Welcome to the spring issue of HCfE News

… we hope it will inspire!

The inaugural BA Entrepreneurship programme takes off

Enthusiasm for starting their own business certainly runs high with the first batch of BA Entrepreneurship students at Henley Business School! The programme is not only popular with home students but has also attracted top talent from Malaysia, Portugal, India, China and Bulgaria. At the inaugural ‘BA@HCfE’ meetup, students had the opportunity to meet key HCfE staff, who will look after them over the next three years.

Student Entrepreneurship Society grows stronger

Looking back, 2015 was a fantastic year for the Society and we developed the quantity and quality of the opportunities we were able to offer. Here’s a quick review of the events we put on last year.

**Build Your Idea – 20 October:** This was the first event of the year. We had a serial entrepreneur, Ollie Forsyth, on campus to give us first-hand advice on how to build a business from scratch.

**Talk by Founder of Checkatrade – 18 November:** Kevin Byrne, the founder of checkatrade.com shared with us his process of developing a successful business that helps people find the right trade and service.

**Legal Advice – 2 December:** Three legal experts from Pitmans came to discuss data protection, commercial contracts and employment contracts.

**Funding and Finances – 22 February:** Jon Crook from Aldermore spoke on credit finance and Jurek Sikorski shared his top ten sources of finance for starting a business.

**Pitch Perfect – 7 March:** The workshop which was run by award-winning entrepreneur and Pop-up Business School founder Alan Donegan gave members a practical insight into how to hone their presentation skills.

**Create your own app – 8 March:** Piers Rudgard-Redsell co-founder of successful start-up business Airbyte, a digital agency in Reading ‘developing’ apps including UniApp, trvlRDG and food dice, all of which are apps used daily by thousands of students showed how easy and inexpensive it can be to develop an app.

Ben Redmond, one of the co-founders of Risk Capital and Yasmina Siadatan, winner of the BBC programme The Apprentice!

**HCfE produces new video promoting entrepreneurship at the University**

Have you been wondering what goes on at the Henley Centre for Entrepreneurship? Hear from those in the thick of it. A new video produced by Indigo Blue Productions features faculty, staff and students talking about how entrepreneurship teaching and extracurricular initiatives are making an impact on them.

The video can be seen at: [www.henley.ac.uk/research/research-centres/henley-centre-for-entrepreneurship](http://www.henley.ac.uk/research/research-centres/henley-centre-for-entrepreneurship).
HCFE delivers a wide range of SME events

During autumn 2015 and early spring 2016 HCFE delivered a series of talks on enterprise development and speakers’ panels. These included:

Talks

**Everyday’s a Schools Day... Building a Successful Business from Scratch** by Ian Ward CBE, CEO of Corrotherm a British based manufacturing company

**From Launch to First Base** by David Grundy, CEO of Invenias

**Learning to Juggle: How to Run a Successful Business** by Victoria Peterkin, MD of Daisy Nursery, which was voted SME of the Year 2015 by the Thames Valley Business Magazine.

The speakers told their stories of how they had started and grown their businesses, describing things that had worked and the things that hadn’t!

Speakers’ panels

**What have SMEs done to Grow Their Businesses** – this event, jointly hosted with the Business Growth Hub, involved business leaders Pete Doyle, Founder and CEO of Social Retail, Steven Hickey, Founder and CEO of Cookie Reports and Catherine Jenkins, Business Development Director of Maxx Designs. The panel discussed how they have grown their businesses with the support received from the Business Growth Hub, a network funded by the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership.

**Developing your Customer Acquisition Channels** brought together three CEOs of SMEs – Alex Tatham, Managing Director of Westcoast, Adam Hale, CEO of Fairsail and Zabetta Camilleri, CEO of Sales Gossip – who shared how their companies have built customer traction.

**From Research to Commercialisation**, jointly hosted with the Faculty of Life Sciences, assembled five leaders: Dominic Behan, VP and CSO of Arena Pharma, Prof. Glen Gibson, UoR, Ajay Luthra, CEO of BioInteractions, Colin Hill, MD Valley Produce and Al Edwards, Director & Co-Founder, CFT, who spoke about how collaboration with the University has transformed their businesses.

The talks and speakers’ panel were delivered to audiences of SMEs from across the Thames Valley and students studying entrepreneurship at Henley Business School.

