



**ANNUAL REPORT**  
FISCAL YEAR 2025





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OX Delivers, a 2024 Solver team, is an electric truck for goods transport in Africa that is 10x cheaper than alternatives.





# A NOTE TO OUR COMMUNITY

Dear friends and fellow problem-solvers,

This year brought no shortage of headwinds. At Solve, we don't measure progress by the absence of challenges, but by what our community builds in response.

As Leonard Cohen sang, "There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." Our innovators are that light.

Jason Wang was arrested at 15. Today, his platform FreeWorld has helped 13,000 formerly incarcerated people find living-wage jobs. Shelly Xu saw her childhood playground buried in textile waste—now SXD's AI saves 10x more fabric than any other approach. Across the globe, innovators show up where systems crack, turning scarcity into ingenuity and ideas into impact.

This year, we've doubled down on what works: find innovators closest to the problems, fund them at moments of maximum leverage, and connect them with partners who think in years, not quarters.

As you read these stories, see them not as isolated successes, but as proof of concept for a new model of change—where we are all multipliers and where the future is something we build together.

The cracks aren't going anywhere. But with your support, neither is the light.

With gratitude,



**Hala Hanna**  
Executive Director



SOS Biotech, a 2024 Solver team, trains fishermen to harvest invasive sargassum to turn into sustainable agriculture products.



## **DRIVING INNOVATION TO SOLVE WORLD CHALLENGES**

Solve is an initiative of MIT. We believe that to build a better future for all, we need new voices and ideas. We launch open calls for exceptional and diverse solutions to the most pressing global challenges from anyone, anywhere in the world. Selected innovators get the backing of MIT and our community of supporters to scale their impact and drive lasting change. Join us on this mission.





# FROM SELECTION TO SCALE

Briota, a 2023 Solver team, uses AI and the IoT to enable early precise diagnosis of Chronic Respiratory Diseases.



# OPEN INNOVATION

At Solve, we believe solutions to the world's toughest challenges exist—but are too often overlooked.

Our open innovation challenges reinforce that problem solvers are everywhere, with 26,000+ solutions submitted from 180 countries, addressing global issues from decarbonizing supply chains to improving rare disease care.

**26,000**  
APPLICATIONS

from 180 countries

**95+** INNOVATION  
CHALLENGES

including 9 new challenges this fiscal year



"Solve is a way of seeing extraordinary talent in the world that is already solving problems and coming together to support them. We can all accelerate their work."

**Megan Smith | Founder, Shift7**

★ Solve Advisor



# IDENTIFYING GAME-CHANGERS



## 540+

innovators awarded with prize funding

**330+** Solver teams (+30 in FY25)

**210+** custom challenge winners (+23 in FY25)

“MIT Solve didn’t just see our potential — they legitimized it. They gave me, and our team, the resources, strategic support, and credibility to refine our methodology and sharpen our mission ... and permission to lead with conviction — to name the new field we’re helping create.”

**Jessica Minhas | Founder & CEO,  
Story Mobile App**

📍 USA

★ HPE Supporting the Survivors of  
Modern Slavery Challenge Winner

Story Mobile App is powered by AI to help human trafficking survivors to pursue justice and access resources.



## 330 SOLVER TEAMS

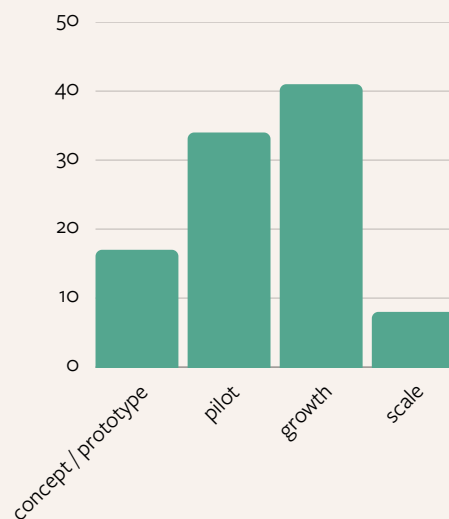
👤 **63%** woman-led

🌐 Headquartered in **58** countries

🏠 **49** Indigenous Communities Fellows  
representing **30** unique Indigenous  
nations across US and Canada

