



ALUMNI CHANGEMAKERS

ALUMNI STARTUP NETWORK



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Alumni Changemakers

Explore the entrepreneurial spirit within Goa Institute of Management's (GIM) three-decade legacy with 'Alumni Changemakers - Alumni Startup Network.' This book highlights the journeys of GIM alumni who have ventured into entrepreneurship after graduation. Through enlightening interviews, these alumni reflect the institution's ethos of innovation. The publication not only celebrates GIM's profound impact but also acknowledges alumni ventures, endorsed by the Alumni Association. As GIM commemorates its 30th anniversary in Goa, 'Alumni Startup Network' encapsulates the institute's steadfast dedication to fostering entrepreneurial excellence.



Director's Message

Dear Alumni,

As we unveil the GIM Alumni Achievers book, it is with great pride and excitement that I extend my warmest greetings to each one of you. This book stands as a testament to the remarkable achievements of our alumni, showcasing their diverse journeys and contributions to society.

Over the last 30+ years, GIM has flourished, and our alumni have been the driving force behind this success. With a robust alumni base of over 6000 individuals, GIM has become a hub of excellence and innovation.

The GIM Alumni Achievers book not only captures individual success stories but also reflects the collective impact of the GIM community. It is a celebration of your resilience, determination, and commitment to making a difference in your respective fields.

As you peruse the pages of this book, may it serve as a source of inspiration and pride. Each story is a chapter in the larger narrative of GIM's legacy, and I am confident that it will inspire current and future generations of GIM students.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each one of you for your invaluable contributions to GIM and beyond. Your accomplishments embody the spirit of excellence that defines our institution.

Thank you for being an integral part of the GIM family. Here's to many more years of success, innovation, and impactful contributions.

Warm regards,

Prof. Ajit Parulekar

**Director
Goa Institute of Management
Chairman, GIM Alumni Association**



Chair's Message

We are thrilled to share an exciting news with you! After months of planning and collaborative work, we are proud to present the first volume under the Alumni Changemaker Series. This volume is a celebration of the remarkable journeys undertaken by our alumni who have ventured into the entrepreneurial landscape. The volume shares details of our alumni entrepreneurs as well as features stories of a few social entrepreneurs. Each of the narratives of the social entrepreneur is a rich tapestry of their experiences which provides practical insights into the entrepreneurial world, with valuable lessons shared by the accomplished alumni entrepreneur. Their stories are inspirational and serve as a blueprint for GIM students and alumni who wish to embark on an entrepreneurial journey.

Through this volume we celebrate the spirit of entrepreneurship within the GIM community and we congratulate all our alumni for their successful entrepreneurial ventures.

Dr. Sreerupa Sengupta
Assistant Professor, Healthcare Management
Chairperson, Alumni Relations



GIMAA Member's Message

This is more than a coffee table book for me.

This book honors the dedication, vision, and purpose-driven leadership of our alumni entrepreneurs. They tackle society's toughest challenges while building businesses for good. Their stories ignite hope, prove profit and purpose can co-exist, and inspire us all to be architects of a brighter future and here's to the impact creators, our alumni, building enduring impact beyond products, beyond profits.

Humbled to contribute, honored to share their stories.

With gratitude,

Hardik Sojitra
Class of 2014/PGDM Full Time
Member - GIMAA







ALUMNI ENTREPRENEUR NETWORK



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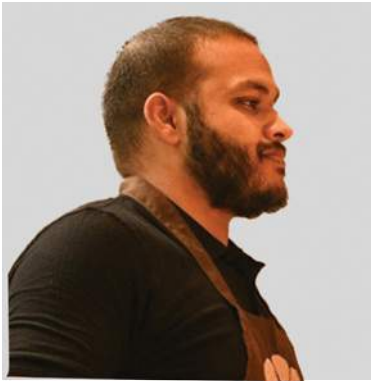
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Get in touch with the Alumni Office and Nominate yourself for the second edition of Alumni Changemakers – Alumni Startup Network

REACH US ANYTIME

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CREATING SOCIAL IMPACT

JOURNEY OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS

Ram Kolavennu

Class of 1998/PGDM Full Time

Founding Member, Labournet



What motivated you to move into the development sector?

My transition from the corporate to the development sector was motivated by a profound belief that engaging in social work is most effective when done during one's prime time. For me joining the development sector was not a retirement job. Rather I was yearning to make significant contribution towards development of the society. I wanted to transform lives of individuals who are less fortunate and help them find jobs to improve their living conditions. It was this zeal which motivated me to start my venture and propelled me to make meaningful contributions towards changing lives of people through my initiatives.

What is the core focus of your venture? Who is your target audience?

The primary goal of my venture is to transform communities and bring about positive change. Labornet is a social enterprise which is dedicated towards the skill development of the informal sector, facilitating them to increase their earnings through new forms of livelihood. I have been instrumental in scaling up the skilling initiatives of Labornet. The primary target audience for Labornet is the undereducated and unemployed youth. Another significant initiative with which I am associated is the Foundation for Excellence, a non-profit organization. This organisation specifically targets academically bright students who are financially disadvantaged, and helps them to pursue higher education and professional courses.

What challenges have you faced in your journey in the development sector?

The development sector journey has been laden with several challenges. Since my foray into the development sector, my biggest challenge has been to secure adequate funding. Infact even today, fund raising remains as one of the biggest hurdles towards the growth of the venture. Another challenge has been creating a secure

foundation for the organization, especially in the early days of its journey. Additionally, getting the right skilled personnel to carry out the initiatives and continuous capacity building of the human resources for sustained growth also pose as significant challenges. Overcoming these obstacles requires strategic planning, support of dedicated partners and the passion towards social change.

How have you incorporated community feedback into your venture?

