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Across the University of Nottingham, there is vital research, teaching and practice being undertaken to help improve lives and shape the future. This is crucial to ensure the institution’s ongoing impact in the city, the UK, and globally.

The Haydn Green Institute (HGI) is among Europe’s leading centres for enterprise education and the focus for entrepreneurial skills development at the University. The work done within the Institute has created a platform for voices often overlooked, working with people across the board from Instagram influencers to women in STEM, BAME tech founders to refugee entrepreneurs.

I am struck by the generosity of individuals and companies who are willing to give their time and expertise to help unlock the potential of our students. HGI has a network of over 50 Entrepreneurs in Residence – experienced business leaders who want to give something back – whether that’s through mentoring, chairing round table discussions, or giving a guest lecture. The Ingenuity19 programme has benefitted from new sponsors, Experian and the Smallwood Trust. While the YES Competition is celebrating over 20 years of providing opportunities for Early Career Researchers – but could not do this without contributions from local individuals and businesses.

Ingenuity19 broadened its horizons this year, reaching out to community groups, corporate businesses and public sector organisations. As part of the University’s civic mission, Ingenuity has engaged with these new stakeholders with the aim of attracting diverse voices, perspectives and ideas from all parts of Nottingham’s society.

The Ingenuity finalists proved the strength and breadth of innovative ideas this programme has generated – from a 3D prosthetic arm that can grow with a child, opportunities for children and young people in China to grow confidence in their English communication skills, to providing housing and support for destitute asylum seekers and refugees. I was delighted to award the Vice-Chancellor’s Impact Scholarship to Sustainable Water, which offers an affordable solar water pump to developing countries.

It has been a pleasure to see the growth of the ‘Women in Ingenuity’ project I was involved in last year - the Brenda Dean Ingenuity Scholarship has provided funding for three brilliant female-led businesses to launch their companies.

This report gives a flavour of the outstanding work being done in research, teaching and practice at the Haydn Green Institute, developing the innovators and entrepreneurs of the future.
This year we have been amazed by the breakthrough ideas created through addressing global challenges such as zero poverty across our research, teaching and competitions.

This would not have been possible without the hard work of the whole team to redesign and align our programmes to involve local entrepreneurs, social innovators and investors in their delivery and assessment. I am delighted to see that such an ambitious change has been welcomed with enthusiasm and passion by our students and mentors.

The Ingenuity Lab has continued to support emerging companies and businesses, with a renewed focus on supporting ventures creating social as well as economic value. It offers bespoke training and mentoring with an emphasis on sustainable growth in a supportive environment.

The aim of the Ingenuity19 competition was to inspire a generation to create the solutions of tomorrow to build a stronger and fairer UK economy and society. For the first time the competition was open to community groups and other universities and from this diversity, incredible innovation was realised.

Our network of Entrepreneurs in Residence continues to grow – we now have over 50 experienced business leaders who want to contribute to the development of the next generation of entrepreneurs. The impact of this fantastic network is now starting to be felt across teaching and practice.

2019 saw the first cohort of the Witty Entrepreneurial Scholarship complete the programme. The scheme was launched last year to support undergraduates from lower-income backgrounds develop their entrepreneurship and innovation skills. It is exciting to see the ideas generated by this group and their inexhaustible appetite for training, internships, competitions and venture building that would not have been possible without the support of the Scholarship.

The Institute has now enjoyed six years of support from the Haydn Green Foundation – this has enabled us to experiment with novel ways to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation and encouraged us to conduct our research with local and disadvantaged communities, that are often neglected by traditional approaches. It is particularly heartening to see the tangible and lasting impact our academics can realise through working with aspiring innovators in those communities.

I can’t wait to see what the next year will bring.

Foreword

Professor Simon Mosey
Director,
Haydn Green Institute
Our practice-based teaching inspires our students to embrace change and think differently to promote entrepreneurial thinking and innovative outcomes. Over the next few pages, you will see how our students challenge the norm in order to develop innovative and creative solutions to important social and sustainable challenges.”

