Welcome from the Director of the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre

The Masood Entrepreneurship Centre is the focal point for entrepreneurship at The University of Manchester and the annual Venture Further Awards event is the showcase that allows us to celebrate the amazing entrepreneurial talent of our students and recent graduates.

Launched in 2003, the competition has helped to launch many successful new ventures and careers and we continue to encourage and support the development of new businesses based on the innovative opportunities identified by our students and recent graduates.

The competition has grown over the years and there are now five categories of award – environment, healthcare, services, social enterprise and technology. The finalists have submitted detailed business plans and pitched their proposals to panels of expert judges.

After two years of online awards, we are excited to return to the Whitworth Hall to celebrate this year’s finalists. Despite the challenges faced through the COVID-19 pandemic, the standard of entries has been incredibly high, and it is amazing to see so many entrepreneurs, from a range of academic disciplines, that are serious about starting a business. This year’s winners will receive prize money totalling £75,000 with additional support offered by expert groups across the University and its wider networks.

Finding financial support to go from an idea to an actual business is one of the most difficult hurdles that entrepreneurs face and the cash prizes in this competition will enable the winners to move their business forward. There are no rules for founders – just find a need and seize the day.

As we uncover real talent for business, we hope you will agree that here at Manchester we are developing the next generation of entrepreneurial graduates with the skills and confidence to identify and act upon new opportunities.

I would like to offer a special thank you for all the help and support we receive from our alumni, our colleagues across the University, our wider support partners and this year’s competition sponsors.

Lynn Sheppard
Director, Masood Entrepreneurship Centre
From 2010 to 2017 Luke was responsible for the University’s research strategy and its implementation and doctoral training. Among other duties he continues in his new role to be responsible for business engagement and commercialisation activities. He is active in research and policy advice to governments and business.

Luke is currently a member of the Board of Directors of Manchester Science Partnerships, the UK’s largest science park company and a Non-Executive Director of the Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust. Since 2016 he has chaired the Steering Committee of the European Universities Association Council for Doctoral Education.

He was elected to the Academia Europaea in 2011. He has published extensively on research and innovation policy and management in leading outlets. He holds a PhD (1982) and BSc from The Victoria University of Manchester.

“I have been involved with Venture Further for over a decade – as a judge, presenting the awards and meeting the winners and guests at the Venture Further dinner. This competition is part of a long tradition. Innovation and enterprise are core to this University’s strategy and entrepreneurship is a defining feature of the Manchester experience.”
Venue

Whitworth Hall
The University of Manchester

Programme

18:00
Drinks reception

18:45
Welcome and Guest Speaker
Mohammad El Hajj

19:00
Dinner

20:45
Awards Presentation
Environment
Healthcare
Services
Social
Technology

21:45
Close
Mohammad is the Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Bright Biotech, an award-winning start-up that uses genetic engineering to transform tobacco plants into low-cost, sustainable and ultra-scalable bioreactors making extraordinarily high yields of recombinant proteins.

The mission of Bright Biotech is to produce high-value proteins at the quantity, quality and cost necessary to promote and enable sustainable industries such as lab-grown meat production as well as regenerative medicine practices.

Mohammad has a PhD in Biotechnology and Enterprise from the University of Manchester. The emphasis of his PhD project was on the development of novel upstream bioprocessing strategies in chloroplast biotechnology for high-yield recombinant protein expression in marker-free plants. Mohammad also holds an MSc in Biotechnology and Enterprise as well as a BSc in General Biology from the American University of Beirut.

Undertaking a number of enterprise modules at the Alliance Manchester Business School, Mohammad honed his business skills quickly. Upon entering Venture Further in 2021, he went on to win first prize in the technology category.

Bright Biotech – Transforming plants into engines that produce high-value proteins

mohammadkhalilelhajj
brightbiotech.co.uk
Patrick Hackett took up his role as Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer on 1 October 2018. Previously Patrick was Deputy Vice-Chancellor at The University of Liverpool, a position he took up in August 2013, having formerly been Chief Operating Officer since November 2008. Prior to that he held the position of Director of Facilities Management.

An architect by profession, Patrick has a BArch from University College Dublin and has previously held senior leadership positions at The University of Reading and Royal Holloway, University of London. He has also been a consultant, advising higher education institutions across the UK on facilities management organisation and development and the delivery of major capital projects. Patrick was a non-Executive Director of Aintree University Hospital NHS trust for six years until the end of March 2015 and he was also a Trustee Director of the University of Liverpool Pension Fund until 2018.

