

SCRATCH

STUDENT STARTUPS MAGAZINE

NO. 2



Exclusive Interview with Lyster Surf Craft

A WORLD OF COLOUR

Review with Paddleboat
Theatre Company

EXETER'S BOOMING COWORKING SPACES

Find out about the best spaces to
work and the communities you
will find there.

SWEET HORIZONS: RASPBERRY PI

Interview with Founder of
ModMyPi

CONTENTS

- 02 Editorial
- 03 Meet our EiRs
- 12 Lyster Surf Craft
- 15 Fintech Summary
- 17 Jamie Wild Sculpture
- 21 Palm Oil Crisis
- 23 PaddleBoat Theatre
- 26 ModMyPi
- 28 Exeter Co-working
- 30 Falmouth Hotbed
- 32 USA Mega Trip
- 34 Santander Support
- 35 Entrepreneur Society
- 36 ENACTUS Society
- 38 HATCH





editorial

EMILY DAVIES, STUDENT STARTUP MANAGER

Hello and welcome to the second edition of Scratch! We created this magazine so we could share news and updates from Student Startups HQ with you and also catch up with some of the amazing startups that have been founded by current students and graduates. We have tons of great events and workshops planned for the coming year as well as 1-2-1 support and access to seed Grant funding to help get your ideas off the ground

Opened in September 2018, The Deck at the Innovation Centre in Exeter has given us a home for all things 'Startup'. It is a space in which we are hosting workshops, guest speakers and hackathons; a space in where we can collaborate across colleges and disciplines and most of all a space to share with you - our entrepreneurial student and graduate community. The Deck has also become a home for Enactus Exeter whose projects aim to bring together business and charity; making an impact in communities both here in the city and beyond. We also now have a small but perfectly-formed startup space on the Penryn campus in Cornwall thanks to the efforts of the brilliant David Walker. And we are only just beginning - there is so much more that we are building and developing and so much more we want to share with you over the coming months.

Thank you for your ideas, your creativity, your talent and your energy - we appreciate it more than you know! If you would like to get involved with our Startup programme or have ideas of events and activities that we could host in the space, do drop us a line - we would love to hear from you.
ex.ac.uk/studentstartups ; facebook.com/studentstartupsUoE; studentsstartups@exeter.ac.uk



**MEET OUR
ENTREPRENEURS
IN RESIDENCE**



"Creativity
requires the
right
conditions -
not
necessarily
inspiration."

Chris Howard

FOUNDER OF THE RATTLE

Chris (left hand side) is the CEO & Co-Founder of The Rattle - a global community supported by a network of facilities that aim to help makers of art and culture become founders of their own companies.

In the past, Chris has been a prolific builder of projects and companies that aim to push boundaries in entrepreneurship and the creative industries. Having tried and failed at half a dozen 'traditional' careers - being a chef, a music producer, a

'professional cyclist' and even a spy - Chris cut his teeth in entrepreneurship at MIT in 2009. Chris' research focused on the effects of influence and motivation online, and how advocacy works within communities of creative people. Using this insight, Chris co-founded and led the celebrated startup - Libboo - by creating the world's first crowd-sourced science novel. This was followed by several high-profile start-ups, one agency, and a short tenure as the Head Teaching Fellow of

Harvard University. Alongside being the CEO of The Rattle, Chris also acts as the Fundraising Coach for MIT's Global Startup Workshops, an educator in entrepreneurship at UCL & Hult International Business School, and a regular Entrepreneur in Residence at leading startup accelerators such as Techstars and MassChallenge. We are thrilled to have him join us at the University of Exeter.

THE RATTLE.SPACE

Q: Can you tell us a bit more about your current project, The Rattle. Where did the idea come and how is it going so far?

A: The Rattle came from 15 years of personal pain and struggle at trying to be 'famous'! Obviously, I'm not famous. But my cofounder was :)

Bobby Bloomfield was the founder, producer, writer, and performer with cult-band "Does it Offend You, Yeah?" On top of that, he wrote and produced for artists like 50 Cent, Linkin Park, as well as making music for superstar games like Gran Turismo and The Oscars. Bobby and I have known each other since the late 90's when Bobby was the 'hot' producer in Reading (what a town!) and I was the emerging singer-songwriter in town.

While he was flourishing as a culture-maker, building fan-bases in the millions, I gave up on my quest to succeed in music because I was too ugly and instead fell in love with tech and startups. I panicked, completed a PhD at Reading University, and went on to build my first tech company at MIT in Boston in 2009 - Libboo.com. The product was drawn from my research in computational psychology, and my passion for helping creative folk succeed by using tech to understand someone's audience enough to identify mega-fans.

After 4 years building that company, raising tonnes of money, I exited to return to the UK for family reasons in 2013/2014. The company went through a partial acquisition shortly after I left, and I was incredibly lucky to walk away with a reasonable reputation of 'messing stuff up' (for the better) and a very strong opinion on the rights-and-wrongs of business.

Between returning to the UK and forming The Rattle with Bobby, I built a bit of a reputation in London as 'the investor who doesn't play by the rules'. I celebrate the underdog - the person who doesn't look the same, smell the same, or make 'yet another Uber for something totally pointless'. I look for

originality and a rebellious nature in what people make. To grow that, I established a startup accelerator called MassChallenge in London, became the Entrepreneur in Residence at Techstars, and represented MIT's entrepreneurial practice across the globe as a traveling 'mentor in residence'.

It was in 2015 when I remet Bobby after 10 years apart. I wanted to inject a 'musical spirit' into startups by bringing Bobby in as a mentor to MassChallenge. One crazy story after another led to Bobby and I bringing together our startup and culture-building experience into one 'thing' - The Rattle - on an obsessive mission - no, quest - to start a new cultural renaissance in music - to empower counter-culture and support the underdog by embracing the 'founder spirit' so prevalent at MIT.

How's it going? Flippin ace.

Q: Where/How do you find creative ideas and inspiration?

A: Creativity requires the right conditions - not necessarily inspiration. Solving problems often means you need to deeply understand the problem, immerse yourself in knowledge and ways of thinking until a 'lightbulb' fires and the solution presents itself. The struggle for most after that point is simply how to communicate the idea.

Being creative, however, is entirely different. Ironically, it involves not surrounding yourself with knowledge or necessarily understanding any 'problem'. It requires language to almost disappear and your mind to 'feel' and 'flow' using its own momentum. Creativity is the process of creating conditions to organise chaos - which means you need some chaos to organise!

So, if I am looking to solve a problem, I have a very straight forward technique - I ask as many questions as possible until I understand the problem fully, read about the topics online for

"MOST STARTUPS ARE BORING. THEY MAKE THE SAME THING, FOUNDERS DRESS THE SAME WAY, AND ENTREPRENEURS PRETEND TO TAKE ADVICE BUT INSTEAD ONLY WANT YOU TO PULL OUT A CHEQUE BOOK."

some time, then throw myself at a computer game until my subconscious goes "ping!" and turns on the light bulb. (Seriously, this is what I do...)

But, if I am looking to be creative, I need to wait for the right conditions - and I cannot force them to occur. I wait for chaos - for a moment where I have no control. Once I have that, I pick up my creative tool - and let my mind take me where it wants to go.

Q: What gets you out of bed in the morning?

A: My pregnant wife.

Q: What do you find most exciting about working with new startups?

