Summer Start-Up Boot Camp Delivered to Students by HCfE, in Partnership with PopUp Business School

On 25-29 June the PopUp Business School led the annual Henley Summer Start-Up Boot Camp, hosted by Henley Business School and supported by HCfE. With 99 signups, including University of Reading and Henley Business School students, Santander customers and local residents, the aim of the Boot Camp was to change the traditional approach to starting a business and dispel the notion that starting a business needs a lot of money.

Each day focused on a different aspect of creating a business, with attendees building a range of businesses covering everything from driving schools to caravan sites. Alan Donegan, the co-founder of the PopUp Business School, began by exploring the five different ways to start and build a business with no investment. The second day of the Boot Camp was about getting participants to focus on generating sales and getting creative with their marketing and on the third day Alan introduced the group to building websites. The fourth day explored how social media can generate sales and the final day of the Boot Camp ended with an entrepreneur’s guide to company structure, tax, accounting and banking. By the end of the Boot Camp 23% of attendees had made a sale and 97% had started trading or were preparing to begin trading in the near future.

Catering was served by Norma, a new food business and winners of HCfE’s 2018 IDEAFEST Student Business Competition, and Sung Kim, a recent graduate and an attendee of the 2016 Summer Start-Up Boot Camp who was inspired by the course and set up QooQn, a food preparation and delivery business.

Feedback from the entrepreneurs attending the Boot Camp was exceptionally positive. David Overton, a BA Management and Business student at Henley Business School, said: “I would highly recommend this course to anyone who is interested in starting their own business and making their own money. Every stage experienced by a start-up business is covered along with solutions to all the potential problems it could encounter.”


The Boot Camp was kindly sponsored by Santander Universities:

HCfE Release New Promotional Video

Working together with IndigoBlue Productions, HCfE have released a new video to offer insights into what goes on at HCfE and how students can get involved in the extracurricular activities, events and initiatives.
HCfE Invites All Students to Entrepreneurship Vibes Event, 23 October 2018

HCfE are hosting a brand new student-facing event on 23 October 2018, titled ‘Entrepreneurship Vibes’, to which the entire University of Reading student body is invited to attend.

The event will take place in the Meadow Suite on Whiteknights campus, 12:00pm to 2:00pm. It will open with an overview of entrepreneurship at Henley Business School by Andrew Godley and will feature a screening of the new HCfE video, the launch of the IDEA FESt Student Business Idea Competition 2019 and some fun games led by lecturers Dr Norbert Morawetz and Dr Anna Spadavecchia.

The event will also feature an introduction to the Entrepreneurship Society and its programme of events by Harry Good-Stephenson, the society’s President, and a short talk by Tim Brownstone, the CEO of KYMIRA and Visiting Fellow at Henley Business School. Refreshments will be provided on the day.

To sign up to attend this event, go to our page on Eventbrite here: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/entrepreneurship-vibes-tickets-50601154415

Delegates Hail Brittelstand Symposium a Success, with AI Emerging as the New Game Changer

Over 100 business leaders and guests came together from across the Thames Valley on Wednesday 19 September 2018 to attend the Brittelstand Symposium, jointly organised by HCfE and Business United and hosted at Henley Business School’s Greenlands campus.

The Symposium offered real insights into the issues of business at a time when it grapples to come to terms with the exit from the EU, with attendees able to hear talks from five high profile keynote speakers and eight breakout panel sessions, providing the chance to debate the issues challenging mid-sized businesses.

The highlight of the Symposium was a talk by Cindy Rose, CEO of Microsoft UK. Titled ‘AI: Amplifying Human Ingenuity, Opportunity and Responsibility’, Cindy’s talk inspired delegates with her insight into the topic of artificial intelligence and its role in society. Cindy described, with the help of a series of short videos, how AI in its many forms is transforming not only the way we do business, but the way we live.

Cindy contended that it is no longer whether we adopt AI, but how do we adopt AI to gain competitive advantage and build sustainable businesses. Simultaneously, Cindy stressed the importance of business and government taking responsibility to ensure that AI benefits society and becomes a ‘force for good’. Citing the book ‘The Future Computed: Artificial Intelligence and its Role in Society’ written by Brad Smith and Harry Shum at Microsoft Cindy stated that it brought a new perspective on AI.


