Progress becomes visible when innovations begin finding their place in existing systems, when governments adopt them, financial institutions enable them, industries invest in them, and communities choose to use them.

This month's edition captures different moments along that journey. A Stanford Graduate School of Business case study examines Social Alpha's work in building markets for science and technology innovation. Conversations on inclusive finance highlight the importance of making new technologies accessible to those who stand to benefit the most. Across our portfolio, collaborations, strategic partnerships, and global recognitions demonstrate how innovations are moving beyond proving what is possible to strengthening systems for wider adoption.

Progress is rarely defined by a single milestone. More often, it is reflected in the steady accumulation of trust, partnerships, and opportunities that allow innovation to become part of everyday life. That is the journey we continue to follow, and the stories you'll find in this edition.

CENTRE STAGE

STANFORD GSB STANFORD BUSINESS
Social Alpha: Building Markets Where Markets Fail.
In early 2020, Manoj Kumar was preparing for a season unlike any in recent memory. As managing director of Singapore-based Social Alpha, a nonprofit that supports innovators in science and technology across Southeast Asia, he was accustomed to long days and constant travel. But the coming months would test his organization in ways he had not anticipated. Social Alpha was in the middle of a major expansion, having secured a $10 million investment from Temasek Foundation to scale its operations across the region. The plan was ambitious, and the timing was unfortunate. As COVID-19 began to spread, Kumar and his team had to decide whether to pause, pivot, or press forward with a model that had never been tested in a crisis.
Founded in 2013, Social Alpha was designed to bridge the gap between promising scientific innovations and the markets that could bring them to life. The organization supports entrepreneurs working in areas such as agriculture, healthcare, and sustainable manufacturing, providing mentorship, technical support, and access to investors. Its model depends on relationships between innovators, corporations, and investors, and on the belief that markets can be created where they do not yet exist.
Kumar had joined the organization in 2019 after years of working in corporate strategy and venture investing. He was not a scientist himself, but he was familiar with the challenges that innovators face when their technologies require new infrastructure, new customers, or new ways of doing business. The work was slow by design, and it was not easy to explain to people who were used to quarterly results.
Continue reading

We are now a Stanford Case Study.

"If We Are Growing, We Actually Have A Problem" – Manoj Kumar, Founder at Social Alpha

At Social Alpha, the ultimate ambition is to eventually render itself unnecessary. A new Stanford Graduate School of Business case study examines Social Alpha's decade-long story of building markets for innovations.

"Social Alpha's wager is that markets can be built, De-risk the venture, align state, society, and capital, and it will attract risk-minimum investor since refused Becomes one they can underwrite", Kumar, Founder, Social Alpha Kumar, in the months writing the Stanford University GSB case study on Social Alpha with Professor William Barnett.

Click here to read more

MONTHLY SCOOP

Inclusive Finance Inevitable for Inclusive Growth

Ganesh Neelam, Co-founder, Social Alpha, and CEO, Sustain Plus, spoke at the Inclusive Growth Conference 2026 New Delhi, joining a panel discussion on scaling agriculture and energy technologies using inclusive finance. The session examined innovative ways of bringing finance to the end users to optimize the impact.

Ganesh emphasised on centering communities by offering new technologies at minimal risk alongside influencing finance partners to bet on climate-smart technologies.

Agri-Tech Innovation & Start-Up Connect 2026 at Nashik

Social Alpha joined partners and stakeholders in Nashik celebrating State Agriculture Day- bringing farmers, FPOs, agri-tech start-ups, government institutions, and ecosystem partners around innovation in agriculture.

With 12 start-ups presenting their solutions across clean energy, farm mechanisation, post-harvest technologies, livestock management, and soil health, the event facilitated opportunities for farmers and FPOs to explore collaborations.

START-UP SHOUT-OUT

Deeptech Start-up Albatross Energetics Bags $1.05 million

Albatross Energetics, a Mumbai-based deeptech start-up raised $1.05 million in a pre-series A funding round led by Transition VC.

Founded by Sudarsan M S and Srihari B in 2021, Albatross, develops energy-efficient industrial cooling systems. The company will use the funding to set up pilot-scale manufacturing for key components and expanding their cooling solutions across various industries.

To learn more about Albatross Energetics Click here

ALBATROSS ENERGETICS

Bare Necessities and Made Without - A Tale of Shared Vision

Social Alpha is thrilled to witness two of its start-ups, Bare Necessities and Made Without, collaborating, in what can be called a happy marriage of materials!

Bare Necessities, a personal and home care brand, and Made Without, a deeptech recycling brand-both centred around sustainability have come together to launch world's first biodegradable deodorant stick made from recycled chip packets.

