

# HCfE News

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**Henley**  
Business School  
UNIVERSITY OF READING

Where business comes to life

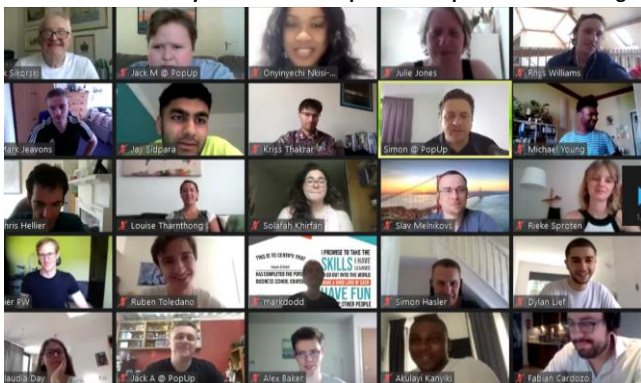


## Entrepreneurs Inspired by Online Henley Summer Start-Up Boot Camp 2020

**More than 80 University of Reading students, alumni and local residents joined HCfE's annual Henley Summer Start-Up Boot Camp to gain the knowledge and skills they need to start and grow a business from scratch.**

Due to COVID-19 restrictions the Boot Camp was held online from 22-26 June 2020 and was led by Simon Paine of the PopUp Business School. Participants were given the chance to try out a hands-on, practical approach to starting a new business from the ground up.

Henley Summer Start-Up Boot Camp attendees dialling in



Over the five days the course covered everything from building a website to the best methods to market and sell a product, with guest speakers invited onto the call to add their own comments. These included Sswap co-founder Amer Nahouli, who had attended and benefitted from the 2019 Boot Camp, and Alan Donegan, Simon's fellow co-founder of the PopUp Business School.

On the final day of the course there was even a panel of experts, featuring Ashan Arif, Partner at ClarksLegal, Sarah Friend, Partner of Business Tax at BDO, and Mark Shepherdson, Business Relationship Director at Santander. Together they addressed a range of topics crucial for any new business owner, from employment and finance to intellectual property, the legal requirements for businesses and tax regulations.

By the end of the week participants had gotten to grips with all the building blocks of growing their business and gained the confidence to make money doing what they love. The consensus was overwhelmingly positive, with some attendees making sales before the end of the week.

*"I started the Boot Camp without knowing what to expect. What I learned absolutely blew my mind. The techniques, entrepreneurial mindset and advice that was given to us are priceless. I feel confident and full of energy now to take my business idea to the next level."*

**Rieke Sproten, University of Reading Postgraduate Food Systems and Food Ed Consortium alumnus**

To find out more about what was covered in the Henley Summer Start-Up Boot Camp 2020, read the full news release here: <https://www.henley.ac.uk/news/2020/henley-summer-start-up-boot-camp-2020-engages-over-80-aspiring-entrepreneurs-to-start-their-own-business-doing-what-they-love>

In addition to being led by the PopUp Business School and hosted by HCfE, the Boot Camp is sponsored by Santander Universities.



## Entrepreneurship Vibes 2020 Opens Registration for Students



All University of Reading and Henley Business School students are invited to sign up for HCfE's annual Entrepreneurship Vibes event, held on 22 October 2020.

The aim of Entrepreneurship Vibes is to showcase the support that HCfE offers on campus to all University of Reading students with aspirations to someday start their own business. This includes everything from one-to-one advice about developing an idea for a business to competitions that students can enter to help turn their business idea into a reality, with prize money of over £1,000 up for grabs.

Students don't need any prior knowledge of entrepreneurship to join in with Entrepreneurship Vibes, just an interest being entrepreneurial and even some day starting their own business. The event will be held online, with the following schedule:

11:30am – Introduction, by Prof Andrew Godley

11:40am – 'The Impact of COVID-19 on Entrepreneurship' Discussion and Launch of the 2020 E-Buddy Scheme, by Dr Lebene Soga

12:00pm – 'The University of Reading's Tech Entrepreneurs' Talk and Quickfire Quiz, by Fabian Cardozo-Cajamarca, co-founder of WakeSense

12:10pm – 'How HCfE Supports Students' Talk, by Karin Zhang-Wei and Nur Sarah Mohd-Haslizan, Entrepreneurship Society Co-Presidents, and Lucas Cimino, IDEAFEST 2020 winner

12:15pm – E-Buddy Video Challenge, by Dr Lebene Soga

12:25pm – 'How Students Can Get Involved with HCfE' Talk and Calls to Action, by Jurek Sikorski

12:30pm – End

Students that register for Entrepreneurship Vibes will be sent the link to dial in. To register, go to

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/entrepreneurship-vibes-2020-tickets-122374207549>

Find out more about Entrepreneurship Vibes here:

<https://www.henley.ac.uk/research/research-centres/henley-centre-for-entrepreneurship/entrepreneurship-vibes>

## Two Students Chosen as New Entrepreneurship Society Co-Presidents



HCfE's Entrepreneurship Society, the University of Reading's largest non-sport society for students, has appointed Karin Zhang Wei and Nur Sarah Mohd-Haslizan as its Co-Presidents for the 2020/21 academic year.

