

## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Maggie Philbin announces winners in The Impact Awards

Maggie Philbin who regularly provides comment on technology for the BBC revealed the winners at Wednesday evening's glittering award ceremony. Bumblebee conservation, a radical treatment for allergies and a synthetic bone graft material which helps new bone to grow are amongst the winners of the PraxisUnico Impact Awards which recognise the impact of innovation.

Other award winners included an obesity management programme which has major implications for the UK's health spending, plus there were also individual awards for those who are upcoming knowledge transfer advocates and who are involved in translating the outputs of UK research into the new innovations of tomorrow.

Speaking at the awards, Maggie Philbin said, "These finalists showcase just some of the examples of great british innovation and we need to be better at shouting about our successes."

Professor David Secher, PraxisUnico Chairman rounded off the evening by saying, "I'd like to thank all the entrants to this year's awards and congratulate those shortlisted and winners for bringing such deserved attention to these new innovations. These awards reveal the diversity of projects that knowledge transfer and technology transfer professionals contribute."

### The winners

Business Impact – Achieved award, sponsored by BDO is:

- Queen Mary Innovation Ltd for **ApaTech**

Business Impact – Aspiring award

- Imperial Innovations for **Circassia**

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Environmental Impact award

- University of Stirling for **Bumblebee Conservation Trust**

Public Policy and Service Impact Award

- Robert Gordon University for **Counterweight**

Newcomer of the Year Award, joint winners

- Dr Vera Hazelwood and Dr George Rice

Winners of The Impact Awards were announced at the PraxisUnico Conference Gala Dinner, East Midlands Conference Centre on Wednesday evening, 16 June 2010.

For more information on The Impact Awards visit [www.impactawards.org.uk](http://www.impactawards.org.uk), or email [info@impactawards.org.uk](mailto:info@impactawards.org.uk), or call 01223 422085.

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### Notes to Editors

1. The Impact Award categories include:
  - Business Impact Award – Achieved
  - Business Impact Award – Aspiring
  - Environmental Impact Award
  - Public Policy and Service Impact Award
  - Newcomer of the Year Award

### About PraxisUnico

1. PraxisUnico is a not-for-profit educational organisation set up to support innovation and commercialisation of public sector and charity research for social and economic impact. PraxisUnico encourages innovation and acts as a voice for the research commercialisation profession, facilitating the interaction between the public sector research base, business and government. PraxisUnico provides a forum for best practice exchange, underpinned by first-class training and development programmes.
2. PraxisUnico is the UK's leading research commercialisation association.
3. Professor David Secher stepped down from the role as PraxisUnico Chairman on 17 June and Dr Phil Clare, Associate Director of Research Services at University of Oxford now holds the Chairman's role.

### The Impact Award sponsor

Business Impact Achieved award – BDO BDO LLP is an award winning accountancy firm providing a full range of advisory and accounting services to businesses, academic institutions, governments and forward thinking entrepreneurs.

### Winning project profiles

Business Impact - Achieved winning entry is:

#### **Queen Mary Innovation Ltd, Queen Mary, University of London for ApaTech**

ApaTech, a spin-out, is now a world-leader in orthobiologics and bone graft technologies, selling its products in over 30 countries around the world. The success of ApaTech has generated much interest nationally and internationally and will serve to further encourage the academic research base at Queen Mary, University of London and beyond, to engage in knowledge transfer for academic, public and economic benefit.

The sale of the company to Baxter International (in March 2010), one of the largest ever cash transactions (\$330 million) for a UK technology spin-out, generates considerable economic benefit to the UK.

Business Impact – Aspiring winning entry is:

#### **Imperial Innovations/Imperial College London for Circassia**

Circassia develops treatments for common allergies, such as cats, house dust mites, and ragweed. The company's most advanced development programmes use its proprietary ToleroMune technology. This novel treatment approach is based on research undertaken at Imperial College London, and involves desensitising sufferers.

The global allergy market is huge, global and currently underserved. Phase II clinical trials have returned positive results and Circassia has raised development funding of £32.6 million.

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Environmental Impact winning entry is:

**Bumblebee Conservation Trust/University of Stirling for Bumblebee Conservation**

Bumblebees have declined alarmingly in the last 60 years. These declines threaten pollination of crops and wildflowers. A university research group has spent 15 years studying why bumblebees have declined, improving our understanding of their ecology, and assessing means by which declines could be reversed. However, it was recognised that bee populations could not be reversed without a mechanism to communication conservation change.

The aim of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust (through outreach, conservation and lobbying) is to prevent further bumblebee extinctions and reverse the decline by achieving a patch of flower-rich habitat on every farm in the UK, and a clump of bee-friendly plants in every garden. At present the trust has 6,500 paying members.

Public Policy and Service Impact winning entry is:

**Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen for Counterweight: Evidence based, cost effective management of obesity in public health**

The prevalence of obesity is an escalating problem in both adults and children globally. In Scotland alone the associated direct health costs are £171 million. Obesity has been linked with an array of serious long-term conditions.

The Counterweight programme is an evidence- and theory-based intervention programme for obesity management which has been fully evaluated in the primary care sector and was established as a spin-out in December 2009.

The Counterweight programme is expected to realise savings to the NHS of around 6.3% of prescribing costs. Using National Centre for Clinical Excellence (NICE) obesity guidance, results showed that Counterweight would bring clinical benefit (including quality of life improvements for patients) together with an overall cost saving to the NHS over a patient's lifetime.

Counterweight has been delivered via the NHS to over 6000 patients with this figure increasing by around 3000 patients per year as new staff are trained .

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Newcomer of the Year award joint winners are:

**Dr Vera Hazelwood, Industrial Mathematics Knowledge Transfer Network**

In her role as Programme Manager in 2008 for the Industrial Mathematics Internships Programme, Vera has grown the programme from 6 to 35 internship projects, with the total investment of over £300,000. All the projects are aimed at extending the innovation impact of mathematics by achieving knowledge transfer from academia to industry. Exploiting issues where existing capability translates into business impact.

The programme has also achieved penetration into the sectors such as financial services, where knowledge exchange has previously been difficult. Now there are five internship projects with insurance and actuarial companies.

Vera's efforts have been central in creating and expanding the Internships Programme, which is now becoming a permanent and exciting feature of the UK innovation landscape.

**Dr George Rice, The University of Nottingham**

George Rice's technology/knowledge transfer initiatives are resulting in step-change improvements in the commercialisation of individual technologies and general engagement of a wide range of stakeholders with the university's knowledge transfer agenda.

George has built technology transfer capacity within the Chemical and Environmental Engineering department. Successes included the first venture capital investment into industrial microwave processing, winning the Unico (now PraxisUnico) Environmental Impact award in 2009.

George has worked closely with the engineering and physical sciences research bases to pull together a wide range of exhibits that represent some state-of-the-art inventions and innovations for The University of Nottingham *Technology Demonstrator*. The Technology Demonstrator is a unique initiative aimed at enhancing interaction with university developed technologies to a wide range of stakeholders.

Interaction with technology prototypes significantly enhances the quality and effectiveness of knowledge transfer. Each exhibit underpins compelling stories of invention from "eureka" to mature technologies that are already having impact on society.

George is a passionate promoter of innovation, enthusing audiences with his stories of invention.

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# PraxisUnico.

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## Images

Images are available upon request.