

# School of Business and Management Entrepreneurship Hub

Annual Report  
2022/2023





# SBM ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUB

The School of Business and Management (SBM) at Queen Mary University of London is a business school with a difference. SBM emphasises the connections between business and society, with a commitment to making a positive impact and driving change through business and management practice. Our mission is to deliver a business education centred on social justice, sustainability and good governance and inspire our students to be self-reflective and pursue those values throughout their professional lives.

In pursuit of our mission, the School launched the Entrepreneurship Hub in 2019 to cultivate entrepreneurial competencies and mindsets for all students. The Hub aims to empower the next generation of entrepreneurs. Whether they have an initial business idea, want to scale up their start-ups, or explore entrepreneurial opportunities for the future.

Four years on, the Entrepreneurship Hub has offered a wide range of support to current students, recent graduates, and the wider community. This includes impact-driven extracurricular activities, advice and mentoring from experts across and beyond the University, access to funding opportunities, networking events, etc. We carried out most activities throughout the Covid-19 pandemic!





# OUR TEAM



**Matteo Colledan**  
Italy



Second year Business Management student at Queen Mary University of London.

**Flora Egyud**  
Hungary



Second year Business Management student at Queen Mary University of London.

**Enrique Martínez Serrano**  
Spain



Second year Aerospace Engineering student at Queen Mary University of London.



## DEAR FRIENDS



*The SBM Entrepreneurship Hub had another fantastic year during the 2022/2023 academic year. I would like to express my gratitude to our students, team, volunteer mentors and partners for your continuous support and collaboration. Your contributions are crucial to cultivating our students' entrepreneurial mindsets and shaping society's future.*



**Dr Joanne J. Zhang**

Reader in Entrepreneurship

Founding Director of SBM Entrepreneurship Hub & QMSVF



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# 2022/2023 PROGRAMMES

The Hub offers a portfolio of entrepreneurial programmes, ranging from one-day workshops to yearlong programmes, including 1) Social Entrepreneurship Workshop, 2) QMUL Project ReMAKE, 3) QM Social Venture Fund, 4) Student Entrepreneurship Projects, and 5) Social Impact Projects. These programmes aim for current students to engage with the broader community of entrepreneurs, investors and practitioners and gain hands-on, real-world experience for their future work and employment.

## 1) SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WORKSHOP

During Semester 1 (Reading Week), we organised a one-day workshop on building a social venture. A group of 12 students participated, collaborating with mentors to refine their pitch decks throughout the day. The pitch competition concluded with three standout teams – Alcohollect, Better U and Milking it, securing 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places, respectively. Feedback from the students underscored the workshop's effectiveness in cultivating entrepreneurial aptitude. They found it particularly beneficial for honing skills such as problem-solving, boosting confidence, and developing an entrepreneurial mindset.





## 2) QMUL PROJECT REMAKE



Project ReMAKE is an entrepreneurship training programme for formerly incarcerated individuals, equipping them with business skills to re-enter employment and preparing them to integrate into society. The programme, founded by Judge Kameel Khan, is delivered in partnership with The School of Business and Management, together with the School of Law. Throughout the seven weeks of training, participants worked with student advisors and business mentors to formulate business ideas, create business plans, and put together a pitch to investors. Upon completion of the programme, successful participants are put forward for internships with Capita Plc. By the end of July 2023, 92 graduates from the Project ReMAKE programme have no known re-offending. Compared with a 54% re-offending rate in the UK, Project ReMAKE has created significant social value and impact.