Karin is a BA Business and Management student, whilst Nur Sarah studies on the BSc Biomedical Sciences course. Together they are taking over the President role from the outgoing Julia Kala and will collaborate to drive student engagement in entrepreneurship for students across campus.

The Entrepreneurship Society has been running since 2014 and lead their own programme of events, in tandem with HCfE's initiatives. The Society exists to support entrepreneurially-minded students by helping them network and gain new skills, whether for starting their own business, joining an SME or finding employment at a larger business.

Karin and Nur Sarah will be supported by a committee of other students. Craig Davidson is the Society's Events Officer, James Cook and Stacey Chen are the Marketing Officers and Vedant Gupta is the Business Development Officer.

This year the Society aims to offer some successful event topics from previous year including networking and LinkedIn Photoshoot, along with new interactive events such as job shadowing and How to Start a Business in a Pandemic 101. The full agenda of the Entrepreneurship Society's planned events for the 2020-21 academic year is as follows:

14-15 October 2020 – Freshers Fayre 2020

28 October 2020 – Welcome and Speed Networking, 1:00pm to 2:30pm

25 November 2020 – Business Start Up: Pandemics, 1:00pm to 2:30pm

3 December 2020 – Family Businesses, 1:00pm to 2:30pm

15 January 2021 – Let's Optimise Your LinkedIn, 1:00pm to 2:30pm

28 January 2021 – Overcome Obstacles and Challenges During a Pandemic, 1:00pm to 2:30pm

24 February 2021 – The Flagship Conference: Opportunities Found in Uncertainty, 9:30am to 3:30pm

15 April 2021 – Job Shadowing: One Day at your Future Workplace

*“From an entrepreneurial perspective, the ongoing pandemic offers more opportunities than obstacles. We intend to bring together the most innovative, creative, and open minds, which will equip the students for their coming entrepreneurial journeys.”*

Karin Zhang-Wei, Co-President of the Entrepreneurship Society

*“Running the Entrepreneurship Society will be a huge responsibility and challenge. Everyone should have the essence of an entrepreneur – I believe what makes an excellent entrepreneur is someone who gives back to the community in different aspects such as money, education, knowledge.”*

Nur Sarah Mohd-Haslizan, Co-President of the Entrepreneurship Society

To become a member of the Entrepreneurship Society and find out how to sign up for all the events listed above, please visit <https://www.ruentre.com>

## HCfE Relaunches Business Idea and Start-Up Clinic for Students



**In June 2020 HCfE's Business Idea and Start-Up Clinic relaunched to much acclaim, offering one-to-one advice to any student, alumnus or even University of Reading applicant yet to begin their studies to help them develop a business idea.**

The purpose of the relaunch was to widen access to the Clinic for alumni and students worldwide, with HCfE faculty joining to pool their knowledge and provide mentoring. This ensures that Clinic attendees get wide-ranging and useful guidance on how to develop and commercialise their business ideas. This has proven to be hugely successful, with HCfE faculty members including Prof Andrew Godley, Dr Amal Ahmadi, Dr Parisa Baig, Dr Lebene Soga, Dr Maks Belitski and Jurek Sikorski all delivering mentoring at the Clinic.

Appointments at the Clinic are held on Wednesdays, from 9:00am to 11:00am and 4:00pm to 6:00pm. The Clinic was first started in 2014 and since then has grown to become hugely popular, with students booking appointments every week.

To book an appointment at the Clinic, or to provide feedback, visit <https://www.henley.ac.uk/businessideaclinic>

## HCfE Mentors Students for Young Entrepreneurs Scheme

**Dr Simon Cutler, the Business Relationship Manager at the University of Reading's Knowledge Transfer Centre (KTC), has collaborated with HCfE Executive Director Jurek Sikorski to mentor the University of Reading's team for the Young Entrepreneurs Scheme (YES).**

YES helps develop business awareness and entrepreneurship skills in UK postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers, as participants prepare a business plan for a hypothetical company. The University of Reading has entered teams into YES every year and with HCfE's mentoring to help them refine their business idea they have achieved significant success. Most notably, in 2018 a University of Reading team won the Environment category and in 2017 a team won the Best Healthcare Business Plan category.