The Brittelstand Symposium was kindly sponsored by PwC, supported by Redwood Technologies, EFG Bank and Thames Valley Berkshire LEP and co-organised by Business United.

Entrepreneurship Special Interest Group to Launch on 27 November 2018

Henley Alumni and Development Team, in collaboration with HCfE, has finalised plans to launch an Entrepreneurship Special Interest Group (ESIG) to build a community of active alumni.
HCfE will work with the Development and Alumni Team to promote the ESIG to current students and new alumni on completion of their programme to help build the entrepreneurship ecosystem across the alumni community globally. The alumni will promote entrepreneurship and engage entrepreneurs for mutual benefit, including connecting entrepreneurs with HBA for funding.

The ESIG will meet up to three times a year and have a committee of volunteers. The first meeting of the ESIG, scheduled for 27 November 2018 at the Thames Valley Science Park, will feature Joanna Abeyie as a guest speaker. Joanna is the UoR Alumnus of the Year and founder and CEO of talent management firm Hyden, who specialise in the recruitment of diverse senior leadership talent in the media and creative industries.

Jean-Pierre Choulet, Head of Development and Alumni Relations said: “Entrepreneurship is strongly embedded across Henley Business School and many of our alumni share an interest in entrepreneurial activities, either as founders, funders or as service suppliers to entrepreneurs. We are delighted to launch the ESIG to give its members access to resources that will help them to build their businesses successfully.”

Savio Kwan Bursary Winner Leyi Zhang Takes Business Trip to China

Leyi Zhang, the inaugural winner of the Savio Kwan China entrepreneurship bursary and a student on the MSc in Accounting and Financial Management course, has successfully developed her business idea and has scheduled business visits in China.

Leyi was granted the bursary in April 2018 as part of the IDEAFEST Business Idea Competition 2018 awards. Her business idea, DesignerSolutions, impressed the judges with its focus on providing an online store for soft furnishings that designers could add their products to. Leyi says her business “aims to help people design their home by linking professionals to customers online”.

Entrepreneurship Society Appoints New President

BA Entrepreneurship student Harry Good-Stephenson has been selected as the new President of Reading Entrepreneurs, the University of Reading’s Entrepreneurship Society. Harry’s stint as President will cover the 2018/19 academic year.

Harry, who replaces outgoing President Alex Taggart, was a member of the society’s committee for the 2017/18 academic year and is looking to continue to expand the society’s membership.

Looking at the Society’s future, Harry said: “It is an absolute privilege to be appointed the president of the Entrepreneurship Society for the upcoming year. We are currently working on planning and organising a calendar of professional and inspiring events for the upcoming academic year. Anyone that studies at the University of Reading can join and gain a wealth of entrepreneurial knowledge.”

You can read more about the Society and the upcoming events led by Reading Entrepreneurs by visiting their website: http://www.ruentre.com/

Entrepreneurship Project Students Travel to Poland for Study Visit

Between 4-9 June 2018, Keith Heron and Dr Maks Belitski led a study visit for 24 postgraduate students on the Entrepreneurship Project module, giving them the opportunity to experience entrepreneurship in practice by travelling to Wroclaw in Poland.

One of the main features was the visit to the Droids on Roids office, where the students learned more about the process of developing an app by seeing a business in action.

Recounting his experience of the trip, MSc Entrepreneurship (Leadership) student Jonas Tusar said: “The visit to Droids on Roids was a great experience. We got to see an insight into the company’s business model and success.”

Henley Start-Up Business Incubator Relocates to Thames Valley Science Park

HCfE has moved its Business Incubator from Whiteknights Campus to the state of the art Gateway Building at the Thames Valley Science Park, Shinfield.

The shared space at the Incubator’s new headquarters
Occupants are provided with desks and the chance to work in an environment where they are part of a wider community of innovative businesses, with access to expertise, sources of funding and free workshops.

Graduates of Henley Business School and the University who have set up businesses and are looking for space can apply via HCfE. Further information on how to apply to the Business Incubator can be found on the HCfE website at https://www.henley.ac.uk/business-incubator

Henley Business Angels Companies Receive Investment from Members

Henley Business Angels is delighted to announce that a total of eight companies have received investment within the last six months from HBA members.

