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pro-manchester

TRAILBLAZING TECH

2024

FRIDAY 21ST JUNE
MANCHESTER CENTRAL

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#TTech24

Welcome to the **pro-manchester** Trailblazing Tech Conference 2024

We are delighted to welcome you back to the annual pro-manchester Trailblazing Tech Conference 2024 – a staple event in the Manchester calendar.

Today promises to be packed full of new and exciting innovations entering the market. We will explore the challenges and opportunities this fast-paced sector creates, and we will demonstrate just why Manchester is best placed to lead the way in the world of Technology.

Throughout the day we will hear from the best of the best as they explore the North West's tech scene, where the past meets the future, and innovation knows no limits. We will witness the trends and triumphs shaping the future. We will discover the trailblazing advancements of robotics, sector trends, AI and much more. We will also have live demos from some of the region's very latest innovators who will be in with a chance of walking away with the prestigious pro-manchester Trailblazing Tech award for 2024.

We would like to offer our most heartfelt thanks to all of our speakers, sponsors and our brilliant innovation committee for sharing their insight and making events like this possible. Finally, the biggest thanks of all goes to the amazing pro-manchester team who work around the clock to bring live events like this to our doorstep.



Sam Booth
Chief Executive
pro-manchester

Nicola McCormick
Chief Operating Officer
pro-manchester

Handwritten signatures of Sam Booth and Nicola McCormick in black ink.

Agenda

Trends and Triumphs of the North West

-
- 08.50 - 08.55 **Welcome - Trailblazing Tech in the North West**
Sam Booth & Nicola McCormick - pro-manchester
-
- 08.55 - 09.05 **Trailblazing Tech in the North West**
Danny Simpson - Chair, pro-manchester & MID Communications
-
- 09.05 - 09.25 **Robotics - The Future of Work!**
Martin Keelagher - Agile Automations
-
- 09.25 - 09.55 **Panel session: Powering 'Up North'**
Naomi Timperley - Tech North Advocates (HOST), Alex Brooks-Sykes - Safety Culture, Martin Bremner - Ze-Box, Beenish Siddique - Innovate Hydrogel
-
- 09.55 - 10:15 **Meet Matthew Scullion, the dynamic CEO behind Matillion**
Matthew Scullion - Matillion
-
- 10.15 - 10.45 **Coffee Break**
-
- 10.45 - 11.15 **Panel session: Real life implementation of AI in the business**
Dr Muktar Bello - Centre for Sustainable Innovation (HOST), Michelle Sally - TLT, Paul Adams - Travel Counsellors, Kevin Smith - Made Smarter, Grace Shaffi - Amazon Web Services
-
- 11.15 - 11.35 **Redefining Business in the Digital Age**
Ken McPhail - Alliance Manchester Business School
-
- 11.35 - 12.05 **Panel session: What's happening NOW in FINTECH**
Kimberley Waldron - SkyParlour (HOST), Dave Gardner - TLT, Farooq Ansari - Softwire, Aseem Pahuja - The Centre for Financial Technology Studies (CFTS) at AMBS
-
- 12.05 - 12.50 **Trailblazing Tech Award Final - Live Demos**
*12.05 - 12.20: Carbon Neutral Fuels - Sophie Zienkiewicz
12.20 - 12.35: Featherbed Tales - Caroline England
12.35 - 12.50: The Path to Independence - Dougie Stringer-Fewtrill*
-
- 12.50 - 13.50 **Lunch**
-
- 13.50 - 14.20 **Panel Session: Disrupters of the future**
John Toon - Beaver and Struthers (HOST), Rhys Lloyd - PharmAppy, Dr Penny Traynor - Clinical Neuropsychology Services Ltd, Tom Rowland - Lokulus, Simon Groom - MagnifyB
-
- 14.20 - 14.40 **Taking you on your Transformation**
James Ford - Anumana
-
- 14.40 - 15.20 **Panel: Stay Curious: The Key to Adaptability and Innovation**
Alastair Swindlehurst - EZHR (HOST), Marie Hamilton - Microsoft, Adam Dickinson - Rezzil, Hitomi Hamaba - Sony, Andrew Finlayson - Accenture
-
- 15.20 - 15.30 **Trailblazing Tech Award Winner & Close**
-