**Jurek Sikorski mentoring the University of Reading 2019 YES team**



This year YES celebrates its 25 year anniversary. Due to the pandemic, autumnal workshops due to take place at Syngenta and GSK have had to be postponed until Spring 2021, but the KTC is working with HCfE and the Henley Business Angels to prepare participants as they embark on their first commercial adventures. The support offered includes advice on developing the business idea and how to present the product or service from a business perspective, akin to pre-accelerator support programme.

*“YES has a positive impact on our commercialisation culture by developing skills and embedding knowledge in individuals and departments. The University of Reading have been competing since the very start. This year, despite lockdown, we have attracted a record-breaking 24 individuals across five teams, so there is a pleasing appetite on campus for this type of experiential training.”*

Simon Cutler, Business Relationship Manager of the Knowledge Transfer Centre

For further information about YES, please look at their website here: <http://www.yescompetitions.co.uk> Alternatively, please contact the KTC's Dr Simon Cutler on [s.b.cutler@reading.ac.uk](mailto:s.b.cutler@reading.ac.uk)

## The Future of Entrepreneurship Looks Exciting

Jurek Sikorski, the Executive Director of HCfE, wrote a blog post titled 'The Future of Entrepreneurship Looks Exciting' for the Henley Business School's Henley Live blog series.

The blog is an outlet for Henley Business School staff and faculty to use their expertise to analyse current news and concerns, engaging with them and answering key questions. Jurek's piece explores the ways in which COVID-19 has changed the entrepreneurial landscape and what new opportunities there are to start a business. These opportunities include the rise of digital technologies such as 5G and AI, the changes in consumer behaviour and improved support for small businesses in the form of loans and grants. The single biggest emerging trend is the digital transformation of businesses, which is being accelerated by COVID-19.

To read the full piece, go to the Henley Live blog here: <https://live.henley.ac.uk/news/308403>

## Henley Business Angels Appoints New Board Members



**In the summer of 2020 Henley Business Angels (HBA) announced four new appointments to the board of directors.**

Effective 1 August 2020, HBA confirmed the appointments of John Cavill (private equity investor) and Denis Bidinost (exited entrepreneur and investor) as NEDs of HBA Ltd. Additionally, Jeremy Rowson (industrial investor) and Nestor Ceron (senior adviser at National Instrument and family business owner) have been appointed as HBA Membership Representatives.

All members joined the board meeting online on 10 September to receive a report from HBA Director Jurek Sikorski and review the performance and marketing campaign plan for 2020-21. The board noted that since its establishment in October 2016, Henley Business Angels received applications from 204 companies, of which 74 have presented to members over 15 investment rounds with 10 presenting more than once. A total of 23 companies, 31% of those that pitched, have received investment from HBA members and guest investors, amounting to £1.1m.

Henley Business Angels is sponsored by Barclays and BDO.



## Henley Business Angels Members Contribute to Report on Angel Investing



**Working in collaboration with Henley Business School's Centre for China and Global Management (CMGB), Henley Business Angels led a webinar on 20 August 2020 for its members to hear the results of a new survey conducted into angel investing during and post COVID-19.**

The survey ran between 15 June 2020 and 20 July 2020 and was set up by Prof Yipeng Liu, Director of the Centre for China Management and Global Business. Yipeng was aided by HBA's Director, Jurek Sikorski, and experienced HBA member Denis Bidinost.

The results from the survey provided some illuminating insights into how angel investing has been impacted by the ongoing pandemic. In his report to the HBA members, Yipeng outlined that in the current climate 62% of respondents were not investing, with 25% investing in their existing portfolio and 13% still investing in new deals.

Rather than withdrawing from investing directly, caution was the recurring theme – 50% of those that completed the survey stated that COVID-19 had negatively impacted on their investment opportunities, but the consensus was that COVID-19's impact was low or short-term. Whilst 56% are investing less than before the pandemic first hit, angel investors are still actively looking for companies that have an experienced management team, a realistic business model and offer a sustainable and differentiated solution to a problem.

Once Yipeng had presented the results of the survey, the discussion in the webinar turned HBA members recounting their personal experiences of investment during the lockdown. The discussions centred around comparing investment in different sectors, the differences in investing time or money into a business and the importance of government support and loans.

*“Overall, the human factors such as the passion, business savviness and preparedness of the entrepreneur, as well as trust building, are important for angel investors. We plan to carry out a second phase of this research project by collecting more qualitative data to examine the role played by human factors in the judgement*

*and decision making of business angel investors post COVID-19.”*

Prof Yipeng Liu, Director of the Centre for China Management and Global Business

Henley Business Angels is sponsored by Barclays and BDO.