CamBioScience, an e-learning company that provides intensive training courses in breakthrough life science technologies, has received investment from three Henley Business Angels members, helping the company to raise a total of £400,000.

Dr Chibera (Beza) Agley, CamBioScience’s CEO, said: “We are delighted to have backing from the Henley Business Angels, which will support us in adding to our growing team of software engineers and data scientists.”

CupClub, a returnable packaging service for drinks centred on the reduction of single use plastics, had one HBA member contribute to their £200k seed round.

Safia Qureshi, the founder and CEO of CupClub, said: “We plan to use these funds to build our operations team to deploy for our client sites across the UK; we aim to bring down our current manufacturing costs by x10 through new investment in tooling.”

Mayku

Mayku, a consumer products company that has built a desktop vacuum former, received investment from one HBA member towards their SEIS funding round.

Alex Smilansky, founder and CEO of Mayku, said: “At Mayku we believe that the power to create should be in the hands of everyday people, not just large companies with multi-million-dollar budgets. We’ve already got 3,000 customers in 74 countries.”

MedicSpot, a private online GP services provider, had one HBA member contribute toward their £150k SEIS round.

Zubair Ahmed, CEO of MedicSpot, said: “In tandem with other investments it will help us to expand rapidly across the UK and provide a service which patients have responded positively to.”

Mimica Lab, a business that produces award-winning technology designed to reduce waste in perishable products such as food and pharmaceuticals, raised £470k towards their funding round.

John Knechtel, Chief Financial Officer at Mimica Lab, said: “We are delighted with the response we have received from investors. The success of this round has propelled Mimica’s mission, to be the global mark of freshness for businesses and communities.”

Safe Solvents, a cleaning services company offering a range of non-hydrocarbon based liquids and machines for cleaning automotive parts, mechanical components and paint systems, received investment from two HBA members as part of its £300k fund raise.

Sozie, a company that uses RFID and beacon technologies to connect shoppers to in-shop garments through their mobile phones, had one HBA member invest in their £150k seed investment round.

SoundVault, a music production platform and a global marketplace for music licensing, has received investment from one HBA members, contributing towards its Series A investment round which saw it raise £1m.

HBA sponsors:

HBA delivery partner:
HBA is a member of the UK Business Angels Association.

Further details about HBA can be found at our website: http://www.henleybusinessangels.com

HCfE Host SME Events to Highlight the Importance of AI and Skills Development

Over the last six months, HCfE hosted events have been exceptionally well attended by local SMEs and Masters students.

 Talks on Enterprise Development

Kishore Sankla, co-founder and CEO of award winning healthcare services company Solutions 4 Health, delivered the eleventh talk in the ‘Talks on Enterprise Development’ series on Monday 18 June 2018 to an audience of SMEs and students. ‘Scaling Growth using AI’ was the title of the talk, which Kishore embellished with a showing of AI in action with a product demonstration.

Kishore Sankla, CEO of Solutions 4 Health

Kishore focused his talk on the innovations Solutions 4 Health is behind, highlighting the company’s application of AI to create a solution to help people stop smoking. In the UK smoking is the leading cause of preventable death and disease and 70% of smokers want to quit, but most lack the motivation and smoking related illnesses and accidents year cost many billions of pounds.

To combat the problem Kishore launched ‘Bella’, a virtual personal stop smoking coach that comes via Alexa. Bella helps smokers quit by supporting them through conversation, including answering questions. Launched in January 2018, Bella has already captured the attention of public authorities around the country, which are signing up to receive the service. As an added bonus the service is free to anyone seeking to quit smoking as part of a smoking cessation programme.

 Speakers’ Panels

On 21 May 2018 HCfE hosted the ‘Bolstering and Balancing Your Technical and Soft Skills’ Speakers’ Panel. The panel featured three award-winning speakers: Kate Lester, CEO of Diamond Logistics, the fastest growing courier company in the UK; Sharon Pursey, CEO of the SafeToNet Foundation and co-founder of SafeToNet, a company that provides security to protect children from harmful content online; and Tracey Sanderson, Managing Director of Sensory Dimensions, a company that delivers sensory and consumer research for many leading food, beverage, home, personal and healthcare companies.

