



**GENEVA IMPACT
INVESTING
ASSOCIATION**

Annual Report



2022-2023

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FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce you to the Geneva Impact Investing Association (GIIA), a student initiative dedicated to mainstreaming sustainable finance and impact investing among students. GIIA has witnessed a growing interest from students at the Geneva Graduate Institute and beyond, who are eager to contribute their passion, knowledge, and skills to mobilise resources for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

As a generation conscious of the impact we can make and as future young professionals, we recognise our responsibility to drive systemic change and be accountable for our actions. GIIA aims to empower youth engagement in the industry, serving as a platform for learning, networking, and engagement with professionals in sustainable finance and impact investing. Through events, workshops, and career development programs, we bridge the gap between academic learning and practical application, fostering collaboration with the private sector to tackle pressing challenges.

I am immensely grateful for the dedication of our executive team, the GIIA community, the Centre for Finance and Development, and our partners who support our mission and create an environment where ideas flourish, collaborations form, and impactful initiatives take shape. Our efforts have expanded our network in Geneva, generating keen interest from students and organisations to join us in realising our mission. I am excited to announce that GIIA will be hosting an event at Building Bridges 2023 to develop a Youth Engagement Strategy for the sustainable finance industry.

I invite you to join us on this transformative journey. Whether you are a student exploring a career in sustainable finance or an industry professional seeking to share your expertise, GIIA offers an inclusive platform for growth and collaboration. Together, let us build a future where finance becomes a force for good, where every investment contributes to a better world.

Best,

Nikita Dennis Joseph,
President 2022-23
Geneva Impact Investing Association

ABOUT GIIA

OUR MISSION

- Knowledge and hands-on skills development
- Promoting understanding of impact investing
- Providing networking opportunities with professionals in the relevant industries to gain in-depth insights into career opportunities.

OUR VISION

- Forging and scaling up sustainable economy with discussion and research
- Equipping members with the knowledge, skills, and network necessary to succeed in the field of impact investing
- Becoming the most recognised student-led initiative focusing on impact investing in Geneva

OUR WORK

EVENTS

- We invite impact investing professionals from the public and private sectors to share their first-hand insights

RESEARCH & MEDIA

- We provide in-depth analyses and discussions on the most recent trends in impact investing and sustainable finance through our review and podcast

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

- Through mentorship, workshops, and networking opportunities, we enrich our student community with the knowledge, skills, and network necessary to excel in the impact investing industry

OUR TEAM



NIKITA DENNIS JOSEPH
President



EDGAR SAINT-HILLIER
Vice-President



HINAH MIAN
Director of Finance and Business
Development



MUAMER BRKA
Director of Finance and
Business Development



MAYU SUZUKI
Director of Outreach and Event
Partnership



EMMA NIJSSEN
Director of Communications &
Marketing



ALEXANDRE DIOGO
Director of Communications &
Marketing



CLEOPATRA MYRIANTHOPOULOS
Director of Event
Coordination



SIGNE JENSEN
Head of Podcast & Welfare Officer



HELENE OEUVRAY
Chief Editor of GIIR

OUR TEAM



YASH ARYA
First Year Representative



BENJAMIN BUTCHER
First Year Representative



GABRIELE INNAZZINI
First Year Representative



EMMA JONES
First Year Representative



PEDRO LLOPIS
First Year Representative



SAMEEKSHA MATTA
First Year Representative



SOPHIE MOENS
First Year Representative



JUHUI OH
First Year Representative



YICHEN SHEN
First Year Representative



LUZ STECCA
First Year Representative



KARTIK TRIPATHI
First Year Representative



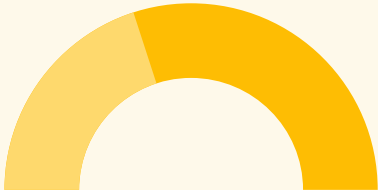
VARUN VITHALANI
First Year Representative



