

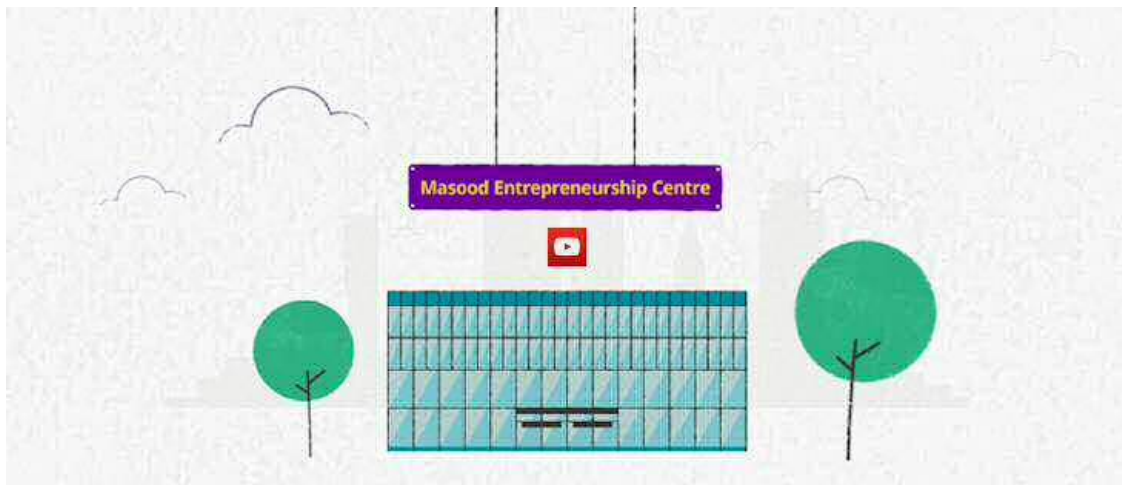
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Masood  
Entrepreneurship  
Centre

MEC Update

Issue 14 | 17 November 2021



Welcome to the latest [Masood Entrepreneurship Centre](#) newsletter...

MEC News

## The power of entrepreneurship – be your own boss



Start-up founders must be bold, brave and believe in themselves. However, everyone needs a little help... That's why the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre at The University of Manchester has once again launched the Venture Further Awards (VFA's), the UK's leading university-led start-up competition.

The VFA's showcase the wide range of entrepreneurial students and graduates across The University of Manchester. Giving them the chance to turn their ideas into reality, the VFA's provide entrants with the chance to win significant early stage funding to start their own business.

With a prize fund of £75,000, the VFA's will fund fifteen new business propositions. It's not all about the cash though; this competition opens the door to a world of support programmes, workshops, mentors, and networks.

Acting as a stepping-stone for students to launch their dream business, the VFA's allow students to get moving quickly. Rijul Shukla, winner of the Business category in 2020 and founder of Spice Story, launched his business a mere 3 months after his big win. Since launching, Spice Story has gone from concept to product with its 100% plant based Indian frozen curries now stocking in nine different stores across Greater Manchester. With a mission to help people live more sustainably and reduce the impact of food on the planet, Spice Story has collaborated with Too Good To Go and has also featured in the *Guardian Weekend Magazine*.

Entries to the competition should be viable and credible business proposals with real potential to succeed. Applications close on **Thursday, 24 February 2022** and following the deadline, up to 25 finalists will be invited to pitch their business proposal to a panel of expert judges for a chance to win one of the cash prizes. To ensure entrepreneurs get the most out of the competition, MEC are offering a variety of support sessions between December

2021 and the competition finals in March 2022, to all aspiring entrepreneurs looking to enter the competition.

[Find out more and enter online >>](#)

## MCR Makes

In collaboration with the SU, MEC are hosting the first MCR Makes Market, encouraging our students with side hustles or small businesses to sell their products in person.

From clothing to handmade art, artisanal goods to homewares we want YOU to take part in the very first MCR Makes Market. If you have a unique product that you want to sell to your peers at the SU, then sign up to take part now!

[Find out more](#)



## Applications for Start-up Visa are now open!

If you are an international recent graduate from The University of Manchester with an interest in starting your own business, then you may be eligible to apply for endorsement for the Start-up Visa via the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre.

The new businesses will need to be innovative with a clear sustainable competitive advantage over existing provision. They will need to be scalable with potential to create substantial jobs and growth not just in the UK but abroad as well, and the applicants will need to be able to demonstrate that they have the necessary skills and competencies to run the business.

