

Global Impact Report ₂₀₂₀



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Preface

The immediate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the social innovation sector are alarming and threaten both impact and business models of many social entrepreneurs. Yet, it is in disruptive times like these that social entrepreneurs are most needed.

How do we make sure that those hit hardest by the pandemic like the elderly, single mothers and those living at the edges of our societies are supported and feel included? How do we close the educational gap that has significantly widened in recent months? How can we make sure that the climate crisis is addressed when rebooting our economies?

This urgency to act has dominated the 2020 edition of SIA. Already in spring, just shortly after the global breakout of COVID-19, thousands of young social innovators joined SIA's

programs and developed fresh ideas to address the new realities.

The most promising of these ideas were prototyped, validated, marketed and ultimately promoted with the Social Impact Award. Over the course of this year, it became more and more evident: social innovation does play a vital role in rebooting our economies and societies, and this world's youth is ready to take on the challenge.

In this hopeful spirit, I invite you to study this impact report and allow yourself to be inspired by the stories and impact data from our global SIA community in a truly special year. Let us then look ahead and make sure that the post-pandemic world is more just, inclusive, and sustainable than the one we left behind.



Jakob Detering
Managing Director
SIA International

WHAT WE DO

SIA empowers youth to make a difference. We support their development into active agents of change that build social ventures and innovative solutions to the world's most pressing issues.

We do so by hosting local events and organizing workshops on social entrepreneurship, running incubations helping validate and prototype impact and business models, and mobilizing this global community of social entrepreneurs whose stories inspire local youth to take action.

AWARENESS

We raise awareness among youth about social entrepreneurship as a potential career path and vehicle for civic engagement.

SUPPORT

We support the most promising young social entrepreneurs with know how, mentoring, access to networks, pre-seed funding. We also strengthen their wellbeing capacities.



EDUCATION

We provide our participants with the necessary tools, skills and mindset to unfold their potential as social innovators.