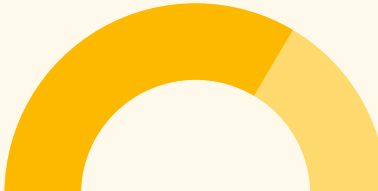
SARAH WERREN
First Year Representative

KEY FACTS

60% WOMEN

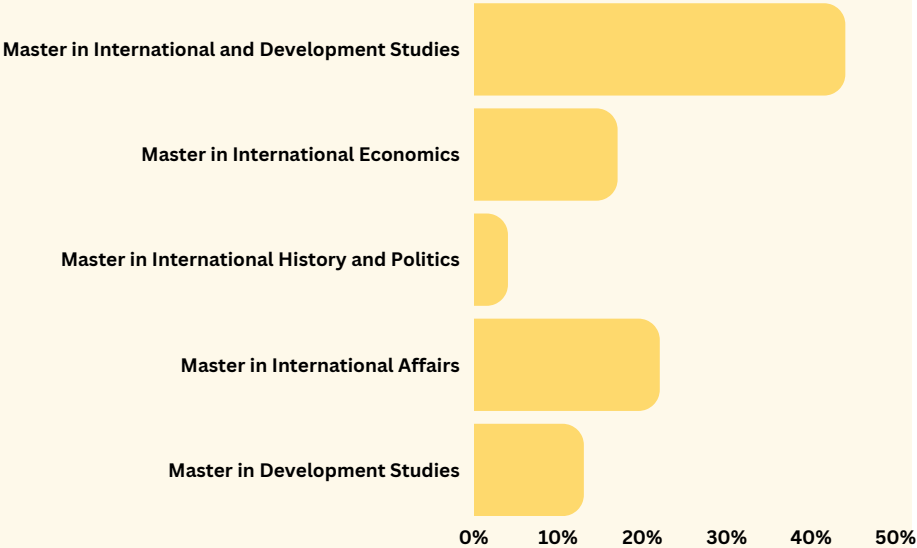


16 NATIONALITIES



60% from the Global North
40% from the Global South

ACADEMIC BACKGROUND



EVENTS

The Geneva Impact Investing Association curates events after carefully understanding the needs of our student community which aspires to break into the sustainable finance and impact investing industries. Through a combination of knowledge enhancing panels with experts, interactive workshops and collaborative problem solving activities, the events we have hosted so far have received praise and appreciation from students who benefit greatly from the skills and networks they get access to.



EVENTS

Impact Investing for Students :

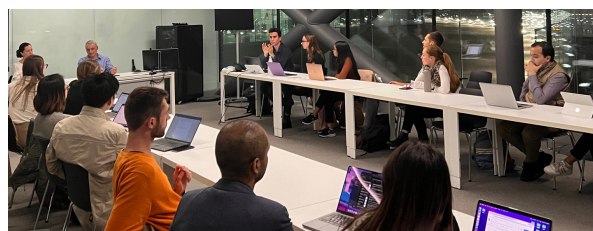
The need is evident to raise awareness and educate students on not just key concepts but careers associated with sustainable finance and impact investing - emerging fields that are becoming central in discourse about the Sustainable Development Goals. One of GIA's goals is to highlighting possible career paths that students of the Geneva Graduate Institute can embark on with their unique combination of academic backgrounds, professional experiences and skill sets.



To achieve this goal, we organised a panel discussion on October 27, 2022, headed by H el ene Oeuvray and Cleopatra Myrianthopoulos. The event brought together academics and industry professionals to provide conceptual clarity and foster insightful conversations about the industry.

Professor Nathan Sussman, faculty of International Economics at **IHEID** and Director at **Centre for Finance and Development**, Ekatherina Kazantseva, an investment analyst at **Symbiotics** and Maria Theresa Zappia, the chief impact and blended finance officer at **BlueOrchard** provided an overview of impact investing, including its actors, structure, processes, mechanisms, and challenges.

They also discussed the career opportunities available in this field. The event offered valuable insights for students interested in impact investing and provided an opportunity for them to consider pursuing a career in this growing sector.



