

Delivering positive systemic change, a profile of Giant

With #QVCS, Maddyness profiles different funds to give founders and entrepreneurs the information they need to choose the right investor. Today, we speak to Jia-Lin Yong, Investor at Giant to explore the future of health.

I have always been passionate about solving pressing problems in climate and healthcare, which led me to sustainability and climate change consulting before working at Babylon Health, where I was most recently Chief of Staff. I noticed that there was not enough risk capital allocated to these big problems that have the potential to change the world, and that is what led me to *Giant*.

Giant's purpose of backing companies that matter and its mission to deliver positive systemic change alongside exceptional returns truly resonated with me. I believe that entrepreneurship and innovation are the best solutions to these global challenges, and that it needs to be funded by thoughtful capital.

Giant is incredibly entrepreneurial, so I can leverage my operating skills and sustainability expertise alongside investing to help build a leading firm. Giant is also constantly innovating in order to build the world's premier engine of purpose-driven innovation. For example, we don't only invest in companies but also incubate them and, recognising the funding gap for early growth stage climate tech companies, we launched a climate growth fund to enable the best climate companies to scale.

What recommendations would you give someone looking to work in VC?

Those looking to build a career in VC must be prepared to play the long game and it often feels more like an art than science. There are long feedback loops in this industry, and you will likely be saying more “no’s” than “yes’s”. It is vital to have a clear “why” for being a VC day to day, whether that is the opportunity to work with founders, find the next category-defining company or deliver positive impact through startups.

It’s never too early to build a wide and reliable network for deal flow and due diligence. There are multiple ways to achieve this, be it through attending networking events, reaching out to people cold, or building your personal brand through podcasts. It is even better if you can build a network that gives you an edge, for example, in a specific vertical, such that you are always top of mind for founders in that space. Most importantly, focus on building authentic and lasting relationships.

Of course, there are the more technical elements of investing, which aspiring investors can familiarise themselves with through books like *Venture Deals*, *The Power Law*, and *Secrets of Sand Hill Road*.

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[Companies that matter, a profile of Giant Ventures](#)

What industries are you investing in and why?

Giant backs purpose-driven founders solving the world’s biggest challenges across three themes: climate, health, and inclusive capitalism. These themes have been selected because of their urgency for humanity and their potential for radical innovation through technology.

We believe that these three themes cut across many industries. When thinking about climate, often energy and mobility come to mind. In reality, climate change is affected by and affects all corners of the economy, and therefore, the

solution also lies in multiple sectors, from fashion to manufacturing to finance to food.

Under the inclusive capitalism theme, we invest in technologies that rebalance the relationship between labour and capital and enable a more equitable economy. This includes solutions to make education more accessible, increase the competitiveness of small businesses, and improve economic opportunities for disadvantaged communities.

We have a similarly broad remit in healthcare that spans the full health spectrum, from diagnostics to treatment, from wellness to secondary care, and from acute to chronic care.

The unifying theme for the companies that we invest in is that they have the potential to deliver scalable positive impact alongside exceptional returns.

What do you look for in a founder?

Successful founders exist in many forms. Outliers can be found in all ages, backgrounds, and genders. However, the common traits that I look for in founders are resilience and a sense of urgency.

The journey of founding a company is unpredictable, challenging, and unsettling. It takes a special type of person to wake up day after day to overcome these challenges and persevere in building towards their vision. I have noticed that the best founders rarely complain and dwell on mistakes made; they are always action-biased.

Usually, these people cannot imagine themselves doing anything else but building their own company to solve the problem that they are solving. They have a fire in their bellies that they need to do this right now, and with urgency.

What does the future of health tech look like?

More than half of the world still does not have access to essential health services. Where healthcare is available, many health systems are reaching breaking point as the demand for care continues to grow whilst the supply of clinicians is dwindling.

I'm optimistic that we can address these challenges, as healthcare innovation is happening at speed. Technology can augment healthcare delivery and

enable clinicians to practise at the top of their licence. AI is transforming healthcare through automation – many of the administrative tasks, such as documentation and coding, can now be effectively automated, freeing up the third of clinicians' working hours currently spent on those tasks to treat patients. Looking ahead, technology will play a more significant role in complex tasks, such as AI-aided diagnostics, robot-assisted surgery, and personalised drug design.

Today we know more about our health than ever before. The volumes and frequency of individual-level health data generated, combined with AI advancements, will enable truly personalised and predictive healthcare. I envision a world where every provider, patient, and carer has an AI co-pilot, democratising the level of care and support that was previously only accessible to the 1%. Continued consumerisation of healthcare and the rise of new technologies will further shift healthcare away from hospitals to homes and make everyone active participants in their health.

What makes Giant Ventures different?

Venture capitalists work directly with founders, but over 90% of European venture capitalists have never worked at a startup. Giant is led by a team of former founders and operators, so we understand the journey first-hand. Our team includes the founders of Bulb Energy, Ganni, 23andMe, and Starcity, and operators at some of the biggest tech companies, such as Revolut, Deliveroo, Babylon Health, Rent the Runway, Huffington Post and Microsoft. Having this experience enables us to roll up our sleeves and work with founders closely, but above all, it means that we can truly empathise with entrepreneurs and be their sounding board.

With Giant, founders are not compromising on network and access to work with a values-aligned team of founders and operators. Founders can tap into our extensive transatlantic networks of capital providers for their next fundraise, corporates (BMW, Henkel, and Virgin are some of our LPs) for their first enterprise customers, and talent for their first hires.

Giant also only invests in purpose-driven founders, so we are mission-aligned from day one. We believe that the future unicorn companies will be built by tackling the largest problems in the world, so impact and profit aren't mutually exclusive.

What one piece of advice would you give

founders?

Ruthlessly prioritise. Time is one of your scarcest resources, and speed is your main advantage. As a founder, there will be a million things to do, but it is important not to lose focus. The majority of your time should be spent building and talking to customers to get feedback to iterate.

Jia-Lin Yong is an Investor at *Giant*.

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