Britain's Best Small Businesses to Descend on Manchester

Monday 23 June, 2014

Fifty of Britain's most exciting and innovative entrepreneurs will arrive in Manchester in September for a business boot camp organised by one of the UK's longest running entrepreneurial competitions.

Founded in 2008 by UK Business Forums, The Pitch has helped thousands of entrepreneurs make connections, secure support and access investors.

In 2014, the competition, organised in association with AVG, has introduced two boot camps for the 100 entrepreneurs shortlisted from those who apply at www.thepitchuk.com by 13 July.

The 100 will be split into two groups, with 50 travelling to Manchester on 18 September for a full-day event at thestudio in the city's Northern Quarter. The first boot camp takes place in London on 4 September.

During the intensive and very practical events, the small business owners will receive top class advice from a range of experts including pitch training from Annette Kramer, who has successfully coached several participants on TV's Dragons' Den.

Contestants will also take part in interactive workshops focusing on digital marketing, business planning and building an effective business model led by competition supporters AVG, Constant Contact and ICAEW. There will also be drop-in clinics on building an online brand from .co.uk.

At the end of the day, which is also supported by Nokia, all participants will pitch live on stage. From the 100 pitches, 30 entrepreneurs will be selected to present at The Pitch 2014 grand final in Bristol on 23 October.

The finalists will compete in front of judges including serial social entrepreneur and founder of CrowdMission.com Karen Darby, Company Shortcuts boss Lara Morgan, who built luxury toiletries provider Pacific Direct into a £20m business, and Judith Bitterli, serial entrepreneur and chief marketing officer, AVG Technologies.

One participant will be crowned the champion and receive a huge package of business support including 12 months free access to business lounges around the world, online security software from AVG, free taxi travel, a Nokia Lumia tablet, web design advice and PR consultancy.

All finalists will also have access to investors.

Dan Martin, founder of The Pitch and editor of BusinessZone.co.uk, comments: “Since launching The Pitch in 2008, many of our finalists have commented that they would have benefited from pitch training and other practical help before taking to the stage at our grand final.

“We've listened to that feedback and we've created boot camps that will prove hugely advantageous for all the entrepreneurs who take part.

“We chose Manchester as a location because it's a city oozing with creativity and entrepreneurial innovation. We can't wait to visit with some of Britain's brightest businesses.”

- Ends -

Notes to Editors:

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The Pitch 2014 is a Sift Media event presented by BusinessZone.co.uk and UK Business Forums in association with AVG and supported by ICAEW, Constant Contact, .co.uk and Nokia.

About Sift Media

Sift Media is a leading business-to-business publisher specialising in online communities and face-to-face events. Founded in 1996, Sift Media delivers content to more than one million members every month, across small business, accounting, HR and training, marketing and customer management.

About BusinessZone.co.uk

BusinessZone.co.uk is Sift Media's online publication for entrepreneurs providing free, practical and no-nonsense advice on how to start and grow a successful business.

About UK Business Forums

UK Business Forums is the UK's most active online forums for small business owners attracting more than 400,000 unique users every month.

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