## Emma Jones MBE Delivers Henley Business Angels Guest Speaker Talk

**Emma Jones, the founder of Enterprise Nation, delivered an inspirational guest speaker talk for the HBA Company Presentations event on 10 September 2020.**

Enterprise Nation, a community of small business leaders and advisors that provides support for new entrepreneurs, has had a massive impact on the SME community across the UK. A successful entrepreneur in her own right, Emma’s energy and enthusiasm for supporting businesses is well known and in her talk she spoke on the topic of ‘A New Era for Angels? Why Business Owners Need More than Your Money’.

Speaking to the HBA members, Emma highlighted that in the last six months there has been an acceleration in the digital transformation of business, a trend that will undoubtedly continue. She described some of the projects Enterprise is involved in, including a partnership with Salesforce to deliver small business grants. Having distributed hundreds of these grants, the message coming back from businesses was that the money was used to help them become digitally enabled and to do business online.

Emma added that Enterprise Nation is aiming to help over 250,000 businesses – since March, she had noted that thousands of small businesses (no more than 10 employees) from all sectors have come on the Enterprise Nation website. Their questions like ‘Do I qualify for the Bounce Back Loan Scheme?’ and ‘Am I eligible for the self-employment income support?’ made Emma target Enterprise Nation’s online content to address topics such as ‘How to make money from a blog’, ‘How to use Pinterest to grow your business’ and ‘Using Facebook ads effectively’.

Emma wrapped up by looking to the future, revealing that Enterprise Nation had agreed to work with Amazon to deliver its small business accelerator programme. This programme is focused on digital skills, with the goal to train over 200,000 small businesses over the next 10 months.

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## HBA Seeks Business Leaders to Support Entrepreneurs



Are you a business leader, successful entrepreneur or self-certified investor? If so, we would be interested to talk with you about joining Henley Business Angels.

Members enjoy significant benefits, including access to investment in carefully selected early stage companies with high growth potential, engagement with the University in collaboration and networking with other HBA members working together in areas of mutual interest.

This is what one HBA member and senior executive at an IT company had to say about why he joined and how he has benefitted:

*“Joining Henley Business Angels has given me a unique opportunity to meet some of the brightest entrepreneurs in the Thames Valley and hear the exciting and innovative ideas for which they are seeking funding. I have had the privilege of discussing these in detail and have been able to provide my own perspective and support to help them get to the next level of growth and funding. Over the past year of involvement, I have personally invested in three separate and very different start-up enterprises, each with a novel proposition and disruptive approach to their markets. I look forward to continuing my involvement with the group and helping further young enterprises realise their full potential.”*

For a private conversation about HBA and becoming a member, contact Jurek Sikorski, founder and Director of HBA, at [jurek.sikorski@henley.ac.uk](mailto:jurek.sikorski@henley.ac.uk)

## HCfE Creates ‘Fashion Futures’ Online Course

**On 29 June 2020 the Africa Fashion Week London kicked off its first ‘Fashion Futures’ online course, created by HCfE members of faculty.**

HCfE collaborated with Parsons School of Design to create the course, which covered six days and was established for emerging and established Africa-inspired designers and entrepreneurs to

explore future trends in design and business. Instructors include leading experts and academics from Henley Business School, who have created a bespoke programme of virtual classroom teaching and peer-to-peer learning.

Course participants gained valuable insights into wearable technology, upcycling and fashion sustainability, with a wider look into an entrepreneurial mindset and industry 4.0's impact in the world of fashion.

Attendees were able to refer to real-world case-studies on successful African designers and at the end of the course the top five ideas were selected for further presentation and mentoring with industry professionals.

To find out more about the Fashion Futures online course, visit <https://www.africafashionweeklondonuk.com/online-courses>

## HCfE Supports Festival of Digital Disruption 2020 and ConnectTVT Talks



**The Curious Lounge, Reading's co-working space that HCfE regularly collaborates with, has announced the Festival of Digital Disruption (FoDD) 2020 will be held on 16-20 November 2020, with University of Reading and Henley Business School students invited to attend.**

The FoDD is a celebration of digital creativity and innovation, aimed at displaying the opportunities for students and recent graduates to either join existing companies or start their own business in the creative, digital and tech sectors. The week will consist of multiple panels and one-to-one talks with dozens of business leaders, including Solveiga Pakstaitė (founder and Director of Mimica, who received funding from Henley Business Angels) and Darren Browne (Commercial Director for the University of Reading).

Each day of the FoDD will have a theme, ranging from 'Start-Up Stories' to 'Tech for Good'. Henley Business School students will also be directly involved, as they have been assigned the task of leading some of the interviews.