Conference Speakers

Adam Dickinson

Co-Founder & Director - Rezzil



Adam Dickinson, Co-Founder and Development Director REZZIL, Rezzil is one of the world's leading XR sports trainer who have been developing unique VR sports training experiences to improve performance using applied research and working with some of the world's elite sport sectors. Now focusing on bringing to consumer a whole new experience. Adam

is an industry veteran in art/design/producer working for companies such as EA, Activision, Bizzare, Rage and Infogrammes with a lifetime passion for innovating with ground-breaking projects, including platforms such as mobile, console, VR tech, 360 videos, BAFTA nominated interactive dramas, TV, and Film and sport tech products.

Alex Brooks

Head of GTM - SafetyCulture



Alex Brooks-Sykes is Head of GTM (UKIMEA) for SafetyCulture, a workplace operations platform that digitises and automates processes, simplifies training, and connects frontline workers and leaders in a cycle of improvement. Alex is responsible for leading all of SafetyCulture's functions within its Manchester city centre-based office, where SafetyCulture looks after customers

such as Network Rail, Emirates, and Transport for London.

Alastair Swindlehurst

Founder & CEO - EZHR



Alastair is the Founder of EZHR, a HR subscription solution for SMEs that wants to lower barrier of entry to really good advice. Prior to that he spent 15 years' working in house for various Blue Chip FMCG and manufacturing businesses along with a number of global BPO organisations. His work was across various areas of specialism including employee relations, organisational

change, development, TUPE, and business sale.

Additionally, he hosts The Alternative Business Review. A podcast for early-stage founders that offers an alternative take on what it's really like founding and growing a business.

Andrew Finlayson

NW Regional Lead - Accenture



Andrew Finlayson, also known as Finny is the North West Regional lead for Accenture UKIA. Andrew has held leading roles as Innovation Champion, Programme Director, Experience Architect and Subject Matter Advisor in large scale or complex digital and innovation programmes, relating to engaging Human Experiences – ranging from Patient, to Carer, to Citizen. He specialises

in facilitating cross-functional collaboration and has immersed himself in the understanding of emerging trends in Digital Experiences spanning therapy and treatment areas.

Andrew is an advocate for V&A, Sustainability, events, training and performance, in bringing to life the unlimited potential of imagination, technology, and intelligence. One of Andrew's most passionate areas is inclusion and diversity. He is devoted to these causes, not only in the workplace, but holistically and is responsible for driving all of the Accenture Song UK&I inclusion and diversity initiatives.

Conference Speakers

Aseem Pahuja

Lecturer in Fintech - The Centre for Financial Technology Studies (CFTS) at AMBS



Dr. Aseem Pahuja is a Lecturer in Fintech and IS at the University of Manchester, UK. His research interests range from Blockchains and Cryptocurrencies to Generative AI. He holds a Ph.D. in Information Systems and Analytics. His work is published in leading venues such as ICIS, PACIS, GDN Journal, and SIGBPS. He is the recipient of ICIS Best Paper Award Runner-Up and Best UG Dissertation Advisor Commendation.

Caroline England

Founder - Featherbed Tales



Caroline is the founder of Featherbed Tales - an edtech/healthtech story-based app. She is a non-tech founder with a passion for tech for good. An award winning writer, she combines a love of connecting people with a make stuff happen attitude to bring stories to life through the voices of loved ones. She has a background in consultancy and research across multiple sectors and a drive

to improve the lives of children, families and others through the power of stories. She believes that in a rapidly evolving tech landscape that enhanced human connection will become increasingly important and play a valuable role in our physical and mental health as well as within education and learning.

Dr Beenish Sadique

Founder and CEO - Innovative Hydrogel



Dr Beenish Siddique is a young and enthusiastic entrepreneur with high ambitions. AEH Innovative Hydrogel was founded in late 2018 by Dr Beenish Siddique while she was writing her PhD thesis. The idea received three prestigious awards, which provided a strong foundation for the company's development. This led to the creation of one of the most innovative products for growers worldwide.