"The Venture Further Awards are a very visible manifestation of our University’s deep and abiding commitment – some would say it’s in our DNA and contributes to what makes us truly distinctive – innovation through enterprise and entrepreneurship. I am delighted to be joining colleagues from the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre to hear about our wonderful students’ and recent graduates’ entrepreneurship journey – they are all winners."
The judging panel

**Competition Organiser**
Ellie Buckley
Enterprise Business Development Executive,
Masood Entrepreneurship Centre,
Alliance Manchester Business School

**Chair**
Lynn Sheppard
Director,
Masood Entrepreneurship Centre,
Alliance Manchester Business School

**Healthcare**
Paul Squire
Managing Director,
Manchester Slalom

Dr. Elizabeth Crawford
CEO,
Clin-e-cal

Chris Hepworth
Business Engagement Manager (FBMH),
The University of Manchester

**Social**
Liz Allen
Director,
The Connectives

Dr. Leigh Wharton
Director, Bubble Partnership Ltd
Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management,
The University of Manchester

Josh Turner
Founder,
Stand4 Socks

**Environment**
Lee Mowle
Director,
OCL Regeneration Limited

Monica Mwanje
Founder & Managing Director,
MM Creative Solutions

Dr. Somayeh Taheri
CEO,
Urban Chain

Luke Bywaters
Strategic Advisory Manager,
KPMG

**Services**
Simon Baker
Business Transformation Consultant,
Ecosystem, Client Engineering, IBM

Dr. Sarwat Howe
Project Manager,
The Innovation Factory

Paul Argyle
Managing Director,
Flight Directors

**Technology**
Professor Luke Georghiou
Deputy President and
Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
The University of Manchester

Daniel Bobroff
Founder,
Coded Futures

John Edwards
CIO Enterprise Architect, Consultant,
Technical Staff Member, IBM

Catherine Wilks
Senior Director,
Slalom
Environment

Archisight Ltd

Archisight is a design and building company specialising in small-scale structures and buildings using robotic 3D printers. Through our technologically advanced construction methods we aim to build a new generation of buildings that are both beautiful and innovative, high-quality in performance, high-end in aesthetics, green in materials, and highly cost-effective in componentry, fabrication, and operating expenses.

Lead Entrant:

Franci Tafilaj
BA Architecture
School of Environment, Education and Development

Lead Entrant:

Santiago Daniel Zapata Boada
PhD Chemical Engineering
Department of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Science
School of Engineering

AUCAf

B2B software that integrates scientific knowledge in climate change, digitalization, and artificial intelligence, to enable small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to calculate and decrease their carbon footprint, allowing them to meet legal and tender requirements, improve their sustainability performance, and decrease energy costs.

Lead Entrant:
**EvoPlant**

Our agriculture system has been challenged to feed 10 billion people by 2050, but the climate change is threatening our crops. EvoPlant has developed a novel technology that can breed a stronger crop with much simpler and faster way. We believe our technology will have significant contribution in eliminating hunger, deforestation and sustainable agriculture.

**Urban Panel**

Urban Panel is a building material manufacturer and building contractor who are seeking to streamline the construction industry. Non-sustainable materials, material wastage and delays in construction has been accepted as the norm in the industry. Through modularising the building down to individual floor, wall and roof panels, Urban Panel will piece together an efficient package to meet your building needs.

**Vitroplanta**

Vitroplanta is a biotech plant tissue culture company dedicated to the study, selection, propagation and commercialisation of in vitro selected trees. Our organisation and strategic approach allow the large-scale production of stress-tolerant UK native trees for woodland creation and rehabilitation.

**Lead Entrant:**

- **Junwei Ji**
  PhD in Plant Science
  Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health

- **Jia Yu**
  PhD Plant Science
  Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health
  Alumni Class in 2018

- **Steve Philip**
  MEng Civil and Structural Engineering
  Department of Mechanical, Aerospace and Civil Engineering
  School of Engineering

- **Francisco Jácome Blásquez**
  PhD in Plant Science
  Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health
In line with the NHS equality objective, healthcare should be universally accessible for all the residents in the UK, irrespectively of their gender, ethnicity, country of origin and nationality. We are here to support the NHS to achieve this goal by providing non-English speakers services in their native language.

NanoGraft is a health tech start-up developing first a wearable then an implantable solution to help treat phantom limb pain while also allowing amputees to feel the floor when they walk with their prosthesis. We are a B2B company that combines innovative technology with community development and support, to create a product that truly helps.