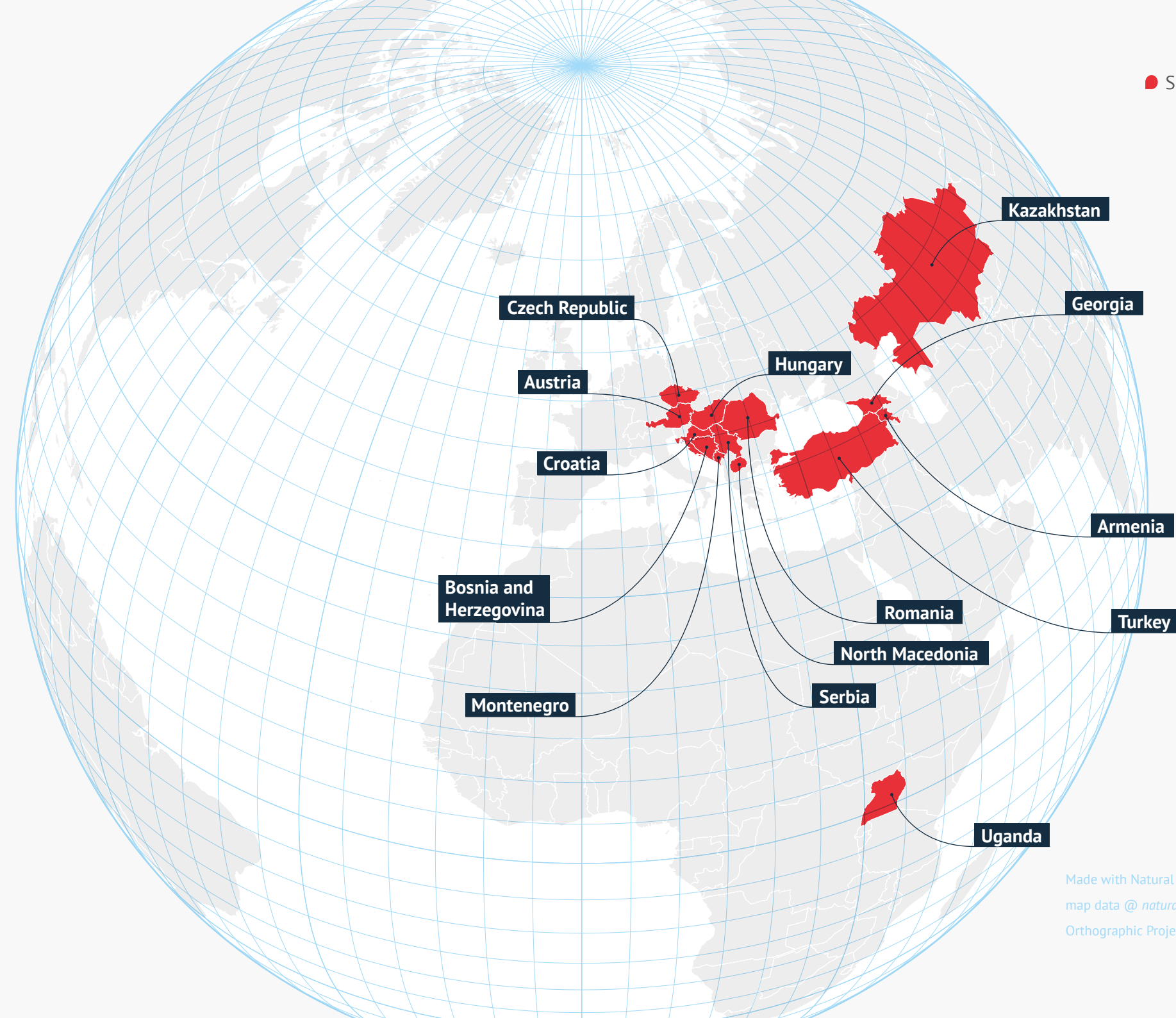
COMMUNITY

We connect successful young social innovators with an international community of peers, entrepreneurs and experts.

● Different countries – one vision

In 2020, we were active in the following 14 countries:

Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, Uganda.



Made with Natural Earth. Free vector and raster map data @ [naturalearthdata.com](https://www.naturalearthdata.com).
Orthographic Projection, December 2020

● SIA's Journey 2020

1 KICK-OFF

SIA kicked off in 14 countries across Europe, Central Asia, and Africa in early 2020. With no insight in the tumultuous year to come, the kick off events took place mostly in person, allowing youth to connect with local social entrepreneurs and get a glimpse of the SIA 2020 program.

2 DISCOVERY

With COVID-19 now in full force globally, SIA workshops and events were swiftly shifted online, reaching more than 5,100 participants. These sessions, fully free of charge, allowed youth to discover the field of social entrepreneurship by learning how to generate an idea, create a business and impact model, and more.

3 APPLICATION DEADLINE

557 teams made up of young changemakers with the desire to take their idea to the next level applied to partake in the incubation program in their country. The 120 most impactful, innovative and feasible projects were selected by local juries made up of experts from diverse impact-oriented organizations.

4 INCUBATION

These ventures underwent an intensive incubation adapted to the local COVID-19 restrictions. Ventures prototyped and validated resilient business and impact models while being guided by international experts and mentors. Participants learned to adapt to the current challenges and build models with greater impact than ever before.

5 VOTING

Every year, one venture per country wins the Community Award after receiving the most votes from people around the world. This year's ventures served as beacons of hope for a better future and received 36,000 votes, the highest number to date.

6 CEREMONY

The incubation came to an end with ceremonies in each country, awarding a total of 52 ventures with seed funding as well as publicity and access to high value networks to turn their impact idea into reality. All incubation participants were also invited to the SIA Summit 2020, a fully virtual experience that proved to be the biggest and best one yet.



SIA Summit 2020

From November 26th to 28th, more than 250 Social Impact Award winners, finalists, alumni, and mentors from 15 different countries embarked on a virtual collaborative journey to explore what it takes to lead in transformative times. Held fully online, SIA Summit 2020 was the largest and most unique SIA Summit yet.

We took the complex and uncertain circumstances as an unprecedented opportunity to create a new kind of event experience. The online nature of the event gave us little to no capacity limits, allowing us to bring together

all kinds of members of our community. Our speakers were globally recognized leaders in their field, which included Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Beatrice Fihn, founder of International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons; Alma Zadic, Austrian Minister of Justice; Chris Worman, Vice President of Alliances & Program Development at Tech Soup; and many more.