Danny Simpson

Chair, pro-manchester & MID Communications



Danny Simpson is the CEO of MID Communications & Founder of the MID Group, the largest multi award winning O2 Franchise in the Northwest, providing both B2B and B2C services across 16 retail stores throughout the Northwest and a business centre based in Rochdale.

Danny started his career back when GPRS was the only form of mobile internet and he also experienced the launch and impact of both 3G and 4G. He has also witnessed the release of the first ever iPhone in the telco marketplace along with many other tech gadgets like wearables, smart tech, innovative apps and especially tablets. Danny has seen how each of these have cannibalised the market in laptops to how the digital landscape has changed and works in our world as it is today.

He has the queens award for voluntary service, is a trustee for Hits Radio Cash for Kids Manchester, Non-Exec & Trustee for Cash For Kids UK, Non-Exec Director & Trustee for Kingfisher Learning Trust.

Conference Speakers

David Gardner

Partner - TLT LLP



David is an authority on IT, outsourcing and technology-driven procurement, with a particular focus on clients in financial services and the technology sector. David regularly acts as lead advisor for customer and suppliers to deliver complex and strategic technology projects, collaborations and commercial contracts of all shapes and sizes. He is ranked as a leading individual

in both Chambers & Partners and Legal 500, the independent guides to the legal profession. David is a published author and speaker who is regularly sought out for his industry insights. In 2018 David co-authored a ground-breaking research report on Open Banking, which is shaping the future of financial services.

Farooq Ansari

Client Partner - Softwire



Farooq is Client Partner at Softwire, a tech consultancy with offices in Manchester, London and Cambridge. He has over 15 years experience in the tech space, and works across areas including digital transformation, generative AI, and data engineering.

Prior to joining Softwire, Farooq has worked in a number of agencies, startups and consultancies in Manchester and London spanning areas as diverse as e-commerce, charities and third sector and game development. Prior to this, he worked at the BBC (also in Manchester).

Dougie Stringer-Fewtrill

Founder & Director - Path To Independence



Dougie Stringer is the founder and company director of Path To Independence. His journey began when he entered foster care at age 11 after his mother's suicide and his father's struggles with alcoholism. Growing up, he experienced over six adverse childhood events, which gave him a deep understanding of trauma. Today, Dougie's mission is to help young people thrive as they transition

out of care.

Professionally, he has worked in a residential home in Warrington, spent seven years as a personal advisor within a leaving care team in Cheshire, and currently balances roles as a social worker in a leaving care/Staying Close/Transitions team, director of The Path To Independence App, a steering group member, and a director board member for NASAP. These experiences have provided Dougie with valuable insights into the challenges young people face as they approach 18. He now believes he has developed the perfect solution to address this problem head-on.

Grace Shaffi

Cloud Solutions Architect - Amazon



Grace works as a Cloud Solutions Architect at AWS, primarily focused on UK airports including Manchester and Heathrow.

She is working with customers daily to explore how data, and importantly AI and Machine learning, can improve their businesses, reduce operational costs and improve customer experience. She is also an ex Computer Science teacher and is

passionate about the opportunities that technology and the cloud can bring about for the Manchester area as the demand for skills grows with emerging technologies in AI and Generative AI.

Conference Speakers

Hitomi Hamaba

Head of Product & Marketing Lead - Sony



As the Head of Product & Marketing Lead for News, Cloud & AI Solutions at Sony, Hitomi leads the strategic direction, development, and marketing of cutting-edge software products designed for the media industry. With over 10 years of experience in media and tech, she is passionate about revitalising traditional media business through digitisation and agile transformation.

Her career started as a journalist, reporting for TV broadcasters in Japan. After earning an MBA from the University of Cambridge, Hitomi transitioned to the tech side of the media industry, joining a rapidly growing startup in the media space. At Sony, she has leveraged cloud and AI technologies to drive innovation and change in the media sector, as well as orchestrated the transformation of multiple product lines by harnessing agile methodologies. Hitomi is an avid advocate for empowering women to pursue their career ambitions, sharing insights on pivotal topics such as #womenintech and #media evolution.

