Of the full-time students who have completed the program, the job placement rate is 70% by 180 days after graduation. If you remove students we were unable to reach after graduation, that rate is 78%.

This is the first time we're reporting our data in this format, so below we'll go into detail about why we've changed our reporting methods and why we've spent so much time identifying a new way to stay accountable.

Where We Started: When we began as a lean startup a little over two years ago, our focus was on rapid iteration to improve our core teaching programs and investing resources towards student success. We didn't have a data team to build the type of reporting we aspired to. But reporting and transparency was important to us and so we chose to participate in the Council on Integrity in Results Reporting (CIRR). As a new school, it was our best option and in 2018 we reported accurate information based on their prescribed process for doing so. But beyond that, we didn't have the resources at that time to invest in the level of data reporting we're now prioritizing.

What Changed: Late last year, we made a deliberate decision not to report to CIRR. There were two reasons for this choice. The first is that their reporting parameters are not well suited for the structure of our school, failing to capture how our focus on "Mastery Based Progression" enables each student to succeed on their own timeline. Second, Lambda is now at the size where it has become essential to develop our own standards for reporting and to invest in a process and system that can grow with us.

In H2 2019, we built out our data team and began the manual process of redesigning how we collect, analyze, and report our outcomes data.

Where We Are Now: We will report these numbers every six months. We'll continue to improve as we go, and we're still committed to working with an outside firm to validate our results. We weren't able to land on the right partner this time around, but we didn't want to wait any longer to publish. We're actively in discussions with firms and expect to finalize on a provider shortly.

Ultimately, Lambda doesn't succeed if our students don't. We know they show up every single day ready to work as hard as it takes to land that offer letter. We wish we had done this sooner, but it takes time, and it's absolutely a priority to get it right. Students, prospective students, and hiring partners need to know the school is working and have the data they need to know if Lambda is the right fit for them.

Methodology | Behind the Numbers

The data set we created to compute this report focuses on two populations of full-time students.

Given that only a few people finished the first part-time class, we will wait until our next report to release their outcomes. Additionally, given the small size of several of our full time programs, we have decided to report all of them together. In the future when the other programs are of sufficient sample size, we will break them out individually.

Here's how we identified the two student population cohorts on which this data is based.

(A) **Population for graduation rate:** This population of students is the set of students whose "day one graduation date" occured during H1 2019. Because our Mastery Based Progression program allows students to repeat sections, and because we encourage our best students to join our Team Lead program to deepen their technical skills and tutor other students, many choose to change classes. In order to provide a consistent methodology for selecting students, we only looked at those whose original cohort finished the program in H1. The equivalent would be a student who starts with Class X and remains with that class regardless of when they complete their education. For instance, a student whose original finish date was in H2 2018 but who actually finished in H1 2019 would still be included in H2 2018 placement date. These students are not included in the graduation metric here, but are included for placement. Due to these factors, we decided to focus on whether or not the students in the population finished our program. "Withdrawals" are people who have left the program. You can see from the "still enrolled" population that we have students on hiatus who are planning to return who may eventually graduate. These students do not pay any additional tuition for this flexibility. This data set also includes students who began the program as full-time students and switched to our part-time program to finish the material after being hired early.

(B) **Population for placement rate:** All of the students who completed the program are included in this population. It does not include those who finished in H2 or later. They will be included in future reports. The placement rate also includes people who originally expected to finish before H1 2019 who actually finished in H1 2019. You can see that we have a long tail for job placements. It's important to remember that while we train people wherever they are, most of our jobs are in company offices, sometimes requiring a move. This opens our students up to many roles around the country which is great for opportunity, but it can also make placement more complicated than finding a job near the school.

Another important fact that impacts our placement number is that many students choose to stay in our Team Lead program to support upcoming students while they focus their skills. This paid remote role can relieve some of the stress of finding a new job, but is not permanent. The group of people who were in this program and have not yet found another job is separated for illustration.

