

MANCHESTER  
1824

The University of Manchester



Masood  
Entrepreneurship  
Centre



VENTURE **FURTHER 22**  
START-UP COMPETITION

 #VFA22

@EntrepMCR @OfficialUoM 



## 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.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads 'Lynn Sheppard'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

**Lynn Sheppard**  
Director, Masood Entrepreneurship Centre







## Professor Luke Georghiou

### Deputy President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor

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

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## 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**



## Guest Speaker **Mohammad El Hajj** Bright Biotech Limited

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](https://brightbiotech.co.uk)



Award Host

**Patrick Hackett**

Registrar, Secretary and COO

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

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### Competition Organiser

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

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### Chair

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

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### 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

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### Healthcare

**Paul Squire**  
Managing Director,  
Manchester Slalom

**Dr. Elizabeth Crawford**  
CEO,  
Clin-e-cal

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

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### Services

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

**Dr. Sarwat Howe**  
Project Manager,  
The Innovation Factory

**Paul Argyle**  
Managing Director,  
Flight Directors

**Oliver Van Emden**  
CEO,  
deCrease

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### 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

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### 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

### 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:



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



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## 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.

### 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

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## 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.

### Lead Entrant:



**Steve Philip**

MEng Civil and Structural Engineering  
Department of Mechanical,  
Aerospace and Civil Engineering  
School of Engineering

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## 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:



**Francisco Jácome Blásquez**

PhD in Plant Science  
Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health





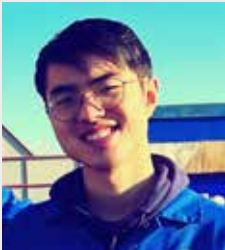
## Healthcare

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### HeyHealth

In line with the NHS equality objective, healthcare should be universally accessible for all the residents in the UK, irrespective 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.

#### Lead Entrant:



**Jiaao Yu**

BSc Computer Science -  
Human Computer Interaction  
Department of Computer Science  
School of Engineering

**Albert Viilik**

BSc Computer Science with  
Business Management  
Department of Computer Science  
School of Engineering

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### NanoGraft

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.

#### Lead Entrant:



**Gergana Ivanova**

MEng Material Science and Engineering  
Department of Materials  
School of Natural Science

**Omar Haroun**

MEng Material Science and Engineering  
Department of Materials  
School of Natural Sciences

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### Organoid Solutions Ltd

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

**Dominic Williams**

PhD Materials  
Department of Materials  
School of Natural Sciences



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## 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

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## 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

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### Keep-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

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### 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



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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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:



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

### Lead Entrant:



**Daniel Warrington**  
MBChB Medicine  
Faculty of Biology, Medicine, and Health

**Cameron Elsworth**  
MBChB Medicine  
Faculty of Biology, Medicine, and Health

### Lead Entrant:



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



## Social

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### 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

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### 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:



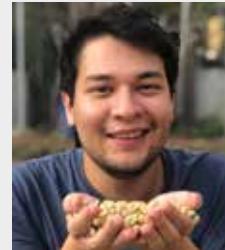
**George Obolo**  
MBChB Medicine  
Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health

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### 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





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## Corimus

Corimus 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

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## 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



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## 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

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## 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

“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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