Community feedback is integral to our approach. For skilling initiatives under Labornet, we have established an engagement process that involves reaching out to beneficiaries in interior parts of the country. This process ensures that our programs align with the specific needs and aspirations of the community. In the case of Foundation for Excellence, we engage with students to collect their feedback, understand their needs, which helps us immensely to enhance our offerings such as provide adequate financial support, mentorship, aptitude training, and continuous support beyond graduation.

How do you measure/define impact?

In the development sector, measuring impact is crucial. Impact assessment helps us realise the effectiveness of our initiatives. We emphasize on tangible outcomes and quantifiable impact. Labornet, through its skilling initiatives, has directly or indirectly impacted close to 100,000 livelihoods. Labornet has created value not only for unemployed youth by skilling them for formal jobs; the venture has also created value for the industry by providing skilled labor force. Foundation for Excellence, which focuses on the education and professional development, has impacted around 40,000 students, leading to transformative changes in their lives.

What social impact have you created through your venture?

Our initiatives have a significant and broad

societal influence. Labornet's skill development programmes have improved youth unemployment and employability while also having a direct influence on thousands of undereducated youngsters. Foundation for Excellence has made a substantial contribution to the professional and educational growth of academically gifted but financially disadvantaged students, changing their lives and opening doors to better futures. They are all settled in nicely and have begun contributing financially and in other ways towards societal development. Thus, we can say that our initiatives have created changemakers.

What are your future plans?

In the future, we hope to use Foundation for Excellence to assist a particular number of people. Our goal is to turn it into a programme that is appealing to the corporate sector and has a significant impact. Beyond the immediate beneficiaries, we hope to create a greater social impact by bridging skill gaps and supporting the nation's skilling objective.

What are your key learnings from your journey?

The journey has been a continuous learning process. Some of my biggest lessons have been how to stay true to the cause on the face of challenges; developing strategies to avoid dependency on specific initiatives and spreading engagement across different areas and partners for sustained growth. The importance of honesty in our endeavors and the realization that avoiding shortcuts is vital for achieving long-term goals have been my guiding principles throughout the journey.

What is your message for future social entrepreneurs?

To future social entrepreneurs, I emphasize on the importance of staying focused on their goals and maintaining honesty in their endeavors. Challenges are inevitable, but strategic planning is key towards overcoming obstacles and creating

key towards overcoming obstacles and creating impact. I would also like to share that future entrepreneurs should adopt a comprehensive approach to entrepreneurship instead of taking short cuts in the name of quick profits. Working in the social sector is rewarding and you will feel happy to see when your venture will create positive changes in the society.





Supria Dhanda

Class of 1998/PGDM Full Time

Founder and CEO, Bagggel Foundation



What motivated you to start your venture?

Embarking on this entrepreneurial journey was a response to a critical observation of gender imbalances in the workplace. It wasn't merely about venturing into business; in fact, it was an impassioned response to the structural underrepresentation of women in workforce especially in leadership roles. I have had a very satisfying corporate career and reached pinnacle of success. However, I don't see many women at the top. This underrepresentation of women at senior leadership roles strongly influenced me to dismantle barriers and create a transformative platform that surpasses traditional success metrics. The goal was to initiate a paradigm shift, to create a space where women can shatter the glass ceiling as well as collectively reshape the narrative of their professional trajectories. The change begins right at the top and through BAGGGEL Foundation, we intend to balance the top with more women CEOs.

What is the core focus of your venture? Who is your target audience?

My venture known as BAGGGEL Foundation transcends the conventional networking platform. The purpose of my venture is to develop women leaders and propel women in senior management positions for greater personal and organizational success. We have meticulously designed an ecosystem which focuses on comprehensive development of women across diverse professional spectrums and help women aim for the top CEO job. It is more than a meeting ground; it's a catalyst for solidarity, knowledge exchange, and collaborative growth. The target audience is expansive, encompassing women from various sectors—entrepreneurs, professionals, and leaders. The vision is to be a unifying force that addresses the unique challenges faced by women in their professional journeys, provide a multifaceted and inclusive support system which goes beyond mere networking and believe in shared success and collaborating for a shared future. BAGGGEL aims at facilitating women to unlock their full potential, seize the emerging opportunities and

acquire mastery of tools in order to craft value propositions for CEO role as well as board positions in any business.

What challenges have you faced in your entrepreneurial journey?

The entrepreneurial journey, while fulfilling, also came with a complex web of challenges. From the initial skepticism surrounding the viability of our concept to navigating the unpredictable financial landscape, overcoming these challenges required tenacity and strategic recalibrations. Adapting to the ever-evolving business landscape required a high degree of agility, an insatiable appetite for learning, and an unwavering commitment to our mission. Conquering these hurdles made our venture strong which can survive the rough water of entrepreneurship. At BAGGGEL, our members believe in 'Growing by Giving' and they show up for networking, development, peer mentoring and sometimes just to share a laugh with a friend.

How have you incorporated community feedback into your venture?

Community feedback is an integral part of our venture's DNA. We have established a dynamic feedback loop, involving surveys, focus groups, and extensive research. This iterative process ensures that the platform evolves based on genuine needs, aspirations, and challenges faced by women. We have committed ourselves to an ongoing dialogue, ensuring our platform remains anticipatory and responsive. The incorporation of community feedback is a testament to our dedication towards creating an inclusive and empowering space that resonates with the women we aim to serve. Our peer mentoring centers around asking our members, what they want to be mentored on, which mentoring group would they join thus and why. Our mentors have the will to pay forward and keenness to share their insights for a larger success. We hold masterclasses from finding your purpose to celebrating your authentic self to entering the world of AI to strategic thinking for CEO role. The wide canvas with distinguished members is a great place to exchange ideas for a

better and balanced tomorrow.

How do you measure/define impact?