H1 2019 Outcomes Data

From the population we surveyed for this report, the total graduation rate was 72% and total placement rate was 70%, not including students we were unable to reach 180 days post-graduation. We are still actively attempting to engage these alumni and are working to build a more robust alumni network that will support our students and keep them connected to Lambda School and each other after they're placed at their first job, and beyond. Networking is an integral part of a successful career, and we're committed to helping our students build their professional networks beyond Lambda School.

The median salary for H1 2019 graduates was $70,000. Even after a student is placed, we encourage them to continue building their skillset and their networks, and many go on to significantly increase their salary at their second job post-Lambda School. Students and alumni have access to lifetime support from our Careers teams to help them find jobs that fit their desired income level, location, and tech stack.

<div align="center">

**Median Salary from H1 2019:**

$70,000

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Please Note: Part-time Graduates are not represented in this report due to a lack of sufficient part-time numbers in H1 2019. Part-time student data will be represented in our September 2020 report.

Lambda Outcomes Reporting Student Outcomes - 2019H1		
Full-time students	Total #	Total %
Enrolled	**443**	-
- Withdrawals	96	22%
- Still enrolled	30	7%
- Graduates	317	72%
Total Graduation Rate		**72%**
Lambda Outcomes	Total #	Total %
Graduates Who Participate to Completion	**278**	-
- Placement Within 90 Days of Graduation	116	42%

- Placement Within 180 Days of Graduation	182	65%
- Placement More Than 180 Days After Graduation	194	**70%**
- No Placement	84	30%
- TLs/SLs (unplaced)	*34*	*12%*
Total Placement Rate		**70%**
Generated: 2/24/2020		

Here are some of employers who hired our 2019 Lambda School students:
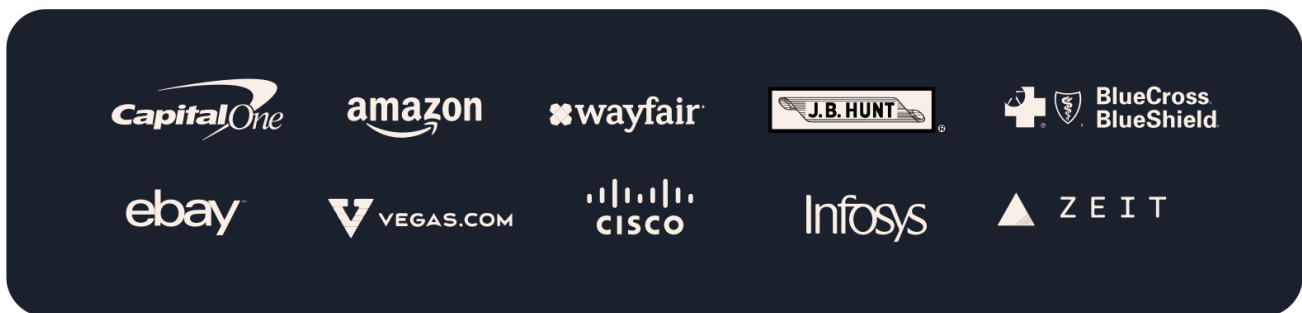
Student D&I Data:

The tech industry urgently needs more diverse talent at all levels and Lambda School is deeply committed to being part of that solution.

Our accessible model enables us to train more individuals from historically disadvantaged groups, and our student body includes students from all 50 states, from various professional and personal backgrounds, and a range of life experiences. Approximately half of our student body identify as non-white.

Our continued focus is on how we can both expand our impact and create the programs and resources that better support the success of our students.

This includes partnering with organizations that are working to close the tech divide and increase access to underrepresented groups, including Code.org, which is improving diversity in computer science by reaching students of all backgrounds where they are — at their skill-level, in their schools, and in ways that inspire them to keep learning.

In July 2019 Lambda School launched mandatory week-long training for all Team Leads (TL's) which includes a strong focus on inclusion and psychological safety. As part of the program, student leaders receive training on building inclusive team environments and gain understanding on Lambda's policies and resources.

H1 2019 D&I Data:

Student Body

49% of students
identify as non-white/two or more races.

46% of students
identify as white.

05% of students
preferred not to answer.

This data is current as of February 2020 and is based on a survey of 1000+ recently enrolled students who volunteered to share this data.

