

The Global Problem Solver

Turning Universal Talent into Real-World Impact

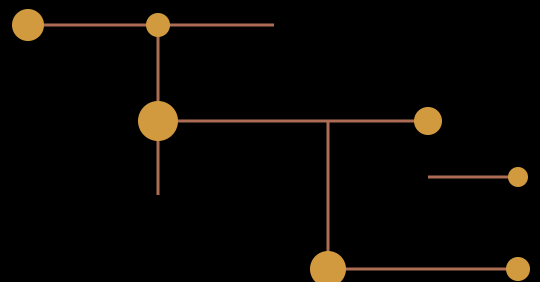
A Social Impact Studio.AI Program for Youth Innovation,
Venture Creation, and Real-World Problem Solving

"Talent is universal. Opportunity is not."

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SOCIALIMPACTSTUDIO.AI





Executive Summary

Talent is universal. Opportunity is not. Young people everywhere have technical ability, lived insight, imagination, and entrepreneurial potential. What they often lack is access: real problems, expert mentorship, structured development pathways, market intelligence, funding networks, and the confidence that their ideas can move beyond a classroom, hackathon, or demo day.

Many young people are introduced to innovation through competitions, school projects, hackathons, or pitch events. Those experiences can be powerful, but they often end too early. A team creates a promising prototype, delivers an impressive presentation, and then has no structured pathway to continue. The idea disappears. The learning stops. Students return to school without a clear bridge to mentorship, funding, product development, or entrepreneurship.

"What happens after demo day? What if a promising student solution could become a structured residency, and the outcome was not only a better product, but a stronger young problem solver?"

A Pathway, Not a Prize

The Global Problem Solver in Residence program (GPSiR) extends the life of good ideas. It creates a pathway for young people to move from challenge-based ideation to prototype development, market validation, venture readiness, and, where appropriate, commercialization or shared public-benefit learning. It is not only a youth skills program; it is an early venture creation and problem-solving pipeline rooted in dignity, access, and real-world impact.

Peer-to-Peer, Not Charity

GPSiR reflects SIS.AI's broader belief that intelligence should be accessible. The goal is not for one group of students to "help" another; it is to create environments where young people from different backgrounds, geographies, and lived experiences collaborate as equals. Each brings something essential: technical skill, creativity, constraints, lived insight, cultural context, urgency, and imagination.



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Talent Is Universal, Opportunity Is Not

Why SIS.AI Created GPSiR

Social Impact Studio.AI (SIS.AI) is a mission-driven technology organization structured as a California 501(c)(3). SIS.AI builds intelligence infrastructure for regenerative systems: systems that restore capacity, expand opportunity, and help people move from fragmented knowledge to coordinated action. One of the clearest expressions of that mission is the Global Problem Solver in Residence program, or GPSiR.

SIS.AI created GPSiR because the world needs more people who can solve complex problems responsibly. GPSiR is part of the second pillar of the SIS.AI strategy: Global Problem Solver Development. The premise is simple and deeply held: talent is universal, but opportunity is not.

GPSiR extends the life of good ideas. It asks what happens after the demo day, and it builds the bridge that usually is not there.

Intelligence Should Be Accessible

SIS.AI is not interested in a world where only well-resourced institutions can access advanced tools, strategic guidance, market research, or technical mentorship. GPSiR gives young people a supported pathway into the kind of thinking normally reserved for startups, accelerators, consultants, and venture-backed teams.

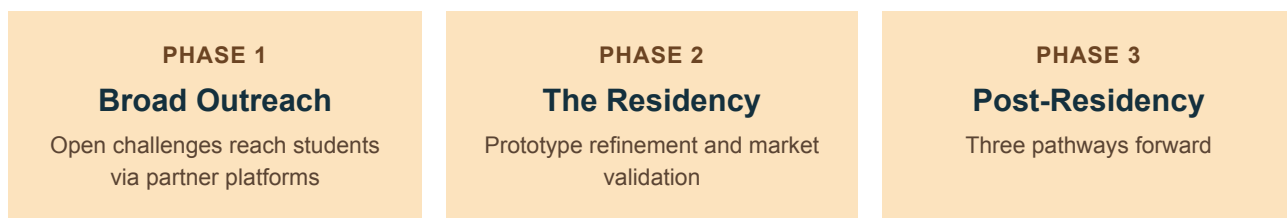
The program helps them learn how to frame problems, test assumptions, listen to users, evaluate market potential, work as a team, and make responsible decisions about whether and how an idea should continue.