Reports on all the events can be read at [www.henley.ac.uk/newsandevents](http://www.henley.ac.uk/newsandevents)

Do you have a new, interesting, exciting idea for a project or business?

**HCfE launches Henley Crowdfunding Platform**

HCfE has partnered with Crowdfund Campus to launch the Henley Crowdfunding Platform. The donation–reward based platform has been launched in response to the growing number of business ideas that are emerging from the entrepreneurship modules and degree programmes that seek validation and which would benefit from funding.

Students can launch campaigns for the funding they need to start or develop their business ideas. The crowd of people, made up of other students, staff and alumni as well as members of the public interested in novel ideas can browse the campaigns and contribute towards the projects. In return, they receive rewards, which may be anything tangible, including thank-you postcards, T-shirts, tickets or the product they are contributing towards.

The platform also features a teaching tool, which is a first in the UK for a crowdfunding platform. The teaching tool allows students to upload projects to be viewed by the class and graded by the course convenor. Students have the choice to decide whether to create a campaign and raise donations.

[https://crowdfundcampus.com/henley](https://crowdfundcampus.com/henley)

**Flexible Executive MBA students engage in entrepreneurship at Henley Business School**

The Flexible Executive MBA 2017 class met on 30 November to hear about the support HCfE provides entrepreneurs in addition to teaching on the curriculum. Jurek Sikorski, delivered a talk highlighting the range of extracurricular initiatives on offer, including Idea and Start-up Business Clinic, ‘Talks on Enterprise Development’, the Entrepreneurship Society and the IDEAFEST Student Business Idea Competition and new initiatives like the Henley Business Angels and Henley Crowdfunding Platform planned for 2016, which students can engage in to help them explore and launch a career in entrepreneurship.

James Strathearn, an Executive MBA student who attended, said: ‘The cohort were very impressed by the range of services and support offered to encourage entrepreneurship; many have expressed a strong interest in taking advantage of the wide range of services.’
SMEs join University Careers and Placement Fair 2015

For the first time SMEs joined the University Careers and Placement Fair, which was held on 28 October. It proved very engaging for SMEs to meet and talk with students and graduates. Paul O’Brien, MD of Acorne, attended the Fair and offered positive feedback and suggestions on how the Fair might do more for SMEs who are recruiting graduates. It was highlighted that entrepreneurial SMEs are an attractive source of jobs for graduates.

All SMEs are invited to advertise vacancies directly to students via ‘My Jobs Online’:
www.reading.ac.uk/careers/employer/submit.asp

IDEAFEST Student Business Idea Competition 2016

The HCfE in partnership with Pitmans LLP are in the midst of their annual business idea competition. This year’s finalists will all compete for the chance to win £1,000, plus mentoring, to get their idea to the next stage.

The finalists are; Lili Zhao (Big Shake Co), Ross Murphy (Build Smart), Jimmy Zhi Kai Poh/Dingyao/Emeline Chen Yue Xin (Kydra), Alex Taggart/Josh Hardy (Rush) and Floris Schirmer (Servu).

The final takes place in front of the judging panel and audience on Wednesday 20 April 2016. Do come and join the audience. Contact alice.tattersall@henley.ac.uk to reserve a place.

Launch of Henley Business Angels

Summer 2016 will see the launch of Henley Business Angels (HBA), a subscription-based organisation of high net-worth individuals, successful business leaders and self-certified business angels. Its purpose will be to develop Henley Business School as a centre of entrepreneurial excellence and to support new business ventures launched by graduates of both the University and Henley Business School, as well as entrepreneurs from across the Thames Valley, by investing in their business ventures.

A first meeting of potential members was held at Henley on 16 December, during which attendees who joined in person and by video link learned about the proposed constitution and operation of HBA. An overwhelming vote of support was given to HBA and pledges to join were received.

Further information about HBA and how to join can be found at www.henley.ac.uk/henleybusinessangels.

Former student praises the teaching on the MSc Entrepreneurship programme

In a message to Keith Heron, Programme Convenor, Vinyu Varanyuwatana, a 2015 graduate of the MSc Entrepreneurship programme, has described how the course has had an immediate impact on the family business:

‘Thank you very much for the past 12 months; it has been a pleasure learning from you and other staff on the course. Now that I’ve been fully involved with the family business for the past two months or so, I am seeing the real applications of the knowledge gained during the degree. The project that we are starting is like instigating a completely new business, as we have registered a new company specifically as a bottle manufacturer. A new factory is being built and is near completion.’