Looking Ahead:

"

Our primary focus at Lambda School is to foster an environment in which all employees can do their best work, and feel included and welcomed for who they are. We strongly believe that an inclusive workplace serves not only our employees but also our students.

We further recognize that our students come from backgrounds that are very different from the standard Silicon Valley demographic. To serve our students, we believe we must deeply empathize with our students. To be confident we can do this, we must be a workplace that is as similar to the composition of our student body as possible. Our ultimate goal is a diverse workplace that mirrors the ethnic composition of our student body and exceeds the gender ratio of our current student body. We recognize the gap between our student body composition and staff composition and are actively working to make significant progress in closing that gap in 2020."

– **Mark Frein,** Chief People Officer

2019 H1 Population Illustration for Outcomes (not to scale)
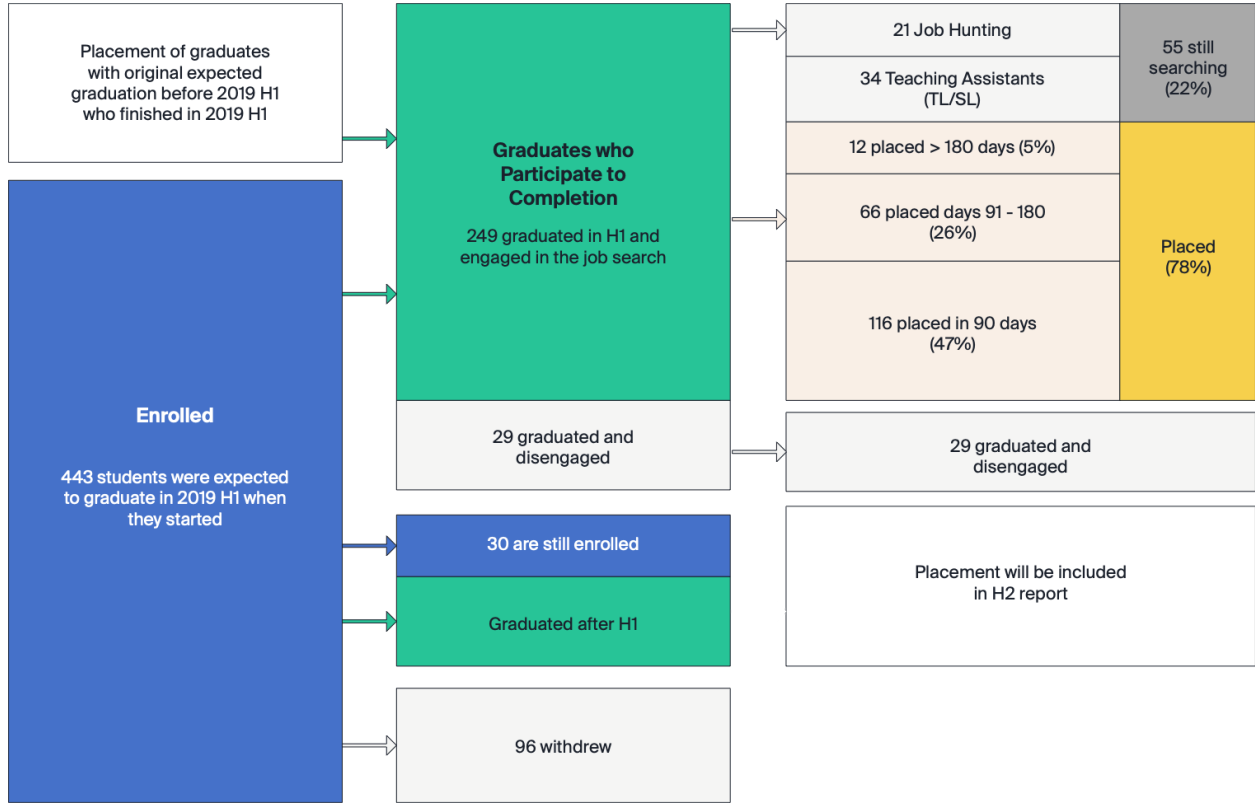
The diagram above is a visual version of the previous table. It focuses on the population in consideration for Outcomes in the top green box (249 students), those who finished their program in 2019H1. The placed 78% in yellow is composed of the three groups from the table showing how long placement took.