A: Most startups are boring. They make the same thing, founders dress the same way, and entrepreneurs pretend to take advice but instead only want you to pull out a cheque book. It's a painful journey most of the time supporting startups. But.... every once in a while... I am given goosebumps from an entrepreneur with a real problem to solve, or comes to me after the creation of something truly original without a clue on what to do with it. Those moments overwhelmingly compensate for the 90% of meetings where I finish with the line "sorry, I'm not your investor".

It's when I find a truly original thinker or a magically creative person that I throw all I have in supporting them 'start up' and beat the odds in the early-days of their endeavour.

Q: What's the best or worst piece of advice you've ever been given?

A: This one's easy. The best advice I've ever had is "if you need money, ask for advice. If you need advice, ask for money". The worst advice is often the advice I give. It's so much easier to give advice than it is to take it. So, it's not so much a piece of advice I've had/given which is bad - it's failing to understand that advisers who often give advice are doing it from a position of detachment. The emotional rollercoaster of creating a startup is something internal and can only be felt at the time by the person building it. Taking advice from those who have never felt that makes, for me, their advice kinda pointless - no matter how rational it may sound.

Q: How might you be able to help our student and graduate startups?

No idea! I'm a founder - it's a drug. And for those others who are as addicted as I am, I hope to be another voice they can trust and help show that there is a positive end to all this.

DAVID SOLOMIDES

BUSINESS GROWTH COACH & EXPERIENCED NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

David Solomides is one of our Experts in Residence and specialises in business development, sales, go-to-market strategies, market segmentation and partnership alliances.

David has a dual role, supporting the businesses at Exeter Science Park Centre as well as the student entrepreneurs at the University of Exeter.

David had a successful career within domestic and international banking and running businesses in areas ranging from: tech to clothing, recruitment to nanotechnology, and software to education supplies. He is now primarily a Growth Accelerator Coach and mentor, bringing his experience, insight and valuable connection to both early-stage and established business' to innovate and facilitate significant growth.



"HAVE A VISION AND REMAIN FOCUSED, NO MATTER WHAT THE OBSTACLES AND YOU WILL SUCCEED!."

Q: Exeter and the surrounding area is growing and developing rapidly. How do you think Startups can benefit from being based in the Southwest?

A: There's a buzz and focus on entrepreneurship in the South West, with plenty of opportunities to network with likeminded startups and early stage businesses. There's access to university research from both Plymouth and Exeter and the Impact Lab is a rich source of talent and support. Enhanced funding and support opportunities also exist from the Heart of The South West Growth Service, Business West, FastTrack2Growth, the European Space Agency and Hinkley Point C Community Fund.

Q: What gets you out of bed in the morning?

A: By making a difference with the businesses with whom I work and encouraging and supporting students

to apply the theory they learn in the classroom. Feeding success!

Q: What do you find most exciting about working with new startups?

A: The energy and will to succeed. Also, the lack of fear or appreciation of risk and the drive to achieve goals and aspirations despite setbacks.

Q: What's the best or worst piece of advice you've ever been given?

A: Have a vision and remain focused, no matter what the obstacles and you will succeed!

Q: How might you be able to help our student and graduate startups?

A: Advice, guidance and introductions through my extensive network of contacts and preventing them from making some of the mistakes I have made!



"I believe anything is possible and by building small impactful changes, we can make significant progress."

ALEX LIGHT

FOUNDER OF THE ONE SITE

Alex Light is a serial entrepreneur and a builder of unrelenting positive impact. He has founded a number of startups, across a range of sectors, as well as working in sales, marketing, branding and Tech. Alex has a passion for building companies, projects, and events that make things better and has a natural ability to bring communities together, forge connections and shine light on champions. He is currently busy planning a one-day summit in Cornwall to bring together people and projects or world-changing impact.

Q: You lived and worked in London and Dubai for a long time and have recently moved to Cornwall. How are you finding it so far?

A: Cornwall represents a huge change for me. Before we moved to Cornwall, I spent eleven years in Dubai, so settling in was a challenge. Cornwall is a unique business environment, challenged by geography, infrastructure, competition, access to and volume of resources. However, that said, Cornwall is full of optimism and innovation. For the most part, I've found it

forward-facing. And perhaps the challenges it faces are the reasons it blossoms with bold businesses.

It has to be said that Cornwall is a stunning place to live, coupled with this, most people have moved here for a reason and are therefore bound together by their quest for a better standard of living. I'm a firm believer in choice, and therefore, more-days-than-not, I choose to have a great time in Cornwall.

Q: Where/How do you find creative ideas and inspiration?

A: I love the idea of a future that's bright, clean, full of inspiration, inclusive and packed with positivity. I believe anything is possible and by building small impactful changes, we can make significant progress.

I try to surround myself with those that are, in my opinion, ahead of me; Smarter, faster, more productive, more innovative. This means reading, listening, watching for fuel. And then doing.

Actually **doing** delivers actions and responses, builds progress and resilience. From this position I gather motivation to improve my work or create new work. Action first, inspiration follows.

In a practical sense, I usually have a simple formula; I run whilst listening to podcasts or audio books. When I get an idea, I either note it in my phone, or I'll action the thing that my "runners high" has convinced me is such a great idea. Better to regret the things you did do, than the things you wish you'd done.

Q: What's the best or worst piece of advice you've ever been given?

A: Best: "Take action first, inspiration will follow"
Worst: "Life's unfair"

Q: What gets you out of bed in the morning?

A: Usually insomnia. I don't sleep much, which is actually one of my 2019 systems I'm working on. Better sleep. However, my aim is to simply fulfill my potential. Get up. Drink water. Read. Train hard. Connect with those I love. Make clients more successful. Talk kindly to myself and others. Eat well. Fail. Learn. Plan for a better future.

Q: What do you find most exciting about working with new startups?

A: Market traction. Great ideas are great, but meaningless until they meet the market.

Q: How might you be able to help our student and graduate startups?

A: Practical positivity. Revenue generation. Broader market networks. Creative market acquisition. I've been many things in a few companies, whilst developing specific experience within business development and revenue generation. Therefore, I can speak to a number of issues, challenges and opportunities relating to growing a business and building teams. Consulting with start-ups is my business, and in most cases, teams need the chance to step back from a hurdle or potential opportunity, sound-off, gather some feedback and advice, perhaps some confidence...and press-on. I hope I can help the teams exceed their goals.

STUDENT STARTUP ALUMNI

THE STUDENT STARTUP TEAM SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF NEW BUSINESS' ACROSS A WIDE RANGE OF SECTORS. THIS INCLUDES TECH, DIGITAL, LIFESTYLE, TRAVEL, EDUCATION, ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH & CREATIVE ECONOMIES. WE'VE BEEN DOING IT FOR QUITE SOME TIME NOW.

WE THOUGHT IT WAS ABOUT TIME WE HAD A CATCH-UP WITH SOME OF OUR ALUMNI TO FIND OUT WHERE THEY ARE NOW...

FEATURING LYSTER SURT CRAFT, MODMYPI, FINTECH SUMMARY, PADDLEBOAT THEATRE, JAMIE WILD SCULPTURES.



