

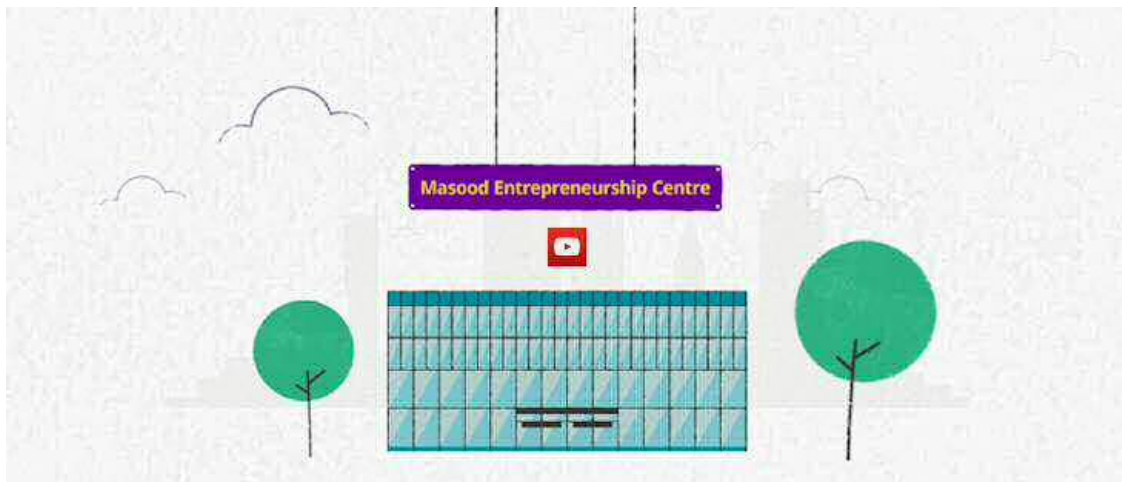
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Masood
Entrepreneurship
Centre

MEC Update

Issue 18 | 11 March 2022



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

MEC News

Welcome to MEC - Dr. Daria Tataj

We are delighted that Dr. Daria Tataj has joined our team as an Honorary Professor.



Daria's work focuses on Network Intelligence (nIQ), a system-change methodology developing digital competencies at the ecosystem level for innovation and networking. Empowering purpose-driven entrepreneurial people to amplify growth opportunities from the networks they build to innovate better, faster and have long-term resilience.

Daria Tataj is the Founder and CEO of Tataj Innovation, a global crowdsourced learning company helping industry and governments innovate better and faster. As a former scientist and author, Dr. Tataj has been shaping tomorrow's agenda at the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Design Innovation and serving as an expert on collaborative innovation.

Dr. Tataj holds a Ph.D. from the Polish Academy of Sciences in design and an International MBA from Warsaw University of Technology, London Business School, HEC Paris, NHH Bergen. She has published over 50 academic and non-academic articles and is regularly invited at many business, government, and academic events all around the world. Dr. Tataj has played an instrumental role in setting up a new European Union institution - the European Institute of Innovation and Technology. For six years, as an Executive Member of its founding Governing Board, she fostered entrepreneurship and ecosystem thinking across Europe and helped build the EIT into a multibillion EUR funding institution with a novel governance model.

Winners announced: FSE Innovation Academy -
Researcher to Innovator (R2I) Programme



Eleven early career researchers and their teams were the first cohort completing the Innovation Academy Researcher to Innovator (R2I) programme, an exciting new entrepreneurship training programme for FSE early career researchers with ambitions to develop commercial ventures from their academic studies.

The programme was originally launched in October 2021 by Professor Martin Schroeder, Vice-President and Dean, Faculty of Science and Engineering, and has been supported with additional funding from the Faculty's [EPSRC Impact Acceleration Account \(IAA\)](#).

The programme aims to inspire and accelerate the translation of the knowledge created through academic research into products, services or processes to deliver tangible benefit through a series of bespoke workshops and mentoring opportunities. The workshops helped researchers articulate their science and ideas by taking them through a lean start-up technology pathway to explore the potential of their ideas.

To complete the programme, participating researchers then made their final pitches in a Dragons' Den style event to a panel of entrepreneurs with experience across the science and engineering landscape.

Aline Miller, Professor of Biomolecular Engineering and Associate Dean for Business Engagement and Innovation, presented the Innovation Enabling Awards to the five winning projects.

The prize winners will also receive expert support and onward access to places on regional and national accelerator programmes and all the participants on the programme may receive mentorship and guidance from FSE Innovation Champions and internal professional support teams, including the opportunity to build relationships with the Innovation Factory and the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre.