The event will be held virtually due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. Full details of the line-up and instructions on how to register can be found here: <https://www.connectvt.co.uk/fodd>

## Henley Business School Students Experience Virtual Poland Study Trip

**Keith Heron, Associate Professor in the department of Leadership, Organisations and Behaviour, led a group of 24 Henley Business School students to carry out a virtual Poland study visit via Microsoft Teams on 24 June 2020.**

The Henley Business School students, plus another 20 students from Wroclaw University of Economics and Business in Poland, worked with five dedicated Climate-KIC coaches on an intense one-week programme of real entrepreneurship problems. These coaches had all worked with Henley Business School's previous in-person study visits to Wroclaw, which have been a recurring event for several years and much anticipated by the students.

Even before the start of the programme, students engaged in teambuilding and knowledge exchange by using Miro whiteboards. The Miro boards also provided real time visual navigation on the programme itself, as it allowed spreadsheets to be converted from 'source code' (in Excel) to a navigation board 'user interface' (in Miro).

Mini lectures from faculty and coaches directed students to use specific thinking tools to investigate and analyse different aspects of the business. The entrepreneurs presented their business situations and the student teams demonstrated good Humble Inquiry (Schein) practice to build trust. Students then developed their proposals and delivered those to impressed start-up entrepreneurs on the final day.

Students reported in their feedback that they had enjoyed the programme and in the process developed otherwise unexpected skills that will be highly valuable in the changed business circumstances throughout COVID-19. Entrepreneurs also reported their satisfaction with how the insights from students had benefitted their start-ups.

The 2021 Poland study visit will again use this approach and technology. This ensures students from around the world can develop these new capabilities and help entrepreneurs wherever they are located.

## Rod Gammons Wins Barclays Entrepreneur of the Year Regional Award

**Rod Gammons, a Henley Business School Executive MBA graduate and long-time supporter of HCfE's initiatives, has been selected as one of the regional winners of the highly sought after Barclays Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2020.**

The award nominees are chosen by Barclays' Relationship Directors, who were looking for exceptional innovation, creating social change and business growth from nominees. They were impressed by Rod's world leading LED lighting company Rotolight, particularly for its rapid growth, with over 50 patents and products used by the BBC, ITV, EA Sports and Disney. Coupled with Rod's work in supporting other entrepreneurs, he was the standout nominee and is following up on his 2019 success, when he was chosen in the Lloyds Development Capital 'Top 50 Most Ambitious Business Leaders' award.

By being selected as a regional winner of the Barclay's Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Rod will also be considered for the prestigious Barclays Icon of Year Award. A presentation to announce the Barclays Icon of Year will be held in November 2020.

Rod has been a key part of Henley Business Angels, regularly providing entrepreneurial insight at the Investment Readiness Workshops and interview panels. He has also been a guest speaker on the Understanding Sales modules HCfE leads, sharing his sales methods and strategies with the students.

*"I'm honoured to have won this award. It has been an incredible journey with Rotolight and we continue to strive for growth and continually push boundaries with our technical innovation, to drive our industry forwards. I'm certain that I wouldn't be in this position were it not for my Executive MBA at Henley Business School, which gave me the tools to deliver my vision for the company."*

Rod Gammons, CEO of Rotolight and Henley Business School alumnus

## Masters' Students Carry Out Marketing Project on Snaffling Pig

Prof Adrian Palmer, Head of the Department of Marketing and Reputation at Henley Business School, worked together with HCfE to arrange for MSc Marketing students to carry out a marketing project on pork snackfood company Snaffling Pig.

Prof Palmer had been due to lead a cohort of MSc Marketing students to France earlier in the year on a specialised study visit, where they were assigned to develop a 'pop-up shop' plan for a local fashion retailer, but the trip had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, HCfE stepped in to provide the

students an alternate project, putting Prof Palmer in touch with Snaffling Pig's founder and CEO Nick Coleman.

Snaffling Pig, who had previously received investment from Henley Business Angels members, had needed to transition during the pandemic due to being unable to sell their snacks to pubs and restaurants whilst they were closed. With his marketing plan shot to pieces, Nick saw that Henley Business School students could be a source of innovation, ideas and inspiration and so he set an alternative marketing challenge to adapt his business to its changed markets.

Presentation made by a team of MSc Marketing students



Students came back with plenty of ideas. Many were based on engaging online with loyal customers. But students also picked up small changes which could make big differences. For example, Snaffling Pig's sharing packs of pork scratchings could be at risk of spreading COVID-19, so students found the solution of smaller, safer individual packs.

*"Marketing and entrepreneurship are often about seizing opportunities. COVID-19 made the MSc Marketing students' original challenge impossible to complete, but Snaffling Pig provided a very real alternative challenge of the moment. The students got stuck into it and put their year of studies to very practical use."*

Prof Adrian Palmer, Head of the Department of Marketing and Reputation

## Dr Norbert Morawetz Awarded Prestigious Innovate UK Grant

Dr Norbert Morawetz, Associate Professor in Entrepreneurship, has been awarded a highly sought-after grant from Innovate UK for his Class of 2020 project.

