# Refugee-led social enterprise ACH wins prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise

**Thursday 29 April, 2021**

ACH, a leading social enterprise specialising in migrant and refugee accommodation, integration and community-based training services, has won the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise.

ACH is proud to announce it is one of 205 organisations nationally to be presented with a Queen's Award for Enterprise, considered the most prestigious business accolade in the UK. ACH is one of 18 companies to be awarded in the category of Promoting Opportunity (through social mobility).

Her Majesty the Queen makes the awards on the advice of the Prime Minister, assisted by an advisory committee made up of representatives of government, industry, commerce and trade unions.

ACH is a refugee-led social enterprise which has been operating since 2008. It provides housing, support and integration services to refugee and migrant communities across Bristol and the West Midlands, supporting 2500 individuals a year to integrate and thrive in the UK. Through its training arm, Himilo, it provides community-focussed training courses and careers advice designed to prepare students for sustainable employment opportunities.

Winning in the category 'Promoting Opportunity (through social mobility)' recognises the vital work ACH undertakes to promote equal and inclusive opportunities for newly arrived communities. ACH aims to re-evaluate and reshape the ways refugees are seen, portrayed and integrated through its #RethinkingRefugee campaign.

Focussing on newly arrived communities as assets, ACH works to build individuals' resilience in the labour market, upskill and support refugees into sustainable, higher-level employment or self-employment in order to develop their independence and ease their integration into UK life.

ACH's mission to promote opportunity through social mobility is demonstrated through innovative programmes such as the Effective Digital Entrepreneurship & Business Support (EDEBS) Project and Bob UK. The EDEBS Project is an AMIF funded programme aiming to reinforce the launch, stabilisation and growth of non-EU migrants' businesses through personalised business support. BOB UK is an unbiased AI-driven careers advice platform which has recently won the Nesta CareerTech Challenge.

**Fuad Mahamed, ACH CEO, said:** *"Winning the Queen's Award is a huge achievement for ACH. We pride ourselves on our accommodation, the support services and training courses we offer to our customers; I'm delighted we've officially been recognised for all our hard work with this esteemed award.*

*Last year has been a difficult year going through the pandemic, the response of our staff has been exemplary, and this is a worthy recognition for all our relentless and untiring response"*

Winning the Queen's Enterprise Award is an acknowledgement of the hard work and dedication of ACH staff and partners over past 13 years and is particularly significant after overcoming the challenges of the past year.

ACH hopes this recognition will inspire refugee and migrant-led entrepreneurs to start their own businesses in the UK, fuel the #RethinkingRefugee campaign and encourage research and innovation in refugee and migrant integration policy and services.

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**For more information regarding this award please contact:**

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**About ACH**

ACH is an award-winning social enterprise specialising in integrating refugees & migrants through

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accommodation, support and community-based training. The organisation provides safe, secure and comfortable housing combined with culturally sensitive support, careers advice and vocational training.

*A leading source of expertise in refugee integration:* ACH is established as a research practitioner informing policy through practice, bringing the lived experience of our staff into policy design.

Re-evaluating and reshaping the ways refugees are seen, portrayed and integrated through the narrative of its #rethinkingrefugee campaign ACH focuses on building individuals' resilience in the labour market, upskilling and supporting refugees into sustainable, higher-level employment or self-employment in order to develop their independence and ease their integration into the UK life.

ACH has worked over the last 13 years with aspiring refugee entrepreneurs and the wider business ecosystem to successfully start many small businesses. It is now focused on ensuring the system is changed to increase the effectiveness of services available and the support it can offer into the communities with which it is closely allied.

**Further information**

BOB UK: Bob-UK - Winner of the Nesta CareerTech Challenge and £120,000 Prize | ACH

EDEBS Project: ACH receives £1 million worth of funding for project | ACH

This project (EDEBS) has been part funded by the European Union Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Making management of migration flows more efficient across the European Union. The above text reflects ACH's views only and not those of the European Commission or the UKRA. In addition, neither the European Commission nor the UKRA is liable for any use that may be made of the information contained above.

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