EVENTS

Innovation Challenge for Climate Action :

On November 25, 2022, Hinah Mian and Edgar Saint-Hillier hosted the Innovation Challenge on Climate Action introducing student participants to the creative problem solving methodology of human-centred design thinking as well as the opportunity to network with academics and practitioners in impact finance.

Four teams of 17 participants were facilitated through the design thinking process of empathising with stakeholders, defining an opportunity for change, brainstorming ideas and prototyping innovative solutions based on case studies of drought in Gujarat, India and urban flooding in Ethiopia.

The participants consulted with experts, consisting of Heli Shah, a master student at **IHEID**, and Denis Ruyschaert, a professor at **IHEID**, and presented their solutions to a panel of judges consisting of Roland Dominicé, the managing director at **Symbiotics**, Marie-Laure Schaufelberger, the head of ESG and stewardship at the **Pictet Group**, and Brindusa Burrows, the chief executive officer and co-founder of the **Ground_Up Project**.

Teams won the Best Innovation for Climate Action Award, the Outstanding Problem-Solvers Award, the Stellar Speakers Award and the Investors' Choice Award based on the results of the judging round. Participants gained invaluable feedback from judges about the investment potential of their solutions.



EVENTS

ESG Debate :

On December 8, 2022, we had the privilege of hosting an engaging Oxford-style debate on the topic of ESG, thanks to the outstanding dedication of event heads, Signe Skov and Mayu Suzuki. The purpose of the debate was to present well-rounded perspectives and stimulate critical discussions about ESG.

The debate featured two teams, one supporting the positive aspects of ESG which included Raphaël Caregnato, a senior ESG analyst at **Ethos Foundation** and Louis Bourgeois, an impact manager at **BlueOrchard**, while the other team highlighted the negative aspects and was composed of Damien Contamin, a non-financial risk manager at **BCGE**, and Isabel Regard, a client advisor at **Banque Alternative Suisse**.

The debate delved into the potential alternatives or modifications to the ESG approach in finance, with a focus on the issue of greenwashing. The event provided a valuable opportunity to furnish knowledge about ESG and engage with practitioners in the field.



GIIA FORUM

This year, we hosted our inaugural 'Geneva Impact Investing Association Forum: From Aspiration to Impact- Empowering the Next Generation of Impact Investment Professionals' on April 26. The event brought together students from across Geneva curious to learn more about the industry and meet like-minded people keen on exploring a career in sustainable finance. GIIA hosted two back-to-back events followed by a social evening for our participants and guests to connect. In the coming years, our vision is to use the platform the GIIA Forum offers to annually bring students and young professionals together to enable the growth of youth in the sustainable finance and impact investing industry.



Investing 101 : Breaking down the barriers

The workshop 'Investing 101: Breaking Down the Barriers' gave a beginner-level, interactive introduction to investing.

For most people with no knowledge of investing, online resources can be complicated, overwhelming, or expensive, which excludes many people. Therefore, the aim of the workshop was to make investing accessible to those typically and historically left out of the field.

This then makes impact investing, and GIIA itself, a less daunting field for fellow students from different backgrounds to get involved in.

The workshop was successfully delivered by Gian Plebani, the former head at **UBS** of the investment solutions portfolio management team for the APAC region, with the support of 4 GIIA executive board members.

The first part of the workshop gave a seminar-style introduction to key topics in investing, such as: reasons for investing, different forms of investment, graphs and trends, and diversification. Participants then split into two groups which rotated between two activities.

One group focused on learning how to find and use a viable investment platform, and the other group conducted ETF comparisons. Overall, the event was a great success. We received excellent feedback and thoroughly appreciated Gian's support in the delivery of this accessible workshop.



GIIA FORUM

Careers in Impact Investing and Sustainable Finance: Paving the Way for a Greener Future

This event aimed to inspire and inform students on how to build a career in impact investing, regardless of their background or nationality.

The event included a panel discussion that explored the differences between working in impact investing in the private, non-profit, and international sectors.

