

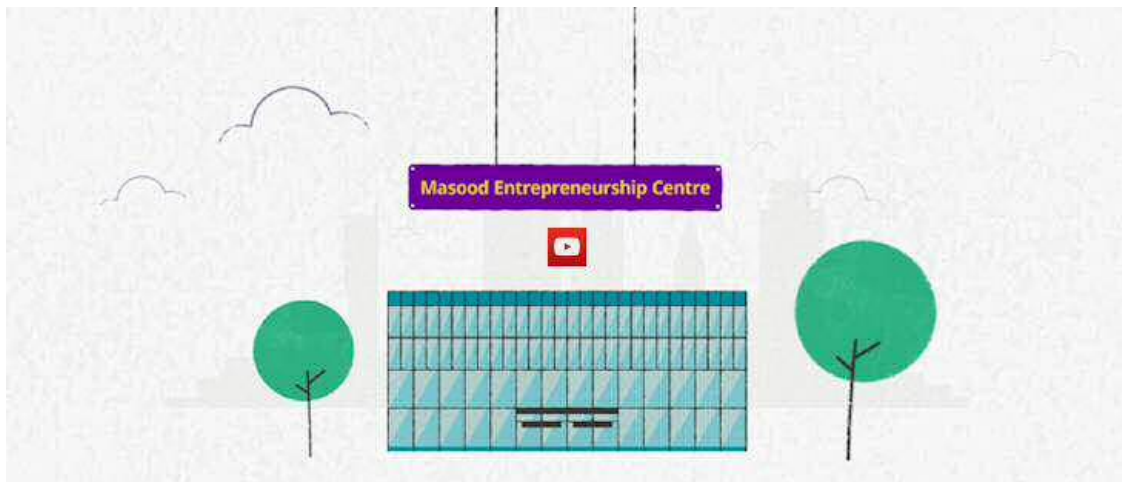
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Masood  
Entrepreneurship  
Centre

MEC Update

Issue 23 | 20 July 2022



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

Eli and Britt Harari Graphene Enterprise Award



## Winners announced for the 2022 Harari Graphene Enterprise Award

The winners of the [Eli and Britt Harari Graphene Enterprise competition](#) were announced on Friday 8 July.

The Eli and Britt Harari Graphene Enterprise Award, in association with Nobel Laureate Professor Sir Andre Geim, is awarded each year to help the implementation of commercially-viable business proposals from our students, post-doctoral researchers and recent graduates, based on developing the commercial prospects of graphene and other 2D materials.

First prize of £50,000 was awarded to Dr. Aled D. Roberts, Research Fellow (School of Natural Sciences) and his team (Aoife Taylor, Helen Park and Sunny Vowles) at [Deakin Bio-hybrid Materials](#). This venture is developing a green, bioinspired alternative to ceramic tiles that not only avoids energy-intensive firing, but also consists of captured carbon dioxide in the form of carbonate minerals.

Taking inspiration from natural materials such as pearl and seashells, then using natural chlorophyll resources to give colour, they have developed a bio-based composite (biocomposite) material that will incorporate graphene to meet strict performance requirements necessary for commercialisation - by improving flexural strength and hydrophobicity.

The Graphene Bio-tiles (GBT) stand out from the competition by having a far lower (and potentially negative) carbon footprint compared to conventional ceramic tiles.

Aled commented: *“Our team was immensely humbled and honoured to have won the 2022 Harari Graphene Enterprise Award. We honestly weren’t expecting to win, given the strength of the competition this year, and we were speechless when the announcement was made. Now that it’s sunk in, we’re really excited for what we’ll be able to achieve with this transformational amount of funding. We plan to use the prize money to expand from my cellar and kitchen into some proper laboratory facilities – my wife isn’t too happy about the 50-tonne hydraulic press that currently occupies the living room, or when I accidentally made a poison gas in the microwave. We’re also looking forward to dedicating our full effort to developing our materials, rather than being limited to evenings and weekends. We’re also excited to obtain some high-quality characterisation of our materials at the Graphene Engineering Innovation Centre (GEIC) in Manchester, as we have largely depended on favours from friends and free testing done at trade-shows to date.”*

In second place and claiming the £20,000 prize was Joseph Neilson with G-Sense, using atomically thin monolayers of graphene as the strain sensing element in transparent, precise, stretchable, and wide-area strain sensing applications from aerospace to fitness tracking. This technology opens new opportunities for making air and road travel safer, reducing glass waste, and delivering unprecedented transparent sensing functionality for an increasingly interconnected world.

Joseph commented: *“I am incredibly grateful towards all the organisers, and to Eli and Britt Harari for funding the award, which presents excellent opportunities for innovation breakthroughs using graphene. I am also grateful for the staff at the Graphene Engineering Innovation Centre, for all their help and fruitful discussions over the past few months. I was elated, and a little bit shocked, to win the £20,000 prize, which will allow us to upgrade our deposition equipment, scaling up the maximum area of G-Sense films from 25 square centimetres to over 600 square centimetres. With the support of Masood Entrepreneurship Centre and GEIC, we are confident that we can secure additional investment to fund the future of G-Sense and grow the business”*.