Dr Hannah Noke
Deputy Director, HGI

Ingenious solutions to global challenges

Dr Tom Coogan
Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Dr Tom Coogan’s research specialises in disability and entrepreneurship and the intersection between the two. As well as teaching the next generation of leaders through HGI modules, Tom has run public seminars and focus groups offering support for entrepreneurs with disabilities. Tom is also interested in offering students practical experience and trying out new ways of engaging with them.

This year Tom introduced a new core module for undergraduate students called Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice. This was designed to offer students the chance to engage in practical entrepreneurship challenges, complementing the conceptual and theoretical elements of the course.

“The students took part in several workshops where they formed groups to define and tackle a challenge, using HGI’s Ingenuity Process,” Tom said. “They then worked together to develop a social enterprise to deliver solutions and presented these to a variety of external stakeholders. This year’s challenges included homelessness in Nottingham, Future Foods, UN Sustainable Development Goal#1 (Ending Poverty), and Culture Shock.”

Tom also wanted to introduce an interactive element to this course.

“A key issue in delivering this course was the challenge of engaging with large student groups of over 300,” he explained.

“To address this, we introduced a ‘blended’ element to the lectures, making use of students’ devices to facilitate live online polling with question and answer sessions during lectures. This gave us the chance to quickly and easily hear from a wide range of students, and allowed us to gain feedback in the room.”
Dr David Achtzehn joined the Haydn Green Institute in September 2018 from Bangkok University School of Entrepreneurship and Management and he has certainly made his mark on the modules he is involved in.

David is module convenor for Venture Capital and Private Equity, one of the most popular optional modules open to MSc students across the Business School.

“The success of this module comes down to the right balance of theory and practice,” David explained. “Each week students discuss a real case study, written and presented by one of our guest speakers. Last semester a total of seven industry experts contributed to the module, sharing their time and experience.”

The Venture Capital and Private Equity module was first introduced by Professor Rob Carroll three years ago. This year, the topic of equity crowdfunding was added to the mix.

“For example, take Crowdcube – one of the UK’s largest equity crowdfunding platforms,” David added. “This year 18 to 24 year olds invested an average of £1,577 on this site, a huge increase from £306 in 2016. As lecturers we can use this real engagement as a learning opportunity while also promoting critical thinking.”
As module convenor for the Entrepreneurship Project, Dr Hannah Noke places postgraduate students with organisations to address real-life challenges and to develop tangible solutions.

The Entrepreneurship Project is an integral part of the MSc Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Management programme and is often cited as a highlight by students.

“Applying theory to practice is fundamental to our teaching approach within the Institute and the Entrepreneurship Project perfectly demonstrates this,” Hannah explained. “It provides students with a solid foundation for whatever entrepreneurial activity they wish to pursue after their time with us – whether that is to start their own business, work in a small or medium sized enterprise (SME), support innovation in an established organisation or develop a social enterprise.”

Some of the companies sponsoring the project have been involved for over 15 years.

“This just goes to show how much our partners value our students’ hard work, dedication and enthusiasm for such business engagement,” Hannah added.

Learning outside the lecture theatre

The time spent with a local SME, charity or social enterprise can be incredibly valuable as MSc in Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Management student Brooklynn Meinke testified from her experience of working with Nottingham-based company, HerSpirit.

“I felt the Entrepreneurship Project was a great hands-on experience. Seeing the time, work, and dedication it takes to create and develop a vision into reality gave me a realistic perspective on what it’s going to be like to get my business off the ground in the future.

I learned the importance of good communication and building relationships. I’m thankful for the time I got to spend with the company growing their business and can’t wait to put into practice all that I learned during that time.”

Congratulations!