An entrepreneur reflected on the impact of this programme:

*"Being somebody who has been a prisoner for over seven years, I've become used to being let down and led up the garden path. I've completed more courses than I've had hot dinners, but I rarely had access to anything tangible to grasp. Project ReMAKE has allowed me to see myself in a different light, open new doors, and let go of the past, in exchange for the future." - Omar Mentesh (Entrepreneur)*





Dr. Kameel Khan commented on how impressive he was with QM student advisors:

*"What has given me a lot of hope is the kind of optimism the students have about things. And I have a lot of faith going forward with people like that because they want to make the world a better place. And that really comes through with the students."*

This year, 14 formerly incarcerated individuals, 23 student advisors (11 from the School of Business and Management and 12 from the School of Law), and 17 business mentors participated in the QMUL ReMAKE programme. Both business and law students highlighted the benefits of experiential and interdisciplinary learning and the long-lasting impact of this unique programme on their lives.

Overall, 88% of students are extremely satisfied with participating in the programme. The programme has revealed positive outcomes in developing the confidence and skills necessary to prepare students for their future career success. Students found themselves gaining confidence in communication (74%), developing networking skills (65%), and working with others to solve problems creatively and systematically (73%). In addition, the programme also inspired students to reflect on their current practice and consider opportunities for improvement. Of these, 70% have reflected further on their values about social justice and environmental issues, 65% have recognised the importance of how different academic disciplines connect, and 74% have started to think more about the strengths and weaknesses of how we do things and potential improvements.







## Testimonials

*“Project ReMAKE has been a great exercise and test of my abilities beyond the practice of what I have learned about business management in an academic sphere. I really enjoyed the mixture of large and small group collaboration, and this supported a great balance between learning from experienced professionals about their field (and how to approach each stage of the Prince's Trust Model) and trying our hand at the practical application of this information to our specific business plan.” – Theodor James Mahon (BSc International Business)*

*“Getting to see the effects of the law and how it has impacted them, and how they could just move on from that part of their life. I think that was important for me, studying law. It was particularly inspiring to see the entrepreneurs' self-improvement during this program. Despite minor setbacks and having to reconsider parts of their plans, they all left the program with a greater sense of individuality” – Jaylene Chelsea Neeala Ali (LLB Global Law)*

*“My favourite aspect about the programme was the opportunity to connect with the discipline of business and entrepreneurialism. From the perspective of a law student, it is vital to have the necessary business skills and awareness when approaching work in a law firm.” – Amnah Bibi (LLB)*

*“I feel grateful to Queen Mary for providing me with the opportunity to be a part of this amazing cause. I have found a new friend in my mentee, and I am super excited to see where life takes him and his business. My heart fills with joy when I think about the fact that I was able to make an impact on someone's life.” – Laura Hoffmann (BSc Accounting and Finance)*



### 3) QM SOCIAL VENTURE FUND (QMSVF)

Launched in 2020, Queen Mary Social Venture Fund (SVF) is the UK's first student-led, social impact venture capital fund focusing on investing in 'start-ups for good'. The fund aims to empower student entrepreneurs and impact investors from diverse backgrounds. QMSVF has partnered with the Creator Fund to train our student investors since inception and has been supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation since 2022/2023. It won the QM President and Principal's Award in 2021.

QMSVF has recruited 25 student investors this year as their 2022/2023 cohort. Of these, 52% were female and 48% were male, and 75% were of BAME heritage. Progressing beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, the programme has transitioned to a hybrid model and delivered part of training and mentoring sessions online and in person. Alongside deal sourcing, the student investors have also taken the initiative to organise a networking event and three online forums throughout the programme. The student investors have reached out to 179 student-led start-ups and organisations and organised the final pitch competition in March 2023.

The programme is an innovative pedagogy of entrepreneurship education using an authentic learning approach. Students have provided positive feedback and are highly satisfied (4.81 out of 5) participating in the programme.