HCfE promotes entrepreneurship in schools

On 3 December, Jurek Sikorski delivered a talk to sixth formers at Bradfield College about entrepreneurship. Entitled ‘We are all entrepreneurs’, Jurek covered a range of topics including ‘Who is an entrepreneur?’ and ‘Why become an entrepreneur?’, dispelling common myths about entrepreneurs like the idea that entrepreneurs are born, and sharing the characteristics of successful entrepreneurs. Emily Stannard of Bradfield College reported, ‘Jurek’s talk was enlightening and engaging, providing a key insight into the world of the entrepreneur – the pupils loved it!’

HCfE joins breakfast roundtable of Thames Valley 250 SMEs leaders

Jurek Sikorski joined leaders of several Thames Valley top 250 companies at a breakfast roundtable at Ascot Racecourse on Friday 9 October 2015 to discuss the changing face of sales. Among the topics discussed was the evolution of sales strategies from traditional face to face to the more recent online customer acquisition strategies, the growth of partnerships with customers and sales education. Henley Business School offers a one-day workshop: ‘Winning at Customer Development’ and coming soon an Executive Education ‘Winning and Developing Customers’ masterclass under the convenorship of Jurek Sikorski coming soon.

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New faculty member joins the HCfE team

Marrisa Joseph joins as a Postdoctoral Fellow in Entrepreneurship at Henley Business School, and is a member of the Henley Centre for Entrepreneurship. Her PhD research focuses on the formation of business practices in the Victorian publishing industry, in particular examining how socio-cultural influences enabled and constrained how individuals made strategic decisions.

Novel feedback concept shortlisted for IBM Intelligent Data Insight competition

An innovative learning mechanism proposed by Dr Norbert Morawetz, which connects learners and enables them to provide feedback to each other, has been shortlisted for the highly competitive Intelligent Data Insight grant competition run by Innovate UK and IBM Watson. The system, Socrat.io, would allow learners in massive open online courses to be automatically connected with each other in a smart way.

HCfE collaborate with BISA to launch Massive Open Online Course

Professor Andrew Godley and Dr Maks Belitski, from the Henley Centre for Entrepreneurship, and Professor Kecheng Liu and Dr Weizi Li, from the Informatics Research Centre, have developed a brand new online course ‘Digital leadership – creating value through technology’.

This four-week course focusses on the skills and competences required to be a digital leader, how to align business and IT strategy in an organisation and digital technologies. The course is free, hosted on the FutureLearn platform and is accessible to anyone around the world who has internet access.

Digital Leadership Forum to be launched

The Digital Leadership Forum (DLF) will be launched in June 2016 as a collaborative platform set up by Henley Business School. Henley Centre for Entrepreneurship and the Informatics Research Centre will engage with practitioners and policy-makers through the Forum on research projects, networking, teaching, design and transferring policy-relevant research in the field of digital leadership.

The DLF is dedicated to promoting innovations in ICT and exploring how digital technologies facilitate the way we work and communicate, now and in the future.

Insights into entrepreneurship

Dr Anna Spadavecchia gave a presentation on ‘Corporate innovation and the technological advantage of British regions in the interwar period’ at the seminar series ‘Economic history of firms and industries’, Department of Economic History, the London School of Economics and Political Science. She has completed a book chapter, with Alberto Rinaldi, Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, on ‘The political economy of financing local production in Italy, 1950–1990s’. The pair presented the research at the European Association for Evolutionary Political Economy (EAEPE) Annual Meeting, Genova, 17–19 September 2015.

Professor Andrew Godley contributes to our understanding of entrepreneurship

Professor Andrew Godley has delivered a range of talks, interviews and papers including:


Interview recordings with five leaders of the UK food industry for National Sound Archive, British Library, and at UK Data Service ReShare 2015;

‘Continuity and change: learning from the previous generations’, OpenLearn Open University – www.open.edu/openlearn/


‘Entrepreneurship in the UK Food Sector’ Seminar at Alliance Manchester Business School, Centre for Entrepreneurship, February 2016.

We value your comments on the new website and how we might improve it. Please forward your comments to jurek.sikorski@henley.ac.uk

Further information about the Henley Centre for Entrepreneurship can be found at Henley Centre for Entrepreneurship