To MSc Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Management student Sarah Brookes for being awarded a prestigious Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) studentship for a PhD. All HGI staff wish her the best of luck with her ongoing research.
I’m lucky to have been through the cycle of starting something, growing it and surviving out the other side. I think young entrepreneurs and founders like to hear about these experiences of what worked and what didn’t. Some have also had the opportunity to discuss meaty issues in a ‘real-life’ Board Room situation, which they’ve found particularly useful.”

Mark Hawkins
Founder, HD Decisions, Founder and CEO, Factor 50

“Time spent with the leaders of our future is a vital way to provide them with the support they need to dare to care, to realise they can make a difference and understand that the decisions they make throughout their lives will impact on many generations to come.”

Phillipa Bray
Co-Founder, Fieldwork

“I enjoy helping by listening to ideas, goals and aspirations. I then share my experiences of what has worked for me and what hasn’t and how those experiences might be applied, or avoided, within their own businesses or personal development. In return I get a great buzz from being inspired by the next generation.”

Nicola Hurley
MD, Mercia Group Ltd
Research

“HGI’s research continued to break new ground in 2019. Our academics presented their research findings at international conferences facilitating global impact from our work, while their work also informs high-quality teaching and delivers impact locally, regionally and nationally.”

Dr Lorna Treanor Divisional Research Director, HGI and Co-Chair, Gender and Enterprise Network

Creating the tools for entrepreneurial success

Dr Isobel O’Neil
Assistant Professor in Entrepreneurship and Innovation, HGI and Director, IDOOA

Following on from research carried out with women who run their own business, Dr Isobel O’Neil saw an opportunity to focus her efforts on ensuring research impact.

“I wanted to create a toolkit to support female entrepreneurs so that they could build on their success,” said Isobel. “The idea came about as a result of my original research. This identified that female entrepreneurs were not provided with support aimed specifically for them.”

With a team of collaborators, Alexandra Hardwick (lineanddotcreative.com), Debbie Clarke (debbiedoooh.co.uk) and Sarah King (workbydesign.co), Isobel put together a toolkit that supports women’s personal development. It includes resources to help them engage in self-reflection – to make sense of their achievements so far and consider what they want their next steps to be.

“The last six months have been really exciting – we’ve run workshops on the toolkit for NatWest, HSBC and Nottingham’s Bluestockings,” Isobel added. “We were awarded funding from the Nottingham Impact Accelerator, which is enabling us to offer a six-session programme of workshops to support toolkit users, to host informal meet-ups at the Business & IP Centre at Nottingham City Library, and to engage in research with a large local corporate to explore how the principles of the toolkit extend to careers more generally.”

Isobel and Alexandra were also successful at Ingenuity 19, when they pitched a social business idea – IDOOA – to the panel. They were awarded an Innovation Prize from the Smallwood Trust which will go towards developing a toolkit and workshops for entrepreneurial women on low incomes in Nottingham.

“Overall, this strand of my work is certainly making connections between HGI research and local organisations,” Isobel said. “The long-term aim is for ongoing knowledge exchange and social value creation as a result of this collaborative way of researching entrepreneurship.”
Making a difference to how women do business

Ketch Adeeko has just completed the first year of her PhD. Her research examines how refugee women overcome multiple societal challenges as they engage in entrepreneurial activities.

During her first year Ketch enjoyed several opportunities to share her research with non-academic audiences.

“During Refugee Week, I attended the book launch of an autobiographical account of a woman’s refugee experience and journey to becoming a business owner in the UK. I was invited to speak about refugee entrepreneurship in the UK,” Ketch explained. “As a result, I was able to present my research to a diverse audience and highlight its potential to inform change among policy makers and business support providers.”

Earlier in the year, Ketch presented at a ‘New Perspectives’ tour at the Djanogly Gallery at the University of Nottingham. She added “I spoke about a piece of artwork through the lens of my research topic. It was encouraging to think that even at this early stage of the research I might challenge the audience’s preconceptions of refugee women and their images of who could be an entrepreneur. In so doing, I felt that I was already beginning to raise the profile of a hidden and under-researched group of business owners – refugee women entrepreneurs.