## Testimonials

*"As a participant in SVF, I can confidently say that this program has been one of the most impactful and transformative experiences of my academic career. The training and mentorship provided by the SVF were instrumental in helping me to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to evaluate and invest in socially responsible ventures. The program provided a unique opportunity to work with a team of incredibly talented and motivated student investors and to learn from experienced professionals in the field of impact investing. The mentorship provided by the SVF was invaluable, and the support that we received from our mentors helped us to identify and evaluate socially responsible ventures with the potential to create real impact. Through this program, I gained a deep understanding of the importance of social entrepreneurship and impact investing, and I am now better equipped to pursue my own goals of creating positive change in the world. Thank you to the SVF for providing this incredible opportunity!" – Akshat Gupta (MSc Entrepreneurship and Innovation)*

*"I found the programme very enriching and helpful for my personal and career development. The training sessions run by Jamie Mcfarlane of the Creator Fund gave me a big-picture overview of the VC investment landscape. I also learned the different stages of investing, what to expect and how to deal with challenges that may arise in various stages. The highlight of the course for me was learning how to holistically evaluate business models, not just by looking at what makes a business good but what makes it investible. The knowledge and skills I gained from this will be very helpful when I commence my graduate role in equity research next year, where fundamentals analysis is a key part of the job. I enjoyed being able to apply what I had learned from the programme each week into practice when I went out to do deal-sourcing." – Nur Alina Binti Hassan (LLB Law)*

*"The program has enhanced my knowledge in the VC industry. The ability to network with people from a range of disciplines at QMUL has not only allowed me to see how I can better use my own skills but also has allowed me to see how best to work in a large group." – Aaron Grewal (MSc Financial Mathematics)*

*"When I started SVF, I was absolutely clueless about the start-up and investment world. Coming from an architectural background with no prior business experience was an intimidating challenge for me. Having felt so, from day one till today, I have only been grateful for being accepted into the program. Highly recommend this program to anyone who feels aloof like myself." – Snigdha Rao (MSc Management)*



## 2022/2023 Pitch Competition & Investment

To mark the programme's culmination, the student investors organised the first in-person pitch competition with seven start-up finalists, a panel of 3 expert judges (Bran Pathmanaban, Head of ESG at IP Group plc; Junior Ogunyemi, Senior Product Manager at Zipistream Technology; and Corinna Bordoli, Co-founder of CocoRio), and more than 75 attendees. In the pitch competition, the start-up finalists shared their vision and progress of their social ventures, and received feedback from the judging panel. The start-up finalists include Stix Mindfulness, Stem@Home, Lylo, Waterscope, Milbotix, Oshen, and Canopey – all with social impact at their core. Collectively, the student investors have decided Oshen - as the winner of this year's pitch competition and invested £15,000 into the business, adding it to the SVF portfolio alongside GoRolloe, Biophilica, Sweed and Leiho.



Oshen, founded by Anahita Laverack (CEO) and Ciaran Dowds (CTO), aims to use autonomous micro-vessels for en-masse ocean data collection. They are determined to fill in the areas of the ocean where we have sparse data coverage by developing vessels that are small and simple enough to be deployed en-masse but smart enough to stay in position or track a desired path.

*“We're truly grateful to have been chosen as the winner of this pitch competition. It's a validation of our dedication to solving a real problem, and we're excited to use the prize money for further development.”* – Anahita Laverack (CEO, Oshen)

## SVF Investment Portfolio



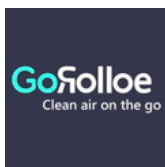
Biophilica is a female-led start-up led by Mira Nameth. They have developed a product called Treekind, a leaf-based leather alternative that uses less than one per cent of the water used in traditional leather production. The product is plastic-free and non-toxic to the environment and can be turned into compost or recycled.



School of Business and Management alumnus Marcos Souto Ulloa, who graduated with an MSc in Entrepreneurship and Innovation in 2020, together with his co-founder Pia Alais, created Sweed. Sweed is a sustainable seaweed plastic material used to replace traditional plastic films. It decomposes safely in the ocean and can be disposed of with food waste as home compostable.



Leiho is a female-led social enterprise co-founded by Joey Li and Thuta Khin. The company is on a mission to help support homeless communities through the supply of basic essentials that improve their quality of life. Leiho sells environmentally-friendly socks made from organic cotton and bamboo, and every pair helps to provide essentials for vulnerable communities, including refugees and people experiencing homelessness.