The Summit was a completely co-creative experience, focused on transferring knowledge and building skills around leadership and community-building. The use of Open-Space Technology, an innovative facilitation method, allowed participants to

Hosting a conversation at the Summit was a delightful opportunity to dialog with young social innovators. The format offered a rare opportunity to dig in on some questions, learn what the community is working through, and build new relationships that I am sure will blossom over time.



Chris Worman
Vice-President, Alliances & Program Development,
Tech Soup
Summit 2020 Speaker



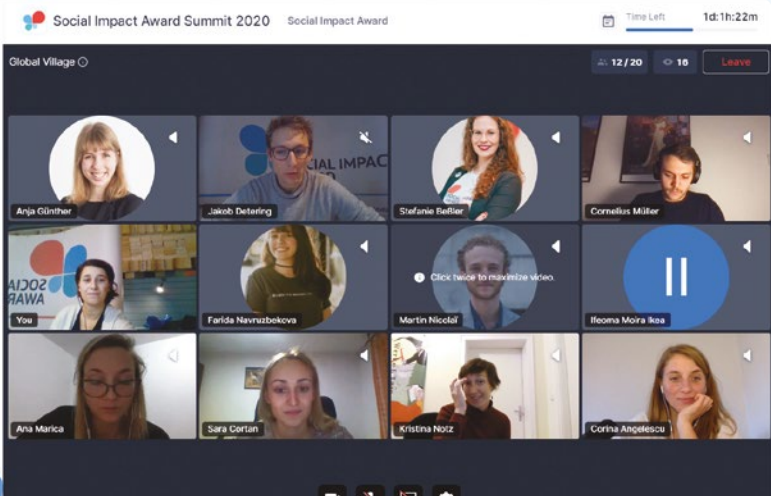
build their own Summit experience based on their needs and desires. It also enabled them to host their own sessions and share their expertise around a topic they are passionate about with like-minded people.

SIA Summit 2020 was a celebration of our participants' journeys as social entrepreneurs. It was an opportunity to come together across borders and build strong bonds that will last for years to come. And most importantly, it gave participants of the SIA program the confidence needed to take on the next chapter of their social entrepreneurship journey.

I did not expect to have the opportunity to meet, see and hear the stories of such wonderful people at this year's SIA Summit. I hope that I will have the opportunity to meet all participants and organizers in person one day. I also want to thank everyone for beautifying these 3 days for me especially with the current global situation. You have managed to bring positivity and optimism into this negative and dark time. Thank you!



Selma Salman
Co-founder, Skamt
SIA Bosnia and Herzegovina Winner 2020,
Summit 2020 participant



Strategy 2023

What was once a small initiative in Vienna has now grown into a global community empowering thousands of young social innovators to turn their passion into successful ventures. This growth is humbling and warrants deep reflection on our objectives for the future. After a co-creative process engaging all our key stakeholders in 2019,



we developed a strategic framework grounded in our 4 impact fields that will guide our work until 2023. The results for 2020, the first year of implementation, can be found in this report.

AWARENESS Inspiring youth with local success stories

Experience and research suggests there is massive impact potential in strengthening our role as an inspirational platform that raises awareness among youth about opportunities in social entrepreneurship. Having fostered over 850 alumni ventures, worked with a network of over 1,000 local partners, and conducted impact measurements on an ongoing basis, we have a wealth of stories at our disposal. This allows us to provide youth in our countries of operation with contextualized stories that they can relate to and be inspired by.

EDUCATION More local roots for our global content

SIA's educational strategy builds on ten years of successful activities and experiences. Our focus for the next three lies in breaking down barriers to participation for youth. We aim to reach more marginalized and underprivileged youth, and break down any language barrier or geographic constraint. Moreover, our educational offers have mostly focused on the founder role. To showcase the variety of ways one can achieve impact through their career, we will highlight other important roles in the social entrepreneurship process.