Looking ahead, I am particularly excited about the prospect of making a difference to how women do business.”
Dr Christopher Carter has a wealth of experience working with diverse research teams both in industry and academia and has spent the past 12 months continuing to develop his wide network of multi-disciplinary research collaborators.

Chris has recently started a research project with HGI colleague, Dr Hannah Noke, and first-year PhD student, Kadja Manninen, to investigate entrepreneurial opportunities amongst a group of Instagram influencers.

He said “One of the undeniable privileges of doing academic research within HGI is the opportunity to work on such a wide range of exciting projects, with such inspirational colleagues and peers. This project adopts an innovative approach to mixing big data analytics with traditional semi-structured interviews.”

The team shared some of their preliminary findings in July 2019 at the DISCo! (Digital Economy Summer School Conference), based at the University of Nottingham.

Chris is also collaborating on a new research project led by Haydn Green Institute PhD alumna Dr Angela Martinez Dy, now at Loughborough University London. This will evaluate the impact of the OneTech programme. Co-funded by Capital Enterprise and J.P. Morgan, this initiative aims to support underrepresented female and BAME tech founders in London. The team is going to present some of the initial findings at the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE) conference at Newcastle in November 2019.

“This year has also provided me with exciting new opportunities to engage with initiatives based in Asia,” Chris commented. “In March 2019, I was delighted to be a keynote speaker and mentor at our Ingenuity19 Tech for Good Summit held in Cyberjaya, Malaysia. It was a great experience to interact with HGI colleagues, Malaysian students, and Experian Asia Pacific staff in the context of the Ingenuity competition, with some really fascinating entrepreneurial ideas emerging from the sessions.”

Chris has also collaborated with HGI colleague, Dr Bin Wu, looking at community connection as a potential resource for rural revitalisation in China. An article about their research was recently published in a special issue of the Journal of Rural Studies and will be the basis for future collaborative research investigating the impact of entrepreneurship education in rural China.
Dr Lorna Treanor’s research focuses on the influence of gender on entrepreneurial activity – exploring women’s entrepreneurship in atypical contexts such as business incubators, STEM careers and social enterprise.

This year Lorna received two Impact Funding awards. The first award facilitated research on women who had taken part in the Young Entrepreneurs Scheme for early career researchers in science and technology disciplines. Lorna presented the findings of this research at an International Conference on Gender Research in Rome in May and at the DIANA International Research Conference (the world-leading conference on women’s entrepreneurship) held at Babson College, Boston, USA, in June.

The second round of Impact Funding went towards supporting Lorna’s work with Dr Naomi Irvine, a Gender Equality Consultant. This was to develop RESET – online resources for women in STEM disciplines and professions seeking support and advice in relation to career development in the Midlands and beyond.

“These resources include training and information for men working in STEM on unconscious bias and the resulting impacts upon women’s career progression,” Lorna explained. “They include a LinkedIn group, Facebook page and website and they will be formally launched at a public event to be held at the University of Nottingham in the near future.”
This year, we have increased the training and development of our businesses as we recognise that knowledge is at the forefront of great decision making. Through this provision, we have seen our entrepreneurs take on a greater understanding of business planning, investment, branding and more. We celebrate this growth and are super-excited for the future!

Dr Terri Holloway  Operations Manager, Ingenuity Lab

“It is so inspiring to be part of the Ingenuity Lab and see how entrepreneurs from all over the world are able to bring together their passion and determination to create businesses that can benefit the local UK economy and yet, often link to their origins, culture or background,” said Will.

Will comes from a third-generation family of miners, in his home country of Madagascar.

“I have seen first-hand the appalling working and living conditions of the miners and the local industry plagued with corruption, illegal trafficking and poor infrastructure,” Will continued.

“My aim – through my company Meralt – is to address these pressing challenges by collaborating with UK-based expertise and promote the inclusive development of artisanal and small-scale mining communities.”

