

Schwab Foundation Awards 2025: New Social Entrepreneurs and Innovators of the Year Announced

DAVOS-KLOSTERS, SWITZERLAND, January 21, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, in partnership with the [Motsepe Foundation](#), announced today at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting its [2025 awardees](#).

The 18 leaders from 15 organizations are values-driven entrepreneurs pioneering transformative business, social development and environmental models that are helping build a more equitable and sustainable world. This year's awardees are addressing health disparities from the United States to Zambia, creating income opportunities for displaced individuals, combatting deforestation in Central and West Africa, and improving the lives of vulnerable communities in India and beyond.

"It is a great privilege to introduce the 2025 Schwab Foundation Awardees, a remarkable group of social entrepreneurs and innovators who embody integrity, humility and positive values in their work," said Hilde Schwab, Co-Founder and Chairperson of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship. "Their extraordinary achievements reflect on the broader community of leading social entrepreneurs and innovators dedicated to fighting social inequalities and preserving natural ecosystems."

Social entrepreneurship and innovation are gaining momentum worldwide, with over 10 million social enterprises creating 200 million jobs and generating \$2 trillion annually. Despite this significant economic contribution and commitment to sustainable and inclusive development, social enterprises face a \$1.1 trillion funding need.

At the Annual Meeting 2025, the Schwab Foundation aims to spotlight social entrepreneurs and innovators who are already leading the way with successful and innovative business models and, ultimately, help advance these solutions at scale to reach more people across the world.

The 18 award winners, within four categories, are:

Social Entrepreneurs

Individuals employing innovative, market-based approaches to directly address social issues.

- Cecilia Corral – Co-Founder and Chief Strategy Officer of CareMessage.

- Christina Mawuse Gyisun – Co-Founder of Sommalife, a social enterprise that addresses the systemic socioeconomic exclusion of women smallholder shea nut farmers in West Africa.
- Muzalema Mwanza – Founder of Safe Motherhood Alliance, a purpose-driven organization in Zambia that aims to ensure safe childbirth for the 20 million pregnant women in sub-Saharan Africa without access to equitable maternal healthcare.
- Valmir Ortega – Founder of Belterra Agroflorestas, which restores degraded land through agroforestry in Brazil.
- Manuel Rosemberg – Chief Executive Officer of ANA Care, which offers an AI-driven platform that provides healthcare training, support and monitoring tools for caregivers throughout Latin America.
- Aline Sara – Co-Founder of NaTakallam ('We Speak' in Arabic), which disrupts the conventional approach to humanitarian aid by enabling refugees and conflict-affected individuals to earn an income online as language tutors, teachers and translators.
- Akshay Saxena – Co-Founder of Avanti Fellows, a non-profit that aims to provide equitable access to India's top science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) colleges.
- Vineet Singal – Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of CareMessage, a US-based technology non-profit building the largest patient engagement platform for low-income populations in the United States.

Public Social Innovators

Leaders in the public sector who harness the power of social innovation to create public good through policy, regulation, or public initiatives.

- Islam Alijaj – Founder and President of Tatkraft, an association of and for people with disabilities who want to manage their everyday lives independently, and actively shape society. Alijaj is a Swiss Albanian disability activist and politician with cerebral palsy, and a member of the Swiss National Parliament since 2023 – after serving on Zurich's City Council.
- Trinh Thi Huong – Deputy Director-General of the Agency for Enterprise Development, Ministry of Planning and Investment of Viet Nam. With over 20 years of policy-making experience, she is now focused on creating an enabling environment for micro, small and medium enterprises, promoting inclusive and sustainable businesses.

Corporate Social Innovators

Leaders within multinational or regional companies who drive the development of new products, services, initiatives, or business models that address societal and environmental challenges.

- Caitlyn (Juhong) Chen – Vice-President and Head of Sustainable Social Value (SSV) at Tencent, where she drives the company’s mission of “Tech for Good” by harnessing connection and digital innovations to address environmental, healthcare and other sustainable development challenges.
- Dr. Eric Cioè-Peña – Founder of the Center for Global Health at Northwell Health in New York, leading research and programmes to address global health inequities.
- Fred Hersch – Senior Product Manager at Google Health, where he leads on Open Health Stack, a collaboration with the World Health Organization offering a suite of open-source components that enable developers to build next-gen, data-driven digital health solutions.

Collective Social Innovators

People who bring together organizations to solve complex problems that cannot be tackled by individual actors.

- Ved Arya – Director of the Buddha Institute and National Convener of the Responsible Coalition for Resilient Communities (RCRC), a collective of 98 grassroots civil society organizations across 15 states in India that formed during the COVID-19 pandemic due to its disproportionate impact on vulnerable communities. Arya’s fellow RCRC leaders and 2025 Schwab Foundation Awardees include Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director of the Population Foundation of India, and Apoorva Oza, Global Lead for Agriculture and Climate at non-profit the Aga Khan Foundation.
- Abraham Baffoe – Technical lead of the Africa Sustainable Commodities Initiative (ASCI), a multistakeholder partnership of ten countries in Central and West Africa, inclusive of governments, companies, local communities and NGOs. ASCI members have defined and committed to principles for producing cocoa, rubber, palm oil and coffee crops in a way that protects forests while improving local smallholder livelihoods.
- Dr. Madeleine Ballard – Chief Executive Officer of the Community Health Impact Coalition (CHIC), a collective of community health workers (CHWs) and aligned health organizations from 60+ countries. CHIC is making professional CHWs – who are salaried, skilled, supervised and supplied – the norm worldwide by changing guidelines, funding and policy.

In January 2024, the Schwab Foundation’s Global Alliance for Social Entrepreneurship launched the Rise Ahead Pledge to help unite businesses to enhance the social economy by 2030. Over two dozen world-leading companies have now signed the pledge, and it is estimated the signatories have spent \$278 million on corporate social innovation to date.

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