James Ford

Chief Technology Officer - Anumana



James is the CTO of Anumana and Founder of Jade Monkey. With a background in consulting and corporate data architectures, James has built cloud data platforms, process and data engineering solutions and enterprise reporting frameworks for businesses across the retail, healthcare and financial services sectors. His current focus is digital transformation and creating bespoke

AI solutions to enable organisations to view their data as an asset.

John Toon

Technical Strategy Lead - Beever and Struthers



As Technical Strategy Lead at Beever and Struthers, Chartered Accountants and Business Advisors, John grows and manages a portfolio of clients based across the UK and internationally. He deals with a diverse range of sectors and specialises in the Innovation, Communication and IT sector. John is a firm believer that whilst every business is unique, many business issues

are common and unique solutions can be found in other sectors – you just need to find the software to do so!

Ken McPhail

Head of AMBS - Alliance Manchester Business School



Ken McPhail is Head of Alliance Manchester Business School and Professor of Accounting at The University of Manchester. He was previously Deputy Head and Research Director at Alliance Manchester Business School. Before this, Ken was Vice Dean for Social Responsibility (2014-2017) within the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Manchester. As Vice Dean,

Ken oversaw the strategic development and implementation of the University's distinctive social responsibility agenda across five schools, 36 disciplines, 18,000 students and 1,800 academic and support staff. In addition, Ken also sat on the University's Social Responsibility Governance Group, chaired by the Vice Chancellor and Principle.

As Vice Dean for Social Responsibility, Ken delivered a new strategic relationship between the University and Greater Manchester City Council with a co-funded Economic Advisor to the new City Mayor. He was involved in the New Strategic Inclusive Growth Unit partnership with Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Prize-winning "Policy @ Manchester" platform for turning research into impact. He initiated the New Ethical Grand Challenges program and facilitated the Sustainably Challenge delivered to 5000 new students in 2016.

Conference Speakers

Kimberley Waldron

Managing Director - SkyParlour



An award-winning marketer and entrepreneur, with 15 years' experience in the technology, retail, mobile and banking sectors. In 2009, Kimberley co-founded international communications agency SkyParlour. Ten years on, from its base in central Manchester, the business has amassed Fintech clients around the world from Palo Alto, to Munich, to Jakarta and

back again to Cheadle.

Kimberley is co-chair of the pro manchester Fintech committee and industry advisor to the University of Salford Fintech MSc programme. She is also an active member of the Founders for Schools initiative and presents the Future of Banking podcast.

Kevin Smith

Lead Technology Adviser - Made Smarter NW Adoption Programme



Kevin Smith is the Lead Technology Adviser for the Made Smarter North West Adoption Programme, making new technology accessible to SME manufacturers. Before this, he spent over 20 years leading transformation projects in the Digital and Creative sector for a wide range of clients. His expertise lies in bridging the gap between complex tech solutions

and practical applications, driving digital growth in the manufacturing industry.

Marie Hamilton

GM Regional Lead - Microsoft



Marie joined Microsoft in February 2022 to lead their work across the Greater Manchester region. Greater Manchester is one of the largest devolved regions in the UK, with a strong mayoral presence and ambitious plans. Marie's role is to develop and lead the place-based strategy within Greater Manchester, working with a cross sector team aligning with regional priorities,

helping to transform public services, drive economic growth and improve outcomes for citizens.

Marie is passionate about social mobility and improving outcomes for all people, she is Co-Chair of the Microsoft UK Social Mobility network and the Northwest social impact group. She serves on multiple advisory boards including Salford Business School, the Blair Project and the newly formed TechUK Nations and Regions Council where she is Vice-Chair

In her spare time, she supports a charity which is focused on encouraging girls to consider careers in cyber. Marie has been working with public sector organisations for over 25 years supporting them with their digital transformation journeys. Before moving to Microsoft, she spent 10 years working for Avaya UK leading their UK central government strategy, and prior to that worked within the education technology sector. Marie lives in Stockport with her husband and children.

Martin Bremner

Head of Zebox UK - Zebox UK



Head of Zebox UK. ZEBOX connects the innovation of startups with the global impact of corporate leaders. Through co-innovation, we pave new paths for a bolder and more sustainable world.