🏢 **62%** for-profit/hybrid **34%** nonprofit

\*Remainder unregistered







SUPPORT

## ACCELERATING IMPACT

**\$80M+**

in funding  
mobilized

**300+**

funders

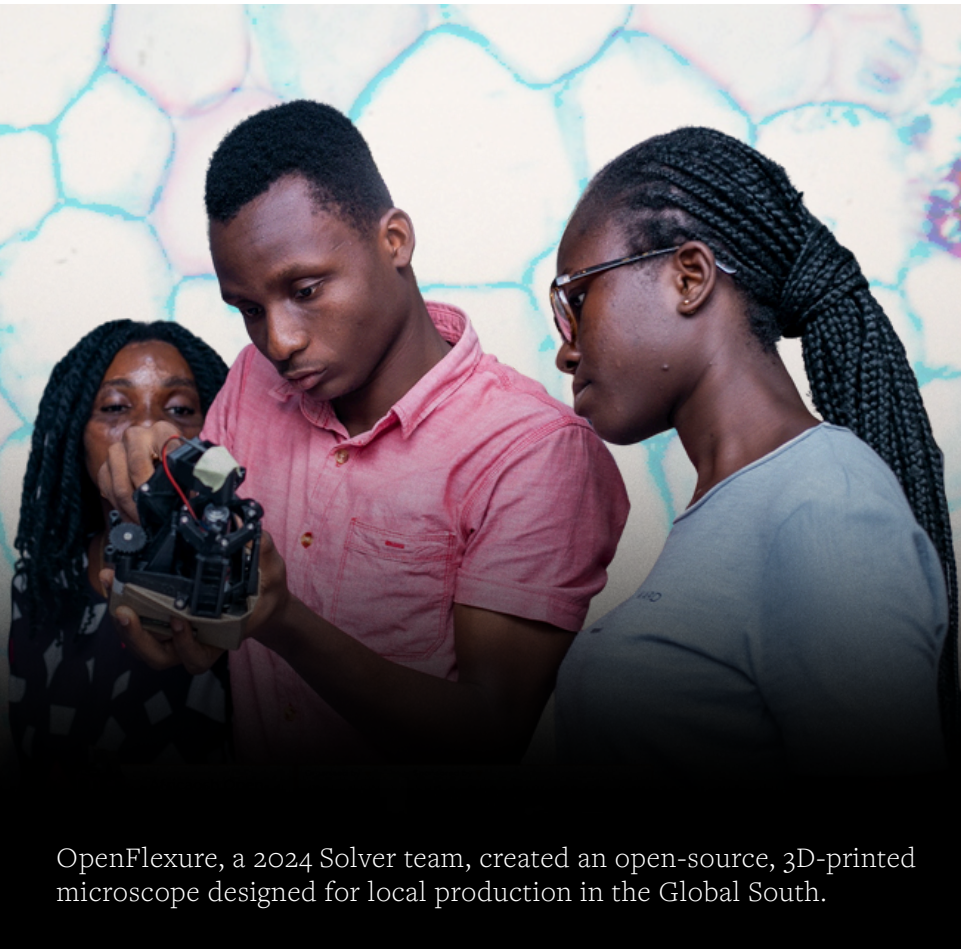
**1,000+**

connections  
facilitated

**NET PROMOTER SCORE 81**

a 'World Class' Solver support  
program\*

\*based on 2024 Solver team survey results



OpenFlexure, a 2024 Solver team, created an open-source, 3D-printed microscope designed for local production in the Global South.

“We talked for years about forming a UK charity to push forward the clinical aspirations of the microscope. We never had the confidence, the impetus, nor the support to do this. Solve gave us all of this, and we are on a completely different trajectory.”

