

# HCfE News

ISSUE 22 | SEPTEMBER 2024


**Henley**  
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Entrepreneurship

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## HCfE Co-ordinates Research Seminar with Professor Héctor Rocha

 Centre for Business  
Ethics and Sustainability

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 Working alongside  
Henley Business  
School's Centre for

Business Ethics and Sustainability (CBES), HCfE organised a successful research seminar featuring Professor Héctor Rocha, Professor of Business Policy and Entrepreneurship at the Instituto de Altos Estudios Empresariales (IAE) Business School as part of the Universidad Austral, Argentina.

The seminar, held both online and face-to-face to an audience of academics and PhD students, took place on 27 June 2024 as part of the wider Leadership, Organisations and Behaviour research seminar series. Having been invited by Professor Maks Belitski, the Director of HCfE, and Professor Kleio Akrivou, the Director of the CBES, Professor Rocha presented on the topic 'Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and Sustainable Development – the Six Ws (What, How, Why, Where, When, What for)'.

The seminar encouraged discussion on the current understanding of entrepreneurial ecosystems and sustainable development, with Professor Rocha's presentation exploring the concepts, interconnections and underlying logic of these two phenomena. He went on to explain why it is essential to examine the influence of entrepreneurial ecosystems on sustainable development and explore the insights gained about the interplay between entrepreneurial ecosystems and sustainable development and how that impacts on research, practice and policy formulation.

<https://www.henley.ac.uk/hcfe>
*"Full steam ahead for HCfE!"*

Professor Maks Belitski, Director of HCfE

Henley Business School faculty had another opportunity to hear from Professor Rocha on 28 June 2024, when he led a workshop titled 'Reimagining Management Theory and Practice'. This workshop focused on discussions to redefine management theory and practice in light of emerging phenomena such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, B Corps, conscious capitalism and the revised purpose statement from the US Business Roundtable.

## Local Sixth Formers Enjoy Social Enterprise Programme Finale 2024

In collaboration with the Henley Enterprise Lab, Reading School and the Abbey School, HCfE hosted the Social Enterprise Programme Finale 2024, where teams of sixth form students presented their social enterprise ideas to a packed audience.

The Social Enterprise Programme is an initiative organised by Dr Amal Ahmadi, a former Lecturer in Organisational Behaviour at Henley Business School, and Charles Lovibond, Head of Business Management at the Abbey School. The aim of the programme, which has been internationally recognised as 'Highly Commended' in the Financial Times' Responsible Business Education Awards, is to provide an education and a collaborative network that empowers youth to support their local communities in the Reading area through the principles of people, planet and profit.

The Social Enterprise Programme Finale 2024, returning for a second year with an expanded cohort of 30 sixth form students after a successful launch in 2023, was held on 7 May 2024. The sixth formers from Reading School and the Abbey School were tasked with pitching a sustainable business idea that addresses a

social or environmental problem in the local community to a panel of judges, who would award funding to the best ideas.

Reading School student at Social Enterprise Programme Finale 2024



Building on a combination of lectures and workshops throughout the last year, the sixth formers were supported by a team of Henley Business School student mentors. The mentors were led by Ellen Whysall (BSc Business and Management) and also included Sam Hirsch (BA Entrepreneurship), William Haresceugh (BA Entrepreneurship), Emily McStravick (BA Business and Management), Urvaksh Bagwadia (BSc Finance), Angel Seaman (BSc Business and Management), Rahma Derrar (BSc Consumer Behaviour and Marketing), Viktoriia Chyp (BSc Architecture), Kumar Rohan (MSc Management) and Mostafa Vahedi (PhD in Management – Marketing and Reputation).

*“It is incredibly rewarding to witness how passionate students and mentors are about making a difference toward a better future for our communities and planet. Social innovation ideas presented this year showcased the role of youth in developing impactful ideas to drive positive change and tackle some of the most pressing social and environmental challenges of our time.”*

**Dr Amal Ahmadi, programme lead of the Social Enterprise Programme 2024**

The five presenting teams were Blob-able (a card game aimed at involving children in discussions about mental health), Book Nest (a redistribution scheme for textbooks from people that no longer need them to address education inequality and sustainable learning), MindFULL (a journal to help teens navigate the mental health challenges of exam stress), Nutrision (an app to improve the food shopping experience of visually impaired individuals) and reVOLT (a series of recycling bins for batteries and other e-waste). Awards were given out to all teams, with MindFULL receiving £1,000, Blob-able receiving £700, Nutrision receiving £500, Book NEST receiving £400 and reVOLT receiving £200.

