



“A wonderful celebration of inspiration and innovation!”



Welcome

Welcome to the Converge Awards!

It's now a long-standing tradition to celebrate and honour the brightest minds in academia and the Scottish universities that nurture them.

The incredible innovators you will meet tonight are breaking new ground in fields ranging from environmental sustainability to healthcare and engineering. Their brilliant ideas truly have the potential to reshape the world we live in, and their stories will certainly inspire.



While our finalists may be the stars of the night, their success is testament to the collective efforts of everyone in this room. From academia to industry, government to the supporting ecosystem, your contributions have been instrumental in developing these exceptional individuals.

Enjoy the show!

Adam Kosterka
Executive Director
Converge

#ConvergeAwards

Programme

18.00 Drinks reception in Edinburgh Suite Foyer

19:00 Welcome by Adam Kosterka, Executive Director, Converge
Address by Professor Andrea Nelson, Pro Vice-Chancellor
(Research), Glasgow Caledonian University
KickStart Challenge Awards

🍴 **STARTER**

20:00 Address by Polly Purvis OBE, Chair of Converge Strategic
Advisory Board
Address by Kate Forbes, Deputy First Minister and
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic
Create Change Challenge Awards

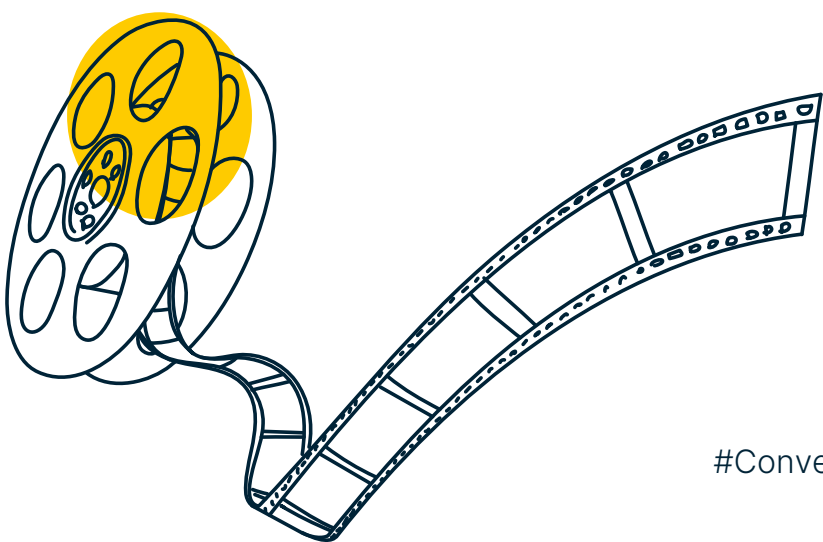
🍴 **MAIN COURSE**

21:15 **Net Zero Challenge Awards, presented by SSE plc**
IBioIC Award
Ventures Lab Award, presented by Challenges Group

🍴 **DESSERT**

22:00 Address by Dr Eve Hanks, CEO & Founder, MI:RNA Diagnostics
Converge Challenge Awards

22:15 Close of formal proceedings, bar open until 23.30



Speakers



Kate Forbes

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy & Gaelic, Scottish Government

Kate Forbes is the Member of the Scottish Parliament for the Skye, Lochaber and Badenoch constituency. In May 2024 she was appointed Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for the Economy and Gaelic in the Scottish Government.



Prof Andrea Nelson

Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research Glasgow Caledonian University

Professor Nelson is a nurse and bioengineer who researches 'what works for wounds' – specifically chronic leg ulcers, foot ulcers and bed sores. That has taken her to trials and systematic reviews of beds and bandages, dressings and drugs, and mattresses and maggots. She is Pro Vice-Chancellor Research at Glasgow Caledonian University.



Polly Purvis OBE

Chair, Strategic Advisory Board, Converge

Polly Purvis OBE is Chair of Converge and former CEO of ScotlandIS, trade body for Scotland's digital industries, where she was also Founding Chair of CodeClan. She is a board member of Edinburgh Science and chairs the Trustees at Digital Xtra. Polly was previously Director of ScotFIN at IGS, a Scottish agri-tech business.



Dr Eve Hanks

CEO & Founder MI:RNA Diagnostics

Dr Eve Hanks is a veterinary surgeon and leading expert in microRNAs. As an innovator and entrepreneur, she used her clinical background for the conception, development and implementation of MI:RNA's pioneering technology, growing the business from the ground up after spinning out from Scotland's Rural College.