This year also saw the inclusion of an additional prize that celebrates the University's position leading the world on sustainable development. The first winners of the £10,000 Eli Harari Sustainability award were Omar Haroun and Gergana Ivanova from Nanograft. Nanograft aim to develop a neuroprosthetic device that allows amputees to feel the ground as they walk with their prosthetic leg. The device takes pressure input from an insole equipped with sensors and transmits this signal to the severed leg's nerves. By stimulating the nerves once again this technology could potentially help to alleviate

phantom limb pain more effectively as well as improve the comfort and quality of life of the patient.

Omar commented: *"The team at NanoGraft are wholeheartedly delighted to receive the first ever Sustainability Award for the 2022 Harari Graphene Enterprise Awards at AMBS. As undergraduate Material Science and Engineering students at The University of Manchester, this award exists as a celebration of the academic excellence of our institution. Looking back at all those who have won this prestigious award, and where they are now, this strengthens our resolve to follow in their footsteps and push the boundaries of neuroprosthetics."*

[Read More](#)

## MEC News

The Masood Entrepreneurship Centre confirmed as part of a successful alliance to further the development of the 'Network Intelligence' methodology across Europe



We are delighted to announce that The University of Manchester through the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre have been successful in a consortium bid for the second round of the EIT HEI Call for developing the 'Network Intelligence' methodology across Europe, receiving 1.2m EURO.

Network IQ Alliance is a community of entrepreneurial universities from Spain, Poland, Latvia, Ireland and the UK, an innovative small and medium-sized enterprise (SME), a network of research institutes, an industry network, and a global network of science and technology parks in 77 countries.

The project's consortium is committed to mainstream network intelligence (nIQ) – a system-change methodology developing digital competencies at the ecosystem level for innovation and networking. The goal is to empower purpose-driven entrepreneurial people to amplify growth opportunities from the networks they build to innovate better, faster and have long-term resilience.

Network IQ Alliance's 2030 vision, via nIQ, is to create systemic impact in higher education at the institutional level by integrating innovation and entrepreneurship into the core strategies of higher education institutions (HEIs), building leadership capacity to execute them and connecting them better with their city-level ecosystems and globally.

[Read More](#)

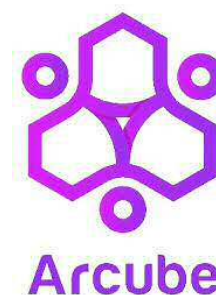
## Etihad Airways and Arcube Announce EY-ZERO1 NFT Collection

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, has partnered with [Arcube](#), a Manchester based start-up supported by MEC's [Kickstarter](#) fund, specialized in the creation of brand NFT collections, to announce the upcoming release of the airline's first non-fungible token (NFT) collection 'EY-ZERO1'.

The artworks included in the EY-ZERO1 collection are designed around Etihad's 787 Dreamliner fleet, reinventing the once physical aircraft models. The NFT collection of 3D aircraft models will provide owners with benefits and support procurement of sustainable fuel.

[Read More](#)

## Application deadline extended - Innovation and Commercialisation of Research (MCEL60091/2)



This programme is for Ph.D. research students in their third or fourth year. It addresses the research commercialisation process and the value of innovation for all organisations through a series of lectures and individual tutorials.

In the 10-week programme, you will develop a commercialisation idea based on your own area of research and prepare a 5-minute pitch and an outline business proposal canvas that outlines the opportunity. There are also follow-on sessions to support you if you would like to take the idea forward. Developing the ability and confidence to transfer knowledge from the research phase to the market.

Places are limited and the deadline for applications is now **Friday 19 August 2022**.

[Find out more >>](#)

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

## Spotlight on



### Opportunity to nominate young professionals for the Manchester Young Talent Awards

JCI Manchester's Young Talent Awards (MYTAs) recognise outstanding individuals between the ages of 18 and 40 who exemplify the best attributes of Greater Manchester's young people. The awards feature talent across varied sectors in Greater Manchester including finance, legal, property, creative, marketing and global citizens.

All nominees need to meet the following criteria:

- Aged between 18 and 40 inclusive at the date of submission (except “Rising Star”: 18-26);
- UK resident and working in and around Manchester.

Nominations are open until **5 September** and you can nominate yourself or your team and there’s also a ‘nominate a mate’ form.

Following nominations, winners are selected by an independent panel of judges, who are respected members of the Manchester business/professional community.

[Read More](#)



Nurture entrepreneurs and a commercial focus to build a greener economy

MEC Senior Lecturer Robert Phillips recently participated in a round table discussion for *Times Higher Education* discussing student entrepreneurs and the green economy.

[Read More](#)



Northern Scale Up Funding Ecosystem

Praetura are currently writing a research paper to provide a snap shot into the UK's funding landscape across different regions. They are particularly focusing on the perspective of early-stage founders and the challenges early-stage companies face, to help shape the conversation around supporting both current and future founders looking to grow a business.