How the Program Works

From Access to Depth to Opportunity

GPSiR operates through three phases: Broad Outreach, Residency, and Post-Residency Pathways. Each phase has a distinct purpose, and together they create a progression from access to depth to future opportunity.



Phase 1: Broad Outreach Through Open Challenges

SIS.AI identifies a real-world problem and posts it through a challenge platform or partner network. In the current pilot, SIS.AI worked through its established partnership with PilotCity, a platform that helps connect high school students with real-world innovation opportunities. PilotCity provides the distribution infrastructure that enables SIS.AI to reach students through schools without having to build a school network from scratch.

Phase 1 is intentionally broad. It creates access. Students can enter as teams or individuals, explore a meaningful problem, and produce an initial solution. The goal is not to identify a perfect product immediately; the goal is to surface creativity, effort, lived insight, technical potential, and problem-solving capacity.

Phase 2: The GPSiR Residency

A selected team is invited into a structured, paid internship or residency with SIS.AI. During this phase, students become Global Problem Solvers in Residence. The residency gives them time, mentorship, tools, and expectations that go beyond a one-time competition. The current pilot runs for six weeks across two connected tracks: product refinement and market validation.

Phase 3: Post-Residency Pathways

The third phase creates options. Not every project should become a company, and not every team wants to commercialize. GPSiR is designed to preserve value across different outcomes.



Inside the Residency

Where Ideas Become Ventures

Part A: Prototype Refinement and Product Development

The first part of the residency focuses on improving the team's initial solution. Students move from a version one prototype to a stronger version two concept or MVP direction. They meet the person or community connected to the problem, gather user feedback, define product requirements, and identify which features are essential, which are optional, and which may introduce unnecessary complexity.

For the AI-Assisted Walker, this meant asking more precise questions. What does a blind or visually impaired walker user actually need inside the home? What role do caregivers play? What safety risks matter most? How should the device communicate guidance? What should it never do? What would make the product trustworthy to a user, a family member, or a healthcare professional?

Innovation is not simply invention. It is listening, refining, testing, documenting, and making responsible tradeoffs.

Part B: Market Research, Competitive Analysis, and Go-to-Market Strategy

The second part focuses on market and venture readiness. Students research the market, study competitors, identify potential customers and partners, consider regulatory or safety constraints, and develop an initial go-to-market and sales strategy. The purpose is not to force every project into a company; the purpose is to teach students how to evaluate whether an idea has a credible path to impact and sustainability.

By the end of Phase 2, a team should have a stronger prototype direction, a clearer user and stakeholder map, a better understanding of the market, an initial competitive landscape, a set of product requirements, and a more credible story about what should happen next.



Three Post-Residency Pathways

The third phase creates options. Not every project should become a company. Not every team wants to commercialize. Not every promising idea is ready for funding. GPSiR is designed to preserve value across different outcomes.

Pathway 1: Co-Develop With SIS.AI

If the project shows strong potential and the team wants to continue with SIS.AI, the next step may be co-development. This may include additional product development, partner introductions, fundraising, licensing, revenue sharing, or governance structures. The specific structure would be defined through a clear agreement before significant commercialization work begins.

Pathway 2: Independent Funding or Venture Creation

If the team wants to continue independently, SIS.AI helps them leave with stronger materials and a clearer pathway: a refined MVP direction, market research, pitch materials, partner targets, and a strategy for seeking grants, investment, or sponsorship. Over time, SIS.AI envisions a pay-it-forward model in which successful alumni contribute back to a restricted GPSiR fund once they reach defined milestones.

Pathway 3: Common Ideas Repository

If the project does not continue as a venture, the work can still create public-benefit value. Research, design decisions, technical lessons, user insights, and market findings may be contributed to a shared knowledge base, with appropriate permissions and attribution. Student work does not disappear simply because a team stops building.

A program that only celebrates successful startups can miss the deeper value of learning. GPSiR treats knowledge itself as an outcome.



A Story That Started at Home

Case Study: The AI-Assisted Walker

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The AI-Assisted Walker began with a personal story. The founder's father has been legally blind his entire life. Over time, his vision deteriorated from being able to read a newspaper by holding it inches from his face, to having about 5% remaining vision, enough to navigate his home with a walker. After surgery for a heart valve replacement and treatment for AFib, he lost the rest of his eyesight.

One day, his wife was guiding him to the bathroom with verbal directions: left a little, go straight, stop, now turn left. At the same time, a Roomba robot vacuum was moving through the house, detecting obstacles and navigating independently. The collision of those two observations sparked a question.