#ConvergeAwards

Finalists 2024

KickStart

Entrepreneurial Spirit
£5,000 cash

Runner-up £5,000 cash

Runner-up £7,500 cash

Winner: £10,000 cash



Alexander Williams
AMH360
Queen Margaret University

AMH360 creates 360-degree video and immersive VR experiences for clinical education, developing innovative training to enhance clinicians' decision-making and situational awareness.



Jonah Davies-Jones
Cycleworx Design
University of Strathclyde

The Assistant is a new bicycle roof carrier designed to make loading bikes onto cars easier for individuals with limited strength, height, or mobility. Reducing the risk of accidents or damage to vehicles while improving safety and ease of use.



Gavin Adams
CSV Getter
University of Glasgow

CSV Getter for Airtable is a web-based tool that enables businesses to export Airtable data securely in CSV and JSON formats. It offers end-to-end encryption and facilitates easy data backup and synchronization with tools like Excel, Google Sheets, and Zapier.



Yue Liu
HerGames
Glasgow School of Art

HerGames creates entertainment games from a female perspective. 'Ivy' addresses adolescent girls' development and social challenges, including menstruation, identity, and emotional trauma. The game provides an immersive narrative that reflects real-life issues.



Chinenye Obioha
Koena
Glasgow School of Art/University of Glasgow

Koena offers an advanced solution for knee injury support, addressing issues with traditional braces and low patient compliance. Koena uses stimulation techniques to improve comfort and effectiveness for athletes undergoing physical therapy.



Nathan Dudley
New-Found-Hope
University of Dundee

New-Found-Hope is developing therapeutic footwear to address toe-walking in kids with neurodivergence and Autism, which can cause long-term medical issues. NFH's footwear promotes healthy gait, reducing risks and boosting confidence through comfort and playfulness.

Finalists 2024

KickStart continued



Garance Locatelli
Orchy MG
University of Strathclyde

MARKED: Wayfinding System is a bike navigation solution designed for all ages. It combines digital and physical elements to optimise cycling infrastructure, enhance safety, and minimise transportation conflicts.



Jillian Gordon
Ovation Agriculture
SRUC

Ovation Agriculture addresses dental disease in cattle by designing tools to treat and prevent dental conditions in cows and courses in dental treatment skills. This enhances cattle health, welfare, and production efficiency.



Catriona Liddle
PalmAlt
Queen Margaret University

PalmAlt offers a sustainable alternative to palm oil-based shortening in bakery products, using clean label ingredients. Designed to improve sustainability and nutritional profiles, PalmAlt has been successfully tested in labs and pilot plants.



Mike Gill
Rail Geospatial
Robert Gordon University

Rail Geospatial helps the rail freight sector use legacy systems and IoT devices by integrating disparate datasets to provide predictive insights on wagon component wear. Their solution, increases wagon availability and enables safety alerts to improve efficiency and safety in rail freight operations.



Solomon White
SEASAT
University of Edinburgh

SEASAT uses satellite imagery to monitor coastal ocean health, and evaluate carbon sequestration in habitats like seagrass to predict how these ecosystems will respond to rising temperatures from global warming.



Velian Velikov
Skyborn AI
University of Aberdeen

Skyborn AI develops AI-powered, vision-based navigation systems for drones to operate in non-GPS environments, ensuring uninterrupted operations in GPS-jammed areas. This innovative solution enhances drone safety, resilience, and efficiency for military and civil applications.

Finalists 2024

Create Change

Runner-up: £10,000 cash & £5,000 in-kind business support

Winner: £30,000 cash & £10,500 in-kind business support



Ciara Bow
Gledfield Distillery
University of the Highlands and Islands

Inspired by her great-great-grandmother Marjorie MacBeath, who distilled spirits illicitly in 1884, this entrepreneur is reviving her botanical spirit recipe. The spirit, made with oats and without juniper berries, is believed to be a world first.



Vijay Luthra
KEPSoft Collaborative
University of Glasgow

KEPSoft Collaborative, a not-for-profit social enterprise from the University of Glasgow, aims to increase kidney transplants. Their software platform facilitates "kidney exchanges" by matching kidney donors with recipients based on blood type and clinical criteria.



Fairouz Dridi
Screen Hustler
University of the West of Scotland

Screen Hustler is an online talent marketplace for the film and TV industry, simplifying talent search, discovery, evaluation, and hiring. It offers intuitive portfolio pages for emerging creatives and a central hub for producers and aims to disrupt traditional talent acquisition.