Conference Speakers

Martin Keelagher

CEO - Agile Automations



After a successful career in Institutional Finance and Wealth Management, serial entrepreneur Martin returned to Greater Manchester to help several SMEs on their growth journeys. As CEO of Agile Automations, a dedicated Intelligent Automations provider, he leads a passionate team of consultants and developers based in the heart of Manchester. Together they

are working towards a future where Intelligent Automations, such as Robotic Process Automation and OpenAI, can revolutionise the modern workplace, unlocking the true potential of the workforce.

With years of experience in business development, finance and strategy planning, Martin has helped the business break into new areas, including the legal and public sectors in the last 12 months, building on its core proposition of supercharging financial institutions. He also has a keen interest in technology, AI, and the future of business in a digital world. Especially its impact on organisational culture and the changing demands of the future workforce.

Outside of his commercial roles Martin is a trustee at The Joshua Tree and a dedicated non-executive director for several organisations.

Matthew Scullion

CEO - Matillion



Matthew Scullion is the co-founder and CEO of tech unicorn Matillion. Matthew began his career as a software and IT professional and went on to build and lead high-performing teams at both large enterprises and small startups. He founded data productivity provider Matillion in 2011 to help struggling companies turn their data into meaningful insights.

Today, Matillion helps thousands of customers across the globe - including Docusign, Western Union, Slack, Tui and Cisco - to build and manage pipelines faster for AI and analytics - at scale.

Matthew has been named E&Y Entrepreneur of the Year UK, Datanami Person to Watch, and serves on the Capital Markets Industry Taskforce.

Michelle Sally

Partner - TLT LLP



Michelle is a commercially minded lawyer with a background in commercial contracts and corporate transactions. She focuses on technology; be it strategic mandates for tech companies or technology contracts for businesses (large and small).

She specialises in contract (in particular sourcing contracts), consumer, data and intellectual property law. She has a

particular interest in artificial intelligence, adtech, NFTs and Web3. She currently acts as a mentor for Abbey Road's music tech incubator.

She was awarded the Global Sourcing Association's Rising Star Award in 2022 and was recently certified as a Digital Operational Resilience Act (DORA) Trained Professional.

Dr Muktar Bello

Lecturer - Centre of Sustainable Innovation



Dr. Muktar Bello boasts more than two decades of expertise in cybersecurity, spanning roles in Law Enforcement, Academia, and Consultancy. He is a Masterclass Trainer, Terrorism Prevention Expert, Subject Matter Expert, and Advisory Policy Maker, having collaborated with prestigious global entities including UNODC, Knowtified, EFCC, and ISC2. He is an

ISO/IEC 27001 Senior Lead Implementer. His research delves into leveraging sustainable innovation and generative AI to craft science-based, intelligence-centric strategies, particularly in the realm of predictive policing to thwart criminal activities.

Conference Speakers

Naomi Timperley

Co-Founder - Tech North Advocates



Naomi Timperley is Co Founder of Tech North Advocates, UK Lead of Global Advocates and We Are GSI Ltd. She's proud to be in the top 50 Computer Weekly Most Influential Women in UK IT 2018, 2019, 2020, 3rd most influential woman in 2021, 4th in 2022 and 2023.

Naomi is an experienced growth and innovation consultant and has extensive

experience working with start-ups & growth businesses particularly in the tech, digital & creative sectors. Naomi has been a mentor for over 12 years and has mentored hundreds of businesses. She is an Honorary Industry Fellow at the University of Salford Business School. Naomi also sits on the board of charity Digital Inc and Social Enterprise PIE. She is the Innovation Director of Merseyway Innovation Centre in Stockport.

Nicola McCormick

Chief Operating Officer - pro-manchester



As COO, Nicola runs the business on a day to day basis, looks after the team and plays a key role in the creation of commercial strategy alongside Sam Booth. Nicola & Sam run the organisation together as equal partners with shared responsibility. She's a strong believer that their differing skillsets and experiences complement each other's strengths and perspectives, thus

building a culture of creativity and innovation. Nicola is passionate about the development of the organisation, helping evolve marketing, sponsorship, product development and customer service.

