

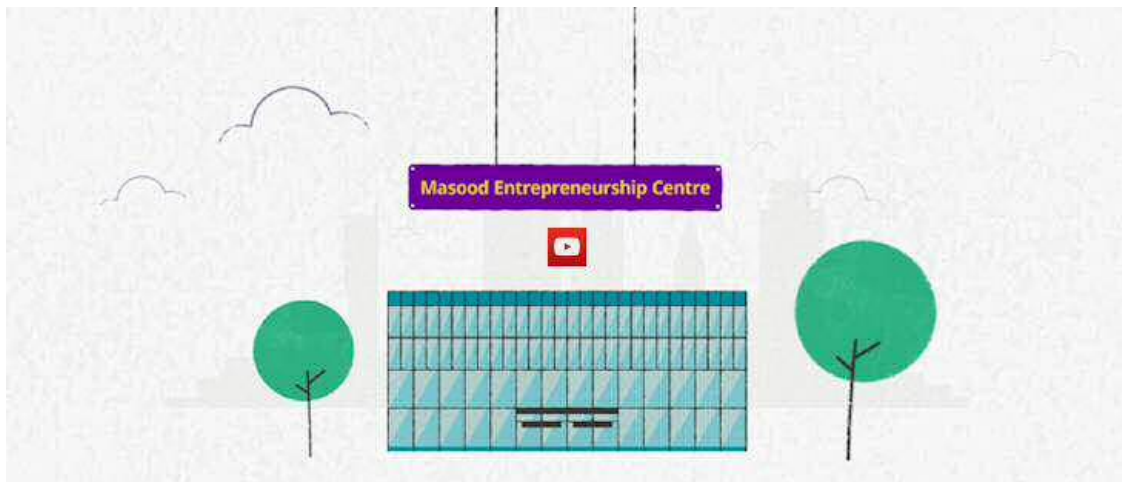
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Masood  
Entrepreneurship  
Centre

MEC Update

Issue 17 | 18 February 2022



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

MEC News

## Venture Further business start-up competition....closing soon!



Do you want to start your own business? Here's your chance to win up to £10,000 and make it a reality with our annual start-up competition, which is still open for entries for one more week.

This is your unique opportunity to turn your ideas into reality and win significant early-stage funding to start your own business. The Venture Further competition will introduce you to a world of support programmes, workshops, mentors and networks to grow your ideas. If you have a viable business proposal then get involved.

The deadline to apply is **12:00 noon on Thursday 24 February 2022.**

[Find out more](#)

## The Eli and Britt Harari Graphene Enterprise Award 2022



The Masood Entrepreneurship Centre has launched its annual Eli and Britt Harari Graphene Enterprise Award competition, for novel ideas involving graphene and other 2D materials that have the potential to be commercialised.

This prestigious award, in association with Nobel Laureate Professor Sir Andre Geim, is now open to all students, postdoctoral researchers, and recent graduates of The University of Manchester.

Graphene, a two-dimensional carbon material, is a game-changing UK discovery and its properties make it one of the most important breakthroughs in recent memory. Graphene is a wonder material, with incredible electrical, mechanical, and thermal properties.

Prizes of £50,000 and £20,000 will be awarded to the individuals or teams who can best demonstrate how their technology relating to graphene or other 2D materials could be applied to a viable commercial opportunity. This year will also see the inclusion of an additional prize that celebrates the University's position leading the world on sustainable development, more to follow!

Express your interest early in the Eli and Britt Harari Enterprise Award competition and connect with the MEC team to discuss potential ideas, and most importantly secure development support, advice, and guidance ahead of the application deadline.

Tell us about yourself and your idea. Upon [completion of this survey](#), individuals will be added to our competition mailing list ensuring all interested applicants are made aware of any key information, guidance, resources and workshops that are relevant to the development of their entries.

Eli and Britt Harari Graphene Enterprise Award 2022:  
Expression of Interest>>

## Welcome to MEC - Dr. Suneel Kunamaneni

We are delighted that Dr. Suneel Kunamaneni has joined our team as a senior lecturer. Suneel's work focuses on current sustainability and inclusivity trends and he has been involved in social and eco innovation and entrepreneurship in his previous role as senior lecturer at Leeds Beckett University.

Suneel is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and delivers teaching and training across a wide range of enterprise and entrepreneurship subjects including business planning, commercialising technology and social enterprise. He has built a reputation for developing new business strategies and incubating new business models that minimise the impact on the environment and has previously advised governments on innovation clusters.