Our metric for impact transcends conventional financial benchmarks. It's more than just numbers; it's about reducing the failure rates for women-led initiatives, fostering a robust support network, and contributing to a sustainable and inclusive business environment. We measure impact by the tangible elevation of women within and beyond professional realms, creating a lasting positive effect on their careers and lives. It is more of a qualitative assessment that reflects our commitment to meaningful, transformative change. At the top, we intend to replace ambition deficit with passionate pursuit of higher challenges and raising your hand for next big job and staying hungry to conquering more.

What social impact have you created through your venture?

Beyond being a networking platform, we have evolved into a catalytic force for societal transformation. Our initiative actively challenges gender norms, positioning us as advocates for increased women representation in professional spheres. The authentic connections formed within our community contribute to a broader societal shift, fostering a more equitable, inclusive, and empowered professional landscape. The social impact is tangible, reaching beyond the confines of our virtual space and resonating in the broader societal fabric.

What are your future plans?

Our future plans are anchored in strategic growth with a commitment towards preserving our unique value proposition. While exploring expansion opportunities, we prioritize in-person events that foster genuine connections. Our compass is set on quality over quantity, navigating the thrilling, dynamic, and evolving landscape that awaits. We envision our venture as a transformative force that continues to redefine the narrative of women in professional spheres, contributing to a more inclusive, equitable, and empowered future. We intend to grow the community by 5x

and open regional chapters thus facilitating in person interactions and networking to form deeper bonds and collectively developing women for the next big change.

What are your key learnings from your journey as an entrepreneur?

The entrepreneurial journey has been a profound teacher, emphasizing humility, continuous learning, resilience in the face of failures, and recognizing the strength that mixed-gender teams bring to the table. This approach has been instrumental in navigating the multifaceted landscape, making us agile, adaptive, and resilient. The key learnings extend beyond business strategies to encompass a comprehensive understanding of leadership, collaboration, and the transformative power of a mission-driven approach. Learning to influence and putting others first and being in the background is a joyful humble beginning.

What is your message for future entrepreneurs?

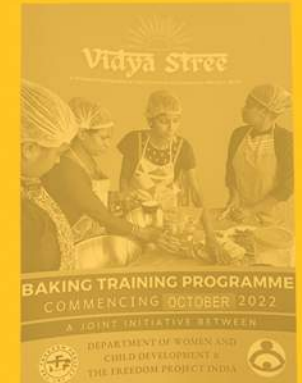
To future entrepreneurs, I extend the advice to start early, infuse your venture with a higher purpose beyond profit, reject stereotypes that may limit your vision, and view diversity not as a checkbox but as the cornerstone of innovation and inclusive culture. Embrace the richness that diversity brings, paving the way for a more robust, innovative, and inclusively prosperous future. Let your journey be fueled by a passion for positive change, resilience in the face of challenges, and an unwavering commitment to making a meaningful impact in the world. In a man's world women may be the diversity, just like men are diversity in a woman's world. We at BAGGGEL Foundation are mission focused to create a diverse and balanced world of tomorrow.





Simran Oberoi

Class of 2003/PGDM Full Time
Founder, Ovenderful Mom Baker's Community
(OMBC)



What motivated you to start your venture?

The origins of this venture can be traced back to an ardent passion for baking and an earnest desire to be a catalyst for positive change within the community. My son's birth, ten years ago, served as an inspiration for starting the Ovenderful Mom Baker's Community (OMBC). My son was very fond of baked products and I started looking up for recipes which would provide healthy baked food to my son. Soon I realised many of the ingredients used in health baking are either costly or have limited availability. I started experimenting with indigenous ingredients, available in shops, easily to ensure my son enjoyed baked products which were healthy. I wanted to share my experiments and knowledge of healthy baking with other mothers, who may be struggling to provide nutritious baked products to their children which were also healthy. I formed community on Facebook and included mothers who were fond of healthy baking. As time has gone by, I have seen OMBC develop organically into a community-driven initiative.

What is the core focus of your venture? Who is your target audience?

My venture is a vibrant tapestry of advocating for healthy baking practices. The venture focuses primarily on engaging parents, especially mothers. It is extremely satisfying to observe that what began as an knowledge sharing forum has progressively evolved into a global collective of healthy bakers. The members of OMBC steadfastly promote healthy baking methods in their own communities.

What challenges have you faced in your entrepreneurial journey?

My entrepreneurial journey has been fraught with diverse challenges. The complexity had increased manifold during the recent pandemic. The nature of the difficulties are varied and range from navigating the nuances of virtual bake sales, maintaining credibility, and coordinating with diverse

members for the expansion into different cities. Strategic navigation was required to tackle each of the complex challenges.

How have you incorporated community feedback into your venture?

The inputs from community is what keeps our efforts alive. The synthesis of community input is an integral part of our evolutionary process, and significantly shapes the direction of our projects. We actively solicit and incorporate suggestions and ideas from our dedicated members and this process creates a dynamic and cooperative workplace.

How do you measure/define impact?

For us, the measure of effect is not an abstract idea; rather, it is determined by observable, beneficial results in the communities we support. Funds raised for certain causes are the precise yardstick by which the success of events such as bake sales is measured, guaranteeing measurable and significant outcomes that align with our overall objective.

What social impact have you created through your venture?

OBMC had begun as a knowledge sharing platform but over the years has expanded beyond its original scope. Today, we do healthy bake sales for raising funds for social causes. Through our cake sales we have created diverse social impact. We have distributed healthy baked goods to underprivileged communities. We have taught survivors of human trafficking baking skills, thereby helping them to become financially independent and start a new life. We continue to collaborate with several NGOs on diverse projects which broadens and deepens our influence. Globally, our network has grown to nearly 40,000 active members representing a powerful community spanning 20 countries.

What are your future plans?