The panellists discussed the industry's current challenges and opportunities and how they are using their work to create positive social and environmental change.

The panellists for the discussion were Khaliun Purevsuren, an associate at **WBCSD**, Julie Montels, an associate impact manager at **BlueOrchard** and Georgia Thorne, a research assistant for innovative financing for education at **NORRAG**.



CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Recognising the gap that exists between academia and the industry, GIA believes in the need to create an enabling environment for students who are soon to be professionals to have the opportunity to interact directly with professionals and build key skills necessary to break into the industry.

In 2022-2023, GIA launched 3 career development programmes to foster a supportive community that empowers students to pursue their career goals and make a positive impact in the world:

- Industry Visits Programme**
- Skills Development Workshop Series**
- Mentorship Programme**



Industry Visits Programme:

The Industry Visits Programme allows students to directly engage with Geneva-based organisations working in the sustainable finance and gain practical insights into their work. Students at IHEID have embraced the program, valuing the opportunity to build relationships with industry professionals and gain a holistic understanding of their roles.

Selected students visit host organizations for 60-90 minutes, interacting with different departments and HR teams to comprehend their work and explore potential roles that align with their skills and experience.

Students were warmly welcomed by **Symbiotics**, the leading impact investing market access platform, on November 21, 2022.

They had the chance to interact with Roland Dominice, Ekatherina Kazantseva, Vladimir Krejci, Alexander Schier, and Nicole Hochschild from the Symbiotics team, who shared insights into their work and the qualities they seek in candidates.

On December 12, 2022, students also visited the **Sustainable Finance Geneva** office, where Kali Taylor, the Community Manager, provided an overview of the pivotal role played by community catalysts like SFG in driving the transition to sustainable finance through stakeholder engagement and project initiatives.



SFG



symbiotics

Skill Development Workshop Series :

The Skill Development Workshop Series assists motivated students with workshops taught by industry practitioners to help students prepare for a career in sustainable finance.

This year, Enrique Alvarado Hablutzel from **Chi-Impact Capital** shared his expertise and skills on impact measurement. Students learned about impact investing and the current impact measurement practices as well as developed their own personal impact measurement tool.



Mentorship Programme :

GIIA will launch its Mentorship Programme in the summer of 2023 from June to September, to scaffold the career building journey of our members.

The structured one-on-one monthly sessions will offer a unique and meaningful opportunity for mentors to guide change makers interested in impact finance careers, grow leadership skills through supporting mentees, gain new perspectives through discussion with mentees from different backgrounds and do all this in an efficient time bounded way.

Mentees will learn how to define their career goals and navigate their aspirations, about specific roles and sectors, receive specific feedback on their CV and cover letters, practise mock interviews, obtain insights into the skills needed and build their network. Four professionals - three from the private sector and one from academia - have already formed our community of amazing mentors !

IMPACT INVESTING 360° PODCAST

GIIA hosts the Impact Investing 360° podcast which caters to students and youth interested in everything sustainable finance. By engaging with industry experts, we uncover the field of impact investing bit by bit and dive into the most recent and important trends.



PODCAST EPISODES

Building Bridges Special

This podcast episode featured Kali Taylor, the community manager at **Sustainable Finance Geneva** and project lead for Building Bridges, an annual sustainable finance conference in Geneva.

She explained how new and returning students could participate in the conference's events and activities, providing information about how students could interact with speakers and connect with professionals.

This podcast is useful for students interested in sustainable finance and who are seeking opportunities to network and learn more about the industry.

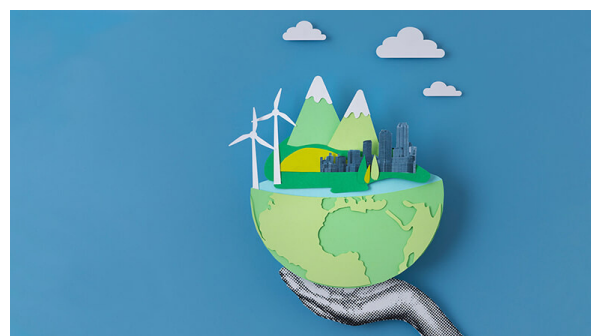


Blended Finance and Peacebuilding

This episode featured Rosalind Tan, a master student at **IHEID**, speaking on blended finance and how it can aid in closing the 'billions to trillions' gap in financing the SDGs.