Class of 2020 is a national initiative for graduates and young people entering a difficult job market this year. It works by asking leading businesses to donate their inhouse learning and training materials, which then get curated into a free online academy that provides structure, support and further upskilling for graduates.

The grant had over 8,800 applications, making it extremely competitive, and was set up by Innovate UK as a response to COVID-19. The programme has been successfully rolled out across several UK universities and has backing from many major corporations, including Microsoft, O2 and Salesforce.

*“The funding will go towards developing a novel peer skills accreditation system, which will enable large scale accreditation of skills of young people/grads who might not be in employment or further study.”*

Dr Norbert Morawetz, Associate Professor in Entrepreneurship

## HCfE Supports Institute of Emotional Education for Entrepreneurs

Dr Maks Belitski, Associate Professor in Entrepreneurship, helped organise a joint workshop sponsored by Indiana University’s Institute for Development Strategies (IDS) and HCfE.

The aim of the workshop, held on 25 August 2020, was to establish the Institute of Emotional Education for Entrepreneurs (IEEE). Led by Ms Maha Aly, Junior fellow of IDS, the goal of the IEEE is to support nascent entrepreneurs, both in Europe and across the rest of the world.

The themes of the workshop included helping entrepreneurs to control their emotional challenges during their entrepreneurial journey, enhancing the entrepreneurial mindset and supporting entrepreneurs in acquiring the skills rarely discussed in academia. In addition, the workshop addressed the challenges for coaching entrepreneurs, tackling the common emotional struggles of fear of failure and fear of success and shared strategies for making quick recoveries and building resilience.

## Prof Yipeng Liu Delivers Keynote Speech for United Nations

On 27 June 2020, Professor Yipeng Liu, Professor in Management and Organisation Studies and the Director of the Centre for China Management and Global Business, delivered a

### keynote speech at the United Nations Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) Day.

Yipeng’s talk was titled ‘Chinese Youth Entrepreneurship after COVID-19: Opportunities and Challenges’. He was introduced following the opening plenary session on ‘Humane Entrepreneurship and the Youth’, which was presided over by session chair Dr Winslow Sargeant, President-Elect at the International Council for Small Business and Former Chief Counsel for Advocacy at the Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Advocacy, USA.

The UN General Assembly set up MSME Day to raise public awareness of their contribution to sustainable development and the global economy. With many small businesses hit hardest by the economic fall-out of COVID-19 due to supply chain disruptions and a massive drop in demand in most sectors, the day also highlighted the need for a business environment that enables small businesses to achieve.

For the full story, visit our website here:

<https://www.henley.ac.uk/news/2020/professor-yipeng-liu-delivers-keynote-speech-at-united-nations-micro-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises-msmes-day-2020>

## HCfE Reports on Creative Spark Ukraine Successes

In August 2020 HCfE compiled a report on the impact of the ongoing Creative Spark Ukraine research project, led in tandem by Henley Business School, Kyiv National Economics University (KNEU) and the British Council.

The report was put together by Dr Maks Belitski, Associate Professor in Entrepreneurship, and outlined the ways that HCfE have actively driven entrepreneurship in Ukraine. The Creative Spark project, which started back in 2018, has supported 16 entrepreneurs in Ukraine through their own Start-Up Bootcamp and IDEAFEST initiatives, hosted by KNEU.

The Ukrainian IDEAFEST has identified several promising new business ideas, with 2019 runners-up New Vision being a major success story. New Vision produces portable skiascopic rulers to reduce eye strain. Their product is two times smaller than the classic rulers, is made of an easily recycled eco-plastic, meets all optometry industry standards and is 17 times cheaper than equivalent products in Europe.

The team behind New Vision has also taken guidance from HCfE to ensure their manufacturing product portfolio diversifies, developing an innovative and interactive mobile application for training. It requires minimal eye contact with the phone screen, as it uses sound and vibration signals, and working with the Centre for Eye Microsurgery and the INGO Clinic they have created personalised training programs.



## HCfE Delivers Report on Creative Spark Georgia Project

**In August 2020 Dr Lebene Soga, Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Leadership, put together a report on HCfE's involvement in the Creative Spark Georgia research project.**

The project, which launched in 2018, is jointly led by Henley Business School, the Business and Technology University of Tbilisi (BTU) and the British Council. The report highlights the positive impact the research project made on Georgian start-up businesses, supporting a hugely impressive 556 entrepreneurs and 286 SMEs.