LYSTER SURF CRAFT

RECIPIENT OF
THE GRADUATE
ENTREPRENEUR
MAINTENANCE
(GEM) FUND

You may remember that in our last edition, we told you about our ambitious crowdfunding campaign to raise £36,000 to create the Graduate Entrepreneur Maintenance (GE) Fund. The purpose of the Grant is to enable recent graduates to remain in the region for up to 12 months after graduation, receiving financial support as well as access to mentoring, technical facilities and workspace up at The Deck. We are delighted to have awarded our first GEM Grant to Duncan Lyster, founder of Lyster Surfcraft.



Q: Can you tell us a bit about your Startup?

A: I've been making wooden surfboards for over 4 years as a hobby, but it was only over the last two years that I've taken the idea of turning my craft into a business seriously. Lyster Surfcraft aims to reduce the environmental damage of the surfing industry. I make lightweight wooden surfboards; generally surfboards are made with a polyurethane (PU) foam core covered with a thin layer of fiberglass. Historically, wooden surfboards have been too heavy and labour intensive to compete with PU boards and this is what I've been tackling. My boards now weigh in at around 4kg, which is as light as a regular board, and I've improved the efficiency of the build process to a point where I can make a board on a comparable timescale to a PU board. I've been developing the designs for the last 18 months and I'm now at a point where I'm happy with what I'm producing and I'm ready to make my first sales.

Q: What motivated you to want to start your own company?

A: I've never been keen on the idea of leaving university and disappearing into the workforce of a large corporation. I want to have a real positive impact and starting a company seemed to be the best way of doing it. It's tough running a small pre-revenue startup and living on a shoestring, but starting your own company is incredibly exciting, and hopefully it'll lead to big things in the future!

Q: What are the advantages of basing yourself in the Southwest post-graduation?

A: There's no-where better to be for a surfing startup, I love the weather down here, and Totnes has a really supportive community for young entrepreneurs. I'm within striking distance of Exeter which makes it easy to keep up good relationships with the startup support network at the university.

Q: Has the GEM Fund helped you progress Lyster Surfcraft and if so, how?

A: The GEM Fund has been entirely instrumental in my progress over the last four months that I have received its support. It has allowed me to focus all my attention on my business, without this I'm confident I would be many months back in terms of my progress, and any setbacks would have had a much greater impact on my motivation and drive. Knowing that the support is there for me, and that people who really understand business believe I can succeed and that I deserve the support available has also been so important to me, pushing me harder to get things done.

Q: What do you see as being the biggest challenges in the next 6-12 months?

A: Now that I'm reaching the end of my main product development phase (of course you never really reach the end of that!) I think my next big challenge is accessing the market. I need to start taking orders soon, and getting the word out there requires some creative thinking. From then I'd love for my biggest challenge to be keeping up with demand but we'll see how that goes.

Q: Any advice for people out there who have an idea for a startup?

A: Get going as soon as you can, find the right person to ask the right questions to, and get a working prototype out there as early as you can. For me, the idea came first, and the business knowledge second. The Student Startup Team were hugely encouraging and I'd encourage any Exeter student with a business idea to get in touch with them, go to a couple of talks/classes and see what help is available. Starting a business has been tougher than I thought it would be, but it's so worthwhile.

Interview by Emily Davies

LYSTERSURFCRAFT.CO.UK

QUOTE OF
THE MONTH

**"YOU CAN'T STOP
THE WAVES, BUT
YOU CAN LEARN TO
SURF."**

- JOHN KABAT-ZINN



FINTECH SUMMARY

Alex Nechoroskovas could be described as a serial entrepreneur. His first endeavour, whilst studying at University of Exeter, started by trying to solve a simple student problem; the cost of printing lecture notes. Alex worked out that, overall, this was costing students around £200 per term, a significant amount of money for a student! So, together with a friend, he started to think of a solution.

They set about investigating who might want to advertise to students and the goals of the university. They found the answer in the need for universities to count good employment rates and employers wanting to promote themselves to students, so they started to sell advertising space to companies on lecture notes. The potential employer paying to have their logos printed onto lecture notes then covered the cost of printing, making lecture notes free to students. The notes would be waiting for students at the end of each lecture, hot off the press. It was a great idea but not a huge money maker, so with this experience under their belts, they moved on to bigger and better things.



FinTech Summary

It was two hours into 2012 when Alex found the inspiration to start his second business. An unfortunate event found Alex on the floor with a broken phone. He had slipped and fallen whilst celebrating New Year's Eve in Cardiff, no broken bones but his phone was in pieces. Once back home in Exeter he trundled off to the repair shop where he was outraged to find that this little accident would cost him £140! At the time Alex was working in Subway to pay his rent, so he simply could not afford this expense. He decided to do some research. Growing up he had always watched his dad fixing things and this gave him the confidence to at least try to fix it himself. He ordered some parts from China and found some instructions online, along with some tools from the jeweler shop and set to work. He admits that this was the most nerve racking few hours of his life, 'you know when you turn your iPhone on, there is a black screen for a second, that moment was the longest second of my life', he recalls. It was a success but he swore never to do it again.

Soon after this vow, he found himself helping out friends by fixing their phones. By his third year at university he had launched his new business 'iMendit' which became a popular, on campus, iPhone repair shop.

Just as he thought he could forget his experience at Subway all together, he found it conversely provided the inspiration to grow his business. He looked at the business model of Subway and sought to mirror the way Subway sets up franchises. He trained people to mend the phones, run franchises of iMendit and they bought the parts from him. 'If you can cook pasta you can mend an iPhone', he says, 'it's just following steps in an sequential order and then following them back again in the same order'.

After graduating he decided to close iMendit and focus on gaining some experience on a graduate placement. Alex worked for Ernst and Young Accountants in Exeter which he enjoyed but after two years he longed to be part of the startup world again. 'I started to think, I like all this technology stuff and now I have all this finance knowledge, what can I do with it?' he says.

The business that emerged from this, and Alex's current business, was Fintech Summary which started out as a blog. Alex started writing summaries on his blog about Fintech which, in turn, motivated him to keep up to date with the industry and read regularly. From this he developed a great reputation and has now developed Fintech Summary into a recognisable brand. He is commissioned to do research within Fintech to help tackle industry problems.

Alex has always been one for lifting business models from companies and reapplying them to his own. He has recently been inspired by Netflix's approach to content management, 'if you look at the model you'll see that Netflix will never show the World Cup or presidential elections or anything that will have no value in the immediate future', he says, 'They don't take things that have shelf life, what they do is 'evergreen content' which means it still holds value in 10 years, such as the TV show Friends'. Alex is now using this strategy within Fintech Summary and starting to look at topics more broadly so that they will be relevant in years to come, therefore, retaining value.

For Alex, to be able to see the direct changes and impacts that Fintech Summary has on the way banks operate is the reward. Within his business Alex feels that having results that are visible and tangible is the most important thing.

Words: Katie Hawker



JAMES WILD SCULPTURES





"IF YOU VALUE WHAT YOU DO THEN YOU CAN CONVINCe PEOPLE OF ITS WORTH".

Before arriving at the University of Exeter, James Wild had made around 10 sculptures and whilst studying he continued making more to earn extra spending money. He has now made over 80 commissions and is starting to work with bronze, which is another huge market to explore.

By his third year at university he gained an interest in startup culture and was inspired to set up his own small business. He sold espadrilles under the business name 'Scrufwear'. After running this for a while it struck him to start putting a business lens on his sculpture, instead of treating it like a hobby. He wanted to take his art practice to the next level and through setting up Scrufwear, he had learnt the skills to enable him to do this. He sought the support and funding he needed to do this from Student Startups at the Innovation Centre.