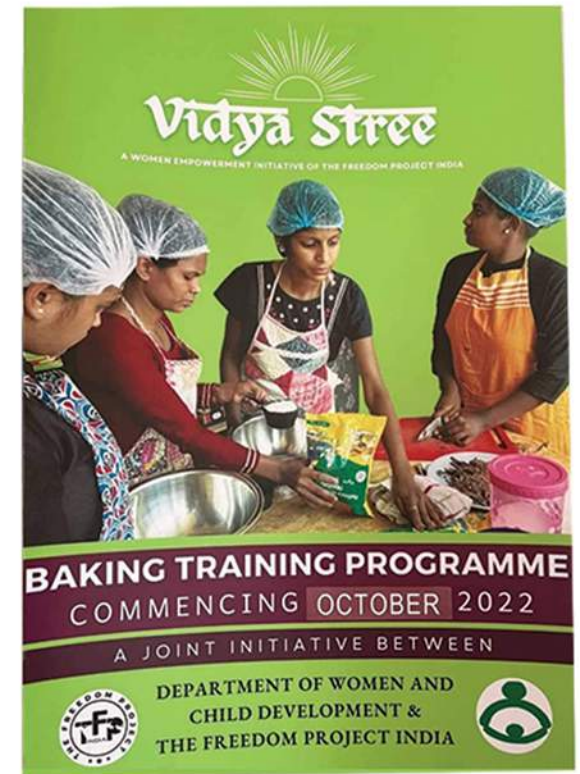
Our ambitions for the future are interwoven with our steadfast dedication to healthy baking efforts. The key objective is to increase our influence rather than merely preserve it. In order to realise our future goals, we will have to aggressively grow our community-driven initiatives to have an even more noticeable impact. We will also have to strengthen partnerships with corporations and NGOs so that we can organize more effective fundraising, and finally create awareness about healthy baking among a wider audience.

What are your key learnings from your journey as an entrepreneur?

When I reflect on my entrepreneurial journey, three key learnings emerge for me which have been my guiding principles, too. First, it is essential to act without waiting too long for external validation. Secondly, to nurture an unshakeable commitment towards upholding the core principles, guaranteeing a constant alignment with our mission. Lastly, to leverage the transformative ability of virtual communities which have the power to forge real partnerships to advance our projects in addition to fostering strong friendships.

What is your message for future entrepreneurs?

To the future entrepreneurs, I would like to say, "embark on your journey with zeal, do not overthink. It is necessary to liberate yourself from the fear of failure. Undoubtedly there will be challenges but you will have to have faith in the potential impact of your actions, which is profound and far-reaching. Embrace the journey with purpose, knowing that every small step has the potential to make a lasting and positive difference".





Pallavi Srivastava

Class of 2005/PGDM Full Time
Founder & CEO, Our Better Planet



What motivated you to start your venture?

I worked for Wipro for around six to seven years in the USA, after finishing my studies. In USA, I was introduced to a well-organized system of eco-friendly and sustainable products, readily available and clearly labelled. But when I got back to India, I found that the products lacked transparency and clarity and that made it difficult for to make informed choices. This realization deepened when I became a mother and faced difficulties in finding eco-friendly products for my family.

Bengaluru witnessed a startup boom around 2014-15. During this phase, I met several people working on innovative products, including eco-friendly products but found the ecosystem to be unorganized. This inspired the idea of creating an aggregator platform for eco-friendly and sustainable products with clear labelling and information.

It was a gap in the market in India which eventually led to the birth of my venture - Our Better Planet

What does your venture focus on? Who is your target audience?

Our Better Planet positions itself as a one-stop shop for conscious consumers and caters to diverse goals of sustainable development (such as goals on creation of livelihood, responsible consumption and production). Our vision extends beyond offering sustainable products; rather, it envisions integrating sustainable services in the future. This expansion could encompass various domains, such as recommending eco-friendly laundry services or collaborating with travel bloggers to provide suggestions for environmentally responsible accommodations. Through our venture, we support local artisans, small business, other startups who prioritise sustainable development goals (SDGs).

The primary target audience of our venture are men and women aged 35 years and above, often

with children. This demographic is characterized by a well-travelled background, possessing a nuanced understanding of various offerings, potentially due to their exposure to diverse cultures through travel. Many in this target group hold postgraduate qualifications, further contributing to their awareness and discernment regarding sustainable products and practices.

Through our platform we also work extensively with NGOs, artisanal clusters and with businesses whose products have minimal negative impact on people and planet.

What challenges have you faced in your entrepreneurial journey?

I faced many challenges when I started the venture. Although I had no background in retail or sustainability, I believed in the idea and hence, sought help from my network. Two alumni from GIM eventually agreed to partner with me in this exploration. The initial funding as well as clients for the venture came through partnerships with friends and alumni. In my entrepreneurial journey, I have encountered several challenges and complexities; also, there are costs associated with the business, however, I remained committed to the vision of creating a platform that promotes awareness and provides a curated selection of eco-friendly products.

The main objective of Our Better Planet is to motivate people towards using sustainable and environmentally friendly products. But changing consumer perception and buying choices is an uphill task. In fact, one major obstacle is consumer resistance, which frequently results from doubt and preexisting assumptions. Some people consider these things to be expensive because of their higher price point, which makes them doubtful of their worth.

How have you incorporated community feedback into your venture?

While explicit feedback regarding retention on the platform may not have been provided, there have

been instances where customers have shared positive experiences about Our Better Planet. From the feedback shared by the customers we have come to know about individuals who have successfully transitioned towards healthier and more sustainable food products offered on the platform. The platform has also collaborated with brands that specialize in hemp-based products, a category not easily accessible in conventional markets and sometimes subject to societal stigma, too.

How do you measure/define impact?