The Ingenuity Lab’s role in supporting Will as he pursued this venture has been vital to Meralt’s development. Will explained “I have found having access to networks of industry experts who can advise, mentor and share their experiences on setting up and running a business highly valuable.”

The commercial aspect of the business is steadily growing and is now moving forward with a development pilot project that will engage with stakeholders of a mining community in Madagascar.

Will concluded “I believe – like every entrepreneur – that the ‘future looks bright’. Mining, however, is naturally associated with negative connotations, and while the ‘ethical concept’ has become widespread in industries like clothing, cosmetics and food, it isn’t at that stage yet in mining. So it’s even more important to figure out what does and doesn’t work. And with every opportunity we get, we aim to educate and make people rethink the mining industry.”

Will Rakotomalala  Director, Meralt

Having completed an MSc in Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Management, Will Rakotomalala has turned his attention to disrupting the mining industry, drawing on the knowledge gained through his course and his experiences of living in the mining communities of Madagascar.
Shaping global clinical practice

Systematic Review Solutions Ltd (SRS) is an independent healthcare research consultancy company, specialising in evidence-based healthcare methodology training and consultancy, including clinical study design, secondary healthcare data synthesis and clinical practice guideline development. The headquarters of SRS is based at the Ingenuity Lab, with branches in China and Malaysia.

“Over the past 12 months, we have achieved several significant milestones in sales and infrastructure building, increasing our turnover by 30%,” Jun said.

SRS has secured two service contracts with the World Health Organisation (WHO) to produce systematic reviews and provide methodological guidance for their global clinical practice guidelines, resulting in significant impact on clinical practice. It delivered Continuous Medical Education (CME) workshops to healthcare professionals in China, and secured a £130,000 contract to deliver training in 35 cities to clinicians of tertiary hospitals.

In response to this rapid expansion, the management team has been actively working on capacity building. A new Managing Director was recruited in January, who has doubled the research and training capacity, brought onboard an energetic sales team, and established networks with a wider audience in the healthcare field. SRS is now heading towards a £1 million turnover within the next two years.

“The Ingenuity Lab has been instrumental in the development of SRS,” Jun explained. “First and foremost, it provides a supportive environment and collaborative culture for its residential entrepreneurs, which encourages creativity and fosters peer support – a context that is crucial for budding ideas to flourish. Professional advice and mentorship are available to all and, as company founder, the networking events have expanded my vision, stimulated new ideas and brought about valuable opportunities.”

Jun Xia
Founder and Chair, Systematic Review Solutions

Jun Xia’s background lies in healthcare research methods. As well as running her successful healthcare consultancy, Jun has published over 30 Cochrane Reviews in relation to the effectiveness of care for people with schizophrenia, depression and cancer.

Find out more about the Ingenuity Lab: nottingham.ac.uk/ingenuity-lab
“My time at the University of Nottingham was characterised by involvement in multiple activities and projects, many of which were facilitated through the Ingenuity Lab and the Witty Entrepreneurial Scholarship,” George explained. “By combining the work done through my Geography degree, the guidance of the Witty Entrepreneurial Scholarship and the facilities provided by the Ingenuity Lab, I have been able to set up an access-to-music project in Wolverhampton.”

George’s interest in the arts began years before moving to study at Nottingham. But through his dissertation, scholarship projects and Ingenuity Lab competitions, he was able to develop specific skills and meet useful contacts, that have now placed him in a strong position to help other young people have access to arts and music.

“I am currently interning with Revolver Records in Wolverhampton, where I am learning more technical aspects of the industry,” George added. “Over the coming year, I’m looking to gain further experience in the creative sector whilst simultaneously building ‘The Floreat Project’, a series of interviews, events, and all-round nexus for young people’s music in Wolverhampton. I hope that the project can provide the opportunities and benefits that a creative education can offer to young people in an otherwise arts-deprived area. My long term goal is to develop a record label fit for the 21st century with talent development a central philosophy. The exciting future of my postgraduate life wouldn’t have been possible without the opportunities, staff and facilities provided through the Ingenuity Lab and the Witty Entrepreneurial Scholarship.”