Organoid Solutions has developed a technology that will aim to rebuild fat tissue by utilising an artificial blood capillary network, for women that have undergone complete mastectomies due to invasive breast cancer. We aim for further down the line for the technology to be applied to other tissues like the skin, kidneys, liver and eyes.

Lead Entrant: Chrisoula Chappell
PhD Materials
Department of Materials
School of Natural Sciences

Lead Entrant: Gergana Ivanova
MEng Material Science and Engineering
Department of Materials
School of Natural Science

Lead Entrant: Omar Haroun
MEng Material Science and Engineering
Department of Materials
School of Natural Sciences

Lead Entrant: Dominic Williams
PhD Materials
Department of Materials
School of Natural Sciences
Synbiote

Synbiote is a biotechnology start-up aiming to increase the accessibility of biotechnology by accelerating the production of novel biopharmaceutical products such as vaccines, chemotherapy drugs and hormones. Synbiote is doing this by developing a machine that acts as a process analytical technology to automate the key production process of purification to save both time and money in production.

Lead Entrant:

Ismat Kabbara
BSc Biochemistry
Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health
Alumni Class of 2019

Alinta Furnell
Co-applicant

Wellspring

Wellspring is a single point of contact for people who are suffering from mental illness, providing a practical step-by-step guide to getting treatment. The app also features information on common conditions – their symptoms, causes and treatments – written in plain English, as well as advice on evidence-based self-help interventions.

Lead Entrant:

Elliot McKernon
PhD Mathematics
Department of Mathematics
School of Natural Sciences
Alumni Class of 2020
Services

Kee-Fit

Keep-Fit is on a mission to remove barriers to well-being and physical activity. We use the components of fitness, health, and developments and match them to customers pain points, needs, and challenges.

With Keep-Fit, we use A.I to provide the best service given to the right people at the right time.

“We are the personal trainer in your pocket”

Lead Entrant:

Feyisola David Adebola
MBA
Alliance Manchester Business School

Jasem Greval
MBA
Alliance Manchester Business School

Chika Nnorom
Co-applicant

Lacuna

An immersive museum that uses the arts and technological advancements such as VR to follow the public through the journey of exploring different forms of Empathy concerning various social contexts. Alongside, providing a sensory experience for the breakdown of core and secondary emotions, in relation to subcategories of Emotional Intelligence. Intending to normalise introspection and critical thinking in our communities.

Lead Entrant:

Ester Demideh
Bsc Management
(Sustainable and Ethical Business)
Alliance Manchester Business School Alumni Class of 2020
Manchester Students’ Group

MSG is an online platform enabling instant communication and information sharing with the student community. We hope to one day be a nationwide tool for students to get the most of their university experience, providing a tool for them to find themselves by finding the right things to do and the right people to do it with.

Lead Entrant:

Farris Ramzy
LLM Healthcare Ethics and Law
School of Social Sciences
Alumni Class of 2019

MasterMedPrep

MasterMedPrep is a high-quality tutoring company focussed on helping students get into their dream medical or dental school.

We have one goal: to level the playing field and help widen access to medical or dental school by providing resources and bespoke tutoring services for any prospective medical or dental students.

Lead Entrant:

Daniel Warrington
MBChB Medicine
Faculty of Biology, Medicine, and Health
Cameron Elsworth
MBChB Medicine
Faculty of Biology, Medicine, and Health

Pandemic Tours Limited

Discover the world at your own pace! Pandemic Tours allows you to walk around cities and attractions guided by your smartphone.

Whether history holds a fascination, or architecture, music, or football... the Pandemic Tours platform will gather all interests under the same roof so anyone looking for a unique experience will be able to access it through the same app.

Lead Entrant:

Joaquin Francisco Contreras Merino
MSc Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship
Alliance Manchester Business School
Alumni class of 2020
Alternative Football

Alternative Football provides the first inclusive, adult women’s and non-binary football league in North England. Being inclusive means everybody feels welcome; it’s about creating an atmosphere that each individual feels comfortable being involved in, regardless of skill, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or financial background. Our focus isn’t just football, it is creating a connected community, a support-network and a place where people feel that they matter.

Lead Entrant:

Bethany Barnes
PhD Cellular Biology
School of Biological Sciences

Helen Hardy
Co-applicant

The Black Excellence Network CIC

The Black Excellence Network challenges the racial disparities within UK higher education and competitive courses seen between black students and other ethnicities. We also support the professional and personal development of current black university students nationwide onward to their future careers.

Lead Entrant:

George Obolo
MBChB Medicine
Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health

Caféca

Caféca is a company that enables speciality coffee farmers in Latin America to sell their coffee directly to coffee roasters in the UK. Our mission is to make a more transparent process by cutting the middleman, increasing wages, and empowering women in coffee communities.