James' sculptures are easily recognisable by their unique style. He uses scrap metal which would otherwise rot in bins and melds them together to form elegant creatures. The pieces of metal he uses are so small that they hold no value on their own so he reclaims these to create stunning animals. These animals have unique personalities and also carry messages about caring for our planet. Conservation is, therefore, both the concept and process throughout the work.

James collects scraps from farmyards, blacksmiths, metal fabricators and scrap heaps and even on the street. He says 'if I see an old bike chain or scaffolding bracket I'll pick it up and that will find





important to James that he feels free to choose the projects he wants to focus on, in order to develop his art practice, rather than being tied to a commercial order list. He always strives to carefully select subjects so that he can experiment and test new ideas. 'I don't want to get stuck in one area, I want to keep on innovating and evolving', he says.

James has had to become more of a perfectionist over the years, 'I feel every piece I do gets better and better and if it doesn't then there is something going wrong' He states. 'You have to push yourself to get better, even if it is uncomfortable'.

its way into a sculpture at some point'.

From a distance the sculptures appear to be traditional and figurative but close-up they are much more abstract and contemporary.

He has recently made an 8ft. long tortoise for a commission in Siena, Italy. Along with some monkeys for a hotel in Barbados and a number of roe deer, wolves, hares, and many more, for private commissions up and down the UK.

James has just completed a piece for the Eden Project, where he has made a life-size sculpture of an orangutan. The orangutan is a permanent exhibition in the Rainforest Biome to raise awareness of the habitat loss caused through unsustainable palm oil farming. The Eden Project are currently showcasing the underlying problems created by the palm oil industry and solutions to protecting forests. They hope to highlight the disastrous effects in order to educate the public on products that contain palm oil and what they can do to support the survival of our closest living relative.

Although James' sculpture has certainly grown into a business, it still remains very much a paradox, that many artists can relate to. He admits that he doesn't like to put too much pressure on his sculpture and to think of it as a business. It is

"DON'T BE AFRAID TO TAKE A FEW STEPS BACK IN ORDER TO TAKE A STEP FORWARD".



JAMESWILDSCULPTURES.CO.UK

For James, it's a fine balance, the sculptures need to be more than just the commissioner's vision. He needs to be able to make the concept his own but ensure that the sculpture is still representative of the clients ideas. They go on a journey together to develop something unique and special. 'People like to know the artist, to see if they share the same views and values', he says, 'so developing a two-way relationship is very important and understanding is also really important'.

James has learnt to choose work carefully and through trial and error, has learnt to price himself right. 'You have got to put your own mark on it and value what you do', he says, 'if you value what you do then you can convince people that it's worth what they are paying for it'.

Creating the sculptures can be gruelling, demanding long hours and James admits that he can, sometimes, start to resent the sculptures. He says 'you've just got to be able to motivate yourself and know that what you are doing is going to give you that rewarding feeling at the end of it'. When the sculptures are installed he describes a euphoric feeling; 'like having a really nasty thing on your 'to do' list and you've ticked it off, it just feels brilliant', he says. James loves to see the impact that his work has on the client when it's installed and this becomes his reward.

For James, inspiration comes from both the past and the present, from classical architecture to social media, 'that is the joy of being creative, you can get inspiration from anything', he says.

James' advice to future creative entrepreneurs is 'to commit and actually believe in yourself even when things look like they are not going your way. Don't be afraid to take a few steps back in order to take a step forward'.

Words: Katie Hawker
Images: Jamie Wild



PALM OIL

THE PROBLEM

Palm oil is the most widely consumed oil in the world – it's in everything from chocolate to pesticides. The world consumed 62 million tonnes in 2015. And by 2050, scientists reckon we'll have tripled our current use. As demand for palm oil increases, so does the

pressure for growers to produce more, especially in the humid tropics, where the yield is highest. This has led to destruction of the tropical rainforest to make room for oil palms – and the surrounding wildlife and world's climate are suffering.

Indonesia produces the highest amount of palm oil, followed by Malaysia and Nigeria. Nearly half of all oil palm cultivation is in the hands of smallholders – ordinary people trying to better themselves and look after their families.

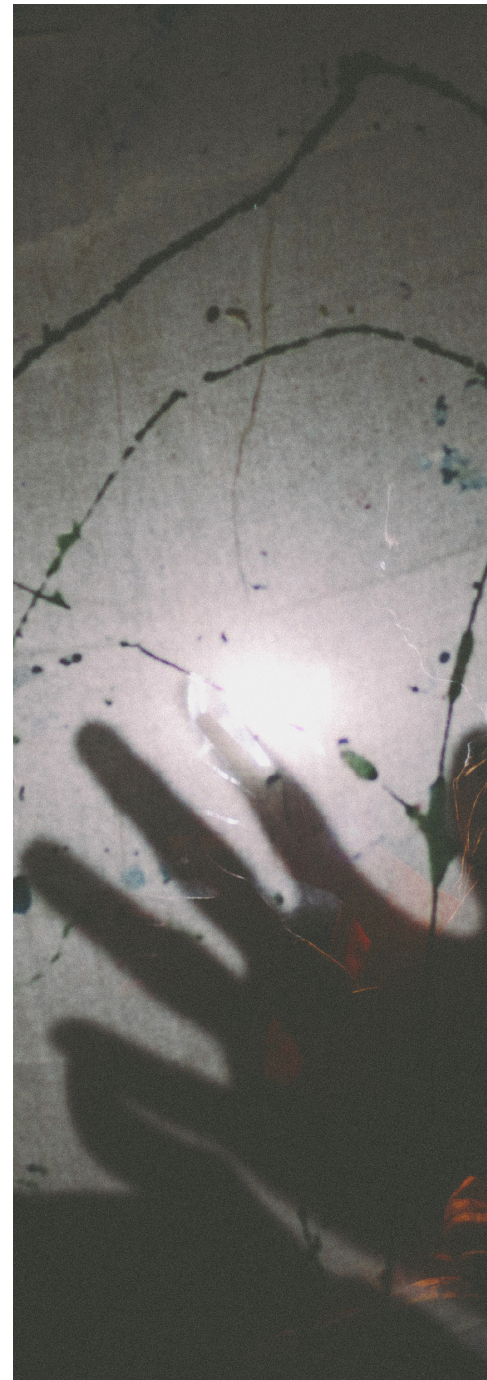


WHAT TO DO?

- Avoid products containing palm oil, sometimes disguised as 'vegetable oil'.
- Look for alternative oils, explicitly labelled as for example sunflower oil or rapeseed oil.
- If you can't find an alternative product without palm oil, look for the RSPO label indicating that the palm oil is sustainably sourced.
- Write to manufacturers and demand change. Ask questions about palm oil. As consumers we do have power to affect change.
- Find out more at the new Palm Oil exhibit in the Rainforest Biome.
<https://www.edenproject.com/>

PADDLEBOAT THEATRE COMPANY

A WORLD OF COLOUR





PaddleBoat Theatre Company believe that theatre is a space where imagination is brought to life.

