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**Embargoed until 00.01 Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March**

### **RSE Unlocking Ambition Enterprise Fellowship Programme now open!**

- **Inaugural RSE Unlocking Ambition Enterprise Fellowship Programme to invest in up to 20 high-potential entrepreneurs**
- **This is an invitation to entrepreneurs from Scotland, the UK and from right across the world to submit ideas which have the potential to be transformative.**
- **One-year package of benefits – up to £900,000 total grant funding across the 20 Fellowships; over £150,000 for a comprehensive and cutting-edge training programme personally tailored to develop business skills delivered to the highest of international standards; a dedicated mentor, and access to professional, financial and entrepreneurial networks**
- **Apply by the deadline of Wednesday 2 May at [www.rse.org.uk](http://www.rse.org.uk)**

Applications are now open for a brand new cutting-edge entrepreneurial support scheme. The £4m Unlocking Ambition Challenge is delivered by key stakeholders from Scotland's entrepreneurial ecosystem as part of the Scotland CAN DO initiative, backed by the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon. The Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) will lead the academic stream of the inaugural programme, with support from Scottish Enterprise, based on the highly successful Enterprise Fellowship Programme that the RSE has been running for 20 years. Together they will invest in 20 early-stage high-potential entrepreneurs with innovative projects, with the aim of forming start-up businesses in Scotland in the new RSE Unlocking Ambition Enterprise Fellowship Programme.

Up to 20 successful applicants will receive an RSE Unlocking Ambition Enterprise Fellowship operating over a period of a year with a host of bespoke benefits, including total grant funding of up to £900,000 (up to £45,000 grant per Fellow - £25,000 maintenance grant from Scottish Enterprise and up to £20,000 business development fund); a total of over £150,000 for a comprehensive and cutting-edge training programme personally tailored to develop business skills delivered to the highest of international standards; a dedicated mentor for each Fellow, and access to professional, financial and entrepreneurial networks.

This is an invitation to entrepreneurs from Scotland, the UK and from right across the world to submit ideas which have the potential to be transformative. You don't have to be in Scotland or be Scottish – you can be anywhere in the world to apply. You are also not required to have an existing connection to the RSE. The only condition is that you agree to relocate or establish your business here in Scotland.

The RSE Unlocking Ambition Enterprise Fellowship Programme will nurture and support early-stage innovators, academics and researchers who have entrepreneurial potential and an innovative business idea. To succeed, we are looking for the most talented and ambitious people around the world to see Scotland as the place they want to establish their businesses.

Up to 20 talented entrepreneurs will be chosen, based on their own potential, the market potential of their business ideas, and the contribution that they might make to our economy and to wider



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society. They will be mentored and led by some of Scotland's leading entrepreneurs in a year-long intensive entrepreneurial business development programme. The aim of the programme is to provide the framework within which individuals can experience the most relevant approach to develop the commercial strength of their ideas and be equipped to succeed in today's fast-paced global business environment.

Business and Innovation Minister, Paul Wheelhouse, said: "Unlocking Ambition is a fresh and innovative approach to maximising opportunities for the wealth of talent that exists in Scotland, or that could be attracted by the opportunities here.

"This programme is a high priority for the Scottish Government, because by tapping into the experience of Scotland's most successful business people, as well as the great companies and institutions based here, we can unlock the tremendous potential of the next generation of entrepreneurs."

"The Royal Society of Edinburgh is delighted to provide support to this worthwhile programme to unlock the ambition of talented entrepreneurs. Since its launch in 1997, the RSE Enterprise Fellowship scheme has supported more than 200 graduates and researchers to develop and launch new businesses. We look forward to supporting and working with this new cohort to help turn their energy and motivation, and of course their new ideas, into a reality." Edward Cunningham CBE FRSE, Chairman, Royal Society of Edinburgh Enterprise Fellowship Programme.