Nicola oversees the delivery of pro-manchester's extensive events and conference programme. This includes over 150 events per year from business lunches and breakfasts to the Trailblazing Tech conference and Made in Manchester Awards.

Nicola has worked in the events industry for over 20 years. She joined pro-manchester with a wealth of knowledge in 2010 as Events & Conference Manager and was made a Director in 2017.

Paul Adams

Head of Enterprise Architecture - Travel Counsellors



Spearheading the technology and platform architecture capability at one of the northwest's largest technology platforms, Paul's three-year tenure at Travel Counsellors sees him lead on key strategic initiatives, including the ongoing development and integration of AI into the company's award-winning global business operations.

Trading in six countries, Travel Counsellors supports experienced leisure and corporate travel experts to run their own businesses through the company's technology platform, where the use of AI performs a supporting role in providing frictionless booking and travel experiences for its growing customer base, whilst retaining focus on ensuring that Travel Counsellors USP – the personal touch in travel – continues to shine through.

With previous senior technology roles at Greensill and Crowder Consulting, Paul will be supporting the dedicated panel discussing the real-life implementation of AI in business, with real time insights and 'on-the-ground' experience of the use of AI in a technology-focussed business that strives to retain the human touch across a global, connected community.

Conference Speakers

Dr Penny Traynor

Paediatric Clinical Neuropsychologist -
Clinical Neuropsychology Services Ltd



Dr Penny Trayner is a Chartered Paediatric Clinical Neuropsychologist and Clinical Psychologist specialising in community-based rehabilitation for children and young people with acquired brain injury. Alongside her private clinical practice which she established in 2009, Dr Trayner is also a Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology and is Academic Director of the University of

Liverpool Doctorate in Clinical Psychology programme.

She has authored articles in leading international journals and academic texts and is an invited speaker at national and international conferences. Dr Trayner is also the creator of Goal Manager®, an award-winning cloud-based software application designed to facilitate effective goal setting and automate the tracking of progress and outcomes in rehabilitation. When she is not being a neuropsychologist, Dr Trayner is also a professional DJ and has used these skills to co-design a first-of-its-kind DJing for rehabilitation programme, BPM Rehab, which provides a vehicle for helping children and adults recover from catastrophic injuries.

Rhys Lloyd

Co-Founder - PharmAppy



Rhys is Co-Founder of PharmAppy, the only patient app fully-embedded into a pharmacy's workflow, allowing patients to seamlessly and securely access the services their pharmacy offers and connect with their pharmacy. With no manual entry of any sensitive data, PharmAppy mitigates risks of prescription items that aren't prescribed being ordered and fulfilled. Having closed an

investment round and strategic partnership in early 2023, PharmAppy, now NHS integrated and approved, have rolled out to pharmacies across the U.K. and are continuing their mission to revolutionise the way we as patients access, connect and interact with our pharmacy.

Sam Booth

CEO - pro-manchester



Sam has been at pro-manchester for 17 years and has been an integral part of its growth from a small, effective membership network to a sophisticated business development organisation. A firm part of the Manchester business community, Sam is a familiar face to most, constantly and efficiently working to bring businesses together in the city region.

As chief executive, Sam is responsible for the organisation's corporate engagement as well managing all existing key partnerships and member relationships. Sam manages the day-to-day running and strategic direction of the business alongside Nicola McCormick. They run the organisation together as equal partners with shared responsibility.

Sam also sits on the board of trustees for Forever Manchester, a charity that supports community activity across Greater Manchester. As well as this, Sam also sits on the Greater Manchester Economic Resilience Board, the Greater Manchester Organisational Representatives Group, the Manchester Business Sounding Board, the Bee Net Zero Advisory Board and the Manchester tech hub Board.

In 2019 Sam also became the Regional Deputy Chair of TheCityUK, where she helps to engage the national body on a regional level on behalf of individuals in the financial and professional services industries. In 2022 Sam was featured in the inaugural Top 50 North West tech Transformers list compiled by BusinessCloud.