Student Spotlight

Yasirah Krueng

"My time at Lambda has been one of the most challenging periods of my life, taking a full-time course with 3 young kids ages 5-11 is a lot, but I made it! So, for those of you, Lambda moms and dads out there, I know you're doing the almost impossible thing, but this is all worth it. When I told my three daughters that mommy now has a job, I know that they are very proud of me (the youngest one keeps saying 'mommy you are a real Hacker now')."

Joshua Vandergriff

"I got the (offer) call when I was crying at my grandmother's table. 'Josh, we were beyond impressed with your dedication to the auto industry and the tech you have learned in so short 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."
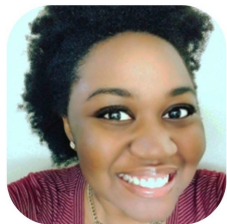
Alexis Carr

"I JUST GOT AN OFFER AT EVENTBRITE AS A SOFTWARE ENGINEER!!!! And have an offer pending as a data scientist at another company in the Bay Area. I'm in my Uber coming back home from another interview ugly crying. Thank you so much Lambda School for taking a chance on me with the living stipend and to all of the staff who didn't let me quit when my imposter syndrome got really bad!"

Hiring Partner Spotlight

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 to count them as one of our Hiring Partners.

Lambda School By the Numbers

Company:

- Employee count: 150 - and growing
- Funding to-date: Approx. $50M VC funding, $100M investment in ISAs
- 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.
- Student-Teacher Ratio: We have 93 full-time employees on the learning/instruction team, 25-35 contract instructors, and another 100 mentors meeting with students every week. *The ratio, therefore, right now if you look at the 85 full-time learning/instruction team is 1:30, plus the 1:8 for TL:student.*

Program Scope:

- Total programs offered: 8 part-time and full-time courses across the four core courses of Data Science, iOS Development, UX Design and Full Stack Web.
- Hours: Lambda School's full coursework is about 1,280 -1600 hours for full-time and 960- 1,200 for part-time.
- In 2019 Lambda School taught 8,428 lessons – which translates to 25,284 hours of live instruction).

Student Body:

- Concurrently enrolled students (accurate as of January 2020): nearly 2,500 students.
- Lambda School students are in almost every state in the US and from our pilot programs alumni across India, Europe, and Africa.
- Over 90% of Lambda School students use the no-tuition up front Income Share Agreement option.
- At the time of writing, our students have completed 750+ Build Week projects and 223 Labs projects
- 1,000+ job interviews scheduled for Lambda grads and students

FAQ

This outcomes number (78%) is a big drop from our last publicly reported outcomes number (86%), why is that?

The 78% comes from a much larger pool of students than the CIRR statistics. One of our issues with CIRR's process is the leeway it gives schools to essentially cherry pick the population their numbers come from. We knew that pulling outcomes data from a wider pool this time around would result in a dip, but we believe it's more accurate and that's what's important. While we're happy to see 78% succeed, we're always pushing ourselves to improve. Student success and student experience are our absolute top priorities.

Why was there a 22% withdrawal rate?

Lambda School is free to enter and admissions are not based on traditional screens such as grades or past work experience — but the program is not everyone. For some, life events or circumstances unrelated to school might get in the way. And for others, it might just not be a great fit. That's ok. This is an intensive program and it takes grit, commitment and lots of hard work. We purposely designed the program so students can cancel ISAs within four weeks of their cohort start date if they decide it's no longer a fit. Our withdrawal rate is slightly below average U.S. college dropout rates.

Why is this focused on H1 2019?

Currently we don't have sufficient data for H2 2019, as there is a six-month delay to ensure we have accurate, full numbers. Those students, as well as part-time graduates will be included in the next report.

How was this data computed?

See "Methodology" above.

Why is Lambda School doing this and not CIRR?

See "How We Got Here."

Does this include part time students?

No we did not have a sufficient number of PT graduates for this report. However, we will be sharing PT data in our September 2020 report.

More Questions?

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

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