Left to right: Tracey Sanderson, Kate Lester and Sharon Pursey

The unanimous verdict of the panel was that technical and soft skills are equally important. Kate’s issued a challenge that business should rethink the word ‘soft’, declaring that soft skills are essential in a workforce and belong alongside technical skills. Sharon focused on the soft skills which feature particularly prominently at SafeToNet, highlighting that collaboration, cooperation, adaptability and communication helped ‘attract extraordinary people’ and ‘achieve extraordinary things’. Tracey added her views on the importance of culture by explaining how it underpins the working practices at Sensory Dimensions, with soft skills crucial in the company’s investment in training employees in technical skills, both in house and external.

Full news of the events can be found at our website: https://www.henley.ac.uk/research/research-centres/henley-centre-for-entrepreneurship/hce-news

These events were sponsored by James Cowper Kreston and supported by the Business Growth Hub, Thames Valley Science Park and VitalSix:

HCfE Appoints K50 Winner Tim Brownstone as Visiting Fellow

Tim Brownstone, a University of Reading graduate and CEO of performance enhancing sportswear and medical devices company
After Joanna Abeyie, winner of the ‘Alumnus of the Year’ by the University of Reading, has exhibited her entrepreneurial drive, having founded the training and recruitment business Shine Media, which recently rebranded as Hyden Recruitment. On top of her role as Managing Director at Hyden Recruitment, Joanna is an accomplished journalist and has received national recognition for championing diversity, winning the Excellence in Diversity Private Sector Award, Black British Business Person Rising Star Award and the FIPP Rising Star 2017.

Speaking about her award, Joanna said: “I know first-hand the importance of offering advice and support to someone who will benefit from it... The University of Reading has offered me countless opportunities to do this, through speaking to the Entrepreneurship Society, delivering lectures, taking part in the Women in Business event and judging IDEAFEST. I look forward to continuing this healthy relationship with the University for the rest of my career.”

Tim is a regular speaker on campus for both entrepreneurship modules and the Entrepreneurship Society and is also a judge on the IDEAFEST Student Business Idea Competition and an Entrepreneur Mentor in Residence for businesses in the Henley Start-Up Business Incubator. Tim also recruits Henley students for projects, summer placements and full time employment.

KYMIRA, has been appointed a Visiting Fellow at HCfE. Tim Brownstone (right) congratulating Tim Brownstone (right)

KYMIRA have a strong working relationship with HCfE; they previously inhabited the Incubator, won the University of Reading Entrepreneur of the Year 2017 award and received investment through the Henley Business Angels. Tim has received international recognition too, having recently been awarded $50,000 as one of the Karios Fund’s K50, which is granted to the best 50 seed-stage companies in the world founded by someone under 30.

Former University of Reading Student Joanna Abeyie Awarded ‘Alumnus of the Year’

Joanna Abeyie, a University of Reading BA English and Sociology graduate and a judge for HCfE’s 2018 IDEAFEST Student Business Idea Competition, has been awarded the prestigious title of ‘Alumnus of the Year’ by the University of Reading’s Alumni and Relations Development department in celebration of the outstanding achievements made by University of Reading graduates from a broad range of fields.

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The Business Idea Clinic, recorded its highest ever figures among students, attracting over 35 students during the 2017/18 academic year. Students with an idea for a business can use the Clinic to discuss the merits of their business ideas and whether or not these might be developed into successful business.

Sessions are held every Wednesday with Jurek Sikorski, Executive Director of HCfE. The Clinic has a proven track record, with all IDEAFEST Competition winners, including the current winners Norma, using the opportunity to receive guidance.

Student wishing to talk about their business ideas can book an appointment by emailing Alex Baker on a.j.baker@henley.ac.uk

Find out more about the Business Idea Clinic at
https://www.henley.ac.uk/research/research-centres/henley-centre-for-entrepreneurship/henley-centre-for-entrepreneurship-business-idea-clinic

Henley Business Angels Celebrates Second Anniversary

HCfE marked its second anniversary at the recent Company Presentations event on 13 September 2018, celebrating with an exclusive annual dinner for members and sponsors.

The anniversary was also marked with two notable guest speakers: Matt Adey, Senior Director and Economist at the British Business Bank, who presented the latest results from the recent research
into the UK Business Angel Market, and Jenny Tooth OBE, CEO of the UK Business Angels Association, who spoke passionately about the growing and vibrant business angel community.