**Julian Stirling | CEO,  
The OpenFlexure Project**

📍 Tanzania, Rwanda, Ukraine, USA

★ 2024 Solver



SCALE

## SUSTAINING GROWTH

94%

of Solver teams  
selected in past 5  
years are still  
operational

\$1.1B+

cumulatively  
raised by for-  
profit and hybrid  
teams

330M+ lives reached

Oorja, a 2024 Solver team, trains smallholder farmers to operate a solar pump through climate-smart farm advisory services.

“I honestly think Solve fills a huge gap in the accelerator landscape for ventures. It sits right where ventures begin to move from startup to scale and to my knowledge, is the only program fulfilling that need well. I think this is critical as many otherwise worthwhile ventures fail at this juncture often for lack of support.”

**Jessica Hicklin | Chief Technology Officer, Unlocked Labs**



USA



★ 2023 Solver

Unlocked, a 2023 Solver team, is an open-source education access and management platform for prisons.



An underwater photograph showing a large school of blue fish swimming in the upper half of the frame. In the lower left, there is a detailed view of a coral reef with various types of coral, including some with large circular openings. The background is a deep blue gradient, suggesting the ocean's depth.

# **BUILDING AN ECOSYSTEM OF IMPACT**



SOS Biotech, a 2024 Solver team, harvests invasive sargassum to turn into sustainable agriculture products.

# TURNING CLIMATE CRISIS INTO OPPORTUNITY

Solver climate solutions are collectively responsible for

**4.0+ million metric tons**

net reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>



“The connections we’ve made, along with the exposure to key stakeholders in the blue economy sector, have opened new avenues for investment and partnerships.”

**Elena Martínez Martínez | CTO & Co-Founder, SOS-Biotech**

📍 Dominican Republic

★ 2024 Solver

## CLIMATE ADVISORS



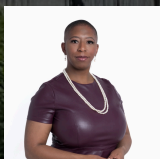
**JANE GOODALL**  
Founder, Jane Goodall Institute



**JOHN FERNÁNDEZ**  
Director, Environmental Solutions Initiative, MIT



**ESTHER AN**  
Chief Sustainability Officer, CDL



**TICORA JONES**  
Chief Science Officer, National Resources Defense Council



**MARY ROBINSON**  
Former President of Ireland



**BELÉN PÁEZ**  
President, Fundación Pachamama




**SHLOKA NATH**  
CEO, India Climate Collaborative



**DAUDI SUMBA**  
Chief Conservation Officer WWF





NaTakallam, a 2024 Solver team, connects displaced and conflict-affected language teachers and translators with clients worldwide.

# BUILDING PATHWAYS TO PEACE AND PROSPERITY

Solver economic prosperity solutions have connected


**10+ million micro enterprises**

with financial services



## BREAKING CYCLES, BUILDING CAREERS

FreeWorld, a 2024 Solver team, is tackling major roadblocks of the reentry experience for formerly incarcerated individuals. It was founded by Jason Wang, who was arrested for robbery at age 15 after growing up in poverty and a turbulent home. Instead of getting lost in the system, he set out to change it. After his release, Jason founded FreeWorld, a program that helps people with criminal histories build successful, living-wage jobs in the trucking industry with free training and certifications. Over 13,000 have applied.



FreeWorld a 2024 Solver team, provides free training and certifications in the trucking industry for formerly incarcerated individuals.



# PROVIDING **QUALITY CARE** IN EVERY COMMUNITY

**J&J**  
**Foundation**

## LEADERS IN HEALTH

As Solve's first Global Health Anchor Supporter, Johnson & Johnson Foundation is backing health innovators from capital to scale—from unrestricted funding to support throughout our nine-month Solver program, and beyond.



Lauren Marks, Global Strategic Partnership Head at Johnson & Johnson, speaks at Solve Challenge Finals in NYC.

Neopenda, a 2018 Solver team, designed a wearable neonatal vital signs monitor for resource-constrained environments.