SUPPORT Preparing the best ventures for flying high, not burning out

Our impact measurement and studies with SIA alumni have highlighted the importance of both individual mentorship and impact/business model validation in the incubation. While these two drivers are core to our strategy for the next three years, we will also put greater emphasis on female empowerment and wellbeing. We see great impact potential in increasing the representation of female and diverse role models in our incubation, and in promoting healthier attitudes towards leadership and team cultures.

COMMUNITY Building a peer community of young leaders

Community plays a vital role in all the phases of our program. From our educational offerings to our incubation, we have always fostered supportive spaces for our participants and micro-ecosystems for their ventures. After ten years, we see great impact potential in building a stronger community around our alumni. We therefore aim to engage our alumni as inspiring role models for youth, provide them with greater opportunities for later-stage support (via accelerators, impact funds, networks, etc.) and connect them with each other to build supportive relationships.





Impact field

AWARENESS

Our contribution 2020

RESILIENT LEADERSHIP

↘ **-3%** 13% of incubation participants felt a **high rate of burnout** in 2020 compared to 16% in 2019

↘ **-13%** 21% of incubation participants felt a **high rate of exhaustion** in 2020 compared to 34% in 2019

→ **+0%** 13% in 2020 of incubation participants felt a **high rate of disengagement** in 2020 compared to 13% in 2019



14
countries of
activity



2,543,769
people reached
online



134
cities of
activity

CAREER CLARITY

65%
of participants found out whether or not they want to become a social entrepreneur

OPPORTUNITY SPREAD

SIA applicants raise awareness about social entrepreneurship on average to

7

SUPPORT FOR THE MARGINALIZED

69%
of applicants have experienced at least one form of economic, social, or political marginalization



Fostering resilient social entrepreneurs

● Gabriela Gandel

Executive Director, Impact Hub Global
SIA Ecosystem Partner

🔗 Why do you think starting a venture during these uncertain times actually represents a unique opportunity for young people?

● Young people are facing an uncertain world of work. The COVID-19 crisis is disrupting industries dramatically, and many of the jobs of the past will simply not come back. However, this disruption

has created opportunities to form powerful new value propositions for the circumstances through social entrepreneurship and innovation.

Entrepreneurship not only enables young people to create successful organizations that have an impact on the urgent social and environmental challenges of our time, but also provides clarity on their professional path. It empowers them with a diverse set of skills necessary to navigate the fluid and flexible world of work as they go out and make their careers in the new reality.

🔗 Resilience is of the utmost importance for social entrepreneurs right now, but it can be hard to balance starting a venture and maintaining well-being. How can young people negotiate these two elements?

● The key to entrepreneurial well-being is at the minimum twofold. On one hand, it is about designing your lifestyle in a way that balances work and personal life well, so that the inevitable uncertainties and challenges of entrepreneurship do not become overwhelming. Self-care like

meditation and yoga and taking time for rest, family, and friends are important.

Equally, staying connected and investing in building a community of peer entrepreneurs is also vital for the inspiration, belonging, and mutual support they offer.

🔗 What does the social entrepreneurship ecosystem need to do to help young people navigate both these dynamics?

● The ecosystem needs to focus on increased collaboration to create an enabling culture and concrete service offers for entrepreneurs in each local ecosystem. This support needs to encompass the whole individual – including their well-being – and enable international connection for easier cross-fertilization and scaling.

It will then be much easier for young people to gain the human, social and financial capital they need for successful entrepreneurship. Collecting evidence on what works and what does not is also key to driving the continuous improvement of service offers for these innovators to succeed.



Impact field
EDUCATION
Our contribution 2020



CAMILLA LOVREK

Project Manager,
MEGA Education Foundation
Mentor, SIA Austria

The challenges of our world need young people and their ideas. SIA offers a safe and encouraging space to unfold these ideas and to make a change.