While not equivalent to impact investing, blended finance can play a crucial role in achieving the UN's sustainable development goals. Rosalind focused on how blended finance can be applied to SDG 16 on 'Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions', providing insights into the benefits and challenges of this approach.

This podcast is useful for students seeking to understand the potential of blended finance in advancing sustainable development.



PODCAST EPISODES

Collective Change in Impact Investing

This podcast episode featured Katherine Milligan, the director of the **Collective Change Lab** and instructor of the "Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship" course at the Geneva Graduate Institute, shedding light on the need for collective change to address the various issues encompassing international development, social entrepreneurship, and sustainable finance.

She advised students interested in working in these areas to "apprentice with the problem" and learn effective communication across different sectors and industries.

This podcast provides insights for students and professionals interested in making an impact through social innovation and entrepreneurship.



Measuring Impact and Scaling Development

This podcast episode featured María Solano, a program manager at **Impact Hub Madrid** and an expert in impact measurement, speaking about the challenges and importance of impact measurement in attracting capital for the impact sector as well as improving processes and strategies.

Solano took a reflective approach to explore the present and future of impact measurement, emphasizing the subjective and human aspects of the topic.

She also discussed how impact measurement varies in the context of financing different SDGs.

This podcast is relevant for those interested in impact measurement and its role in driving positive change.



IMPACT INVESTING REVIEW

GIIA publishes the Geneva Impact Investing Review, our research platform dedicated to all students willing to write articles, with the aim of promoting an understanding of opportunities, challenges and concepts in sustainable finance, particularly in the impact investing field.



Wake Up, World! It's Time to Invest in Sustainable Cities – Globally

Signe Skov Jensen emphasised the importance of investing in sustainable cities globally in the article and highlighted the urgent need for sustainable solutions for the challenges posed by urbanization, climate change, and social and environmental issues.

She argued that cities are the future, and investors need to fill the gap in green investments to achieve the Paris Agenda.

The article also discussed the investment disparity between cities in developed and developing countries and the need for impact investors to prioritize the most at-risk areas of the world.



Financing the SDGs: Exploring Impact Financing Through Development Impact Bonds

Hinah Mian explored the concept of Development Impact Bonds (DIBs) as an innovative financial instrument to finance the SDGs in this article by unpacking the mechanisms of DIBs, the advantages of the results-based financing approach, and the case of Educate Girls, the world's first DIB in education.

She discussed how DIBs could help in addressing developmental problems in countries where traditional public resource mobilisation is ineffective.

The article also highlighted the advantages and limitations of DIBs over traditional financing methods.



Gender Lens Investing: Progress for Women?

In this article, Emma Jones explored the concept of Gender Lens Investing (GLI), which is defined as the incorporation of gender analysis into the practice of investments and the systems of finance.

The article discussed how GLI has garnered global attention as investors seek to bring new dimensions to the nature of their investments, and companies face mounting pressure to redirect towards a sustainable future and the SDGs.

She also highlighted the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of GLI in terms of its impact upon women's lives, and how GLI needs to go beyond just gender and incorporate other intersections like race, disability, age, ethnicity, and sexuality.



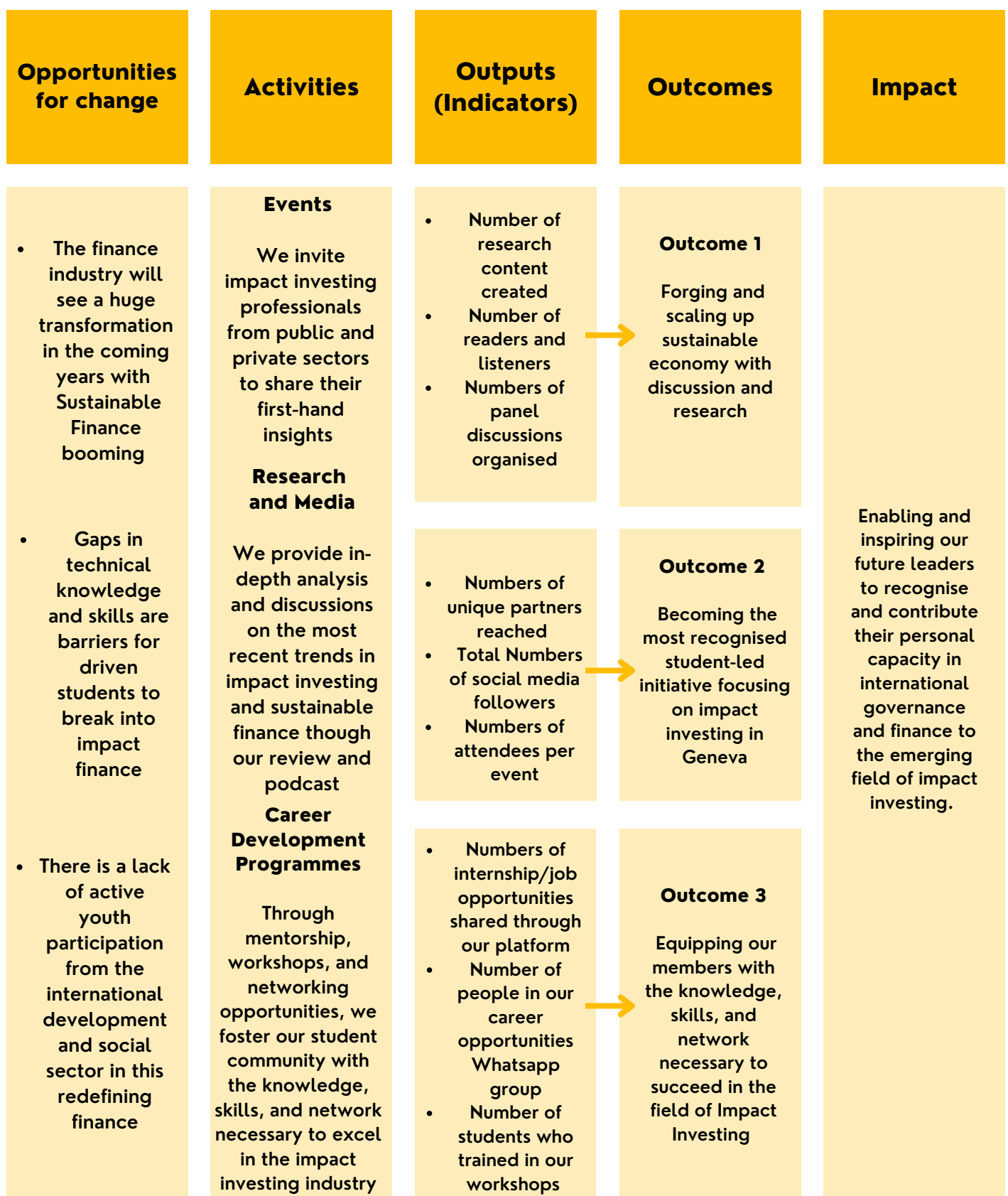
IMPACT REPORT

In an era where sustainable finance and impact investing are gaining immense importance, it is crucial to address the existing technical knowledge and skills gap, along with the lack of youth participation, as barriers for aspiring students seeking to enter this industry.

With a deep understanding of these challenges, GIA launches its first Impact Report to highlight our unwavering commitment to tackling these obstacles head-on and showcasing the remarkable contributions and achievements of our association during the period of 2022-2023 to empower our student community.



THEORY OF CHANGE



GIIA strives to support the following SDGs :



IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

Outcome 1 : Forging and scaling up sustainable economy with discussion and research

7

Number of research content created (podcast and review)

3

Numbers of panel discussions organised

326

Number of readers and listeners

Outcome 2 : Becoming the most recognized student-led initiative focusing on impact investing in Geneva

177

Total number of attendees

35

Average number of attendees per event

22

Unique partners reached

Number of social media followers



513



613

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

Outcome 3 : Equipping our members with the knowledge, skills, and network necessary to succeed in the field of Impact Investing

126

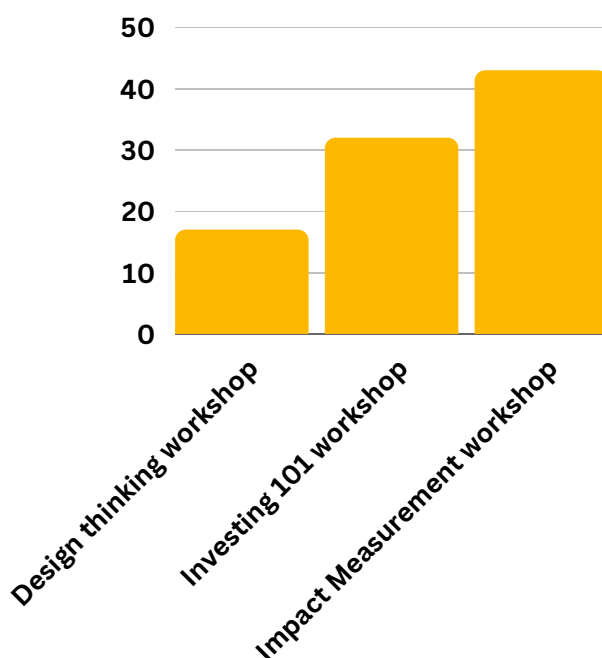
Number of people in the career opportunities WhatsApp Group

73

Numbers of internship/job opportunities shared through our platform

92

Number of students who trained in our workshops



"Through GIA's career platform I found an internship offer at Triodos Investment Management, a Dutch impact investor. Fortunately, GIA's events and workshops came in very useful during my interviews and throughout my internship, as it greatly expanded on my understanding of impact measurement, impact finance through different asset classes and finance sustainable in general."

- Tim van Doorne, 2nd MIA



"I found my internship at Tameo thanks to the GIA career channel. The internship gave me valuable insights into the field of impact investing and has been a valuable experience for my career path"

- Sarah Werren, 1st MINT

GIIA EXPERIENCES



EDGAR SAINT-HILLIER
Vice-President

Being involved in GIIA during my time at IHEID has been an incredibly rewarding experience. The soft skills and knowledge I have gained through the creation and organisation of various events and programs have proven to be invaluable assets for launching my career in impact investing. I strongly encourage future students to embrace this unparalleled opportunity.



HINAH MIAN
Director of Finance and Business Development

Leading and shaping GIIA has been a rewarding experience - professionally and personally. It allowed me to act on a fresh but profound concern for impact investing and finance. Through GIIA gained a fellowship at an impact investing fund manager, candid advice from leading professionals in Geneva's buzzing finance scene, the clarity to forge my own career and bonds that inspire me.



JUHUI OH
First Year Representative

Joining GIIA as a first-year representative has been one of the best decisions I made since I arrived in Geneva. Not only did I gain practical knowledge and hands-on experience in impact investing through numerous networking opportunities with professionals and career development workshops, but also amazing work ethic and team work thanks to like-minded peers passionate about sustainable finance.



LUZ STECCA
First Year Representative

Being a part of GIIA is one of the most valuable things this masters program at the Graduate Institute has offered me. We have the opportunity to link the theory we learn in class to practice and connect with amazing people that have a passionate and ambitious vision of the potential of impact investing and of our student association. I'm very grateful for all the members and especially to the executive board, for doing such a great job and being so generous and patient as they taught us, first-years representatives, everything we'll need to know to contribute to GIIA in the following year.

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Geneva Impact Investing Association |

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