Graduates of University of Exeter, PaddleBoat Theatre deliver high-quality productions and workshops for children and families across the South-West. PaddleBoat's creative team is made up of 5 members: Katy Dash, Hattie Brown, Michael Smith, Stuart Cottrell, Rachel Norris. All believe that theatre should engage with the young minds of tomorrow – as well as reminding every adult that they too can rediscover their own imaginations. PaddleBoat invites audiences into a space where performers and audience members alike embark on journeys, create adventures and get lost in magical worlds together.

PaddleBoat work closely with the Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education and special

schools in Devon to enhance the visual storytelling and sensory elements to incorporate sign-supported dialogue into an enriched performance.

I was lucky enough to be invited into the audience of a recent production by PaddleBoat Theatre and Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education. 'A World of Colour' was delightful, emotive and very messy! The show told the personal stories of the actors, revealing what it is like to be a deaf teenager in a hearing world. The show displayed the student's opinions and aspirations, using loud colours and expressive marks on a large canvas on the floor, which made up the stage. They shared their thoughts of the hearing world, the isolation they felt and their personal journeys towards empowerment and self-love. They expressed their dreams and views on inclusivity, how they wished to have a voice in society like every teenager.



It was ultimately an extremely powerful performance and I was brimming with pride for these teenagers even though we had never met.

Every teenager needs to be allowed to form their identity through experimentation and expression. It is a time of transition, change and new experiences. Paddleboat are providing a platform for these students to speak out, which is evidently, extremely valuable. They crave this space, they claim this space and with their painterly storytelling their marks tag this space. We see them and we hear them.

The students of the Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education have found new and real talents in acting, they have fallen in love with the stage and many want to pursue acting as a career. The work of PaddleBoat is really enabling them to tell their stories and pursue their dreams. It was such a privilege to be in the room with these young talented people and such fun to watch everyone get covered head to toe in colourful paint.

It was a beautifully constructed piece with the actors moving seamlessly through scenes and each taking it in turn to tell their tale, concluding in a crescendo of paint and a collaboratively produced Jackson Pollock-esque artwork. It was at the same time evocative, thoughtful and fun. It had a positive and transformative effect on the audience and I left feeling like I had shared in some magic.

Words: Katie Hawker.

Images: Peter Norris.

Website: www.paddleboattheatre.co.uk



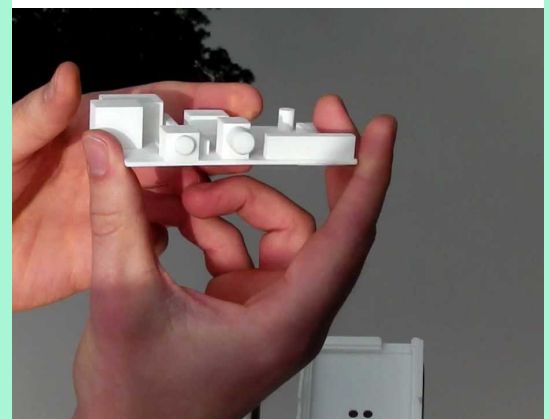
JACOB MARSH

FOUNDER OF MODMYPi

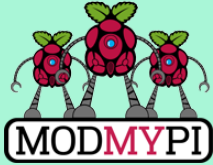
By Katie Hawker

Jacob Marsh is the founder of ModMyPi who design cases and modifications for the Raspberry Pi. For those of you who may be confused, the types of Raspberry Pi's we are referring to are not edible! In fact, a Raspberry Pi is hard to define as it can be many things. It is, essentially, a micro controller for any electrical system. It can be used as a mobile phone or can be connected to temperature sensors or connected to a motors or built in into a robot. The possibilities are endless, which makes it a popular product.

Before these microcomputers, schools in particular found the financial barriers of delivering education in computing very restrictive. The Raspberry Pi is both affordable and flexible and can be used together with old equipment allowing schools to be able to provide education in computer programming and more.



“ MY MAIN FOCUS NOW IS TRYING TO STAY AHEAD ”



Jacob studied Engineering at University of Exeter and part of his course involved 3D design and modelling. Jacob started designing cases for the Raspberry Pi much like an iPhone case. His final year was coming to an end, his dissertation was finished and he had free time on his hands. Feeling a bit lost and confused about the future he decided to do a test, he would put his Raspberry Pi cases on the market, if they sold then he would spend the summer making more and if they didn't he would apply for a graduate job.

Something astounding happened, within the first hour hundreds of people had ordered and by the end of the first week he had over 1000 pre-orders! He had not prepared for this at all. Panic stricken, Jacob urgently sought help from Student Startup Support at the Innovation Centre, who helped him structure his business and connect him with essential 3D design prototyping services.

From this dramatic landslide to a fully fledged business, ModMyPi has been running now for six years. The market has evolved a lot in that time, so the designs have to be a lot more intricate. 'My main focus now is trying to stay ahead', says Jacob, 'if people are copying you then that's fine but they want to be copying last year's design whilst you work on future ones'.

When starting out, any entrepreneur would be lost without a mentor, they offer crucial advice when entrepreneurs need it the most and are instrumental to their success. For Jacob, this was Joe Pearce. Joe guided him through the fundamentals of setting up a business, offered him necessary resources, such as a hot desk and introduced him to a network of start-ups and SMEs. Jacob is also indebted to his friends and family for their support. Jacob's best friend set up the website and manages it today and Jacob's mum works as the Sales Manager, creating a family focused community within the business.

'I'm so grateful now to Student Startup support because I literally came to them and was like, look I've sold thousands of these things and still don't have a supplier, I don't know how to set up a business, can you help?' says Jacob.

Jacob admits that he was very lucky when he started out as he had nothing to lose 'I didn't have to give up a full time job to do this, I didn't have a job at the time so it was very easy for me to pour all my effort and energy into it'. Even so, he still encourages others to go for it! He says, 'If you have the idea and the drive just go and do it, but find a good accountant!'.

EXETER'S BOOMING CO- WORKING SPACES

TRIED, TESTED AND REVIEWED
BY SILVIA PALOSCHI

“♪ Money’s too tight to mention ♪” Though perhaps not one of my favourite retro 80s track references, never have I found a song title to be more appropriately describing that stomach-clench feeling you experience when, as a start-up founder or solopreneur, you first set foot out to try and find a space to work from, and realise how it could literally leave you “Simply in the Red”. Like a well-aimed punch, the realisation of how much cold hard cash and financial commitment you’re immediately being asked for violently hits you, no matter the amount of seed and venture capital you’ve raised, or if you’re already making a healthy turnover.

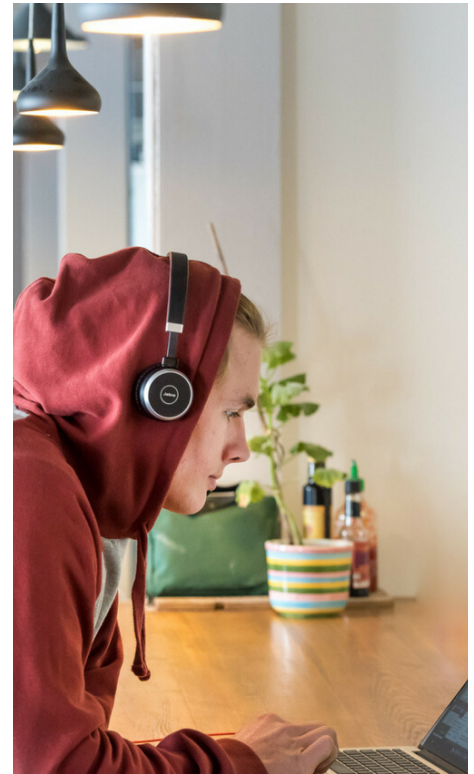
Thankfully, as we approach the last chapter of the 2K’s second decade, not only can we comfortably leave Simply Red’s tune back where it belongs, but we can also regain some sense of excitement at the commonly acknowledged fact that the 4IR’s new ways of working have also brought about smarter and more affordable access to working spaces, other than our own bedrooms.