Lead Entrant:

Alejandro Giron
MSc Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship
Alliance Manchester Business School
Alumni class of 2021
Corinus

Corinus enables people to break mental health stigma and problems by offering mental health support in the simplest and most accessible forms. We are a psychological therapy, coaching and training service which produces engaging and easy-to-read online content about mental health, making sure it’s affordable, accessible and professionally credible.

Lead Entrant:

(Tiffany) Wing Sum Leung
DcounsPsych Counselling Psychology
School of Environment, Education and Development
Alumni Class of 2019

Thibaut Magni
Co-applicant

Flight Crowd Limited

Flight Crowd is a global community set to inform, engage and inspire on the future of flight. Through various initiatives, this not-for-profit enables people of diverse backgrounds to explore Urban Air Mobility (UAM), increasing employability within aerospace. Flight Crowd combines their knowledge of aviation and user-centred design to ensure UAM is inclusive and accessible, empowering individuals to shape future transportation.

Lead Entrant:

Mariya Tarabanovska
MEng Aerospace Engineering with Industrial Experience Department of Mechanical, Aerospace and Civil Engineering
School of Engineering
Technology

Conan Labs Ltd

Conan Labs is a start-up concept devised by Alliance Manchester Business School students. It is developing software that uses conversational analytics in classroom settings to help educators identify and address issues of student engagement, wellbeing and retention. Through data and developing AI, we want to help teachers teach and students to get the best education experience.

Lead Entrant:

Daniel Slope
Global MBA
Alliance Manchester Business School

Eoghan Powell
Global MBA
Alliance Manchester Business School

Simon Cowling
Co-applicant

Granted+

Granted+ is the first mobile app that connects researchers to funding opportunities and collaborators in a few swipes. Granted+ aggregates grants from universities, governments and research councils and allows researchers to select filters and swipe through grants like profiles on a dating app. Granted+ turns qualified people from competitors into collaborators with the complementary skills to execute a successful grant.

Lead Entrant:

Althea Cupo
PhD Museology
School of Arts, Languages and Cultures

Ali Hindi
PhD Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
School of Health Sciences
Alumni Class of 2019
Praeferre Ltd

Positioned in the growing cybersecurity market, Praeferre is strengthening privacy management with blockchain. Using it to track and trade data, the Praeferre SaaS platform provides individuals with a single point of control for data privacy and customer rewards across all their digital touch points. It connects companies with those customer preferences, providing automatic compliance and access to additional layers of data that customers choose to share.

Lead Entrant:

Abhishek Ghosh
MBA
Alliance Manchester Business School
Alumni Class of 2019

Chelsea Jarvie
Co-applicant

PolicyCON

PolicyCON is a subscription-based policy review digital platform that opens public/organisational policies to a diverse range of industry experts, working professionals, researchers, campaigners, activists, and other interested parties, allowing an honest critique from multiple perspectives in a controlled and safe environment. PolicyCON will contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 16 & 17.

Lead Entrant:

Kwame Asamoah Kwarteng
MSc International Development-
Globalisation Trade and Industry
School of Environment Education
and Development
Alumni Class of 2019

Emmanuel Akwasi Ahenfo
Co-applicant

“If you’ve got an idea, start today. There’s no better time than now to get going.”

Kevin Systrom
Co-founder of Instagram
Thank you to our partners for sponsoring Venture Further 2022

IBM is a global enterprise that has “Innovation that matters for our Company and the World” as one of its key values. With over 3,000 researchers in 19 locations on six continents, IBM pioneers the most promising and disruptive technologies in AI, blockchain and quantum computing and we have research and innovation at the heart of everything we do. With innovation as one of its key tenants, it is natural that we would support a great initiative like Venture Further that has innovation and entrepreneurship at its heart as well as helping to develop the next generation of business leaders.

Slalom is a modern consulting firm that focuses on strategy, transformation and technology. Founded in Seattle in 2001, Slalom has grown organically to over 9,000 employees globally. It established a local office in Manchester in 2014 and has consistently been named one of Fortune’s 100 Best Companies to Work For, and is regularly recognised by employees as a best place to work.
Manchester is the place where people do things. It is good to talk about doing things, but better still to do them.

Edward Abbott Parry
“A vision is something you see and others don’t. Some people would say that’s a pocket definition of lunacy. But it also defines entrepreneurial spirit.”

Anita Roddick
Founder of The Body Shop

Be your own boss, venture further...

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