

5 October 2023

National launch of Charter for inclusive entrepreneurship to help minimise barriers to business

A charter, aiming to minimise barriers to entrepreneurship for underserved and under-represented groups through creation of a more inclusive ecosystem, was launched nationally today, at the Shard in London, by the University of Nottingham.

Dr Lorna Treanor, from Nottingham University Business School (NUBS), has developed the Charter which provides a framework for developing an inclusive ecosystem through its five core principles:

1. Promoting diverse role models across the enterprise ecosystem
2. Delivering inclusive enterprise support
3. Enabling lifelong learning of entrepreneurship education
4. Ensuring equal access to enterprise finance
5. Implementing measurable targets for inclusive enterprise policy and procurement Practices.

Dr Lorna Treanor, Associate Professor in Entrepreneurship and Innovation in NUBS, said:

“Social groups, such as women, ethnic minorities, young people, and people experiencing disabilities, as examples, face distinctive barriers to entrepreneurship with equitable access to finance being one such issue. For example, less than 1p of every £1 invested in the UK in 2017 was invested in all women-owned businesses; Black women face even greater barriers when trying to access such finance, receiving only 0.02p per £1 of total investment finance over a ten-year period in the UK.

“The Charter for Inclusive Entrepreneurship offers a framework to enable more appropriate policy, education, training and advisory support and so, equitable outcomes from entrepreneurship for all individuals, regardless of their background, personal characteristics or location. It does this through fostering a partnership approach; by developing a joined-up ecosystem of individuals, organisations, agencies, and enterprises committed to supporting greater equality of opportunity and outcomes.”

The Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship, the Institute of Enterprise and Entrepreneurs, the Neurodiversity and Entrepreneurship Association, Black Business Network UK, SFEDI, the Gender Index and the Centre for Research in Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs are some of the first signatories to the Charter, demonstrating their commitment to ensuring appropriate and equitable support is available to anyone who wants to start or grow a business.

Professor Mark Hart, Deputy-Director of the Enterprise Research Centre, a signatory and co-sponsor of today’s national launch event, in conjunction with the University of Nottingham said, *“It is well-known that entrepreneurship is vital for innovation, job creation, and economic growth which are national priorities. Entrepreneurial activity has been a central focus for unlocking global economic recovery for some time. Despite this, significant disparities persist in relation to access to finance, business growth and returns.”*

Shari Leigh, Founder of the Black Business Network, said: *“Black Business Network is honoured to be joining the Charter as a signatory to this ecosystem. We strongly believe to facilitate growth and change outcomes for under-represented and under-served entrepreneurs, that organisations, networks and resource hubs need to work together to create a pipeline that supports and empowers entrepreneurs through every stage of their journey.*

“The Charter is a fantastic model for implementing this change, and we are committed to working toward creating this change across the country. We look forward to sharing the opportunities and access showcased by the Charter with the entrepreneurs and business owners in our network and championing its growth where we can.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

About the University of Nottingham

Ranked 32 in Europe and 16th in the UK by the [QS World University Rankings: Europe 2024](#), the University of Nottingham is a founding member of Russell Group of research-intensive universities. Studying at the University of Nottingham is a life-changing experience, and we pride ourselves on unlocking the potential of our students. We have a pioneering spirit, expressed in the vision of our founder Sir Jesse Boot, which has seen us lead the way in establishing campuses in China and Malaysia - part of a globally connected network of education, research and industrial engagement. Nottingham was crowned Sports University of the Year by [The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2024](#) – the third time it has been given the honour since 2018 – and by the [Daily Mail University Guide 2024](#).

The University is among the best universities in the UK for the strength of our research, positioned seventh for research power in the UK according to [REF 2021](#). The birthplace of discoveries such as MRI and ibuprofen, our [innovations transform lives and tackle global problems](#) such as sustainable food supplies, ending modern slavery, developing greener transport, and reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

The University is a major employer and industry partner - locally and globally - and our graduates are the second most targeted by the UK's top employers, according to *The Graduate Market in 2022* report by High Fliers Research. We lead the [Universities for Nottingham](#) initiative, in partnership with Nottingham Trent University, a pioneering collaboration between the city's two world-class institutions to improve levels of prosperity, opportunity, sustainability, health and wellbeing for residents in the city and region we are proud to call home. [More news...](#)

A new charter aiming to support entrepreneurs of all backgrounds to start or grow their business is being launched by the University of Nottingham. *Full story below...*

More information is available from **Dr Lorna Treanor** at Lorna.Treanor@nottingham.ac.uk or; **Faith Pring** in the Press Office at the University of Nottingham at faith.pring@nottingham.ac.uk