5,193
digital
participants



156
events and
workshops

Top 6 Impact Fields



6 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the UN

EDUCATIONAL VALUE

83%
learned much
from the digital format
they attended

CONTENT RELEVANCE

87%
found the online
formats interesting
and relevant

TECHNICAL ADAPTATION

85%
found the technical
adaptation allowed easy
accessibility



Building bridges to marginalized youth

● **Mariam Danelia**

Coordinator
SIA Georgia

🗨️ **COVID-19 was a shock for all SIA hosts around the world. What was the situation like in Georgia, and how did it impact the SIA program?**

● The situation in Georgia was quite normal at first. We were able to hold kick off events in-person in Tbilisi and in other cities. This, however, did not last. Everything changed quickly and the country went into lockdown.

We were proactive and immediately shifted our offerings online.

🗨️ **How did you adapt the program and transform the crisis into an opportunity?**

● Online workshops were quite successful, allowing us to cover more regions than we were originally planning on. We wanted to push our impact further in this time of crisis and developed a plan with our partner UNDP Georgia to provide internet to participants living in remote villages. This gave marginalized groups direct access to our offerings.

The success of the partnership was felt instantly. Event & workshop participation was high, we received twice as many applications as our previous year, and had the best finalist projects in SIA Georgia's history. We also scaled our program to allow for 10 finalist teams instead of 6, which means 10 teams were able to undergo intensive incubation and 5 were able to win instead of 3.

🗨️ **What was the response like from your participants?**

● Our participants were very supportive of our adaptations. Certain finalists from remote regions would have been unable to come to the capital every week to meet their mentors. The online format allowed them to get the support they needed at home. As a result of this success, we plan to add an online format to our program in the coming years.

🗨️ **What were your biggest takeaways from your experience of proactively adapting to the crisis, and how does this influence your ambitions for the next few years?**

● By adapting to the crisis, we discovered the value of providing our offerings online and successfully reached more marginalized youth than ever before. However, I also think that in-person workshops have their own benefits. If we use blended learning to combine the two and improve the quality of online and offline formats in the future, we will likely achieve great results!



Impact field
SUPPORT
Our contribution 2020

UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

94%

have developed a deep understanding of the social or environmental challenge they address

VALUABLE MENTORSHIP

95%

found their mentor helpful for the development of their venture



557
applications
for SIA



120
incubated
ventures



52
awards
given

LONG-TERM VIABILITY

81%

have identified a strong, viable model to generate long term income for their business

SOLVING THE PROBLEM

89%

have developed a deep understanding of how they will get their product/service to the target group and funders effectively



Protecting cultural heritage in times of crisis

● **Dilara Bozkır, Eylül Danışman, Elif Kadayıf, Tuba Delikara**
Co-founders of SANDIK,
SIA Turkey Finalist 2020 &
Community Award Winner

What does Sandık do?

● Sandık re-designs traditional Turkish crafts and handicrafts and gives them a modern twist. These traditional crafts are in danger of disappearing, so we modernize them and bring them back into museum stores visited by local and foreign

tourists. This allows us to ensure the sustainability & longevity of Anatolian culture.

One of our main goals is to increase the employment power of craftsmen and traditional handicraftsmen, allowing them to create value-added products reflecting Anatolian culture worldwide.

Why did you apply to SIA?

● We, 4 women, have taken on the task of protecting our cultural heritage in order to provide employment, contribute to the economy and create stable and fair societies. We aim to reconnect our modern society with its origins by encouraging the production of handicrafts that are about to disappear.

With this in mind, we felt that SIA was the right place for us to achieve our objectives. SIA met our expectations with its expert mentor network, the content in its incubation, and its overall role as a leader in the social entrepreneurship ecosystem. Above all, SIA made us feel heard! The internationality of SIA also helped us achieve our

vision of being part of a global network.

How did the crisis reshape your incubation experience?

● Our products are made to be sold in museums and galleries, which were in trouble due to the pandemic. The lack of tourism also made it difficult for us to make judgments about the attractiveness of our products because foreign tourists did not enter the country.

Thanks to the SIA program and its mentors, we were able to shift our business model and found successful methods of conducting field research.

What are your future plans for Sandık?

● In the future, we are looking to form strategic business partnerships and raise seed investment to bring our venture to the next level. We're looking to reach international markets by selling our products online, and showcase our work in at least twenty museums around the world within the next 2 years.