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

## Spotlight on



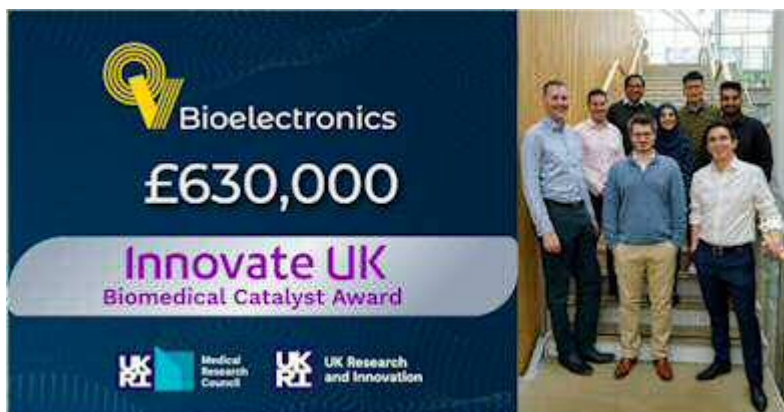
### University Entrepreneurs Grant 2022

MEC are the official patron of the [University Entrepreneurs Grant](#), a business competition for students at the beginning of their business/entrepreneur journey, that aims to discover a brilliant 'bright idea' that could lead to an amazing new venture.

Entrants simply need to provide a brief outline of their idea and, if shortlisted, they will then have the opportunity to sell their concept to attendees of the Educate North Awards ceremony at the Midland Hotel, Manchester in April. Previous winners have all gone on to attract further investment, run successful businesses and have won further awards.

Last year's winner, Dr. Mohammad El Hajj, from The University of Manchester, went on to win first prize in the technology category of MEC's [Venture Further Awards 2021](#). Mohammad is the Co-Founder and CEO at [Bright Biotech](#), a venture developing a proprietary light-driven, protein expression technology that uses chloroplasts to make extraordinarily high yields of proteins in plants. This game-changing manufacturing system is sustainable, free of animal pathogens and bacterial endotoxins, and highly scalable. Bright Biotech is currently producing recombinant growth factors, which aid cell growth to promote regenerative medicine practices, and also industry processes such as clean meat production, winning a certificate of excellence at the recent [EIT Food Demo Day](#).

[Find out more](#)



## QV Bioelectronics Awarded £630,000 Innovate UK Biomedical Catalyst grant

MEC supported start-up QV Bioelectronics have recently been awarded £630,000 of funding under the Innovate UK Biomedical Catalyst Award.

QV Bioelectronics was founded by Christopher Bullock, a Biomedical Engineer who completed his Ph.D. on developing novel graphene biomaterials at The University of Manchester and Clinical Research Fellow Richard Fu. The team were the winners of the Eli and Britt Harari Graphene Enterprise Award in 2018.

The award will help to accelerate the development of the GRACE implant to treat brain tumour patients with electric field therapy. Using advanced materials, the technology underpinning the GRACE device is designed to significantly extend patient life expectancy without negatively affecting the patients' quality of life. This technology could potentially work in conjunction with other treatment modalities to one day turn fatal adult brain cancer into a manageable chronic condition.

The project will allow the company to provide preclinical proof of concept, forming part of a regulatory submission for QV to enter the clinic.

[Read more](#)



## UrbanChain CEO discusses fixing the broken energy market and making energy affordable

Somayeh Taheri, founder and CEO of Manchester based company [UrbanChain](#), was recently interviewed by BusinessLive, discussing the development of the venture in the context of current debates about rapidly rising energy prices and financial pressures on consumers.

UrbanChain, a winner in the 2018 [Venture Further](#) competition, is a commercialised peer-to-peer energy exchange, using blockchain and AI to predict the behaviour of renewables, linking it directly to the consumer to reduce the volatility of prices.

Somayeh suggests that it may not be too late to fix the 'broken' energy market and that a key strategy for this would be to decouple renewable energy from the gas market.

[Read more](#)



## Spice Story

Rijul Shukla, winner of the Business Category of [Venture Further](#) 2020 with his business [Spice Story](#) has been featured in a number of articles online following his participation in the Recipe4Success programme with [Business Growth Hub](#), a programme enabling food businesses to develop and grow their brand.

Spice Story products are now stocked on the shelves of ten different stores across the North West,, including the hugely popular Kenyon Hall Farm in Warrington.

Rijul is also going to take part in his first radio interview, on Sunday 20 February at 7:30 pm., with BBC Radio Manchester.

[Read more](#)



## PolicyCON selected for Microsoft's Startup founders Hub

PolicyCON, a recent start-up venture supported by MEC's Kickstarter funding, has been selected to participate in Microsoft's Startup founders Hub, an acceleration programme that supports startup founders from the idea stage to commercialisation.

Kwame Asamoah Kwarteng, PolicyCON founder, has also featured in a recent interview and contributed a blog post about the development of his venture on MEC's Kickstarting ideas blog series.

[Read more](#)



## Join us at the Festival of Enterprise!

The MEC team will be taking part in the Festival of Enterprise, a new, free event hosted by the Business Growth Hub. The Festival of Enterprise will be taking place on **Wednesday 2 March 2022** at Kampus in central Manchester, between 10.00am. and 3.00pm.

