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## University of Manchester

### Contact Details

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### Model

Find, Fund and Support

### Starting Point

This year the University of Manchester, through its agent for IP Commercialisation (UMIP) and its Centre for Enterprise Learning (MCEL), built on the success of a pilot Social Enterprise scheme within the Faculty of Humanities to expand Social Entrepreneurship initiatives across all four faculties of the University. This helped enable their committed Delivery Team to find a way of effectively publicising and explaining a new Awards Programme to some forty thousand students and ten thousand academic, research and support staff. The UnLtd/HEFCE Programme has enabled Manchester to develop the support available to its social entrepreneurs. However, locating these agents of social change - a number of whom may not immediately have identified with the term 'social entrepreneur', or even been familiar with the underlying concept of social enterprise - was not something that the Delivery Team could take for granted. The Team responded to this challenge with persistence and creativity, raising the profile of social enterprise on campus and attracting applications from more than one hundred members of the University over the course of the year. These were from a balanced range of staff, students and some recent graduates.

### Delivery Approach

The Awards have been distributed through a series of competition rounds, complementing and influencing other competition-based activities taking place within the University's enterprise space. The first competition round took place before Christmas and was marketed under the name of 'Social Enterprise Lite'. The Team focused its energies at this stage on distributing six £500 Try It Awards, providing potential social entrepreneurs with an accessible introduction to the Programme. This was followed by a proactive marketing and publicity campaign, during which the Team ran several workshops and events in order to familiarise students and staff with the concept and terminology of social enterprise. Since



January the Programme has been running its main competition rounds and supporting Award Winners at both a Try It and Do It stage. Awards have been made through dedicated Programme competitions, as well as being incorporated into the existing enterprise framework in the form of the Manchester Business School 'Venture Further' competition. As well as skills development and making a contribution to the local community through their HE Support Awards, The University of Salford offered 8 weeks paid employment for the participants, backed by the University and using HEIF investment. All the HE Support Programme participants who received financial and mentoring support felt that the opportunity to work with social entrepreneurs would enhance their chances of success and all participants saw this as a unique and invaluable part of their Award. So far 8 local placements have been arranged.

### Outcomes and Impact

The combination of competitions and well-marketed introductory workshops has allowed the Delivery Team to bring the Programme, and the concept of social enterprise, to new and varied audiences. Individuals need not go on to become Award Winners to benefit from this activity. Potential applicants, for example, were invited to attend the 'Social Enterprise Brief Case' at The University of Manchester Innovation Centre (UMIC). The Brief Case consists of a workshop and workbook designed by the specialist innovation company Novomodo. The guidance and tools on offer encouraged participants to think in a deeper and more focused way about their potential for social entrepreneurship. As well as providing practical advice to assist with the construction of a well-rounded Award application, these workshops served a dual purpose, not only helping to raise the quality of subsequent applications, but also communicating the Programme's message in greater detail to a range of interested individuals. This was irrespective of whether they go on to become Award Winners. Useful and essential as

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social media and email announcements are, it is this face-to-face contact, exemplified by initiatives such as Manchester's Social Enterprise Brief Case, which has the greatest potential to engage budding social entrepreneurs.

### **The Future**

The Delivery Team at Manchester will be working to further refine and target their Programme communications next academic year. Steps have already been taken, for example, to connect students and staff in the bio-medical field with social enterprise. UMIP, with the support of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), recently held an Introduction to Social Enterprise session aimed directly at this audience. For this and other audiences, social enterprise and the Programme of Awards on offer, will appear all the more relevant if it can be connected with the individual's existing interests and motivations. Well-targeted communications are essential in this respect and, ultimately, work to benefit, not just the Programme, but the development of the social enterprise sector as a whole. Manchester is well placed to deliver its strategic, social and economic goal in this field and has been growing its grassroots links to local social enterprises and charities to widen its reach in sustaining impact that is community led and addressing real need.