In the first year of the research project the start-up business Sapo was a major success story, producing homemade, natural and child-friendly soaps in the shape of animals. Sapo benefitted from the project's Start-Up Incubator, increasing its production and sales, and went on to become an international winner in the creative category of the Big Idea Challenge 2019. In addition to gaining prize money, Sapo received expert mentoring and an invitation to the Startup Sprint led by London Accelerator.

The second year of the project saw even greater successes. Many companies took part in a Business Clinic, designed to offer new businesses one-on-one guidance from a business expert, and a Start-Up Bootcamp hosted by BTU to help new businesses formulate a business plan. Notable companies that used these opportunities to develop included Phubber (a digital marketplace for buying and selling clothes), Villam App and Hardware (a digital solution for farm and cattle disease management), Unikeys (an app for the hospitality sector) and Elven Technologies (a business that creates technologically advanced personal protection suits).

Thanks to the project's support, Phubber are now exploring international business opportunities, Villam App and Hardware received an invitation to pitch for funding at the Global Startup Foundation's Entrepreneurship Summit and Elven Technologies won the Georgia IDEAFEST Competition and earned £1,000 prize money to develop their business idea further and turn their prototype into a final product. Perhaps most impressively of all, Unikeys won a 'digital demo day' and were rewarded with a chance to meet potential investors through the prestigious Georgia Innovation and Technology Agency.

## HCfE Produces In-Depth Afrinolly Creative Hub Case Study

**Prof Andrew Godley, the Academic Director of HCfE, has produced an in-depth case study outlining how Henley Business**

**School has contributed to the success of the Afrinolly Creative Hub as part of the Nigeria Creative Enterprise Support Programme (NICE).**

Set up in January 2019 in partnership with the British Council and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, NICE is an accelerator/incubator programme in Lagos designed to connect creative entrepreneurs and institutions in the fashion and film sectors. The goal of NICE is to facilitate collaboration and enable Nigerian entrepreneurs to develop skills that lead to sustainable livelihoods and more professional opportunities between the UK and Nigeria.

Henley Business School led the development and delivery of a programme of entrepreneurial thinking and leadership training for 40 incubator hub managers at the Afrinolly Creative Hub headquarters. The programme consisted of a short, two-week intensive training programme, followed by extensive coaching of hub managers to help them identify their highest-potential entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs received extensive mentoring and in June 2019 the top three were then awarded seed capital grant funding.

These three entrepreneurial businesses have attained significant international success. One of them, Jub Travel Films, has won awards from the overall programme to support the further development of their business ideas.

Henley Business School also worked with Afrinolly Creative Hub to lead training for the highest potential incubator managers, delivering a customised Professional Certificate in Entrepreneurial Leadership programme to fit the needs of the Nigerian film and media industry. This enabled Afrinolly Creative Hub incubator managers to identify institutional constraints on their growth and development, outline any possible solutions and ensure that Afrinolly Creative Hub would be a catalyst for entrepreneurship and rapid development of the Nigerian film and media industry.

Thanks to Henley Business School's input, Afrinolly Creative Hub has since developed its own business model and become a benchmark for incubators in the creative sectors across Africa. By collaborating with training providers, it has rapidly expanded its range of technical training programmes and increased its suite of technical equipment available to its entrepreneurs, enabling more content to be made on site. Afrinolly is in the process of raising private finance in the UK to support its further expansion and has recently been recognised by the African Tech and Creative Group (ATCG) as one of ten MyAfCFTA Nodes in Africa to drive the implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

The programme was judged to be one of the most successful in the British Council's history in west Africa and Henley Business School was commissioned to repeat the programme in Ghana in February 2020. The British Council's report on the programme can be read here:

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/programmes/arts/nigeria-creative-enterprise-programme-enterprise-support>

## Henley Business School Careers Blog Features HCfE's Boot Camp 2019

Kritika Gupta, a graduate of Henley Business School's MSc Entrepreneurship course and an attendee of the Henley Summer Start-Up Boot Camp 2019, shared a blog entry with the Henley Business School Careers team reflecting on her experiences.

Upon applying for the Boot Camp, Kritika was looking for a way to focus on planning her business ideas and channel her thinking in the right direction. Attending the course after it was recommended by her lecturers, Kritika uses the blog to look back at how it helped her develop her entrepreneurial mindset and make new connections with likeminded students.

Kritika and the other Boot Camp 2019 participants



To read the full piece, go to the Henley Careers blog page here: <https://henleycareers.blog/2020/06/01/henley-business-school-has-great-events-and-programmes-for-students-throughout-the-year/>

## Tim Brownstone Wins IoD Innovation Award 2020

# KYMIRA

On 11 September 2020, University of Reading alumnus Tim Brownstone, founder of wearable technology company KYMIRA, was presented with the prestigious title of the 'IoD Innovation Award 2020' by the Institute of Directors.