[Read more](#)

Ten Questions with an Entrepreneur: Andrew Jervis Founder and CEO of ClickMechanic



Our first Entrepreneurs@Manchester event of 2022 featured the Winner of Small Business Entrepreneur of the Year (London and East of England) awarded by Great British Entrepreneur Awards; Andrew Jervis, Founder and CEO of [ClickMechanic](#), sharing his journey from University of Manchester student to Award winning Entrepreneur.

In *Ten Questions with an Entrepreneur*, Andrew talks about his time at The University of Manchester, motivations behind starting his business and the challenges to starting up. He offers advice to students or recent graduates looking to start a business alongside their degree.

The article also includes a recording of the Entrepreneurs@Manchester event, with Andrew discussing his entrepreneurial journey with MEC Director Lynn Sheppard.

[Read more](#)

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

Spotlight on



Women starting record number of new companies, as Rose Review reports third year of progress

Three years ago, the Alison Rose Review of Female Entrepreneurship identified the importance of women-led businesses to the UK economy. The latest [Rose Review Progress Report](#), published last month, reveals how female entrepreneurship has proved resilient and highlights where there are still opportunities to unleash the potential of female-led businesses.

Key findings of the report include:

- Female founded businesses account for a record share of new firms, outstripping growth in male led firms for the first time;
- More women than ever are starting new businesses, with more than 140,000 companies established by all-women teams last year and the figure is growing by a third each year;
- The proportion of companies created by young women is growing more quickly than any other age group, with 16–25-year-olds founding more than 14,000 new businesses in the UK last year.

The report sets out fresh commitments to boost the number of female entrepreneurs and accelerate momentum to make sure women in business have the same opportunities as men.

Here at MEC, we want to support our female-presenting students to gain confidence in their ideas, their plans, and aspirations to start up their own businesses/projects.

Because of this, MEC has aimed to re-invent our annual *She's the Business* event as a fully-fledged support programme for our students. Instead of a single launch day, we are creating a workshop series to help you gain the confidence, insight, and experience to start off your business.



She's The Business 2022

To kick off our re-invented She's the Business programme, the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre was proud to present a hybrid event fireside chat with Dr. Beenish Siddique, to offer insights on how to foster an entrepreneurial spirit and share her incredible journey as a woman in leadership.



Beenish founded [AEH Innovative Hydrogel Ltd.](#), an award winning company that develops applications in agriculture and vertical farming. Plants are grown in hydrogel, which is more sustainable than current alternatives. The hydrogel is 100% natural as it is completely biodegradable and can improve soil function.

Beenish's journey to this innovation has been met with challenges and breakthroughs. From deciding between being a post-doctoral researcher and starting her own business, to securing funding and support for AEH Hydrogel, Beenish has been challenging stereotypes and setting examples since the start of her entrepreneurial journey.

[Watch a recording >>](#)

We're excited to have Beenish returning for our official *She's the Business* launch on Thursday 7 April 2022, as part of an amazing panel of industry leaders to highlight the best of female entrepreneurship and really showcase to students and staff on how they can build up their own skills, stories and drive!

At the event, sponsored by [Bruntwood](#) and in partnership with [Hatch](#), MEC will be hosting a series of exciting workshops and guest speaker events to help you build your next

venture alongside your degree. No matter how small, medium or large your idea is, the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre are here to help!

So come along and listen to inspiring stories from Manchester-based female entrepreneurs, discover how your skills and experiences can build a great personal brand for employment and much more!

[Find out more](#)



Manchester company's ground-breaking discovery could be key to the electric vehicle revolution

A *Manchester Evening News* article featured Watercycle Technologies, founded by Seb Leaper, a former Ph.D. student and winner of the Eli Harari competition in 2016.

Late last year Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced his intention to kick-start an 'electric vehicle revolution' in his bid to help the UK meet its net zero carbon targets. Ahead of the proposed ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars in 2030, all new homes and buildings will have to install electric vehicle charging points, while new measures will be introduced to make it easier to go electric. But one major stumbling block is getting hold of enough lithium, a key component in the batteries of electric vehicles. Enough to power 10,000 iPhones is needed for just one electric car and there's a global shortage, making it more expensive. On top of that the current methods of producing lithium, often from water found in underground aquifers in South America, are slow and inefficient as well as being bad for the environment.

Watercycle Technologies may just have developed an answer that could make this problem a lot easier to tackle.

They specialise in the development of advanced graphene/polymer composite water filtration membranes and systems capable of treating contaminated water faster and for longer than those currently available on the market.