The longer-term objective is to support Scotland in becoming a world-leading entrepreneurial nation and the programme will be delivered working alongside Scottish Government agencies, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish EDGE, Entrepreneurial Scotland and other partner organisations from the private sector, and third sector who will help support the successful candidates.

The RSE Unlocking Ambition Enterprise Fellowship Programme presents the ideal start-up changing opportunity by supporting promising ideas with the necessary skillsets to build them into successful companies. If this is you, then please apply by the deadline of 17:00 on Wednesday 2 May, 2018. Visit [www.rse.org.uk](http://www.rse.org.uk) for more information and to apply. If you have a question please contact [unlockingambition@therse.org.uk](mailto:unlockingambition@therse.org.uk)

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**For more information please contact:** Kirstie Armsworth, Marketing Manager, RSE Unlocking Ambition Enterprise Fellowship Programme at the Royal Society of Edinburgh on 0738 425 8764, [unlockingambition@therse.org.uk](mailto:unlockingambition@therse.org.uk). Anne Fraser, RSE Awards Manager, is available for comment.

#### **Notes for Editors:**

The [Royal Society of Edinburgh \(RSE\)](http://www.rse.org.uk) is a leading educational charity which operates on an independent and non-party-political basis to provide public benefit throughout Scotland. Established by Royal Charter in 1783 by several key proponents of the Scottish Enlightenment, the RSE now has over 1600 Fellows from a wide range of disciplines. The work of the RSE includes awarding research



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funding, leading on major inquiries, informing public policy and delivering events to inspire knowledge and learning.

The [RSE Enterprise Fellowship Scheme](#) was established in 1997 and provides support to researchers and innovators who have promising technology-based business ideas. The Fellowship programme helps them develop and launch new businesses, with companies formed across a wide range of fields—from tidal energy generation and safety systems for the oil and gas industry, to insect repellents and communication solutions for sufferers of Alzheimer's disease.

Sydney Chasin, Founder The Healthy Crop: Sydney is originally from just outside of Washington DC. After pursuing a career in classical ballet, studying finance in NYC and Edinburgh, Sydney Chasin founded The Healthy Crop LTD in Scotland after graduating from Edinburgh Napier University with a degree in Financial Services. The Healthy Crop is a food company that specialises in commercialising an underutilised grain called sorghum. Despite being underutilised in the west, sorghum is one of the most important grains in the world because of its drought resilient properties. Their first product is called lil'POP, a ready-to-eat popped sorghum snack, which looks like miniature popcorn. The brand is raising awareness of global water scarcity and showing that the lil' things make a massive impact. For more information: <https://thelilpops.com/>

The new programme aims to link high-potential individuals with established and successful entrepreneurs and business advisors to help them develop their business ideas and create a successful business. The entrepreneurial mentors include:

Professor Steve Beaumont OBE FRSE, Emeritus Vice-Principal, University of Glasgow;

Shonaig Macpherson CBE FRSE, Chairman of The Robertson Trust;

David Lane CBE FRSE, Founding Director, Edinburgh Centre for Robotics;

Dr Olga Kozlova, Director, Converge Challenge;

Dr Fiona Marston, CEO, Absynth Biologics Ltd;

Alister Minty, Chairman, Entrepreneur Business School;

Dr Margaret Anne Craig, Former Founder and CEO of Clyde Biosciences, Entrepreneurial Ambassador for the Scottish Government;

Professor Sara Carter FRSE, Associate Principal (Learning & Teaching) at the University of Strathclyde and Professor of Entrepreneurship at the Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship, Strathclyde Business School;

Andrew Muir, Investor, Midven Ltd;

Judy Wagner, Co-founder and Director, FWB Park Brown;

Calum Forsyth, Co-founder and CEO, Seed Haus;

Gordon Short, Director, Entrepreneur Business School Ltd;

Lucinda Bruce-Gardyne FRSE, Founder and Research and Product Development Director, Genius Foods Ltd;

Professor Andy Porter FRSE and Director, Chief Technical Officer, Elasmogen Ltd