George Smith
Witty Entrepreneurial Scholar

Recent BA Hons Geography graduate, George Smith, used Witty Scholarship funding to research and develop his social enterprise which aims to rejuvenate access to music in the West Midlands. His dissertation has been nominated for a Royal Geographical Society Award.

“The Witty Entrepreneurial Scholarship was launched in 2018. It support undergraduates from lower-income backgrounds to develop their entrepreneurship and innovation skills. There are currently 59 scholars engaging with the programme, working on numerous different goals. It’s inspiring to see what they’ve accomplished in just 12 months and I look forward to seeing what their futures bring.”

Janet Wallace Witty Entrepreneurial Scholarships Manager

Find out more about Witty Scholarships: nottingham.ac.uk/go/wittyscholar
Junelle Ayettey (left)  
Witty Entrepreneurial Scholar 

Second year Philosophy student, Junelle Ayettey, has been working on a number of ideas for ventures in Ghana, thanks to internships funded by a Witty Scholarship. The Ingenuity19 Witty Scholars Award winner now plans to study law and set up her own business.

Junelle was one of the first cohort of Witty Entrepreneurial Scholars. Here she explains what she has gained by taking part in the programme.

“Entrepreneurship was not something I had ever considered before, as no one in my family had ever mentioned self-employment. Being able to study International Entrepreneurship as a module while reading Philosophy has really opened up new opportunities for me.

My interest in wanting to start a business in Ghana developed after a two-month internship at a law firm in Accra last summer. Without the funding from the Witty Scholarship I wouldn’t have been able to take advantage of this international experience – which dramatically changed my perspective about my future career. This internship helped me decide to pursue a career in commercial law after graduating in July 2020 with a strong interest in global project finance and emerging markets. This will allow me to be at the forefront of financial and business matters on a global level which will aid the development of my business. I believe this is the right career choice for me as it ties three integral interests of mine: business, law and Africa.

I am no longer afraid of my prospects after university as I believe that this scholarship has equipped me well and I feel confident to face any challenges I may encounter.”

Junelle is now involved in developing a social enterprise – SANkofa SANitation. This aims to improve living standards across impoverished communities in Ghana, by empowering local people to become entrepreneurs.

She concluded “I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Witty family, the mentors on this amazing scholarship and the Ingenuity Lab for allowing me to dream and achieve what I thought was impossible.”
Ingenuity is a forum of world-changing ideas. A development programme. And a prestigious business competition. All in one!

Ingenuity19’s aim was to inspire a generation to create the solutions of tomorrow in order to build a stronger and fairer UK economy and society. For the first time, Ingenuity19 was open to the wider community, including corporate businesses, as well as public and third-sector organisations.

We were delighted to welcome Experian and the Smallwood Trust to our network of corporate partners.

Leading UK universities also took part in Ingenuity this year, including DeMontfort, Derby, Goldsmiths London, Leicester, Loughborough, Nottingham Trent and Warwick.

**Ingenuity19 Programme**

There were three stages to the programme – Inspire, Develop and Compete.

**Inspire:** The first phase comprised of a Future Communities Summit and the Future Technology Summit. Guest speakers from organisations such as Google, Innovate UK, Unltd and the Big Issue presented their views on the challenges ahead. Delegates then worked together to generate ideas and come up with potential solutions.

**Develop:** A six-week skills programme was offered to participants to help them turn their ideas into a costed business plan. Drawing on HGI’s 20 years of innovation and entrepreneurship education, this programme included seminars, keynotes, specialist Q&A sessions and a library of resources. This phase resulted in over 200 innovators entering the Ingenuity Competition.

