

WOMEN'S HEALTH
FOOD SECURITY
SAVING LIVES
ENERGY POVERTY
CYBER SECURITY
ANIMAL WELFARE
FAST FASHION

You know the why behind your business idea.

Let us help with the how.

Soumya Palliyil
Co-founder
BrigID Biologics



A guide for applicants
CONVERGE

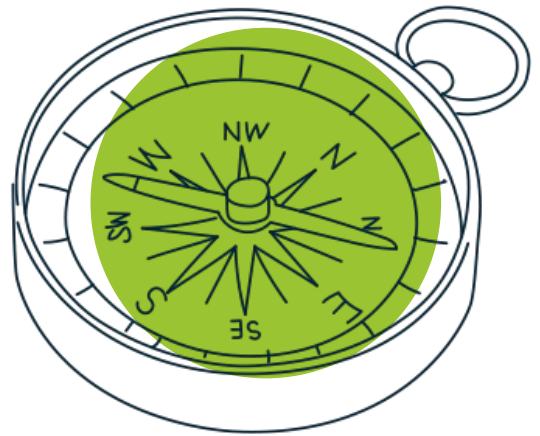
What is Converge?

Working in partnership with Scotland's world-class Universities, we help staff, students and recent graduates with innovative ideas to navigate the journey ahead.

We share your passion for innovation and invention, but we also know that turning great ideas into commercial reality is tough, especially without a road map, funding and a network to guide you along the way.

By taking part in our programme, you'll gain the tools, networks and support to test, validate and springboard your business into the world.

We've trained over 600 aspiring academic entrepreneurs and supported over 400 business so you're in safe hands with us.



Who is it for?



Anyone who is a staff member, student or recent graduate of a Scottish University can apply.

There are four Challenges tailored to different sectors and stages, so it doesn't matter if your business idea is at an early stage or fully fledged – we can help you take it to the next level.

What's in it for me?

If you're successful in gaining a place on the programme, you'll get:

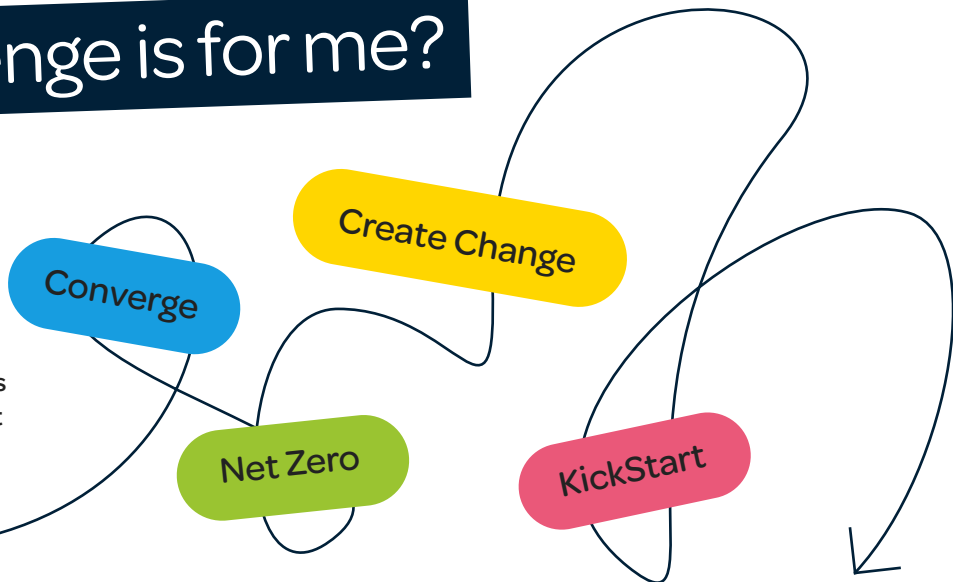
- Bespoke money-can't buy **business training** which has been specially designed for aspiring innovators - just like you
- The chance to win generous, **equity-free cash prizes** to springboard your business
- **Networking opportunities** to meet other participants embarking on the same journey
- Exposure to **experienced business experts** who can help assess your ideas and provide feedback
- Valuable **investor connections**
- Access to our **network of professional partners** - including legal, financial, product design and IP - who can help you on your way



Which Challenge is for me?

There are four Challenges

Choose the one which best fits your business idea or speak to us for advice on the Challenge most suitable for you.



Converge Challenge

£50k Winner

£20k Runner-up

For novel business ideas with solid IP foundations, high commercial potential and evident scalability

Net Zero Challenge

£30k Winner

£10k Runner-up

For green entrepreneurs developing sustainable solutions to our planet's biggest environmental challenges.

Create Change Challenge

£30k Winner

£10k Runner-up

For creative, social and cultural projects looking to become sustainable businesses.

KickStart

£10k Winner

£7.5k Runner-up

For early stage, aspiring entrepreneurs with innovative business ideas they'd like to test, validate and prepare for launch.

What else is there?

We also have some special awards you can apply for.