GoRolloe is a device that attaches to bike wheels to filter air pollution using the rider's motion. The idea was conceptualised by the inventor Kristen Tapping, while she was cycling through the streets of London and being exposed to noxious gasses and particulate matter. It is a product based on the concept of using the energy produced by vehicles to capture pollution on prime roadways.

## 4) STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROJECTS

We are proud to have supported our students in developing their inspiring business ideas.

### Major Mixer

Major Mixer is a society club that aims to enhance students' career prospects by providing valuable insights from a wide range of UK industries. Lijun Hou and friends Mikhail Andreev, Endrit Haziri, Zhishan Huang, Syed Izhaan, and Yasi Ranjbar founded the club earlier this year. The founders believe that Major Mixer will be able to bring together a diverse group of QM students and create a vibrant, inspiring, and supportive community.

### Testimonial

*"The idea for the society was born out of a desire to create a community where students from various programs could come together, share ideas and experiences, and learn from one another regardless of their background or experiences. We recognised that there was a need for a space where students could connect with others who have different perspectives and areas of expertise. We wanted to foster an environment that encourages collaboration, creativity, and growth." - Lijun Hou (Co-founder, Major Mixer)*

One of Major Mixer's achievements this year was organising the University Pitch Competition in June 2023, sponsored by the Entrepreneurship Hub. The competition involved seven teams comprising students from different majors. While the focus was on QMUL students, Major Mixer also invited students from other universities, such as UCL, LSE, and KCL, to attend the event as the audience. Overall, the audience enjoyed the competition, which was a great success. The Major Mixer team hopes to continue organising such events in the future.



## Testimonial

*"The pitching competition was a great platform to provide students with the opportunity to showcase their creativity and entrepreneurial spirit. I commend Major Mixer for the organisation and execution of the competition. The attention to detail in coordinating logistics, managing time slots, and ensuring a smooth flow of presentations was evident and greatly contributed to the overall success of the event. It was a joy to be part of this event." – Grace Samosir (Co-founder, KXY Technologies)*



## Clinton Global Initiative

CGIU is a worldwide community of students and mentors devoted to finding innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges. It includes hundreds of undergraduate and graduate students from different countries who join a year-round community of learning, leadership, and action.

This year, four SBM students were accepted into the programme. Our students proposed two commitments for action, which will be developed throughout the year, guided by our Entrepreneurship Hub's members and Dr. Fernando Barrio.



## Previous Projects

NANOFLEX

NanoFlex started as a QMUL start-up and competed in the Hult Prize Foundation's annual accelerator programme in Boston, Massachusetts. It is a data-driven influencer marketing agency that empowers everyday social media users and helps SMEs promote their goods and services. This approach will see higher engagement than traditional influencer marketing, because of the higher trust levels associated with smaller profiles.



ET Collect won the Hult Prize regionals in Oslo (2019), with their winning idea to partner with businesses and cities in Egypt, to create products from recycled rubbish. Their forecast of creating 30,000 jobs gained the attention of the Egyptian Ambassador, who met with them to discuss their idea. The team also won access to the exclusive Hult Prize 5-week global accelerator in the same year.



GoTaZa (previously AlgaX Superfoods) won a \$100,000 grant from the Hult Prize in 2020 with their idea of speeding up the transition to sustainable food through the sustainable and modular production of Omega 3 and plant-based protein. They also won access to the exclusive Hult Prize five-week global accelerator the same year.

BURGO

BURGO aims to create alternatives to conventional meat using bug-based food. This will be achieved by turning crickets from a common pest into a universal tasty, healthy and environmentally sustainable product, with green packaging and lower production and transport costs than any other meat source.



RepEat XP provides appropriately priced and nutritionally balanced recipes that are accurately adjusted to your dietary specifications.