A wife guiding her husband by voice. A robot navigating the same room on its own. What if a Roomba-like navigation system could be attached to a walker to guide a blind person safely through the home?

That question became the AI-Assisted Walker challenge on PilotCity for high school students in San Jose. One team emerged as the strongest candidate and entered the GPSiR residency. In Phase 2, the students met the founder's father, received direct user context, and began the deeper work of refining the prototype while studying the market.

A deeply personal problem became an open challenge. A student team transformed the challenge into a prototype. SIS.AI then created a pathway for that prototype to become a deeper learning and venture-development opportunity.



The Long-Term Vision

Access, Entrepreneurship, and Global Problem Solvers

The long-term vision for GPSiR is larger than one challenge or one residency. SIS.AI sees GPSiR as a model that can expand access to youth who are often excluded from entrepreneurship and innovation pathways. This includes young people from underserved communities, students without access to elite networks, and youth connected to care systems, including orphanages and care homes.

A Fundable, Repeatable Model

Over time, SIS.AI envisions GPSiR residencies being sponsored or hosted by companies, foundations, families, schools, universities, nonprofit organizations, and mission-aligned partners. SIS.AI would provide the model, intelligence infrastructure, quality standards, program design, partner network, and learning system. External hosts and sponsors could help fund stipends, mentorship, tools, workspace, and coordination. This matters because SIS.AI cannot scale by permanently funding every intern or team itself; the program must become a fundable and repeatable model.

From Ideas to Implementation

The ultimate goal is to create pathways from ideas to implementation. Some teams may become ventures. Some may receive funding or investment. Some may join partner organizations. Some may contribute to a shared knowledge commons. All should leave with stronger skills, deeper confidence, and a clearer understanding of how to move from problem to product to impact.



The Role of Partnerships

Partnerships are central to the GPSiR model. PilotCity provides the Phase 1 challenge infrastructure and student distribution. Market intelligence partners can support Phase 2 validation. Schools, universities, companies, nonprofits, foundations, and community organizations can sponsor challenges, host residencies, provide mentors, define real-world problems, or support post-residency pathways.

This partnership-based model allows SIS.AI to focus on what it is building: a trusted intelligence and orchestration layer for youth problem-solving. SIS.AI designs the model, curates the learning system, supports the teams, connects them to tools and mentors, and helps translate early ideas into credible next steps.

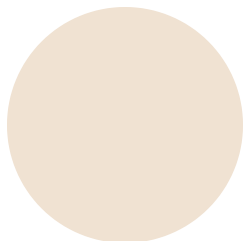
Why It Matters

GPSiR exists because good ideas should not depend on privilege, proximity, or luck. A young person with a meaningful solution should have a way to develop it. A real-world problem should have a way to reach creative minds. A promising prototype should not disappear after demo day. And a student who shows the capacity to solve problems should have access to the tools, mentorship, and pathways that help that capacity grow.

The broader ambition is to build a generation of global problem solvers: young people who can listen deeply, use technology responsibly, collaborate across differences, test ideas rigorously, and build solutions that serve real human needs.



Author



Harbrinder Kang

Harbrinder Kang is a seasoned technology and CSR leader with over three decades of experience spanning Silicon Valley startups and Fortune 100 companies. Formerly Vice President of Corporate Affairs at Cisco, he led the Networking Academy, expanding its reach from 800,000 to 1.9 million students annually. As the Founder of Social Impact Studio.AI, Harbrinder is building a platform that empowers a new generation of social entrepreneurs and CSR leaders through AI-driven tools, startup methodologies, and cross-sector collaboration. A recognized voice on innovation and social impact, he continues to champion the belief that technology and human creativity, working together, can accelerate the transition to a regenerative and equitable future.

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About Social Impact Studio.AI

Social Impact Studio.AI is a California 501(c)(3) building intelligence infrastructure for regenerative systems: systems that restore capacity, expand opportunity, and help people move from fragmented knowledge to coordinated action. The Global Problem Solver in Residence program is part of its second strategic pillar: Global Problem Solver Development.

GPSiR is still being tested and refined. That is part of its strength. SIS.AI is building the model through evidence, feedback, and disciplined learning. If it works, GPSiR can become a scalable pathway for youth innovation, venture creation, and social impact; one that turns lived experience into insight, insight into prototypes, prototypes into ventures or shared knowledge, and young people into confident builders of the future.

"Talent is universal. Opportunity is not."

GPSiR exists to close that gap.