Developed by two Certified B Corps, the product demonstrates how waste can be transformed into valued materials, diverting around 20 chip packets into every reusable case. The material is recovered at 120° C in water instead of being burnt and is ten times more recyclable than standard recycled plastic.

To read more Click here

Raising the Buzz with Drones

PierSight has launched space-borne drones equipped with space-borne radars - yet another technology developed by them. Joining the Drone Federation India (DFI), PierSight plans to expand into drone-based SAR.

With DFI, PierSight will now be a direct participant in conversations on regulation, standards, and partnerships shaping India's drone ecosystem.

To know more about PierSight Click here

Revy and Pixxel Enter into Strategic Partnerships with State Governments

Revy Environmental Solutions Pvt. Ltd signed an investment MoU with the Gujarat State Biotechnology Mission (GSBTM) at the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference 2026 in Vadodara. The new partnership will foster the company's efforts to scale innovative biotechnology solutions for environmental sustainability.

The MoU highlighted Government of Gujarat's commitment towards deeptech innovation for the growth of new technology ventures. The partnership aims to help develop and commercialise technologies for sustainable waste management, wastewater treatment, and bioenergy.

To learn more about Revy

Click here

Pixxel, a global space data company, signed an MoU with the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) to advance agricultural intelligence and climate resilience using high-resolution commercial hyperspectral imaging satellites. In partnership with the University, Pixxel will combine their satellite data with AI powered analytics to track crop health, soil quality, and environmental estimation. Farmers, researchers, and policymakers will be able to access satellite data in an actionable format with the help of Pixxel.

To read more about Pixxel

Click here

And the Winners Are...

Four Innovators Honoured at the Rashtrapati Bhavan

The Hon'ble president of India recognised Sunbird Straws, Ekosight, Harithaveni Renewable Systems, and Astrasus Innovus as Grassroots Innovators at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. The four innovations, incubated by Social Alpha, were among 26 innovations selected under the Atal Innovation Mission 2026.

The four innovators are tackling everyday challenges across sustainability, agriculture, waste management, and healthcare. Sunbird Straws is turning discarded coconut shells into biodegradable straws. Ekosight is making soil testing faster and more accessible to farmers. Harithaveni Renewable Systems converts organic waste into biogas and organic fertiliser, and Astrasus Innovus is bringing oral cancer screening closer to people through an at home screening device.

To watch highlights from the event Click here

CareMother by Data Health reaches AI for Good Summit 2026 Finals in Geneva

Securing a spot among the top 3 finalists at the Innovation Factory Grand Finale, CareMother by Data Health won recognition at the AI for Good Global Summit 2026 in Geneva. The start-up's Indigenous AI-powered maternal health solutions aimed at improving access to quality maternal and neonatal care were highlighted during the summit.

A Colourful Moment for Takachar

Takachar's Takacarter technology honoured as a Rainbow Standard Partner for its Biochar Technology Manufacturer category. The Rainbow Standard Partnership is for developing innovative solutions for carbon removal through decentralised biochar production.

Being a Rainbow Standard Partner will enable Takachar to connect with a wider carbon service partners that support carbon removal projects and further their industry reach.

Earthshot Prize Features Khayi!

Khayi! is a homegrown social enterprise working with farmers, offering affordable protection from pests and extreme weather. They use modular greenhouse technology to protect crops from pests. Khayi! was the Prize winner. Khayi! is an already familiar name in climate action. They are once again featured in the latest Earthshot Prize Impact Report, alongside organisations working on climate impact.

PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

Technonic Innovations in Clean Energy

Accelerating the next phase of India's energy transition.

For years, India's energy transition was measured by how much renewable energy we could generate. Today, the challenge is different. As temperatures rise, electricity demand surges. Cooling becomes essential. Peak demand pushes the grid harder, often increasing reliance on fossil fuels precisely when the transition to clean energy matters most.

The next phase of the transition will depend on how effectively we can store clean energy, improve energy efficiency, and ensure reliable access where it's needed most. In other words, the future of clean energy won't be shaped by generation alone. It will be shaped by everything that enables it.

This shift calls for a new generation of science and technology-led innovation. If you're building technologies in renewable energy, or making energy more reliable, efficient or accessible, we'd like to hear from you.

Apply now

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At Social Alpha, we are on a mission to drive Economic Growth, Social Justice and Climate Action through the power of Entrepreneurship and Market-creating Innovations.

CONNECT WITH US

For any media enquiries or further information, reach out to us at communications@socialalpha.org