**Compete:** From a shortlist of 41 business ideas, Ingenuity19 culminated in £150,000 of funding being awarded to 18 new enterprises. The final celebration at the Awards Dinner in central Nottingham offered a vision of what could be achieved, impact felt, and a model for future innovation.

Ingenuity Event Director, Steve Chapman said “We are now developing Ingenuity further. We are working with a wider range of partners to initiate national conversations about the key issues we face, in order to create businesses that have impact and offer sustainable solutions for change.”

If you would like to join us on this journey, get in touch with us at ingenuity@nottingham.ac.uk
Transforming the world’s water supply

Tabitha Wacera
Director, Sustainable Water

Sustainable Water, set up by Tabitha Wacera in 2016 was awarded the Vice-Chancellor’s Impact Scholarship at Ingenuity19. Winning a prize of £18,500 will enable the company to provide more clean water in the developing world.

“I took part in Ingenuity19 because of its emphasis on meeting global challenges and because it recognised that female entrepreneurs face a different set of barriers compared to our male counterparts,” Tabitha said.

Sustainable Water has developed a low-cost solar water pump that can be deployed for irrigation in developing countries using a Pay As You Go model. The pumps are more sustainable for areas without either electricity or water compared to diesel water pumps. They also have the added benefit that they can be manufactured locally.

Tabitha explained “My approach to Ingenuity19 was go for broke! For me, this involved sharing my personal story – I am a walking water aid campaign. I too have carried 120 litres of water on my back in a day. Having walked the ‘water walk’, it is from this perspective that I want to solve the water crisis from the bottom up. This is my story, my authenticity.”

Thanks to winning this award, Sustainable Water aims to install 40 pumps and build its supply chain in developing countries. By installing 10 pumps quarterly, it will impact of 200,000 people in 12 months. Sixty per cent of the prize money will be used to install more pumps while the rest will be used for development purposes and to hire an additional employee.
It was really exciting that Ingenuity19 was open to the public this year. We were able to reach over 40 local community groups, various corporate and public sector organisations, and build strong partnerships with a shared vision of transforming the future of our region and beyond.

The Ingenuity19 Awards Dinner was a brilliant opportunity to showcase not only the amazing, inspiring businesses that came out of the programme, but also the power and impact that can be achieved through collaboration between the University of Nottingham, civic organisations and local corporates.

We really look forward to continuing to work with our partners and build new relationships with other pillars of our community in the Midlands and across the UK as we develop the future of Ingenuity.
The following ideas came through the Ingenuity programme and were shortlisted as finalists in the Ingenuity Competition, and are certainly ones to watch as they move towards launching their innovations this year.

Nottingham Arimathea Trust
Providing housing and support for destitute asylum seekers and newly recognised refugees.

Proodle Solutions
Building mobile recruitment apps for universities, using branded digital marketing to convert prospective students.

Seedify
Empowering communities to unite in solving global issues and providing a platform for ongoing sustainable fundraising.

Sustainable Water
Offering an affordable solar water pump for developing countries.

Witty Muse
Using digital technology to help graduate fashion designers become innovators of sustainable fashion.

Changing behaviours, empowering families

Anika Vassell
Director, Teen-Behaviour.com

Anika Vassell joined the Ingenuity Lab in 2014 as she wanted to develop a support service for parents who have children aged between nine and 19. Anika is also conducting doctoral research within the School of Medicine, investigating the impact of adolescent behaviour on working parents.

“Businesses are unaware of how adolescent behaviour indirectly affects their bottom line,” Anika explained. “With my support programme of courses for both employees and their managers, the difficulties in raising teens and pre-teens can be addressed.”

Anika won two awards at Ingenuity19 – one from the Intellectual Property Rights Office for Research-Related Business and the other from the Smallwood Trust for projects that support financially vulnerable and/or single mothers.

Anika added “I am now facilitating workshops for staff members at the University of Nottingham and the feedback, interest and uptake has been quite phenomenal. I hope to roll out this service to businesses and other universities over the next few months as the training complements both the Athena Swan Charter and the Working Forward Pledge.