Jurek Sikorski, the founder and Director of Henley Business Angels, said: “It’s gratifying that the HBA network has reached a point where it is making a difference. It is growing in momentum, with some exciting plans for the future.”

FSE are authorised and regulated by the FCA.

Marketing to potential investors in the CoFund would include HNWIs, institutional investors, European Investment Funds (EIFs) and Family Offices. The CoFund is expected to close and be available to invest in early stage companies selected to present to HBA members from Autumn 2019.

University of Reading Investment Committee Approves Establishment of Henley CoFund

The University of Reading Investment Committee met on the 25 September and approved the establishment of the Henley CoFund (CoFund), whilst also agreeing to invest £250k in the CoFund.

The CoFund, which will be constituted as a Limited Partnership and operated by fund management firm FSE, will invest alongside the Henley Business Angels and target to raise an amount of £2m.

HCfE Collaborates to Deliver the Berkshire ScaleUp Support Programme

In partnership with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TV LEP), Business United and Oxford Innovation, HCfE will offer support to the Berkshire based scale-up businesses through a ScaleUp Support Programme to Berkshire-based scale-ups.

The Programme includes multiple networking events, including monthly meetings designed to share experiences and insights, and connections to relevant scale-up events and training courses. The Programme will be directed by the newly appointed ScaleUp Director employed by the TV LEP and advised by the ScaleUp Advisory Board. The board includes Chris Dodson OBE, former CEO of Fairsail and Adviser to the ScaleUp Group Adam Hale and Jurek Sikorski, Executive Director of HCfE.

The Programme’s events will be held on the first Tuesday of every other month at Henley Business School’s Whiteknights campus for the purpose of drawing together entrepreneurs and business leaders to share insights over refreshments on scaling up businesses. HCfE will also contribute to the Advisory Group meetings attended by the board members.

Announcing the launch of the Programme, Jurek Sikorski said: “The Programme is a pioneering collaborative initiative that supports Berkshire’s scaling businesses in a way that benefits them, the economy and all partners. It offers Henley Business School a great opportunity to have students work at scale-ups.”

HCfE Welcomes Record Number of New Undergraduate Students onto BA Entrepreneurship Programmes

HCfE is delighted to welcome 20 new undergraduates onto our BA Entrepreneurship suite of programmes for 2018, the largest intake of new students since HCfE was established.

The suite covers the BA Entrepreneurship and Management course (https://www.henley.ac.uk/undergraduate/course/ba-entrepreneurship-and-management) and the BA Entrepreneurship...
HCfE Faculty Attend Conferences

Prof Andrew Godley travelled to China and Sweden to lead major talks on global entrepreneurship in April 2018. He gave presentations at Macau University and Lanzhou University in China on recent trends in entrepreneurship education in the UK, before contributing to a session on Silk Road Entrepreneurship Education for the Association of MBAs’ Global Deans Conference 2018, held in Stockholm, Sweden.

In May 2018 Prof Godley also participated at the AliBaba Conference on Entrepreneurship Education at Hangzhou, China, which brought together over 20,000 participants from across the world. Accompanied by two other HCfE members, Dr Lebene Soga and Abi Ridgway, Prof Godley spoke about the challenges that contemporary technology poses to privacy and the future of entrepreneurship education. As part of their trip, the three HCfE staff also went on a special visit to the West Lake, a UNESCO Heritage Site famous for its numerous temples, pagodas, gardens and artificial islands.

New Staff and Promotions

HCfE is pleased to announce that Dr Lebene Soga has been granted fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, whilst Prof Yipeng Liu has been appointed as a Professor of Organisation Studies.

Yipeng previously worked at Newcastle University Business School and his research interests centre on the emerging market multinationals and international entrepreneurship from a cross-cultural and comparative perspective, embracing the notion of ‘West-Meets-East’.

News Call

The Editor welcomes articles and news items of interest from faculty, students and staff on any topic related to entrepreneurship for publication in HCfE News. News items should be emailed to Alex Baker, the Newsletter Editor, at a.j.baker@henley.ac.uk

Further information about the Henley Centre for Entrepreneurship can be found at www.henley.ac.uk/henleycentreforentrepreneurship