Solver health solutions have covered  
**59+ million people**  
with essential health services

AmarDoctor, a 2024 Solver team, is a health app that uses AI to deliver personalized healthcare in a patient's preferred language.




"Johnson & Johnson Foundation Global Health Equity Prize has considerably boosted our visibility among nonprofit organizations. We are leveraging this recognition to forge new collaborations and partnerships with other health NGOs, enhancing our capacity to extend our solution's reach and impact."

**Mamunur Rashid | Founder & CEO,  
AmarDoctor**

📍 Bangladesh ★ 2024 Solver





NABU, a 2024 Solver team, is a free, interactive, educational tool that provides kids with equal access to high-quality bi-lingual content.

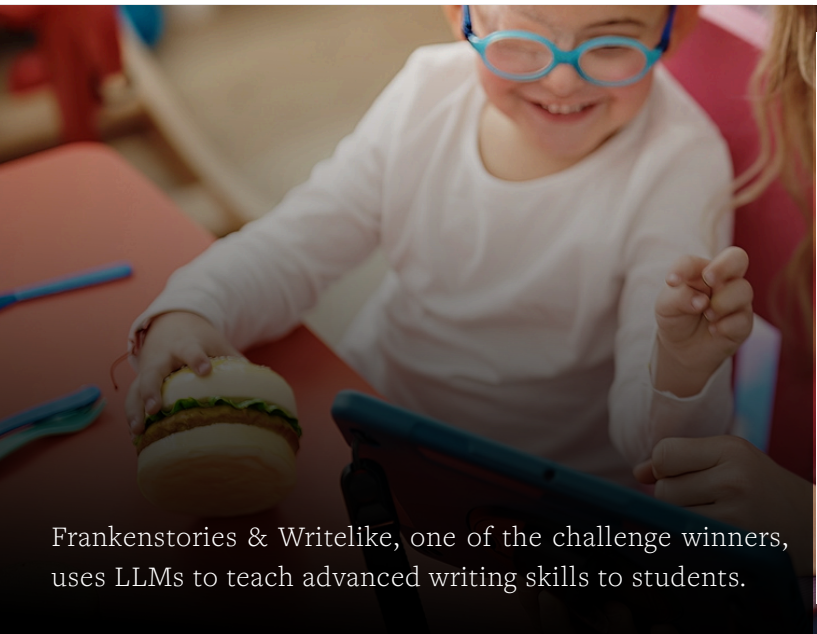
# LEVELING THE LEARNING FIELD

Solver learning solutions have provided  
**61+ million children**  
with educational content

## PERSONALIZED LEARNING, POWERED BY AI

To better understand how—and when—students learn, the Gates Foundation and Solve launched a custom challenge focused on AI-powered assessments for pre-K to Grade 8 learners. The goal: find tools that make evaluations more personalized, engaging, and predictive.

Seven solutions received \$500,000 in funding—ranging from AI-powered conversations that help parents and teachers guide curiosity to large language models that assess short-form student writing across genres.



“My favourite part [of the Solve program] was simply having the resources, pressure, and constraints to create and deliver a new solution to a complex problem: not a concept or a prototype, but an actual solution being used by teachers and students around the world.”

**Andrew Duval | Co-Founder,  
Frankenstories & Writelike**


📍 Australia

★ Gates Foundation Learner//Meets//Future:  
AI-Enabled Assessments Challenge Winner

Frankenstories & Writelike, one of the challenge winners, uses LLMs to teach advanced writing skills to students.



# CREATING TECH THAT SERVES INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES



Yucaykeno Connect, a 2024 Fellow, is an app that reconnects the Borikua Taino community with their cultural heritage and ancestral lands.

## BUILDING INDIGENOUS FUTURES WITH AI

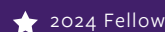
Two 2024 Fellows are harnessing AI to advance equity for Indigenous communities across the U.S. and Canada. wâsikan kisewâtisiwin is an AI tool that detects bias and racism targeting Indigenous peoples, currently preparing to launch an MVP with support from Canadian telecom company Telus.