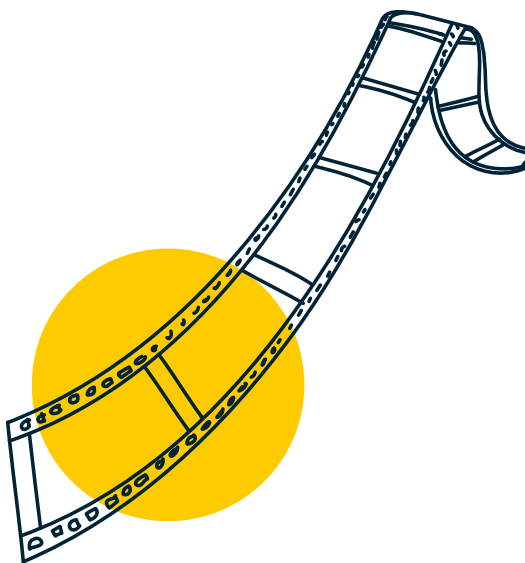
Ifeanyichukwu Ezinmadu
SymphoMe
University of Edinburgh

SymphoMe is a comprehensive app providing a gamified, personalised, and cost-effective musicianship learning pathway for users aged 5 and up. It offers instrumental tuition with real-time feedback to make music education engaging and accessible.



Jawahir Al-Mauly
Ujamaa Spice
University of Edinburgh

Ujamaa Spice addresses issues in the £17 billion global spice industry, including exploitation and corruption, by controlling its supply chain. Ujamaa Spice partners with smallholder farmers in Zanzibar, offering premium prices to ensure high-quality, pure spices for UK consumers while supporting fair practices.



Finalists 2024

Net Zero

Runner-up: £10,000 cash & £9,500 in-kind business support

Winner: £30,000 cash & £19,500 in-kind business support



Rory Bone
4SB Mobility
Glasgow School of Art/University of Glasgow/ University of Strathclyde

4SB designs and manufactures small, swappable batteries for electric vehicles that provide an additional 90 miles of range and can be swapped in two minutes. These batteries complement the main EV battery.



Chris Fowler
Airspection
University of Strathclyde

Airspection offers reliable and safe drone services for inspecting hard-to-reach infrastructure. Their durable drones, provide efficient, low-carbon inspections, predictive maintenance, and reliable access in adverse weather.



Alexander Speakman
E.V.A Biosystems
University of Edinburgh

E.V.A Biosystems develop selectively degradable plastics for packaging by integrating synthetic biological constructs. These plastics detect their environment, like seawater or landfill, and degrade accordingly. This approach aims to address pollution while preserving the benefits of plastic.



Arash Badakhsh
ENTROPYST
University of Strathclyde

ENTROPYST designs and develops efficient energy conversion systems for cost-effective, carbon-free hydrogen production. It offers patent-protected technologies to energy companies, enabling a more affordable hydrogen solution—over 30% cheaper—compared to traditional methods.



James Taylor
SolarSub
University of Edinburgh

SolarSub addresses the challenge of overheating in floating solar panels, a growing solution to land scarcity in the global solar industry. Their innovative cooling system enhances efficiency and extends panel lifespan without requiring additional energy.



Net Zero Challenge
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For a better world of energy

Finalists 2024

Converge

Runner-up £20,000 cash & £9,500 in-kind business support

Winner: £50,000 cash & £20,500 in-kind business support



Kamila Malysz
Excellio Labs
University of Edinburgh

Excellio Labs develops tissue-specific engineered exosomes for precise drug delivery. Their technology improves drug targeting, reducing inefficiency and toxicity, and ensuring drugs are delivered without harmful side effects.



Jamie Scott
IDxSense
University of Edinburgh

Using proprietary chemical technology, IDxSense detects T cell-mediated inflammatory damage linked to autoimmune diseases. The initial focus is on creating an in-vitro diagnostic test for inflammatory bowel disease.



Samuel Rotenberg
INFINECT
Heriot-Watt University

INFINECT addresses the growing demand for reliable internet connectivity in emergency response operations by developing the world's most compact, cost-efficient, low-power antenna ensuring uninterrupted, high-speed connectivity for mission-critical operations.



Momchil Vasilev
inProcess
University of Strathclyde

inProcess has developed the world's first real-time welding inspection system using ultrasonic waves to detect defects as they occur. This technology improves productivity, and helps manufacturers lower their carbon footprint.



Peter Tinning
Northern Light
Microscopy
University of Strathclyde

Northern Light Microscopy develops affordable benchtop microscopy systems using advanced techniques to make cutting-edge microscopy more accessible. Their modular platform is up to 10x cheaper than current systems and extracts twice as much data from biological specimens.



Anthony McGarry
PCAD
University of Strathclyde

PCAD is revolutionising prosthetic care by replacing outdated, labour-intensive fitting methods with a digital approach, providing prosthetists with precise data for improved patient comfort. This modern production method reduces fitting time from hours to seconds.

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