Incubators, Accelerators, Decelerators have blossomed all over the country fostering a start-up culture like never before, and, with their advent, “Co-Working spaces” seem to have finally won a reputation in their own standing as synonymous for entrepreneurial bliss...with Exeter, our very fast-growing tech-digitally minded city, happily ‘succumbing’ to their charms.

So off I ventured, into our cityscapes, to try and find out more about the many secrets to success that these popular new spaces hold, and managed to get myself an invitation to visit the very sought after Generator’s Quay House, on a cold winter’s day.

Kindly fobbed in by one of the residents, as I was stood gazing at its historic building front door, I swiftly climbed up the Escher-looking industrial staircase to be greeted by Neil Finnie, founder and owner, with an offer of cake, a hot drink and a seat at the kitchen high table, where some of the residents were sharing their lunch. Warmly looked after and sipping the winter chills away out of ‘my new mug’, I couldn’t help but immediately feel part of the community around me and witness, first hand, some of the co-working space magic unravel.

Cross-Functional-Collaboration, was first to reveal at our table when Mike Killen, founder of Sell Your Service, happily offered some unsolicited free advice to Tom McLaughlin, a children’s book illustrator, on how changing his status from self-employed to a Limited Company might reduce his legal liabilities. Not long after, Dawn Taylor, web-designer at Kodel, happily chimed in that breaks ‘here’ are just more fun, as freelancers and start-up owners won’t complain about their bosses, and everybody seems much happier with what they are doing. It was then Tom’s turn to candidly confess that, when technological advancements finally turned his entire home office into an easy-to-carry-around iPad 3,



affordable hot-desking at the Generator simply made him a better dad, by allowing him to put to rest mixing work with family - let alone the great networking, stimulation and skill sharing that rubbing shoulders with other hot-desking creatives also brought to his day!

For Mike, the Waterside Hub can sometimes be noisy and hard to concentrate from. However, he was quick to admit it was still a small trade off compared to what it had to offer his world-wide virtually operating business: from making it look legitimate, to access to conference rooms and Jelly* meet-ups, a vast professional co-working and knowledge sharing network, whose events are regularly hosted at the Generator. In addition, he gets to work side-by-side his inseparable Coco, one of the beautifully well-behaved residents' dogs, who provide owners, and co-

workers alike, with soothing pet-therapy, in exchange for walks along the Exeter canal. And what more could an entrepreneur and their dog want!

As my afternoon experience, surrounded by these incredible people, at the Generator's Quay Hub was sadly coming to a close, it just became clearer that what I had read in numerous reviews and articles was now definitely resonating true. Co-working spaces, unlike offices, are places where diluted hierarchies make people feel more engaged and motivated in their work. They are places where the flourishing of organic friendships between like-minded people turns into synergic collaborations. They are places where regular board game nights and Friday breakfasts allow to bid farewell to "loneliness and isolation", two of the biggest

threats to entrepreneurs' mental health and thriving ambitions. So if you're wondering whether I would recommend you, our readers, to try and work from one...well, after this experience, I guess you know exactly what I would be saying! So go and check out the Generator two Houses or the equally exciting Exeter City Space, run by Annabel Morgan, up in the city centre and home to Exeter City Futures. And if you like the idea of bringing your surfboard with you, and work closer to the sea waves, take a look at The Propeller in Exmouth. The Nook up in Collumpton, instead, is for those of you who are in love with the very heart of Devon and absolutely hate the Exe Bridges traffic jams. As you can see there's a co-working space for everyone!

*Jelly is an informal co-working event where freelancers, home workers and small/micro business owners bring their laptop or other work, chat and collaborate with other small business owners.

<http://generatorhub.co.uk/>

FALMOUTH AND PENRYN: A HOTBED FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY

By David Walker

As an entrepreneur based in Cornwall and former student of the University of Exeter's Penryn Campus I have seen firsthand how the local area can engage with and benefit small businesses and startups. If you have an idea and are looking to explore it, the first call would be to the Student Startup team on campus. However then what, where do you work on it? Where do you go to be inspired and develop your plans? Cornwall is the ideal place to think and for ideas to be nourished and grow. Wandering down the High Street in Falmouth you will undoubtedly stumble across freelancers and startups in the numerous independent cafés. Beyond the immediately visible there are also a number of small offices and studios housing everything from small businesses through to larger design agencies with long lists of international clients, should you need expert advice or to form strategic partnerships.

We started the first iteration of Paddle Logger, bootstrapping from

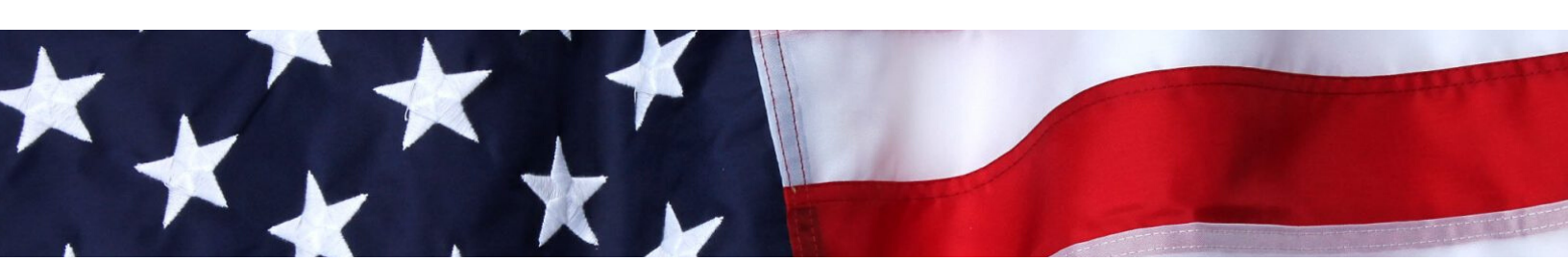




the aforementioned cafés and coffee shops. Benefitting from the supportive culture and serendipitous encounters this community fosters. As the business grew to where we are today, many of those earlier encounters have turned into vital partnerships. We have always been able to find extremely talented local people with impressive portfolios of work. Also going as far to say, that due to the larger number of people in Cornwall running their own businesses, or having a 'side-gig', many people know and understand the journeys that you are on as an entrepreneur. How do you make the most of it?