Consultation Corral created a machine learning-powered portal that makes tribal consultation opportunities searchable in real time. Consultation Corral received the \$20,000 Patrick J. McGovern AI for Humanity Prize and was featured—alongside wâsikan kisewâtisiwin—in Forbes for their role in Indigenous-led AI innovation.



“There were few incubators or opportunities that aligned specifically with a concept-stage idea created specifically to support Tribal Sovereignty. MIT SOLVE has given me as a founder the structure, guidance, mentorship, and resources needed to move this from idea to prototype, and now to beta!”

**Elise Blasingame | Founder, Consultation Corral**







## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to change the social and environmental impact of plastic by creating dignified livelihoods for those in need.

## OUR VISION

A world where plastic waste is managed responsibly for reducing environmental impact and improving market access.

MONACO



# SHARING THE SOLVE STORY



# DANCING INTO THE FUTURE OF STEM

STEM from Dance, a winner of the 2023 Gender Equity in STEM Challenge, empowers girls of color with the skills, experiences, and confidence to pursue careers in STEM — all through the power of dance. This past year, founder and CEO, Yamilée Toussaint, and her work have been featured in a PBS docuseries, Confluence, and profiled as part of CNN Heroes series. STEM from Dance also received \$5 million in funding from Google as part of their AI Opportunity Fund.

“As a result of winning the challenge, we are on a path towards taking this idea that started in New York City and bringing it across the country, and eventually the world.”

**Yamilée Toussaint | Founder & CEO,  
STEM from Dance**

📍 USA ★ 2023 Gender Equity in STEM Challenge Winner



## ACQUISITIONS

I Read Arabic, a 2023 Solver team, was acquired by Seesaw Learning, one of the largest edtech companies in the U.S. and among the fastest-growing globally in the past five years. I Read Arabic specializes in Arabic literacy solutions.

SproutLabs, a 2019 Solver team and Solve Innovation Future Investee, was acquired by Imagine Learning, the largest national provider of digital-first curriculum solutions. SproutLabs is a dyslexia screener and early literacy assessment tool for Pre-K-Grade 3 learners.

## SOLVERS IN THE NEWS

### A DOCUMENTARY FILM ASKS: CAN HEALTH SYSTEMS IMPROVE PATIENT SAFETY BY EMBRACING NEW TECH

Featuring 2023 Solver team, Elythea

### WHEN VETS ARE SCARCE WHAT CAN FARMERS DO

Featuring 2020 Trinity Challenge Winner, Farm2Vet

### THIS AI CAMP IS TEACHING TEENS TO PRESERVE THEIR LAKOTA LANGUAGE

Featuring 2020 Fellow, Lakota AI Code Camp

### HOW DIGITAL RECORD KEEPING IS STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE IN INDIA

Featuring 2019 Solver, Khushi Baby

STAT

BBC

NBCU  
ACADEMY

devex  
Do Good. Do It Well.™



# SOLVE IN THE NEWS

**WHEN RESILIENCE CREATES INNOVATION: LESSONS  
FOR ENTREPRENEURS**

**MIDDLE EAST**  
**Entrepreneur**

**EMBRACING DISRUPTION TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE**

**cipher**

**FROM BLACKOUTS TO BREAKTHROUGHS—HOW WOMEN  
IN LEADERSHIP TURN INSTABILITY INTO STRENGTH**

**WOMEN**  
**thrive**  
MAGAZINE



**We've heard enough about what's not working in the world.** The Solve Effect is a podcast about what is. Each episode, host Hala Hanna chats with leaders, visionaries, and barrier-breakers intent on using technology for good. Follow, like, and subscribe wherever you listen.



## AI FOR GOOD

Developing tools, frameworks, and best practices for the ethical application of AI for social impact.

### RESEARCH

Our cutting-edge AI research with Harvard Business School resulted in two academic papers on how humans can collaborate with genAI to evaluate applications.

### AI TOOLS

Our AI-powered screening tool reduced human screening time for our 2025 Global Challenges by almost 60%.