Our Better Planet has had a significant impact on a number of fronts, especially when it comes to the groups it works with and the constructive societal changes it helps to bring about. Due to scale constraints, the precise environmental impact has not yet been determined; however, the platform deliberately selects to collaborate with socially conscious businesses such as organisations run by women, or which hire people with disabilities, or which work with People living with HIV and AIDS.

What impact has your venture had on the community?

Our Better Planet has had significant impact on a number of fronts, especially when it comes to the groups it works with and the constructive societal changes it helps bring about. Due to scale constraints, the precise environmental impact has not yet been determined; however, the platform deliberately selects to collaborate with socially conscious businesses. This includes programmes run by women, those that hire people with speech or hearing disabilities, and those that assist those impacted by HIV.

What is your message for future entrepreneurs?

The platform continues to emphasise on the value proposition and the necessity for customers to be proactive in researching and comprehending the benefits of the items they purchase, even

in the face of obstacles, particularly the higher pricing associated with niche products. A more mindful approach to consumption is mostly fostered by passion and awareness, which is in line with goal of Our Better Planet. We offer not just products but also information and insights on sustainable living.





Chitresh Sinha

Class of 2009/PGDM Full Time
Founder, The Plated Project



What motivated you to start your venture?

The Plated Project was born out of a desire to transcend the boundaries of commerce and create social impact. The project took shape in 2019. I recognized the power of art as a catalyst for change. Hunger remains a serious concern, globally as well as in India. By leveraging art, functionality, and storytelling, I firmly believed that emotional responses could be evoked, triggering meaningful behavioral change in society which will help towards addressing India's hunger crisis.

What is the core focus of your venture?? Who is your target audience?

At the heart of the Plated Project lies a transformative mission – "art against hunger." This core focus drives the venture's every endeavor. Every product serves as a canvas to address critical social issues, but hunger takes precedence. The Plated Project meticulously crafts home and decor products in collaboration with global artists, creating not only aesthetically appealing items but also powerful conversation starters. The target audience consists of individuals who appreciate the artistic value of these products and are socially conscious, seeking meaningful stories and products that carry a powerful message.

What challenges have you faced in your entrepreneurial journey?

There have been several obstacles in the way of the Plated Project's entrepreneurial journey. It dawned on me early on that striking a balance between profitability and a meaningful social impact is no small task. The possible trade-offs that come with seeking money from venture capitalists are a major worry since they bring up issues with operational control and autonomy. Strategic agility has been necessary to navigate the specific obstacles of India's charity ecosystem. Even though it is a lucrative organisation, the Plated Project is dedicated to upholding its original values and changing society in a meaningful way.

How have you incorporated community feedback into your venture?

The Plated Project understands the value of community input. The brand's ecosystem depends on a mutually beneficial partnership with the artisans. Through income sharing, artwork commissioning, and tying each product back to the original artist, the Plated Project creates an ongoing feedback loop. This promotes a cooperative atmosphere, cultivates connections, and aids in the project's iterative development. Feedback from the community also enables us to tailor and gauge customer demand. In fact feedback from clients is crucial if you want to connect with them, effectively.

How do you measure/define impact?

The Plated Project employs a sophisticated method to assess its influence. In order to accurately assess the efficacy of its endeavours, we consider a multitude of characteristics. To make sure the efforts are having an impact, foundational indicators include quality and reach. Quickness and effectiveness in allocating finances are markers of an organization's capacity to react quickly to societal demands. The dedication to openness and observable results is emphasised by cooperation with reliable partners.

What social impact have you created through your venture?

The social impact of the Plated Project extends far beyond financial contributions. While sales of our products contribute towards reducing the hunger crisis, a serious concern in India today; the venture also takes pride in championing artists, strengthening their opportunities for livelihood and thereby enhancing their quality of life. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Plated Project responded immediately to the pressing needs of the society by providing meals to the community. The impact of our venture is demonstrated through livelihood generation for artisan community and by sensitizing our customers about

contemporary social issues through local art forms.

What are your future plans?

The Plated Project's future plans revolve around strategic innovation and global expansion. The brand aims to introduce more unique products and leverage platforms like Amazon to amplify its reach. While maintaining its role as a contributor to charity, the Plated Project aspires to become a recognized platform that champions genuine art in product design. Sustainability, innovation, and global presence remain at the forefront of our long-term plans for creating social impact.

What are your key learnings from your journey as an entrepreneur?

My entrepreneurial journey, as a founder of The Plated Project, has been very insightful for me. I have learnt to how to maintain operational independence and control and strike a balance between profitability and societal benefit, especially in the face of possible outside funding. Constant innovation in product design stands out as a key component, especially when it comes to forging emotionally meaningful relationships. Along the way, I have also learnt important lessons about overcoming obstacles, being flexible, and maintaining a strong commitment to both trade and social change.

What is your message for future entrepreneurs?

I feel, "it is possible to combine profitability with a sincere desire to create social impact. Therefore, combine business with purpose-driven missions". Plated Project emphasizes on the power of creativity for social change. Every entrepreneur should be innovative and leverage on the power of unique approaches to tackle various social issues and improve the world.