You have to go and engage, getting off campus and enjoying what Falmouth and Penryn has to offer. You, and your business idea will benefit from switching off and immersing yourself in these spaces and the wider local area. As it develops you will find that opportunities are perhaps not as few and far between as you may have thought. There are a large number of programmes and companies that offer financial, grow on

and scale up support. The best thing is, all this talent and opportunity isn't as oversubscribed as it might be in an urban centre. Secondly the lifestyle that people move to the SouthWest for is reflected in the way they conduct business. I'll take a relaxed meeting in a coastal café over a tower block conference room everyday. I'll even put money on being able to achieve more! So where are the best places to go? You will always find Paddle Logger in one of a few places, Origin Coffee in Penryn has one of the best coffee house working environments you will find. That and the welcoming staff seem to have a knack of pointing out other useful or cool people that are worth speaking to!! In Falmouth, you absolutely cannot go wrong with the Old High Street, whether it is Beacon coffee at the bottom of the hill or the Ope at the top, or even Stone's bakery half way up!! They all have a different vibe depending on your mood, but all will give you a great cup of startup juice (coffee) and a tasty bite to eat! Head to the Ope for some really colourful and vibrant food!



USA MEGA TRIP

JOE PEARCE AND ADAM LUSBY VISITED THE TOP UNIVERSITY INCUBATOR SPACES IN THE US AND THIS IS WHAT THEY LEARNT.

1. Entrepreneurship Education is not about startups

The Martin Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship is very clear, as is the Graduate School of Education at the Knight Business School in Stanford - the role of entrepreneurship education is not to create new start ups, it is to produce graduates who understand the challenges faced by entrepreneurs and are able to apply that thinking into their chosen career. That is not to say that these Unis are not great producers of startups, but that venture creation activity happens in the start up support programmes, the accelerators and the incubators.

2. Everyone needs to speak the same language

Bill Aulet leads the MIT Martin9 Trust Centre for Entrepreneurship and is author of *Disciplined Entrepreneurship*, which provides the institution wide approach to how to go about developing Innovation Driven Enterprises. There are distributed centres producing spin-outs and startups across MIT, but by adopting a broadly similar approach and language to assess the commercial potential of research means that students from all disciplines are able to easily communicate. In Stanford,

d.school provides something of a cultural tone for the University, drawing students from all disciplines to develop a design-centred view that can be translated into their studies as well as into new ventures.

3. You need an ecosystem to grow a business, and proximity is important

Great startups tend to be the result of a wide range of influences. Smart founders take advice, support and direction from many sources and so the resulting businesses can rarely, if ever, be claimed as the output of a single accelerator or support programme.

However, you can clearly see in both Boston and the Valley area, how a city or a region can be responsible for the businesses that grow there. In Boston, a spin may start at one of the many Uni's using students and graduates from the others to grow the initial product. From there they might enter the DeltaV accelerator, moving then to MassChallenge before basing themselves at Greentown Labs to continue product development. All the time they are building their network and connections, drawing on the expertise of the mentors, the lawyers, accountants, marketeers and investors. The businesses which emerge are a result of the entire City's ecosystem and their success impacts on the whole environment. It is the same in San Francisco but with programmes such as Startup Garage,

Y Combinator, RocketSpace combining to grow the likes of AirBNB, Spotify and Uber

4. Take an anti-disciplinary approach

Good startups are led by founder teams, and good teams have a broad range of skills and approaches. It is therefore vital that entrepreneurship education and startup support is not delivered in silos of particular academic discipline or mindset. d.school originally only delivered extra-curricular modules delivered by lecturers from all colleges who had to do their work at d.school over and above their scheduled teaching. This meant that you drew students and lecturers from all parts of the University who really wanted to be there. Today lecturers still pitch the modules they are going to deliver to a room full of students, who can then sign up for those they think sound the best. This anti-disciplinary approach is also seen at MIT's Media Lab, where students and researchers from all disciplines combine their knowledge and expertise to address global problems.



5. Space is vital

If the aim of entrepreneurship education and venture creation support is to bring people from all disciplines and backgrounds together, to develop a connected community and a common language, and to allow all those interested in exploring startups to share knowledge, then it is vital that you dedicate space in which it can happen. The MIT Media Lab takes this to the limit, with a multi-million dollar building offering state of the art facilities. At Stanford, d.school occupies a more stripped back space, using loads of white boards that teams can put up and take down to provide “information continuity” – ensuring that they don’t need to wipe off what they had written and can recreate the same space when they return, while also allowing other teams to use it.

It was amazing to visit 2 recognised world-leaders in entrepreneurship education and their surrounding ecosystems and to meet with the teachers, students and researchers in the spaces. It provided a real insight into what is at the heart of the environments and the cultures which enables their success. Although Exeter may not have the financial clout of either MIT or Stanford, we are moving in the right direction and developing the right things. The development of The Deck alongside the startup support programme offers a fantastic environment in which more startups and grow The foundation of the Centre for Entrepreneurship as well as multiple Entrepreneurship and Innovation focused courses in colleges all across the University provide students every opportunity to develop their skills and put them to the test on their own ideas.

There is more to be done – but watch this space!



SANTANDER

What kind of support can Santander offer Student and Graduate startups?

Interview with Remy Foucher

Q: Can you tell us more about your role as Universities Relationship Manager with Santander. What is your favourite part of the job?

A: Through our Universities programme we are committed to providing impactful, diverse and inclusive support to higher education, driving a legacy of sustainability through a focus on education, entrepreneurship and employability. All students deserve the opportunity to succeed. As such, Santander Universities has spent the past decade creating tailored support across the UK by embracing our purpose of helping people and businesses prosper.

Santander Universities is part of the flagship CSR programme for Santander in the UK and my role is to bring to bear all the skills, opportunities and connections of Santander for the benefit of the Universities within the communities we serve. This active collaboration creates opportunities for students, academics and businesses to truly prosper and for Santander to have a meaningful impact across critical aspects of society through investment in education. Our unique partnership of over 1,200 universities situated in more than 20 countries offers a unique opportunity for Internationalisation, transfer of knowledge and delivers life changing experiences through a range of Scholarships, grants and awards. The best part of my role is meeting people and having the opportunity to discover and support their projects. I am extremely lucky to do a job where I can positively influence my communities and help provide life changing opportunities.

Q: Can you tell us a bit more about the annual Santander Entrepreneurship Awards. What kind of talent do you hope to discover through this competition? How can successful applicants benefit from taking part in this event?

A: Since 2011, Santander has held an annual business pitching competition called the Santander Universities Entrepreneurship Awards (SUEA). We have a long term commitment to supporting higher education and we are proud to take an active role in fostering entrepreneurship among university students.

The SUEA awards are aimed at giving a financial boost to student and graduate business ventures in their early stages. Participants can win a range of prizes including seed funding,

mentoring and start-up support. Most importantly, they get access to our network of partners who will help them accelerate their growth and facilitate the development of their business.

In recent years, we supported Exeter University startups such as Jubel & Sancho's Dress who did extremely well in the competition. We are looking for the most forward thinking students and graduates who will become the nation's next great business success story, those with the drive and determination to see their idea turn into successful businesses.

Q: What kind of support can you and your colleagues at Santander offer to Student or recent graduate start-ups? (eg. Business bank accounts, access to networks, mentoring?)

A: Santander Universities has spent the past decade creating tailored support across the UK. We have a holistic approach focused on creating ideas and we also provide the skills to scale up. We can provide localised and expert knowledge, tailored around specific business sectors. Supporting in the way that works for individuals – whether that be face to face, on the phone or at the local Business Centre. We provide timely solutions to meet the current and future needs of their business, and support their journey to help their business prosper.

Q: How can students at the University of Exeter connect with Santander?