The potentially invaluable breakthrough - which the company hopes to scale up and use commercially - is discovering how to directly extract lithium from water and leave the impurities behind in a way that's quicker, cheaper and greener than current methods. With the right investment the technique could be a game changer for the production of lithium for the UK and Europe, which is currently 99.2% reliant on imports from China.

[Read more](#)

Resource Centre

Our [Resource Centre](#) is a vital hub of information for students, staff and recent graduates who aspire to start a business.

Here you can find all the information you need to guide you through the practicalities of starting a business, the answers to many common business dilemmas, expert documents that you can download free of charge and useful links to third party sources and organisations.



If you 'don't know what you don't know' this is the place for you!

People often struggle with the [financial](#) side of managing their small business and this area of the Resource Centre has key information on: [Start-up costs](#), [Start-up funding](#), [Pricing](#), [Cash flow](#).

[Marketing](#) is critical to attract those customers without which, however good your idea, no business can survive and this section will set you on the right track.

The Resource Centre is expanding all the time so come back regularly.

[Find out more](#)

Developing Solutions for Enterprise Creation

Thursday 17 March 2022 10:00 – 15:00 GMT



Ever considered how you might start a research driven enterprise?

In this one-day workshop, aimed at Ph.D. researchers, you will learn the basics of setting up an enterprise. Participants will work as a team on a business simulation to develop an idea for a product and pitch for funding.

This workshop will give you an insight into how to spot an opportunity for an enterprise from a research idea. The workshop is designed for you to learn the basics of developing a research-led business whilst role playing in a given team scenario. These processes can also be adapted for your own research.

Key Learning

After taking part in this workshop, you will be better able to:

- Recognise enterprise challenges and work as a team to find innovative ways to solve those challenges;
- Develop a business proposition;
- Understand the basic elements needed to create a new business enterprise.

This workshop will be interactive and will involve working on activities in small groups.

[Register](#)

Value Proposition Training Session

Wednesday 23 March 2022 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 your customer and 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.

Key areas covered in this session are:

- **Setting the scene-** This section focuses on an introduction to the Value Proposition (VP) canvas tool, the underpinning principles and why it is essential to drill down into customer needs BEFORE you decide on the final product;
- **Team exercise-** Using a very simple product as an example, we will work in teams to apply the VP model to potential markets and profile the pains/gains that are important to the target customer groups;
- **Testing the value proposition-** This section discusses what to test, how to do it, and what the outputs mean;
- **Putting words into action-** Applying the VP tools to your own business idea.

[Register](#)

Momentum Finance Series: Session 1-Starting up

Thursday 24 March 2022 10:00 – 11:45 GMT



Our MEC Momentum Finance Series of 5 online sessions running throughout Semester 2 are designed to support University of Manchester start-up entrepreneurs navigate the world of finance.

This first session will focus 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](#)

Entrepreneurs@Manchester Series: Joseph Foster, Founder of Reebok

Thursday 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](#)

Market Research Training



Monday 28 March and Monday 4 April 2022, 09:30 –12:30 BST

Accurate market research is needed for two key reasons; firstly to inform the business model and route to market and secondly to convince potential investors and other partners that the market opportunity is attractive and relevant.

This one day course will run across two half day sessions and aims to provide entrepreneurs with the skills needed to both prepare and analyse market data that accurately profiles the scale of a given business opportunity.

[Register](#)

She's the Business



Thursday 7 April 2022 12:00 – 18:00 BST

The University of Manchester will once again be celebrating women in business by hosting another inspirational event aimed at empowering women to embrace their inner-creativity and entrepreneurial spirit.

Hosted by the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre, this half-day event will feature a range of insightful workshops and drop-in sessions which will help build confidence, broaden networks, and introduce new tools to help manage challenging situations.

Lack of confidence and a fear of failure is one of the biggest roadblocks to a lot of our journeys, whether that be as students, entrepreneurs or in our everyday lives. For this year's She's the Business, we want to challenge your fear of failure with a powerful panel of industry leaders.

Ranging from experiences in the fashion industry, agri-tech solutions, to the creatives and dance sector, key in to how each of our panel members overcame barriers and set expectations in their respective fields. From securing over £3.5m in funding for their agri-tech, to making the step away from fast fashion into slow-fashion, each unique story showcases the leaps and confidence needed to challenge the norm.

Taking place at the University's award winning Business School, She's the Business will feature various activities for budding female entrepreneurs wanting to accelerate their ideas to the next level through powerful concepts and original thinking.

[Register](#)



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