The award ceremony was part of the IoD's annual London and South Director of the Year Awards and the categories covered directors in the categories of Innovation, Sustainability and Social Impact, Start-ups, SMEs, Non-Executive and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Of the hundreds of nominations only 50 were selected for the final and the judges were impressed by KYMIRA's fast growth, noting that it had shown itself to be a young and

exciting company with lots of new innovations and ideas. KYMIRA will receive further exposure and profile on a national stage as the 'best of the best' in British business at a celebratory event to be held virtually in December 2020.

Tim Brownstone, featured on the IoD website upon being nominated



Tim has supported the University of Reading and Henley Business School by delivering talks for modules and extra-curricular events and has even been appointed a Visiting Fellow. KYMIRA has close ties with HCfE in particular, as they were the winner of the Henley Best Start-Up Business Competition 2016 and have twice received investment from Henley Business Angels members.

*"It was a huge honour just to be shortlisted alongside the other nominees, but to win in such a competitive field, with such exceptional competition, is fantastic."*

Tim Brownstone, founder and CEO of KYMIRA

## University of Reading Student Shares Impact of HCfE Mentoring

Emmanuel Amujo, a student on the University of Reading's MSc in Development Finance course, has shared his experiences of being mentored by HCfE and how it has directly helped him shape his business idea.

The business Emmanuel is looking to set up is called FinREMIT, a fintech business providing interactive financial education and automated savings solutions for migrant workers and students. After Emmanuel attended the Henley Summer Start-Up Boot Camp 2020 and was keen to develop his business idea further, HCfE connected him to Mike Dunn, the CEO of Raisr. Mike is highly experienced in the fintech sector and has previously supported HCfE with guest lectures and applied for funding through Henley Business Angels.

Mike's guidance has enabled Emmanuel to develop the vision of FinREMIT, which centres around revolutionising remittances for Africa growth and development. Mike additionally expressed interest in linking FinREMIT to a wide network of highly skilled experts in the UK fintech environment.

*“My meeting with Mike Dunn was a bomb; my vision for FinREMIT was exploded. I was inspired and motivated by his enthusiasm and passion for fintech.”*

Emmanuel Amujo, University of Reading MSc in Development Finance Student

## Announcements

HCfE is pleased to notify readers about the following new roles, notable publications and other news for its faculty:

Alex Baker



Dr Shaheena Janjuha-Jivraj



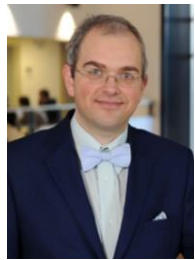
Prof Yipeng Liu



Dr MARRISA JOSEPH



Dr Maks Belitski



Sophia Valeria Maria Belitski



Alex Baker, who delivers HCfE’s administrative support, is now a Senior Department Administrator for Leadership, Organisations and Behaviour.

Dr Shaheena Janjuha Jivraj has taken on the role of School Director of Diversity and Inclusion. She also had three articles published by Forbes, titled ‘Are You Ready To Become A Leadership Champion? What Senior Leaders Need To Know’, ‘The Equal Pay Act Fifty Years On, Why Are We Still Gender-Blind?’, ‘Life Imitating Art – *Black Panther* Star Chadwick Boseman Showed The Power Of Role Models’ and ‘Being The ‘Only’ Woman Isn’t Enough: 200 Companies Commit To Diversity In Aerospace And Aviation’. The full stories can be read here: <https://hly.ac/3hqpujm>, <https://hly.ac/2Yesxqw>, <https://hly.ac/32K1wNc> and <https://hly.ac/36ksbn2>

Prof Yipeng Liu was quoted by BusinessWire in an article titled ‘Guanidao Says US TikTok Deal “Has Changed Global M&A Forever”’. The full article can be read here: <https://hly.ac/36qyF3I>

HCfE welcomed back Dr MARRISA JOSEPH, who returned from maternity leave following the birth of her son, Theo Knights-Joseph.

Dr Maks Belitski was invited to guest edit a special issue of the Small Business Economics Journal on the impact of COVID-19 on small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Lastly, all members of HCfE wish Maks well as he takes his first steps into parenthood. Maks is the proud father of Sophia Valeria Maria Belitski. We all welcome Sophia to this world and wish her and her parents a long and healthy life.

## Submit a story

The editors welcome articles and news items of interest from faculty, students and staff on any topic related to Henley Centre for Entrepreneurship for publication in this newsletter.

News items should be emailed to:

[a.j.baker@henley.ac.uk](mailto:a.j.baker@henley.ac.uk)



For further information, visit:

<https://www.henley.ac.uk/hcfe>