Participants who progress to submitting their business plans in August are eligible to apply.

CENSIS Award

Sponsored by Censis

For the best innovative early-stage idea that relates to sensing, imaging or IoT technologies. £5k cash prize for the university where the idea originated plus a package of support.



IBioIC Award

Sponsored by IBioIC

For the best innovation in the industrial biotechnology space. £20k cash prize for the university where the project originated plus a package of support.



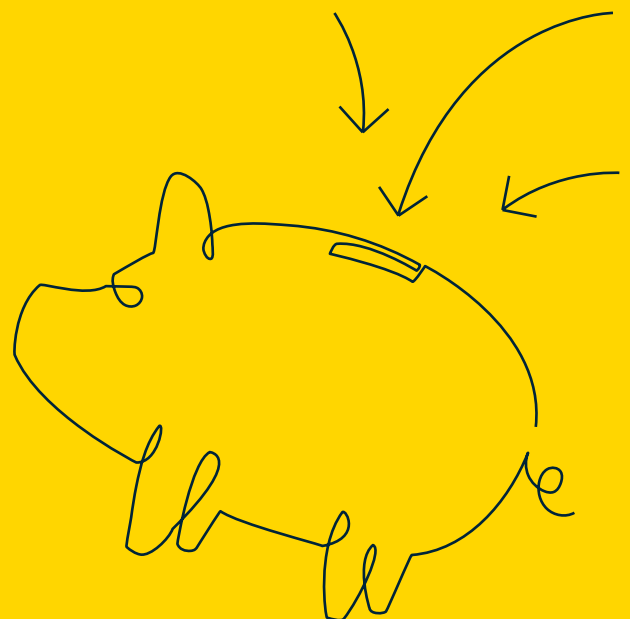
What does it cost?

Absolutely nothing!

We are funded by the Scottish Funding Council, Scottish Universities and our network of strategic and professional partners so it won't cost you a penny!

All we ask from you is to commit to taking part in our training and events. You'll also need to do your prep and make sure you stick to our programme deadlines.

It's win, win!



What will I learn from the training programme?

The training programme will give you an excellent grounding in all aspects of starting a business. You'll get specialist coaching on preparing and delivering a pitch, and how to prepare your business plan.

Our bespoke entrepreneurial training is delivered through a mix of online on-demand modules and face-to-face sessions including masterclasses and networking events.

Later on in the programme, finalists in the Converge, Create Change and Net Zero Challenges will also receive extra training on routes to market, funding and investor-readiness, in preparation for taking your business to the next level.



Ready to apply?

Here are some hints and tips to get you started

- **Read more about our four Challenges and decide which one's for you:** [Find out more](#)
- **Attend our short online workshops** to get a head start on what you might need to do to get your business started: [Find out more](#)
- **Have a 1-2-1 chat with one of our Enterprise team about your business idea.** They'll help you decide which Challenge is right for you and give you hints and tips on how to write a winning application: [Find out more](#)
- **Download the application form template** for your chosen challenge so you know what information you'll have to complete when you apply. Find the Challenge pages here: [Converge](#), [Net Zero](#), [Create Change](#), [KickStart](#)
- **Create your account on our application portal.** You don't have to fill it all in at once - you can come back later to finish your application.
- **Complete your application before the deadline and don't leave it till the last minute!**



Deadline:

12 noon, Wednesday 3 April 2024

What happens next?

All completed applications go into a judging process and we will let you know by 8 May 2024 if you're successful.

You've made it. What next?

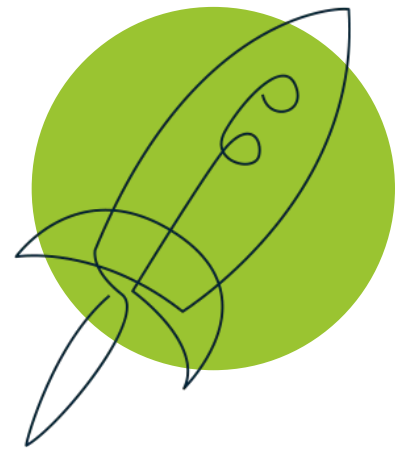
If you're successful, you'll become a member of our 2024 cohort - congratulations - and will receive more detailed information about the training programme.

Even if you don't make it onto our programme, we can still support you in many ways including [free workshops](#) and 1-2-1 advice from our regional enterprise team. And, who knows, you might be eligible to apply again next year!

Who's done this before?

You'll be following in the footsteps of some great businesses who started with help from Converge. Take a look at some of these [video case studies](#) or listen to these [podcasts](#) from successful alumni, and read more in the alumni section of our website.

Our [website](#) is packed full of helpful information on the overall programme and the four Challenges.



“There’s no right time to start a business. Now is the right time. The sooner the better, so jump right in!”

Alireza Abbassi Monjezi
Waterwhelm
KickStart Challenge Winner 2019

We are funded by



& Scottish Universities

Strategic partners



Professional partners

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CONVERGE

www.convergechallenge.com