The festival celebrates all things Start-up, Self-Employed and Entrepreneurship - showcasing that Greater Manchester is the place to start and grow a business.

There will be opportunities to meet experts, hear stories from Greater Manchester businesses that have been through the GC Business Growth Hub start-up journey and network with like-minded people. Attendees will also get the chance to hear from, speak to and learn from people who have just set up or grown their business, as well as experts in every area of business start-up and growth, and the support that is available to them.

Come along to the MEC stand and say Hello!

We hope to see you there.

[Find out more](#)

## Events

### MEC Momentum: How to do your own PR workshop

**Thursday 10 March 2022 09:30–12:30 GMT**



This half-day online session will cover the following:

- What makes a story and how to spot them in your daily business routine;
- How the media works and what to do when approached by reporters/photographers;
- Top ten tips for writing press releases which always get used;
- Insider secrets about how to get your business media coverage.



The workshop will be fun and full of vital information you won't find in any marketing book or PR website. It is a mixture of presentations, discussion and practical hands-on training.

Participants will walk away with a simple toolkit of skills to get the best for their business out of the media.

[Register](#)

## Entrepreneurs@Manchester Series: Joseph Foster, Founder of Reebok

**Monday 24 March 2022 17:00–18:00 GMT**

We are very pleased to welcome Joseph William Foster, Founder of Reebok!

Joseph William Foster (Joe Foster) was born in 1935 in Bolton England with the same birthday 18 May, as his grandfather, also Joseph William Foster who had died 18 months earlier. Joe's grandfather was the founder of J W Foster & Sons (Athletic Shoes) Ltd. and the inventor of the Spiked Running Shoe and the Trainer (Sneaker).

Joe and his late brother Jeff were born into the J W Foster & Sons family business, but on their return after 2 years away from home on National Service, they asked questions. The year was 1955 and the brothers saw a business still rooted in the 1930's.

Their Father and Uncle were now operating the business and very much like another Sports Shoe company, spent more time feuding than collaborating. The result was that in 1958 Joe and Jeff left the Foster business to set up a new Sports Shoe company.



The brothers founded Mercury Sports Footwear, which after 18 months they changed its name to REEBOK. Joe had been advised to protect their company's name by registering it.

By 1965, Joe was on his way to the NSGA (National Sporting Goods of America) Show in Chicago, which was the start of many Global adventures and experiences that after 15 years brought him together with Paul Fireman and later many Stars of film and television.

As the surviving Founder of Reebok, Joe still welcomes the opportunity to travel and recount those early stories from start-up to taking the company to a \$4 billion business, overtaking Adidas and Nike to become the World's No. 1 sports brand. Joe has written his book Shoemaker to share his story and help inspire the next generation of budding entrepreneurs.

[Register](#)

## MEC Momentum Finance Series

**24 March - 26 May 2022**

Our MEC Momentum Finance Series of five online sessions will run throughout Semester 2 beginning on Thursday 24 March.

These sessions, hosted by the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre and Sempas Accountants Limited, are designed to support University of Manchester start-up entrepreneurs navigate the world of finance.

- Thursday 24 Mar - Session 1: Starting up
- Thursday 31 Mar - Session 2: Profit and budgeting
- Thursday 28 Apr - Session 3: Bookkeeping and Taxation
- Wednesday 11 May - Session 4: Cash Flow Management
- Thursday 26 May - Session 5: Funding and Company Valuation



Each session will last for approx. 90 minutes followed by a further opportunity to ask questions.

Registration is now open for Session 1 focusing on Starting up covering, but not limited to, the following aspects;

- Pre-start (i.e. test trading, funding position)
- Structuring your business (Sole Trader, Limited Company, Partnership, Social Enterprise)
- Registering the business
- Filing, other responsibilities and obligations (i.e. legal and tax)

Register

## Enterprise Competitions

### Enterprise Fellowships



The Royal Academy of Engineering's Enterprise Hub have opened their Enterprise Fellowships programme for a new round of applications.

The Enterprise Fellowship is a 12 month programme that supports innovative, creative entrepreneurial engineers who have demonstrated an exceptional innovation in engineering which they want to develop further.

The programme focuses on equipping the awardee with the confidence, skills, experience and network of expert advisors necessary to enable them to develop their innovation.

The fellowships support researchers wishing to spinout a company from a university, recent graduates wishing to create a

company, and international Ph.D. students based in the UK, wishing to spin out or start up.

The Fellowships provide:

- Up to £60,000 equity-free funding;
- Tailored mentoring and training;
- Access to Academy's networks;
- Lifetime membership of the Academy's Enterprise Hub;
- Access to drop-in workspace in central London,

After the programme, continued support includes continued access to facilities, training programme, PR and media support, network of investors, experts, advisors and Academy Fellows.

[Find out more](#)



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To opt-out of future communications [click here](#)