Each step forward has meant a growth in confidence and a new opportunity founded. My hope is that I continue to grow and that I am able to give back all I have gained in at least equal measure.”
The 2018 theme for YES was Protect Our Planet. The competition saw 47 teams of ECRs participate from 28 universities across three strands: Biotechnology YES, Engineering YES and Environment YES. The teams were focused on tackling challenges such as renewable energy, the growing population and agriculture.

Volunteers key to success

It is thanks to all those who give their time to YES for free that the competition has been so successful for so long. The speakers, mentors and judges – leaders in the field of tech-based entrepreneurship – all contribute to its ongoing success.

Last year, 117 experts from 70 organisations donated over 700 hours of their time to support the competition. YES has a profound impact on those who take part and it is telling that six previous participants returned this year as judges.

The theme for the 2019 competition is Empowering Sustainability and as YES turns 25 in 2020, the flow of ideas from our UK universities’ postgraduate and postdoctoral population shows no sign of stopping!

The winners of Biotechnology YES were Phytocolours from the University of Leicester. Their company reduces pollution from the fashion industry by providing structurally coloured cellulose fibres from micro-algae. Their product Rayonbow™ is used in the manufacture of eco-sustainable textiles to produce fabric that never fades.

The winners of Engineering YES were LactoLab from the universities of Durham, Liverpool and Newcastle. Their company aims to reduce non-degradable single-use plastic in labs by providing a compostable alternative using food industry by-products. Plastic is rendered chemically and biologically inert through a novel coating.

MooFree from the University of Reading won the Environment YES competition as well as the people’s choice award sponsored by Indigo. They use genetically engineered yeast to produce sustainable, ethical dairy proteins unlike anything else currently available on the market.

Read more about YES at: www.yescompetitions.co.uk
In March 2019, we successfully designed and ran a new, international, innovation and video pitching competition called the HGI Global Impact Challenge,” David explained. “The twin drivers were to find an alternative to the Universitas21 inter-university innovation competition and develop a further means of initiating substantive relationships with global universities.”

For the initial pilot event, 35 students in seven teams took part from the University of Nottingham (UK), Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon (Mexico) and the University of Nottingham (China).

Solving the world’s energy issues

Over an intensive, one-week period in March 2019, each team used the University of Nottingham’s creative problem-solving tool, Ingenuity Online, to generate novel solutions to real-life issues related to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #7 (Energy). Each team then produced a three-minute video outlining their proposed solution. This was then judged by both an expert panel and peer assessed by all the other teams. Cash prizes were awarded based on the following criteria: originality of the project, potential impact on the problem, practicality and scalability and the effectiveness of the video.

“All of the students taking part gave very positive feedback such as ‘mind-opening’, ‘challenging’, and ‘exciting’. They enjoyed the opportunity to work under time pressure with new peers, while competing against other student entrepreneurs around the world,” David added.

Based on the very positive experiences and lessons learnt from delivering this pilot HGI Global Impact Challenge, a refined version of the competition will be run again in March 2020, with the aim of including at least 25 teams from 10 to 15 global universities.
Meet the Team

Dr David Achtzehn
Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Cherry Anderson
Design and Brand Lead

Professor Martin Binks
Chair, Haydn Green Institute and Professor of Entrepreneurial Development

Steve Chapman
Head, Ingenuity Lab and Director, Ingenuity Event

Dr Tom Coogan
Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Dr Andrew Greenman
Assistant Professor of Small Business Growth

Paul Kirkham
Senior Researcher Ingenuity

Dr Rachael Lamb
Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Professor Sue Marlow
Professor of Entrepreneurship Divisional Research Director Haydn Green Institute

Professor David Park
Professor of Practice, Director of Executive Education, Associate Dean (External Engagement)

Professor Dom Potter
Professor of Practice Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Elizabeth Smith
Producer Ingenuity Event
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