[Find out more](#)



## Opportunity for Manchester social scientists with innovative ideas



Are you a social scientist with an innovative research idea that could be developed into a business or social enterprise? We are delighted to invite you to apply to the ARC Accelerator - a comprehensive entrepreneurial skills training programme. Launching on 1 February 2022, this unique opportunity is specifically designed to help turn your bright idea into a business or venture to help people, society, the environment, or the economy. You will also have the chance to bid for up to £50,000 to support your proposed venture.

The ARC Accelerator is specifically designed to help academics and researchers in SHAPE disciplines (Social Sciences Humanities and the Arts for People and the Economy) explore turning their research ideas into businesses or ventures to help people, society, and the economy.

The programme is open to all Social Science Researchers employed by The University of Manchester.

[Find out more](#)

## Inspiring Manchester Tech CEO shares experiences and advice



Matthew Scullion, founder and CEO of Matillion, shared his unique attitude and dedication to innovation and answered questions from the audience at an event in the Entrepreneurs@Manchester speaker series hosted online by the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre.

Matthew began by discussing his own personal entrepreneurial journey and early motivations for starting a business. He founded his first start-up aged only 18. After then working in commercial IT and software development for fifteen years, he founded Matillion.

Matthew described his initial ideas for the company and how it subsequently developed.

Matthew then answered audience questions and provided advice on developing B2B tech start-up businesses, approaches to networking and mentoring, and perspectives on managing risk and resilience.

[Watch a recording >>](#)

[Keep up-to-date with the latest MEC news here](#)

## Spotlight on



### Triumph of Innovation

The Masood Entrepreneurship Centre has recently participated in the Incubator and Accelerator Track of the Triumph of Innovation Impact Study 2021, promoted by the leading research and advisory organisation UBI Global.

The Triumph of Innovation impact study has focused on how business incubators and accelerators as well as corporate innovation teams took operational challenges and turned them into innovation growth and success during the pandemic crisis.

Business Incubators and Accelerators that were selected to participate support startups at all stages by providing a large array of services, over a period from three months up to five years.

The study will be showcased at a global networking event at the World Expo in Dubai in December 2021.

[Find out more](#)



## The keys to differentiate yourself in a competitive job market

MEC Director Lynn Sheppard recently contributed to an interdisciplinary forum organised by the Institute of Innovation and Interdisciplinarity (iCubo) of the University of Development, Chile. The theme of the forum focused on interdisciplinary teaching and its relevance for the modern workplace.

Lynn was part of the panel of experts made up of professionals from the world of work and academia who discussed the importance of bridging discipline gaps and its value to learning, employability and professional development, how interdisciplinary training impacts students and how leadership and teamwork change between "conventional" versus interdisciplinary groups, among other topics.

[Read more](#)



## Nature or nurture – which has the greater influence in the creation of a successful entrepreneur?

Jonathan Styles, Senior Lecturer in Enterprise, contributed an article to UK Tech News, a leading independent publication for the UK tech businesses community.

The article proposes that while personality traits such as confidence, risk-taking and drive are often associated with entrepreneurship, many people who possess all those traits will not be able to run and manage a successful business. Business acumen is essential, and this must be learnt.

Jonathan is part of the team that delivers the University's new [online PGCert Entrepreneurship](#), which allows students to study part-time alongside their working life and learn how to take business ideas into practice.

[Read more](#)



Helping green entrepreneurs will aid both the environment – and universities' rankings

Robert Phillips, Senior Lecturer in Enterprise recently contributed an article on the Wonkhe higher education policy forum, arguing that student start-ups with an interest in environmental issues are a driving force for innovation.

Students are increasingly becoming exposed to environmental issues and appreciating how their subject relates to it.

Charles Veys founded Fotenix which uses cameras coupled with machine learning to allow farmers to target usage of pesticides and fertiliser rather than wasteful uniform application. Ben Dolman's company, Holiferm, makes novel biosurfactants from work started during his Ph.D. for eco-friendly personal care products.

As well as developing technical business ideas from their subject of study, students are also spotting new opportunities from an awareness of their surroundings. Even clothing and its effect on the environment has not gone unnoticed by students, with many student businesses tackling this issue such as Bundlee, founded while at university by Eve Kekeh, which rents baby clothes, and Pirkani creating a sustainable fashion brand.