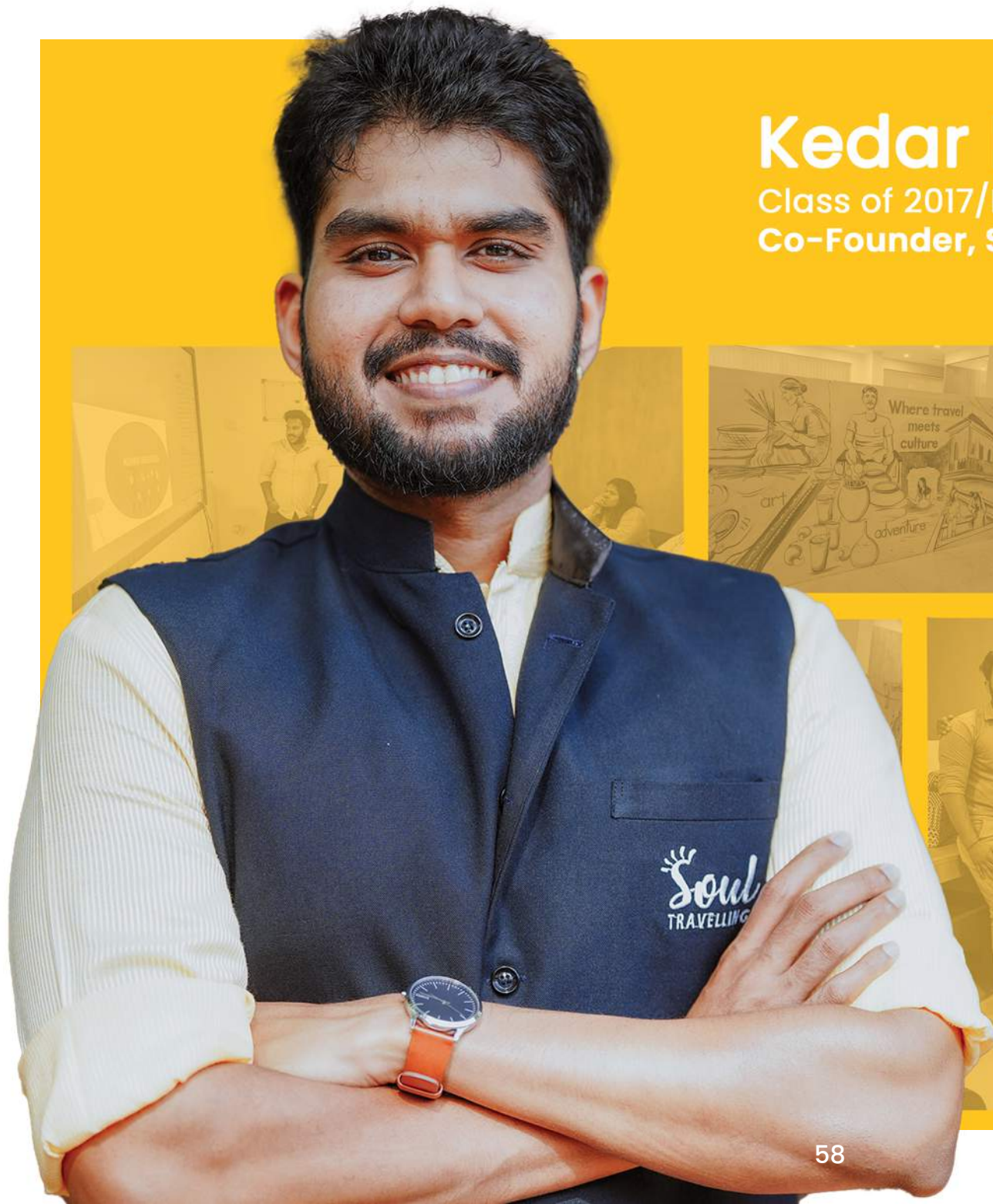


Celebrate 'Feels like Home' with our 100% profits for charity collection of pet bowls created in collaboration with Sarah Sham, Essajees Atelier



Kedar Borker

Class of 2017/PGDM Full Time
Co-Founder, Soul Travelling



What motivated you to start your venture?

After graduation, my partner and I explored diverse parts of World. People often asked stereotypical questions about Goa, assuming it's all about partying and beaches. Working outside Goa, we were consistently requested to bring back partying essentials, reinforcing these misconceptions. These experiences fuelled our inspiration and motivation.

In 2018, we initiated a campaign challenging stereotypes about Goa. Friends held placards with common misconceptions about the destination in the street, aiming to shift perceptions beyond the 3B's (beach, bikini and beer). The campaign went viral, reaching millions on Facebook.

As Goa natives, we recognized the rich diversity beyond the stereotypical image. With 450 years of Portuguese influence, the impact on food, local communities, tribal art, historical monuments, and abundant nature, including waterfalls and migratory birds, made Goa uniquely multifaceted.

Over the past 7 to 10 years, travel habits have shifted significantly from the previous generation's approach of saving up for a yearly trip, focusing on well-known destinations. Today's travellers prefer a more relaxed pace, exploring diverse places over time, departing from the earlier trend of exhaustive itineraries.

Millennials are reshaping travel, viewing it as an integral part of life. With increased disposable income, economic growth, and improved infrastructure, weekend getaways to nearby destinations are common. There's a shift towards exploring culture, connecting with local communities, savoring regional cuisines, and taking time to appreciate traditions. Slow travel, avoiding crowds, and discovering untouched places gain preference. The impact of COVID reinforced the value of prolonged stays, combining work and exploration. Travel is seen as an enriching educational experience, driving a demand for unique, immersive journeys.

What is the core focus of your venture? Who is your target audience?

Our initiative stemmed from the realization that typical tourist visits to Goa primarily benefit mainstream areas, leaving deeper communities untouched. Wanting to redirect interactions and economic benefits, we crafted a model engaging local hosts from various occupations. Over 100 community hosts, including fishermen, farmers, and talented women, now showcase their unique Goan culture. Travel is more than a leisure activity; it's an enriching experience that teaches and impacts both physical and mental well-being. Embracing travel as a preventive medium and integrating it into life offers numerous opportunities in India's growing market. The model provides a platform for retired individuals to stay connected, offers primary or secondary income for hosts, and fosters social learning. By expanding beyond the tourist hotspots, our approach not only enriches the traveler's experience but also uplifts the hidden gems of Goa's local communities.