Impact field
COMMUNITY
Our contribution 2020



IOAN CHIRILA

Co-founder of 2Kids

SIA Romania Winner 2020

“At first, 2kids was our dream of a circular economy model in the children’s fashion industry. SIA helped us concretize this dream by asking us and helping us solve the right questions: “Why are we doing this?” and “How will we know we have succeeded?”.”



36,840
community
votes



869
alumni
ventures



180
alumni involved
in the program

ROLE MODELING

76%

of all SIA alumni gave speeches to youth about social entrepreneurship

PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING

80%

of incubated teams found cohort gatherings very helpful for the development of their venture

LONG-TERM MENTORSHIP

77%

of incubated teams consider working with their mentor after SIA



Shifting business models, enhancing impact

● Sören Lex,
Plasticpreneur
SIA Austria, Winner 2016

🔗 What does Plasticpreneur do?

● We make plastic circular – to empower communities, thrive innovation and foster the transition towards a circular economy.

Plasticpreneur is implementing plasticpreneur hubs globally. Our key activities are the development and distribution of small scale

plastic recycling machines and combining them with social entrepreneurship programs.

We have distributed our equipment in over 40 countries on 6 continents in the last 18 months. Participating in and winning SIA in 2016 gave us the confidence we could get to where we are now.

🔗 How did you and your team first experience the COVID-19 crisis?

● When we saw the shortage for personal protective equipment in Austria, a country with one of the most advanced healthcare systems in the world, we realized that many other countries would likely face even greater challenges. We took it as an opportunity to achieve greater impact, and innovated further so that our tools could better fulfill the needs of the local market.

🔗 What proactive steps did you take to adapt to the situation and turn it into an opportunity for your organization?

● We distributed Face Shield “production kits” to over 12 countries where they produced more

than 80,000 Face Shields out of recycled plastic waste. Our international travels to set up new projects were unfortunately restricted, so we focused on online training to support projects abroad. We also doubled our team in Austria.

During the crisis, we shifted our business model towards the creation of a global network which acts locally. This shift allowed us to win the UNIDO Global Call for “Innovative Ideas and Technologies vs. COVID-19 and beyond”, which receives more than 1100 applications.

🔗 What were some of your key learnings from the experience you and your team went through during the pandemic?

● We realized that it is crucial to have partners in our supply chain we can rely on in times of crisis.

However, we also realized that there are much more important things than business and work – it’s about supporting each other and worrying about the things that really matter. This allowed us to grow even closer as a team.

A New Era

by Neven Marinović

This year has of course been dominated by the crises caused by COVID-19: the pandemic and health related issues, but also fear, panic and uncertainty. However, it has also highlighted the fragility of the systems that we rely on in all spheres - economic, social, political and of course environmental.

There is, on the other hand, a global movement already active and present in almost every country in the world that has been preaching for more just economic models for decades. This movement has taken on many different names, including social business, sustainable business, etc. It calls for an eco-

nomie model that not only takes into account the environmental impacts of corporations while valuing the importance of economic activity for local communities, but actually has an intentionally positive impact on both the planet and the people.

Social Impact Award has become one of the key global players in this movement that not only preaches the importance of the current economic paradigm shift, but also provides practical tools, support, networks and even finances for young people who want to promote solutions for a more just, and more sustainable world.

With this in mind, there is no doubt that now, more than ever, we need to fight for this vision of the world. We need to mobilize a diverse group of stakeholders, among which the most important are young people. Those willing to



challenge the status quo, willing to innovate, with the determination to be a part of the solution while creating jobs and work for themselves and those around them. It is the only way to achieve an economy based on the principles of social entrepreneurship, where business is an integral part of the solution for how we eradicate poverty, injustice, exclusion, and environmental degradation.

SIA has a crucial role to play in pushing this idea from the margins to the mainstream, by engaging a critical mass of young people and providing them not only with the necessary tools and skills, but with the inspiration to

build this vision of our world. By providing a safe space for exploration and connection beyond borders, these young people are not simply part of a program – **they are part of a movement.**



Neven Marinović
Co-Founder & Executive Director,
Smart Kolektiv
SIA Advisory Board Member



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A big **thank you**
to our strategic partners.



**EMPOWERING
YOUTH TO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE**