

Global Entrepreneur in Residence (Global EIR) Program

2024 IMPACT REPORT

FGI
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— IMMIGRATION —

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A Letter from Michigan's Lieutenant Governor

Dear friends,

As Lieutenant Governor of Michigan, it is with great pleasure that I introduce Global Detroit's Global Entrepreneur in Residence (Global EIR) 2024 Impact Report. This report underscores how Michigan continues to serve as a beacon of innovation for entrepreneurs from around the world, and the important role that organizations like Global Detroit and the Michigan Global Talent Coalition play in facilitating this success. Their commitment to attracting and supporting international founders not only showcases Michigan's welcoming and inclusive environment but also highlights the competitive edge our state offers to international startup founders and the new ventures they are creating here in Michigan. Indeed, the success of these entrepreneurs serves as a testament to the vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem and matchless talent pool that our state has cultivated.

I first met Global Detroit's executive director Steve Tobocman in one of the early planning meetings in Detroit where the idea of launching a Global EIR program in Detroit was first discussed. Little could any of us have known that Global Detroit and the State of Michigan would partner within the next five years to make Michigan one of the leading Global EIR states. With state support, new Global EIR programs have been launched at Michigan Tech in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and are launching at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids. Global EIR founders are pioneering electrical vehicle companies to revolutionize the off-road-vehicle (ORV) industry, as well as commercial snow removal services, and creating tech jobs right here in Michigan.



Garlin Gilchrist II
Michigan's Lieutenant Governor

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As we provide transformative opportunities for international entrepreneurs to thrive, we not only enrich our communities but also position Michigan as a global leader in innovation and entrepreneurship. I commend the efforts of Global Detroit and the Michigan Global Talent Coalition for their dedication to building a more prosperous and inclusive Michigan. Building on a decade of national leadership in pioneering immigrant-inclusive economic development strategies and programs, as well as helping other communities across the country to tap into these opportunities, Global Detroit now leads the Global EIR National Peer Network, the leading national organization to help spread this exciting strategy across the country. Together, let us continue to support and celebrate the contributions of international entrepreneurs to our state's growth and prosperity.

Sincerely,

Garlin Gilchrist II

Lieutenant Governor of Michigan

The Global EIR Program

Transforming the Economy, One Global Entrepreneur at a Time

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Global EIR programs provide a crucial pathway for foreign-born entrepreneurs to launch their companies not only in Michigan, but throughout the United States, offering them a unique blend of academic and practical support. By placing them in part-time university jobs eligible for uncapped H-1B employment, these programs allow foreign-born entrepreneurs to engage in pre-launch activities and pursue additional visa support enabling them to launch and work on their startups.

Launched at the University of Massachusetts Boston in 2014, Global EIR programs have expanded to nearly a dozen U.S. universities, with over 100 founders participating. As these startups grow and the founders gain experience, they can transition to longer-term visas.

Indeed, Global EIR programs stand as beacons of innovation, empowerment, and opportunity, dedicated to cultivating ecosystems where international entrepreneurs can significantly contribute to the national economy and share their unique perspectives and ideas in the communities they live and work.

GLOBAL DETROIT'S ANNUAL GLOBAL EIR GOALS



Place **ten GEIR founders** at five universities



Create at least **50 new jobs** through GEIR supported startups



Raise **\$15 million in venture capital** per year (current and alumni companies)



Half of GEIR founders are from demographics **underrepresented** within the startup community



E Pluribus

Maximizing the Impact of Immigrant-Inclusive Economic Development

E Pluribus is an exciting new initiative that aims to expand immigrant-inclusive economic development programs like Global EIR.

OVERVIEW

Global Detroit's E Pluribus national initiative aims to strengthen and maximize the impact of local immigrant-inclusive economic development initiatives in emerging areas of innovation, including Global EIR programs. Through E Pluribus, Global Detroit provides specialized technical assistance, develops national programs, coordinates and executes advocacy priorities, and facilitates peer learning and exchange.



THE GLOBAL EIR NATIONAL PEER NETWORK

Global Detroit launched a Global EIR National Peer Network in 2021 at a time when just four U.S. programs (UMass Boston's Venture Development Center, Global Detroit's program partnered with the University of Michigan, Babson College, and Global Cleveland's program partnered with Case Western Reserve and Cleveland State universities) were in operation. The Global EIR National Peer Network has grown to include over 100 Global EIR program managers, startup founders, innovation leaders, attorneys, and advocates. By the end of 2025, we aim to have Global EIR programs operating at no fewer than 16 participating universities and/or nonprofit organizations across the country, reflecting a four-fold growth rate within four years. Additionally, we hope to add at least 25 new founders as Global EIR participants annually across America.

The Global EIR Program in Michigan

Impact to Date

The Global EIR program at Global Detroit has continued to serve as a catalyst for innovation and economic growth across Michigan. With a vibrant community spanning across 12 high-tech startup entrepreneurs hailing from around the world, Global Detroit's Global EIR program embodies diversity, creativity, and big ideas.

Collectively, our entrepreneurs have not only advanced groundbreaking tech, but also have contributed significantly to Michigan's economic landscape.

Since its inception, the program has sparked the creation of 174 jobs, injecting vitality into local communities and fostering a culture of innovation. Most of these jobs are high-paying jobs in high-tech industries. Moreover, their ventures have raised an impressive \$28.1 million in funding, underscoring their profound impact on driving economic prosperity and technological advancement in Michigan.

The journey of our global entrepreneurs exemplifies the power of collaboration and the transformative potential of entrepreneurship, and leaves an indelible mark on Michigan's entrepreneurial ecosystem for generations to come.

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Global EIR Founders

5

Continents

5

University Partners

174

Jobs Created

\$28.1 M

Capital Raised

The Global EIR Program in Michigan

Academic Partners

The Global EIR program thrives through its deep integration with university partners throughout the state of Michigan. During the last year, our university partnerships have continued to expand. State funding enabled us to add Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, Lawrence Tech in Oakland County and Michigan Tech in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. These expansions signify our model's success and our commitment to rapidly expanding this collaborative approach throughout the state.

These partnerships benefit both Global EIR founders by providing unparalleled access to advanced research and academic expertise, while fostering a culture of learning and entrepreneurship across campus communities. Our founders bring diverse perspectives and real-world experience, enriching the university environment by serving as mentors, stimulating an entrepreneurial culture, and initiating collaborative projects that propel technological innovation and academic inquiry.



The Art of the Possible

Global EIR at GVSU

We sat down with Grand Valley State University's (GVSU's) Technology Commercialization Director, Linda Chamberlain, Ph.D, to learn about the school's partnership with Global EIR.



Why did Grand Valley State University decide to partner with Global Detroit on the Global EIR program?

The Global EIR focus on building inclusive, diverse entrepreneurial ecosystems that contribute to the national economy aligns with GVSU's strategic mission to prepare globally-minded citizens as life-long learners, empowered to create their futures and be leaders in shaping their communities. Together, we aim to build role models, develop talent, and foster the sense of agency found through entrepreneurship.

What attracted you to this program, and what are your primary goals for this partnership?

GVSU champions partnerships that promote economic development through community engagement. The partnership enhances our research, scholarly, and creative efforts by involving faculty and students, and ensuring these contributions are visible, impactful, and valued. We also aim to align innovative, entrepreneurial solutions with regional industry partners.

How will you measure the success of the Global EIR program at your university?

Success will be measured by the demand for engagement from Global EIR applicants. We prioritize the quality of engagements over quantity, focusing on meaningful and impactful collaborations.



Linda Chamberlain, Ph.D
Technology Commercialization Director
Grand Valley State University

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How do you see the Global EIR program contributing to the local community and economic development in Grand Rapids and the broader Michigan area?

The Global EIR program can significantly contribute to economic sustainability and vitality in the region by aligning innovative solutions with regional challenges and bringing diverse perspectives.

What initial steps are you taking to build a strong foundation for the Global EIR program at Grand Valley State University?

We are developing a strong foundation by establishing clear selection criteria based on entrepreneurial stage, alignment with GVSU's research strengths, and industry needs. This approach ensures strategic purpose, accelerates on-boarding, and integrates founders effectively into the regional innovation ecosystem.

The Global EIR Program in Michigan

Founder Highlights

MIHO SHOJI & ALFREDO JALDIN *Bolivia*
Co-Founders, Moodbit



Moodbit, led by founders Miho Shoji and Alfredo Jaldin, has made significant strides in the technology sector. Not only have they secured substantial funding, but they have also successfully launched innovative products and expanded their customer base to over 700 organizations. Their acceptance into prestigious programs like the Nvidia Inception program and partnerships with industry giants like Microsoft, Google, and SAP highlight their growing influence and potential for further growth.



CHENING DUKER *United Kingdom*
Founder, GoodPluck



GoodPluck serves as a bridge between urban farms and consumers, particularly those in low-income housing complexes and neighborhoods. Through innovative approaches, such as mobile markets and partnerships with local farmers, GoodPluck is making a tangible difference in tackling food insecurity across Metro Detroit. Duker's efforts have garnered attention and recognition for their impact on nourishing communities and addressing systemic challenges in the food system.



SIMON FORSTER *Germany*
Co-Founder, PassiveBolt



PassiveBolt, a leading provider of self-sovereign identity (SSI) technology, has collaborated with industry giants like LEGIC Identsystems, ZKTECO USA, PDQ Manufacturing, and TECH5 Group to revolutionize digital identity solutions. Through its KeyShare SSI platform, PassiveBolt offers secure solutions for hospitality, smart cities, and access control, leveraging blockchain and verifiable credentials. In the GEIR Program, Simon worked at Wayne State University in their Office of Business Innovation helping various patent applications and efforts to commercialize university research.

PassiveBolt

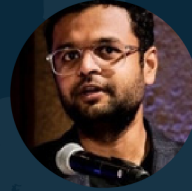
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RUBY AL HAJJAR *Saudi Arabia*
Founder, Cleanwater Nanotechnology ▼



Through Cleanwater Nanotechnology (CWNT), Ruby is using her PhD in microbiology and nanotechnology from Michigan Tech to improve the quality of Michigan's lakes and rivers. CWNT successfully completed the Regional National Science Foundation (NSF) I-Corps program, securing a mini NSF grant for prototype development. Participation in this program also positions CWNT for eligibility in the national I-Corps program. CWNT took part in the 'Inclusive Innovators Summit' at the University of Minnesota, and is currently participating in the AquaHacking Great Lakes Challenge.

ASHOK SEETHARAM *India*
Co-Founder, Paxafe ▼



Paxafe Technologies specializes in predictive analytics for supply chain management, aiming to enhance risk mitigation and minimize disruptions, particularly in cold chain distribution. Seetharam's expertise lies in leveraging technology to enhance logistics and supply chain operations. He has been instrumental in establishing partnerships with industry leaders like Carrier Transicold to integrate Paxafe's risk mitigation and prediction capabilities.



AYUSH AGARWAL *India*
Co-Founder, PencilSpaces ▼



Pencil Spaces, led by founder Ayush Agarwal, is focused on harnessing the transformative power of education through the creation of innovative solutions that support educators and students by fostering a passion for learning. Of note, Pencil recently launched a collaboration with Teach For America and its Ignite Fellowship. Additionally, Pencil Spaces' recognition in Tech & Learning magazine's "Best of 2023" contest underscores its commitment to advancing education through innovative technology.



MAX VON WELS *Germany*
Co-Founder, Life Magnetics ▼



Max Von Wels, the co-founder of Life Magnetics, is a German national who recently joined the Global EIR program and is working on commercializing his company's innovative diagnostic tests in livestock. This is a critical domain for the regional, national, and global agriculture economy, considering the burgeoning Bird Flu outbreak and the general lack of genetic diversity in modern herds.



Acknowledgements

Our community of philanthropic funders and advisors play a pivotal role in the success of Global EIR, serving as champions of innovation. Their generous support and invaluable guidance enable us to continue our mission of empowering entrepreneurs from around the world, driving economic growth, and fostering a culture of entrepreneurship across Michigan.

We give thanks to these organizations.

Connect

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Global EIR Michigan Funders



Michigan Global
Talent Initiative

THE MICHIGAN GLOBAL TALENT INITIATIVE

The Michigan Global Talent Initiative integrates immigrants into Michigan's workforce to boost population and economic growth. MGIT aims to add over 100,000 skilled immigrant workers by 2030, collaborating with various sectors to position Michigan as a leader in immigrant workforce inclusion. MGIT is funded by the State of Michigan and supported by the Office of Global Michigan.



THE WILLIAM DAVIDSON FOUNDATION

The William Davidson Foundation focuses on enhancing the economic, cultural, and civic vitality of Southeast Michigan, the State of Israel, and the Jewish community. It supports artists, educators, entrepreneurs, and leaders through collaborations to create jobs, improve community spaces, and support Jewish life and Israel's prosperity.



RALPH C. WILSON, JR.
FOUNDATION

THE RALPH C WILSON JR FOUNDATION

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation focuses on improving communities in Southeast Michigan and Western New York through initiatives in active lifestyles, early childhood, caregivers, and entrepreneurship. The foundation emphasizes urgency and collaboration, driven by Ralph C. Wilson, Jr.'s legacy, with a mandate to spend down its resources within 20 years to maximize impact.



FAKHOURY GLOBAL IMMIGRATION

Fakhoury Global Immigration specializes in business-based immigration law, providing comprehensive immigration services to corporate clients across various industries. Based in Troy, Michigan, FGI supports clients with work permits, visas, and customized immigration analyses globally.