Our target demographic spans ages 25 to 65, with a sweet spot around 25 to 50. While we've hosted 70-year-olds, they are outliers. Our audience, a mix of men and women, is technology-savvy, engaging through digital marketing channels. Predominantly from metro cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Pune and occasionally Ahmedabad. They seek unique travel experiences, fostering a close-knit community that shares stories and actively voices opinions on societal issues.

This dynamic group, having extensive travel backgrounds, appreciates doing things differently. And, the content creation industry, which has become very public, is again a TG that would like to experience travel this way.

What challenges have you faced in your entrepreneurial journey?

Navigating a new industry presented dual challenges. Firstly, in an emerging field where conventional benchmarks were absent, pricing and

product development became intricate. Engaging in extensive market research, we experimented with various price points, continually adding value to our offerings until achieving a product-market fit. Continuous feedback from our target audience guided this iterative process. Secondly, attracting top talent posed a hurdle, as the unconventional nature of our venture deterred individuals from considering guiding as a lucrative profession. Overcoming this perception involved reshaping the role of a guide into that of an ambassador, emphasizing storytelling, community connection, and expertise in mixology. Collaborating with educational institutes and dispelling misconceptions played a crucial role in recruiting and training a team of skilled ambassadors. Additionally, addressing the informality of local hosts and improving village infrastructure, particularly in areas like transportation and basic facilities, further enriched our approach to community-centric tourism.

Despite challenges, we have also received a lot of support. For instance, we have always received support from the Department of Tourism, Government of Goa. We work closely with the Government and have hosted multiple groups.

How have you incorporated community feedback into your venture?

Our Curation Team, established in recent years, plays a pivotal role by collaborating closely with the local community. Acknowledging the subjective nature of showcasing culture, we prioritize the opinions of our hosts, the local experts. Acting as a bridge, we ensure a harmonious balance between what to showcase, how much to reveal, and respecting cultural sensitivities. This collaborative approach has been instrumental in our success, fostering strong community support and ensuring a positive experience for both tourists and vendors.

How do you measure/define impact for your venture?

Our primary metric is the brand's impact,

surpassing financials, although our financials remain robust with no negative working capital or cash flow issues, except during the initial COVID-19 impact. We gauge growth through transforming Goa's travel image and innovating in the tourism industry. Hosting local talents from deep Goa and expanding from small groups to G20 delegations, including Mr. Pankaj Tripathi, signifies our progress. We aspire to influence Bollywood's portrayal of Goa and have a positive impact on scriptwriters and actors. Community contributions, team suggestions for hosting prominent figures, and fostering a mindset shift towards responsible travel define our growth strategy. Ultimately, we aim for a transformative travel experience.

What social impact have you created through has your venture?

Soul Traveling is more than a company; it's an idea transforming travel perceptions. Through Soul Travelling we have created opportunities for the traveller community towards embracing unique and sustainable experiences.

Beyond joining our trails, we motivate our travellers to make a difference by engaging with the locals, learning the local culture, their way of life and support the local economy.

We have initiated a comprehensive sustainability project, identifying plastic usage in our trail and replacing it with eco-friendly materials. Guests are encouraged to bring their bottles, and we provide filling stations, eliminating plastic use. Our business model prioritizes sustainability by minimizing resource consumption and dispersing tourists across various locations. We are collaborating with Professor Divya Singhal from GIM to develop a sustainability trail, hosting students to showcase how local ingredients sustainably produce everyday items. The immersive experience explores a village near Sanquelim, emphasizing sustainable practices in everything from daily products to traditional techniques, fostering an eco-friendly mindset.

What are your future plans?

We aim to become the premier global experiential tourism company, extending beyond Goa. Our vision is to offer unique, off-the-beaten-path experiences, transcending mainstream travel. Initially expanding to four more locations in India, our long-term goal involves global recognition. Our guests' enthusiasm and requests drive our commitment to continuous learning and expansion into new territories, with the ultimate aim of becoming a recognized brand worldwide.

What are your key learnings from your journey as an entrepreneur?

Our key learnings include the importance of continuous feedback from the target audience, reshaping roles to attract top talent, and the significance of a collaborative approach with the local community. These insights have been crucial in overcoming challenges and achieving sustainable growth.

What is your message for future entrepreneurs?

Embrace travel as a preventive medium, integrate it into life, take risks, and try new things. Amid economic growth and government investments, now is the opportune time to step out of comfort zones and explore. Travel is more than a leisure activity; it's an enriching experience that teaches and impacts both physical and mental well-being.









FACILITATING ENTREPRENEURS

ATAL INCUBATION CENTRE (AIC) – GIM

Messages from Atal Incubation Centre



Dear GIM Alumni,

It is my pleasure to connect with you through this alumni book. Supported by NITI Aayog, AIC-GIM stands at the forefront of empowering visionary founders by providing not just resources and mentorship, but a complete ecosystem for transforming innovative ideas into successful businesses.

Your success stories, as GIM alumni, embody our enduring commitment to excellence and innovation. Your entrepreneurial spirit and vast experience are invaluable to the AIC-GIM community. Whether through mentorship, investment, or leadership roles, you have the opportunity to accelerate the development of our diverse emerging entrepreneurs.

We also invite you to bring your entrepreneurial ventures back to your alma mater. Our doors are open for you to incubate your next project, leveraging AIC-GIM's strong network and resources to bring your ideas to fruition. Together, let's foster the entrepreneurial spirit and uphold the GIM legacy of impactful leadership and excellence.

Warm regards,

Sumit Garg
CEO, AIC-GIM

Dear GIM Alumni,

AIC-GIM has evolved into a prominent player among 72 incubation centers in India. We offer a unique 14-week program, providing personalized mentorship, guidance, and access to government grants. Exclusive to Goa, AIC-GIM collaborates closely with 30-35 start-ups in each cohort. For alumni interested in contributing, we invite mentorship and offer entrepreneurial opportunities. Our facility, a spacious 10,000 sq.ft area, is free for start-ups, with funding avenues up to ₹50,00,000. Looking ahead, we focus on supporting 100 women entrepreneurs in the first half of 2024, incubating 10 start-ups, and launching Entrepreneurship Development Programs. AIC-GIM is not just an incubator; it's a dynamic community and a catalyst for innovation.