Praetura will be producing a paper that will be launched later this year that will deep dive into the eco-system. They aim to show their findings and create initiatives around the key insights to inspire change in the venture capital industry.

Every entrant who completes the survey in full and provides their email address will be entered into a prize draw to win a £150 Amazon voucher.

[Founder Survey >>](#)



## British Business Awards - 2022 Shortlist

Praeferre, winners in the technology category of the Venture Further Awards, have been shortlisted in the British Small Business Awards in the Start-up of the Year category.

[Read More](#)

## Resource Centre



## Business planning



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

Learn why [business planning](#) is an essential exercise if your business is to start and grow successfully, attract funding or target new markets with information and advice on:

- Writing a business plan;
- Business strategy;
- Start up business jargon buster;
- Start-up business plan: Top 10 tips.

[Read More](#)

## Events - Researcher Training Programme

### Developing an Entrepreneurial Mindset

**Tuesday 11 October 2022**

**10:00 – 12:00 BST**

An entrepreneurial mindset is the tendency to discover, evaluate and develop opportunities.

Cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset can help you achieve personal fulfilment and professional growth in various career paths.

The aim of this interactive online session, hosted by Dr. Laura Etchells, Enterprise Business Development Manager from the Masood Entrepreneurship Centre, is to introduce you to some of the practical skills needed to develop an entrepreneurial mindset including the concepts of opportunity recognition, creativity and innovation, initiative and self-reliance, and problem solving.



[Register >>](#)

## Developing a Business Idea for the Creative Industries

**Tuesday 1 November 2022**

**09:30 – 16:00 GMT**

**Alliance Manchester Business School**

**The University of Manchester**



At this workshop, aimed at Ph.D. researchers, you will learn how to help creative organisations use their assets to create new opportunities.

Everyone loves the arts and creative industries – yet many cultural sector organisations struggle to make ends meet. To succeed, creative organisations must create products and services that strongly appeal to their audiences. At this one-day workshop, you'll learn how to help creative organisations do this.

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

[Register >>](#)

## Generating and Shaping Ideas Workshop

**Thursday 24 November 2022**

**09:30 – 13:00 GMT**

In research as well as in a start-up, social enterprise or corporate environment, creative thinking and problem solving skills are critical to achieving any goal.

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



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

[Register >>](#)

## Exploring Enterprise Creation

**Thursday 20 April 2023**

**09:30 – 16:00 BST**

**Alliance Manchester Business School**

**The University of Manchester**



This one-day workshop will give you an insight into how to spot an opportunity for an enterprise from a given research idea. Using case study based scenarios, the workshop is designed for you to learn the basics of developing a research-led business idea . These processes can also be adapted for your own research.

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

[Register >>](#)

## Courses

### EIT HEIT EntreUnity - Summer School - Improving the resiliency of your startup

*What is this course about?*

COVID-19 has taken all start-ups by surprise. However, it is the start-ups' ability to respond to these kinds of external shocks that separates the top-performing start-ups from the rest. Israeli start-ups are hitting another year of record funding and growth, indicating their crisis resilience.



The Innovation Centre in Tel Aviv created a highly concise and practical course based on a deep dive into how Israeli start-ups do it. Each one-hour session will address key topics inspired by the Israeli start-up methodologies.

#### *Is this course for me?*

This course is aimed at University students, Ph.D. students, postdocs and University personnel. It will offer countless practical case studies and exercises that will help improve the resiliency of your start-up and enable you to go global.

#### *How is the course structured?*

This course is made-up of four sessions and will be held from 11:00 to 12:00 BST:

- 8 August, 2022: Gearing Up with 'Armor' for the startup Journey
- 9 August, 2022: Velocity as a Perpetual Vaccine to a Crisis
- 10 August, 2022: Readjusting Strategy for Drastic Market Changes
- 11 August, 2022: Venture Capital Funding in Uncertain times

#### *Who is offering this course?*

The Innovation Centre in Tel Aviv is member of the EntreUnity consortium, led by Queen's University Belfast. This project is funded by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology through the HEI Initiative: Innovation Capacity Building for Higher Education. EntreUnity is network of aspiring entrepreneurial universities that share a passion and a responsibility to tackle global food security, ageing populations and climate change by educating and training the next generation of agri-food, health and green-tech students in entrepreneurship and leadership.

[Find out more](#)

Competitions

## Business Boost



Simply Business, one of the UK's largest providers of small business insurance, have launched their annual £25,000 Business Boost grant competition.

The grant is designed to give UK small businesses a significant helping hand in the face of wider economic challenges - including the cost of living rising at an alarming rate, inflation and supply challenges.

A panel of expert judges, which last year included leading British businessman, investor and former star of TV's *Dragon's Den*, Piers Linney, and *The Apprentice* winner Carina Lepore, will decide on the final winner of the grant.

Entries will close on **17 August** and the winner will be announced on 14 October.

[Find out more](#)



[Masood Entrepreneurship Centre](#)

[entrepreneurship@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:entrepreneurship@manchester.ac.uk)

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