A: Depending on what they are interested in (Internships, Scholarships, student start-ups...) students can connect with Santander Universities via the main Exeter university web pages or simply by getting in touch with me in one of my drop in sessions or via email.

Q: Any hot new startups that we should keep a look out for over the coming year?

A: Yes, Chip[s] Board who were one of the two winners of the Santander Universities Entrepreneurship Awards 2018 competition. The journey of Chip[s] Board began during the studies and freelance work of co-founders Rowan Minkley and Robert Nicoll. Working across a range of design and fabrication projects, the founders were both overwhelmed by the lack of value that materials were given and sheer disposability they held after such short lifespans.

Chip[s] Board, uses industrial potato waste to produce a sheet material with similar properties to MDF, suitable for flat pack furniture and other interior applications, but with less harm to the environment. The product is an eco-friendly wood substitute, biodegradable post-use and, unlike MDF, doesn't contain toxic resins or chemicals. Chip[s] Board's use of waste by-products in biodegradable commodities epitomises a circular economy, as the end-of-life furniture can be sent to composting facilities to help grow new potato crops.

EXETER ENTREPRENEURS SOCIETY

The Exeter Entrepreneurs Society believes every student has the capacity to develop skills and experience to tackle real world problems. This is why our mission is to empower our members and promote disruptive innovation thought processes to become world leaders, whilst acquiring a complete practical skill set driving performance.

To do so, the society runs weekly workshops in coding, crypto-investment and startup growth but also some larger events including Dragons Den-style pitching competition and two hackathons, one of them focusing on finding solution to alleviate climate change.

Founded in 2009, our members have gone on to develop innovative venture-funded companies, secure investment on Dragons' Den and win multiple world-renowned business and technology competitions abroad.



ENACTUS

Enactus Exeter is part of a wider, global network of students using entrepreneurial action to make a difference in people's lives. At Enactus, we bridge the gap between business and charity by developing sustainable projects, aimed at solving issues like fuel poverty, sanitation, homelessness and much more.

We currently have 8 projects running, each tackling a different issue, each at a different stage in their development but all with the aim to improve the lives of those in the local and international sphere. From creating accessible and greener-alternative fuel in Kenya, to growing gourmet mushrooms by upcycling coffee grounds in Marsh Barton, to helping those at risk of homelessness in Exeter, all of our members work incredibly hard to make the most positive impact they can.

Our Fast Stream programme teaches new members the basics of how to create a social enterprise, from the very first steps of assessing a problem, to coming up with a solution, to financing its implementation. This year, members have chosen to focus on complex problems like food poverty, clothing waste and mental health. In 2019, these new ideas will be developed into social enterprises and run as individual projects.

We're always looking for driven people who want to help make the world a little bit better. If you'd like to find out more please contact us through our student guild: <https://www.exeterguild.org/societies/Enactus/>
Or find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/exterenactus>



STUDENT STARTUPS

ex.ac.uk/studentstartups

Be part of the next generation of innovators and makers!



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HATCH

Startup Design Challenge

11 - 13 October 2019



<https://hatchexeter2019.eventbrite.co.uk>
Presented by Student Startups + Corkscrew






Hatch is a 2 ½ day startup design challenge, co-designed and co-delivered by Corkscrew and the Student Startup Team. Beginning with Friday night team formation and ideation and continuing through rigorous market validation, business plan development and rapid prototyping,

Hatch culminates in Sunday night presentations to a guest panel. Approaching the challenge from a problem-first perspective, participants have opportunity to collaborate with people outside their usual networks, build creative confidence, develop new skills and hatch new startups.

Grow a company in a weekend with 3DS Southampton

18th - 20th October 2019

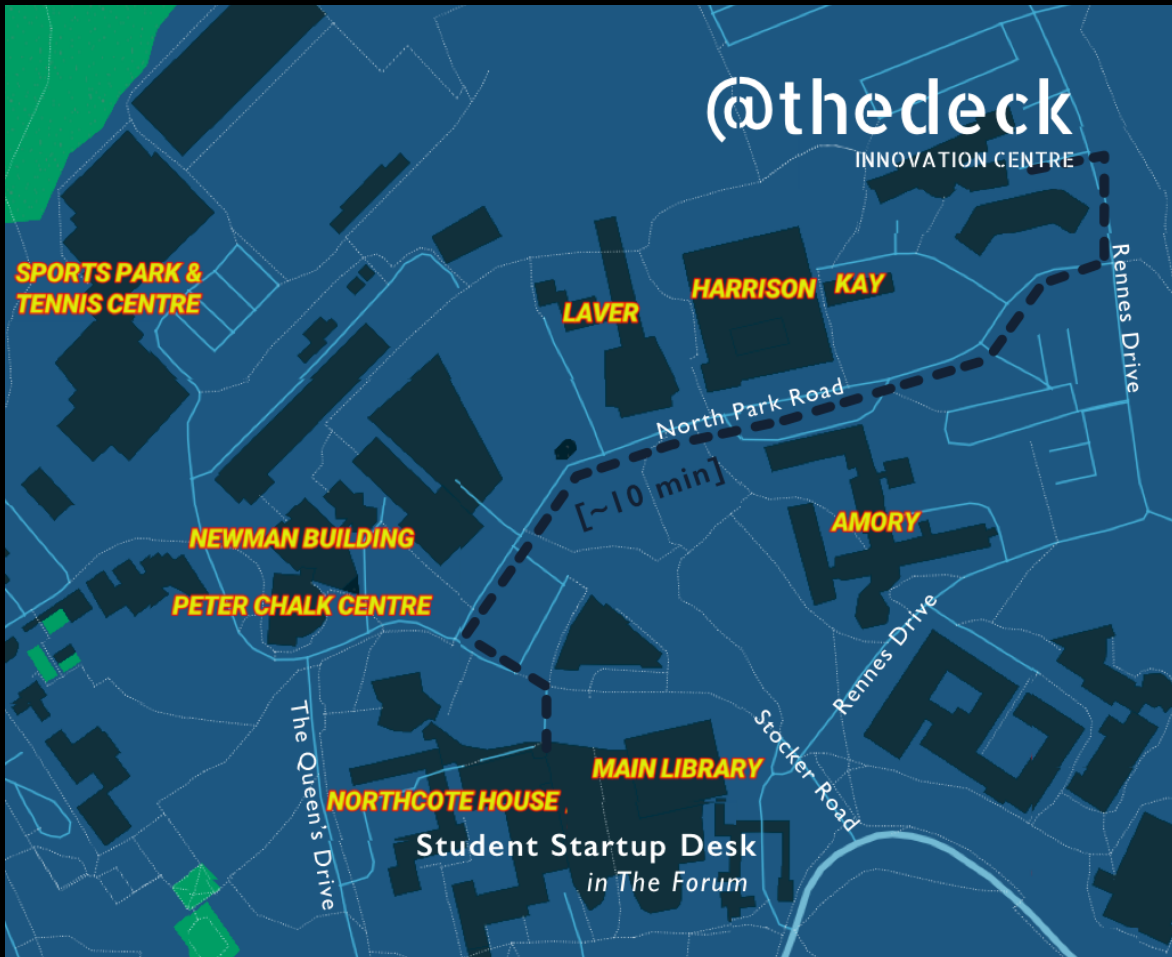
-  Intensive entrepreneurship programme
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