Best regards,

Abhishek Singh
Incubation Manager
AIC GIM



Why AIC-GIM



**Industry Expertise
Access**



**Investor
Engagement**



**Network
Expansion**



**Flex 24x7
Workspaces**



**Startup
Intelligence Support**

1. Direct connection to faculty (GIM and external), industry professionals, augmented by a network of dedicated mentors and student interns.
2. Facilitated introductions to a network of investors, including pathways to government-backed funding schemes.
3. Grow your professional network through our community and build national and international business relationships.
4. Versatile co-working environments, with the option of residential spaces, designed to meet the diverse needs of founders.
5. Data and analytics services to assist in informed decision-making and early-planning support for startups.

Some Notable Collaborations



Successful Startups – "Fostering Success: Stories of Thriving Startups Emerged from Atal Incubation Centre at Goa Institute of Management"

TechXCL India Pvt. Ltd.

Minko Platforms Pvt. Ltd.

Goa App Pvt. Ltd.

Nawgati Tech Pvt. Ltd.

Fitness Konnect Pvt. Ltd.

Arivation Fashiontech Pvt. Ltd.





GIM ALUMNI OFFICE

Messages from GIM Alumni Office



Dear Esteemed GIM Alumni,

Greetings from GIM Alumni Relations!

As the Manager of Alumni Relations at Goa Institute of Management, I'm excited to share our latest developments and initiatives for our expanding alumni community. We are dedicated to enhancing your experience through engaging events, mentorship programs, and knowledge-sharing sessions. Your involvement is crucial, so feel free to reach out for collaboration or updates. Let's make the GIM Alumni community vibrant and dynamic together.

Amit Singh
Manager, Alumni Relations Office
Goa Institute of Management
E: amit.singh@gim.ac.in | M: 7838623108

Dear GIM Alumni,

Proudly representing the GIM family, we are thrilled to declare our renewed commitment to fostering stronger connections and collaboration among members. Valuing the unique expertise and contributions each of you brings, we are making significant efforts to elevate the legacy of alumni engagement at the Goa Institute of Management. Join the GIM alumni portal to stay updated on exclusive benefits and news. We stand ready to support you in every possible way and eagerly anticipate reconnecting with you on this exciting journey together.

Priya Salgaonkar
Executive, Alumni Relations
Goa Institute of Management
M: 9923848960



GIM Alumni Office

The GIM Alumni Support Office stands as a beacon, intertwining the threads of academic legacy, professional growth, and lifelong connections, ensuring our alumni's journey is adorned with unwavering support, opportunities, and a vibrant tapestry of success.

Educational Documents Services

Educational document services for alumni's academic and professional journey



Alumni Events

Global Alumni Gatherings in Cities and Abroad



Mentorship Programs

Advancing Careers, Inspiring Professional Growth



Alumni Career Hub

Job Opportunities, Networking, Support



Alumni Newsletters

Monthly Updates & Highlights from your Almamate



Volunteer Opportunities

Engage in Social and Professional Volunteer Opportunities



Professional Development

Professional Development through MDPs, Knowledge Sessions



Online Communities

Thrive in Vibrant Online Alumni Communities, GIM Portal



Reunions

Relive Memories, Forge New Connections



For inquiries or assistance, connect with us:  **+91 93590 51680**

 **alumnioffice@gim.ac.in**

Stay connected, stay supported, and continue to be a proud part of the GIM family!

Join Alumni Portal

Registration Process for Alumni Portal

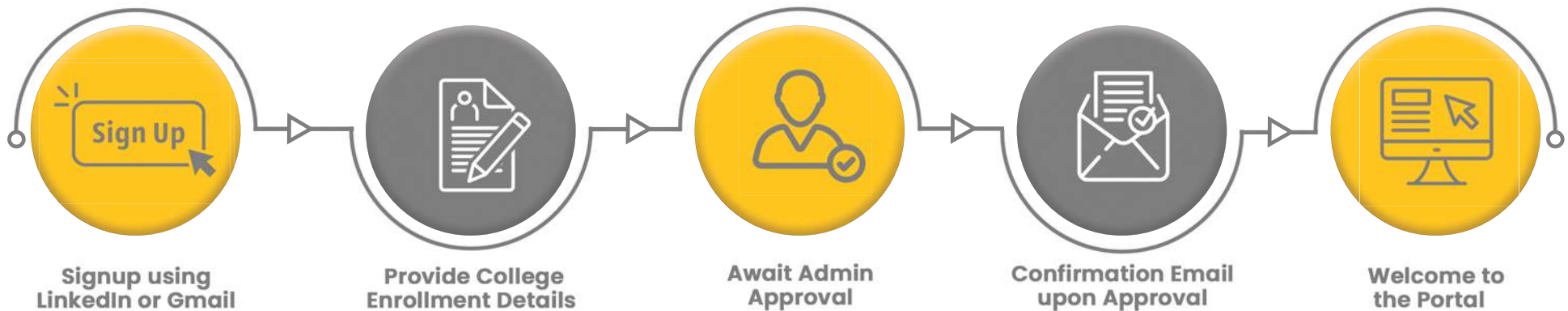
Scan here to download the app



For iOS



For Android



Benefits of the Alumni Portal

By registering on the GIM Alumni Portal, you not only unlock a multitude of benefits for your professional growth but also contribute to the overall success and vibrancy of the Goa Institute of Management's alumni network.



**Connectivity and
Networking Opportunities**



**Professional Development
Opportunities**



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**Alumni Recognition
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Meet the Team

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