### INNOVATOR SUPPORT

Five AI-focused Solver teams received prizes to accelerate their work through the Morgridge Family Foundation AI Innovation Prize and the Patrick J. McGovern AI for Humanity Prize.

### KNOWLEDGE SHARING

With Forbes, we featured teams using AI for good in a five-part series and published an AI series on our research and our Solvers' work.



**Forbes**



# CHANGE CHAMPIONS

J&J  
Foundation



Eink®

Citizens®



SONY



ANDAN  
The Global Citizens Alliance



SOMEONE  
ELSE'S  
CHILD

## IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL

Since 2018, Mike and Diane Christian have directed grant and investment funding to 16 Solver solutions. By developing multi-year partnerships with several of these teams, Mike and Diane show what it means to be real partners, invested in long-term scale and impact.



Mike Christian, Board President of Someone Else's Child



“This is where you drive innovation. This is where you build

# TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS FOR THE FUTURE.”

Lynette Bell | President, Truist Foundation



## SUPPORTERS

Anonymous

Annie Berdy

Antropia ESSEC

BHP Foundation

Brian Brownschidle

Converse

Frank Ho

Gregoire Fabre

H.S.H Prince Henri d'Arenberg

John Currier

Jonathan Dale

Putnam Associates

Rainwater Charitable Foundation

Scott Ritterbush

Yum! Brands

## SOLVE INNOVATION FUTURE SUPPORTERS

Afeyan Foundation

Chandna Family Foundation

Charles Kung and Lisa Guerra

Octarine Invest

Ray and Meredith Rothrock

Seeding the Future Foundation

## CUSTOM PROGRAMS

Solve works with mission-driven organizations like Amgen and UNFPA, as part of their Equalizer Accelerator Fund; as well as with the clients listed here. Together, we are delivering custom programs that meet innovation and impact goals.



Gates Foundation





# OUR ADVISORS

**Noubar Afeyan**

Founder and CEO, Flagship Pioneering;  
Co-Founder and Chair, Moderna

**Colin M. Angle**

CEO, Familiar Machines & Magic

**H.S.H. Prince Henri d'Arenberg**

Founder & Chair, be.Source

**Ursula Burns**

Chairwoman, Teneo

**Vilas Dhar**

President & Trustee, Patrick J. McGovern  
Foundation

**Henrietta Holsman Fore**

Managing Partner, Radiate Capital;  
Chair & CEO, Holsman International

**Elizabeth McGovern**

Trustee, Patrick J. McGovern  
Foundation; Co-Founder and Executive  
Director, WEEMA International

**Lubna Olayan**

CEO and Deputy Chair, Olayan  
Financing Company

**Laurene Powell Jobs**

Founder and President, Emerson  
Collective

**Ray A. Rothrock**

Chairman and CEO, RedSeal, Inc.

**Eric Schmidt**

Technical Advisor and Board  
Member, Alphabet Inc.

**David Moinina Sengeh**

Chief Innovation Officer,  
Government of Sierra Leone

**Neela Montgomery**

Global CEO; Board Advisor,  
Logitech and St. Jude's Research  
Hospital

**Megan Smith**

CEO and Founder, shift7

**Marjorie Yang**

Chair, Esquel Group

A special thank you to our Steering Committee at MIT for their continued guidance and support over the years. We look forward to welcoming Provost Anantha Chandrakasan in the coming fiscal year.

**CYNTHIA  
BARNHART**

Provost

**ALFRED  
IRONSIDE**

Vice President for  
Communications

**ERIC GRIMSON**

Chancellor for  
Academic  
Advancement

**GLEN SHOR**

Executive Vice  
President and  
Treasurer

## Solve advisor, Margie Yang,

joined us for the first episode of our new podcast, The Solve Effect, to talk about her family business, innovating in times of crisis, and how to stay motivated in a lifelong career.







TECHNOLOGY  
DOESN'T CHANGE  
THE WORLD.

**PEOPLE DO.**

[solve.mit.edu](https://solve.mit.edu)