The article concludes with an analysis of what can be done to help these student businesses move forward.

[Read more](#)

## Research Highlights

### The latest research from MEC's academic team

The latest research from MEC's academic team

A team of academics from the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre is working on research on entrepreneurship education. Dr. Fatemeh Salehi, Dr. Robert Phillips, Dr. Jacob Salder and Dr. Cassandra Papadopoulou have presented a working paper on "Entrepreneurship Education And Career Paths: Evidence From An Entrepreneurship Centre" at the Institute



for Small Business and Entrepreneurship Conference (ISBE 2021) - [Bridging Enterprise, Policy And Practice: Creating Social And Public Value.](#)

This working paper sets out a framework and methodology for analysis of the effectiveness of methods of delivery in creating entrepreneurial outcomes in higher education. Positioning entrepreneurship education as part of an entrepreneurship centre (EC) model, delivering blended support across an institution via formal and non-formal means, it examines the progress and destination of students engaged with the EC and the blend of entrepreneurship education in which they participate during their studies. The proposed analysis will make three contributions toward entrepreneurship education debates; adding important longitudinal data to evidence on entrepreneurial outcomes, conducting a broader analysis of the effect of different modes of entrepreneurship education, and discussing the value and benefits of an EC model in delivering entrepreneurship education.

Any comments and insights from colleagues, graduates and educators on this topic are most welcome; please email them to [kassandra.papadopoulou@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:kassandra.papadopoulou@manchester.ac.uk)

## Events

Developing your purpose in business with special guest, Christina Taylor



**Friday 19 November 2021 12:00 (GMT)**

Register for an exclusive opportunity to hear from one of Europe's top 10 female founders on developing purpose in business and her powerful life story in becoming a successful entrepreneur.

Christina Taylor runs a dance organisation called Aim Sky High. Aim Sky High focuses on addressing social issues and aiding social mobility for children and young people by teaching life-long transferable skills such as goal setting, determination, perseverance, teamwork, leadership and more. She also uses

this platform to educate them on topics such as racism, mental health and child grooming.

Christina's mission and purpose is to increase social mobility in society so people who come from any type of background have every chance to succeed in life. Christina is an Alumni of The University of Manchester, and will be joined by leading academic, Jonathan Styles who teaches the 'Exploring Entrepreneurial Mindsets' unit on the online postgraduate certificate in Entrepreneurship.

[Register](#)

## Researcher Training: Generating and Shaping Ideas Workshop



**Monday 22 November 2021 09:00 – 13:00 GMT**

In research as well as in a start-up, a social enterprise or a corporate environment, creative thinking and problem solving skills are critical to moving forward towards any goal. This workshop aimed at Ph.D. researchers is designed help you to define the problem before thinking creatively about how to solve it.

This workshop hosted by the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre will give you an insight into how to create innovative ideas to tackle a particular challenge. It will also help you to define the problem before thinking creatively about how to solve it. These processes can also be adapted for your own research.

[Register](#)

## Market Research Training Part 2



**Tue, 23 Nov 2021 12:30 GMT**

The aim of this course is to provide entrepreneurs with the skills needed to both prepare and analyse market data that accurately profiles the scale of a given business opportunity.

The topics for the second session are:

- Market referencing - how to identify key contacts, how to approach them and how to structure the telephone call or meeting to maximise the information gathered;
- An investor's perspective - what investors will want to see and how it should be organised.

[Register](#)

## Momentum Finance Series Session 4: Cash Flow Management

**Thursday 25 November 2021 10:00 – 11:45 GMT**

Our MEC Momentum Finance Series of 5 online sessions running throughout Semester 1 are designed to support University of Manchester start-up entrepreneurs navigate the world of finance.

Registration is now open for Session 4 focusing on Cash Flow Management covering, but not limited to, the following aspects:

- Cash flow forecasting;
- Importance of payment terms (offered to Customers and agreed with Suppliers);
- Review actual performance against plan;
- Learnings/ action to take.

[Register](#)



## Value Proposition Training



**Monday 6 December 2021 09:30 – 12:30 GMT**

Understanding the Value Proposition of your product is essential to make sure you are developing a product that is needed by the customer/end user and to convince your potential business development partners that the market opportunity is attractive and relevant.

The aim of this course is to provide you with the skills needed to identify and understand the key value proposition of the product you are using as the basis for a new business.

[Register](#)



[Masood Entrepreneurship Centre](#)

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