The full news release covering the Social Enterprise Programme Finale 2024 can be read here:

<https://www.henley.ac.uk/news/2024/social-enterprise-programme-2024-puts-entrepreneurship-into-practice-for-local-sixth-form-students>

## Professor Maks Belitski and Jurek Sikorski Publish New Paper

**Professor Maks Belitski, Director of HCFE, collaborated with Henley Enterprise Lab Director Jurek Sikorski to publish a new paper in the prestigious Journal of Technology Transfer.**

The paper was titled ‘Three Steps for Universities to Become Entrepreneurial: a Case Study of Entrepreneurial Process and Dynamic Capabilities’ and it was published in June 2024. The Journal of Technology Transfer is designated as a three star journal by the Chartered Association of Business Schools.

Exploring the transformation of universities into entrepreneurial entities, the paper focuses on HCFE and Henley Enterprise Lab at the University of Reading as examples. The study investigates the role of dynamic capabilities in the entrepreneurial process within universities and how these capabilities can be embedded into the university’s ecosystem to foster innovation and economic growth.

One of the main findings of the paper was the importance for universities to have dynamic capabilities in teaching, research and commercialisation in order to support the entire lifecycle of entrepreneurship. Particular attention was given to how HCFE develops dynamic capabilities through strategic collaborations with external partners, facilitating the transfer of knowledge from academic settings to market applications.

Another crucial insight the paper shared was a breakdown of the entrepreneurial process at universities into the five stages of idea generation, validation, fundraising, commercialisation and scaling. Each stage involves specific activities and support mechanisms to ensure successful knowledge transfer and commercialisation.

*“Everyone who wants to know how to spinout firms and ideas from a university needs to read this paper.”*

**Professor Maks Belitski, Director of HCFE**

Finally, the paper explores the integration of entrepreneurial processes within universities. It enhances the capabilities of university managers, researchers, faculty and students on an internal level, whilst on an external level it strengthens ties with local businesses, policymakers and other universities, contributing to the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem and

promoting the creation, validation and financing of business ideas to support regional economic development.

## Winners of Dragons Den 2024 Challenge Invited on Savills Study Visit

A group of specially selected Henley Business School students on the Managing Change in the Real Estate Sector module attended a special study visit at Savills headquarters in London.

The purpose of the study visit was to bridge the gap between academic learning and the real estate industry, with students given the chance to experience what goes on in a leading real estate services company. The visit was organised by Dr Matteo Borghi, Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and Hebe Williams, Associate Director and Graduate Recruitment Manager of the Future Talent Team at Savills.

Henley Business School students at Savills' headquarters



The students invited on this study trip were Alana Rodrigues Santos Barbosa (BSc Investment and Finance in Property), Fatema Abdulla, Samuel Bacon, Luke Churchill, Mitchell Jury and Monty Littler (all BSc Real Estate). The six students collaborated on the Dragons Den 2024 challenge and won with the idea of Senspore, a proposal for a mould detection technology to facilitate healthier living and working environments.

*"It was a pleasure meeting so many key professionals and I am immensely proud of Senspore's achievements. This partnership with Savills exemplifies our commitment to integrating industry expertise into our academic programmes."*

**Dr Matteo Borghi, Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Innovation**

Oliver Fursdon, Director of London Commercial Development at Savills, led a presentation on case studies and success stories, followed by a discussion co-ordinated by Kelcie Elizabeth Sellers (Associate Director of World Research) and Charlotte Rushton

(World Research Analyst) on trends and innovations in real estate. The visit finished with a networking session organised by Sarah Thorley (Associate Director of Strategic Advisory in Europe, the Middle East and Africa).

## HCfE Launches Winter Start-Up Boot Camp in Malaysia Research Project

**Dr Matteo Borghi, Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Innovation, launched a new research project to deliver a start-up boot camp programme to empower aspiring entrepreneurs.**

The Winter Start-Up Boot Camp initiative is led by both HCfE and the Henley Enterprise Lab to build on the success of the Henley Summer Start-Up Boot Camp, an annual hands-on workshop event that gives participants the confidence and skills to start a business and make money doing what they love. Dr Borghi submitted the research project application to the Research England fund as part of the International Science Partnerships Fund (ISPF) Official Development Assistance (ODA) strand and was awarded £16,633.20.

The Winter Start-Up Boot Camp is scheduled to take place in December, with Dr Borghi travelling to Malaysia in-person to support its delivery. By focusing on sales-first strategies and minimal resource launch methods, participants will gain the confidence and skills to start and grow their businesses.