## 5) SOCIAL IMPACT PROJECTS

Since 2019, we have been running the Social Impact Project (formerly known as Charity Consult), a programme that places interdisciplinary teams of School of Business and Management students to complete consultancy projects for London-based businesses and charities. Under the supervision of faculty, 68 students have worked and supported 16 organisations to solve pressing business needs for organisations while providing an opportunity for students to apply their knowledge and develop their employability skills.





In line with our schools' values and ethos and commitment to supporting local organisations and making a positive change in business and society, past projects have included working closely with local businesses in and around East London. Past organisations have included Centrepont, MSA Trust and St Hilda's Community Centre.

Projects have included:

- Working with disability charity, Livability, to develop an accessible recipe book for enabling people with disabilities
- Creating a marketing plan for Bennu, an arts therapy organisation for children to increase their social media presence and partnerships with organisations and businesses.
- Supporting Impactic Volunteers to better communicate their impact by investigating impact measurement tools and methodologies

Participants from the 2022-23 programme shared the following feedback in the evaluation:

- 100% of students rated the client as excellent or very good
- 95% of students agreed the programme put them in a better position to achieve their career goals/increased their knowledge of the industry
- 75% agreed they had developed networking skills to help them make connections with professional people in the future
- 74% of students agreed it had helped them reflect further on their own values with regard to social justice and/or environmental issues

## Testimonials

*"This project gave me a chance to fully engage myself in a real-world working scenario, helping me get hands-on experiences from working with people from diverse backgrounds. It greatly improved my analytical skills and teamwork abilities, which makes me more confident about myself to go for my further career." – Zhiying Hong (MSc Business Analytics)*

*"I have had the pleasure of working with a talented and ambitious group of people who have given me an insight into different ways of thinking. As well as that, the social impact program has enabled me to develop my data analytic skills whilst collaborating on key ideas. Finally, I had the opportunity to gain exposure to a real-life client which has been invaluable." – Gediminas Mikucionis (BSc Business Management)*

*"The Social Impact Project has served as a valuable experience for me to develop my team working and communication skills on how to work in a group effectively. Working with an actual organisation really opened my eyes to the workplace environment and gave me an opportunity to experience how to interact with an actual client." – Lehun Chung (BA International Relations with Business Management)*





Past clients' feedback is very positive:

- 100% agreed the students delivered a professional service
- 100% agreed the project had contributed to the development of the organisation in some way
- 80% of clients agreed the project achieved the outcome the organisation was hoping for
- 100% would host another Social Impact Project
- 100% would recommend the programme to another organisation

## Testimonials

*“The project enabled us to start our journey around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The students gave us some good ideas about broadening the pool of people we could support, with some often extremely innovative proposals regarding volunteers. We were able to incorporate some of the suggestions into our recent Needs Surveys questions, and a paper regarding a way forward on EDI has gone to our Board. We will continue to work on this over the coming years. The students were a diverse group themselves with many coming from overseas. This meant that they came with a richness of ideas and cultural and religious differences.”* – Andy Barrick (Deputy CEO, Multiple System Atrophy Trust)

*“I was thoroughly impressed with the professionalism, enthusiasm, and outstanding teamwork displayed by my Social Impact Project team. Their dedication and engagement towards the tasks were exemplary, resulting in high-quality outputs. It was a pleasure to work with such a motivated and talented group, and I am confident that their contributions will help make a lasting change for Impactic Volunteers!”* – Molly Bevan (Founder of Impactic Volunteers)

*“Working with the team was a pleasure. The process of writing the scope and clarifying the brief was helpful on a number of levels within the business. The meetings we had helped me deep dive into the issues even further, and the team worked hard to deliver a sound and innovative assessment and recommendation that was both creative and constructive.”* – Anna Burrows (Co-Founder, See It Be It)

As a result of their involvement in the programme, past student participants, Sharon Gurung and Mehreen Javaid who participated in the 2022 SBM Social Impact Project (formerly known as SBM Charity Consult) were SEED award recipients.

Many students have credited the experience and knowledge, often citing the experience as part of their job applications and helping improve their employability prospects.