*"I think this initiative presents an exciting opportunity for knowledge exchange, as well as potential research opportunities related to the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region. This initiative fosters economic development and gender equality, building local entrepreneurial capacity and strengthening partnerships between the University of Reading and Malaysian institutions."*

**Dr Matteo Borghi, Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Innovation**

The Winter Start-Up Boot Camp project also aligns with several of the United Nations' sustainable development goals. These goals are at the forefront of many Henley Business School research projects and are set out as guidelines on reaching greater peace and prosperity for people and the planet.

The goal of Quality Education is met by providing practical entrepreneurial education to a diverse cohort, including students, aspiring entrepreneurs and community members. By helping them gain the skills and knowledge to initiate and manage



businesses effectively, the Winter Start-Up Boot Camp helps foster sustainable economic growth in the region.

The goal of Decent Work and Economic Growth is also addressed in this project, encouraging entrepreneurship to create sustainable livelihoods. Participants learn business development strategies, marketing techniques and sales approaches, equipping them to contribute meaningfully to the economy and reduce unemployment.

Promoting technology adoption and creative problem-solving help contribute to the goal of Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. Putting emphasis on innovative business solutions and leveraging digital platforms for business scalability, the participants of the Winter Start-Up Boot Camp are given all the tools they need to drive economic growth and industrial development.

Providing free access to the entrepreneurial training is the key to how the project meets the goal of Reduced Inequality. This inclusivity of all participants, across a diverse range of socioeconomic backgrounds, serves to bridge the gaps in knowledge and opportunity and contribute to a more equitable society.

Lastly, through collaborative efforts between the University of Reading's UK and Malaysia campuses, the project embodies the goal of Partnerships for the Goals. This collaboration enhances institutional co-operation and knowledge exchange, setting up the prospect of potential future projects to build on these foundations.

## Dr Matteo Borghi Chosen as Keynote Speaker at Major Conference

**Dr Matteo Borghi, Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Innovation, was selected to be the keynote speaker at the prestigious Banarsidas Chandiwal Institute of Professional Studies XII National Conference.**

The conference, sponsored by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), was held from 7-9 August 2024 and brought together delegates and participants from across India, Canada and the UK. The central theme for the conference was 'Business Transformation and Sustainable Innovation: an Edge to the Global Circular Economy'.

Dr Borghi delivered a presentation on the topic of 'Sustainable Innovation and the Circular Economy: in the Age of the 4th Industrial Revolution'. During his speech, Dr Borghi shared insights on sustainable innovation and its role in driving business transformation within the context of the global circular economy, sparking meaningful discussions and reflections from the attendees.

Dr Matteo Borghi delivering his keynote speech



The full video of Dr Borghi's speech at the conference can be watched here: <https://youtu.be/rtLhUF6qbFg>

## Announcements

**HCfE is pleased to notify readers about the following new roles, notable publications and other news for its faculty:**

Professor Marcello Mariani



Dr Matteo Borghi



Jurek Sikorski



Two members of HCfE were selected as the winners of the inaugural Henley Awards, which were set to recognise and celebrate the outstanding contributions made by Henley Business School staff in the areas of Teaching and Learning, Research and Professional Services. Out of almost 100 nominations, Professor Marcello Mariani, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Management, was selected for the Research category, whilst Dr Matteo Borghi, Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Innovation, was selected for both the Research and Teaching and Learning categories.

Dr Borghi also published a new paper in the *Innovations in Teaching and Education International* journal, titled 'Embedding Entrepreneurship and Technology Literacy in the Student Curriculum: a Case Study of a Module for Real Estate Students'. The paper stems from the entrepreneurship module developed for Henley Business School's Real Estate and Planning department and can be read in full here:

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2024.2382413>

Jurek Sikorski, Director of the Henley Enterprise Lab, was featured in a *Financial Times* article, titled 'Business Schools Target a Fair Start for Women in Start-Ups'. The article explores the inequality still present in entrepreneurship and how business schools across the world are trying to level the playing field for

women, with the full article available to read here:

[https://comms.henley.ac.uk/c/AQiXiREQw9JuGKLtp1gg8fbhGKrfJSow28cDuo9AT33jEofcxD-ZadjkOGKFusoQS\\_qy](https://comms.henley.ac.uk/c/AQiXiREQw9JuGKLtp1gg8fbhGKrfJSow28cDuo9AT33jEofcxD-ZadjkOGKFusoQS_qy)

## Submit a story

The editors welcome articles and news items of interest from faculty, students and staff on any topic related to Henley Centre for Entrepreneurship for publication in this newsletter.

News items should be emailed to:

[a.j.baker@henley.ac.uk](mailto:a.j.baker@henley.ac.uk)



For further information, visit:

<https://www.henley.ac.uk/hcfe>