Conference Speakers

Simon Groom

CEO & Co-Founder - MagnifyB



Father of two girls, soon-to-be-Grandfather, ex-Management & Business Consultant, ex-plc Consulting Director, ex-Small-Charity CEO & National Charity Senior Manager, Entrepreneur & Business Co-Founder, Business Board Adviser & SME Leadership Coach.

Passionate about preventing the decline & encouraging the growth of micro & small

businesses, now using the #MagnifyB SaaS, AI-driven SME platform to do just that! Passionate about Business Productivity & Growth, again in the SME arena. Passionate about Business!

Thomas Rowland

Head of Customer - Lokulus



Thomas is an Architect with over 10 years' experience working in complex pre-sales, engineering, delivery and support environments. He has a proven track record in leading multi-million pound software projects which exceed customer expectations and are delivered on time and on budget.

Thomas has have extensive experience in helping organizations all over the world to identify technology solutions for their business challenges. He is driven by the satisfaction of taking an idea from conception to delivery and passionate about technology and the benefits it can deliver.

Sophie Zienkiewicz

Co-Founder - Carbon Neutral Fuels



Motivated by a strong desire to be part of the solution to solving climate change, Sophie co-founded Carbon Neutral Fuels in 2022. She has a background in chemistry, having worked at the UK's National Nuclear Laboratory in the Insight and Strategy Team, and experience in sustainability consulting with betternotstop. Sophie believes in the power of young people to create positive

change and is a proud member of the Young Energy Professionals Steering Committee and former member of the Nuclear Institute's Net Zero Needs Nuclear team.

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Accenture is a leading global professional services company that helps the world's leading businesses, governments and other organizations build their digital core, optimize their operations, accelerate revenue growth and enhance citizen services—creating tangible value at speed and scale.

We are a talent- and innovation-led company with approximately 743,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries. Technology is at the core of change today, and we are one of the world's leaders in helping drive that change, with strong ecosystem relationships.

We combine our strength in technology and leadership in cloud, data and AI with unmatched industry experience, functional expertise and global delivery capability. We are uniquely able to deliver tangible outcomes because of our broad range of services, solutions and assets across Strategy & Consulting, Technology, Operations, Industry X and Song.

These capabilities, together with our culture of shared success and commitment to creating 360° value, enable us to help our clients reinvent and build trusted, lasting relationships. We measure our success by the 360° value we create for our clients, each other, our shareholders, partners and communities.

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Agile Automations

Agile Automations have a vision of a future where robotic processes are used to revolutionise the roles and requirements of the future workforce. Just as we have seen robots revolutionise the manufacturing industry by creating higher production rates, improved quality and cost savings, Robotic Process Automation (RPA) is revolutionising the way we think about and administer business processes, workflow, infrastructure, administration functions and customer service.

Agile Automations' solutions provide dramatic improvements in accuracy and cycle time and increased productivity in transaction processing while it elevates the nature of work by removing people from labour intensive, repetitive tasks, increased productivity and customer experience, both internally and externally.

www.agileautomations.co.uk

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The University of Manchester
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Alliance Manchester Business School

Manchester Business School was established in 1965 as one of the UK's first two business schools. Today, in its 50th anniversary year, Alliance MBS is one of the UK's largest campus-based business and management schools.

A full-service business school, AMBS provides industry-focused business and management education to over 6000 undergraduates, postgraduates and executives across the globe.

Programme areas include:

- Undergraduate
- Masters
- MBA - Full-time, Global Part-time and Global Executive
- Postgraduate research – PhD and DBA
- Executive Education

The School has over 500 academic, teaching and support staff who continue to gain international recognition for their work. Their influential research impacts business locally, nationally and internationally and covers a broad range of areas across four divisions: accounting and finance; innovation management and policy; management sciences and marketing; and people, management and organisations.

AMBS has centres in Dubai, Hong Kong, Miami, São Paolo, Shanghai and Singapore and is one of few institutions internationally to have achieved triple accreditation from AACSB International, AMBA and EQUIS. The Financial Times ranks its MBA 5th in the UK, 12th in Europe and 35th globally.

A recent £15 million donation from Lord Alliance ensures an exciting and prosperous future for Alliance Manchester Business School.

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From corporate events to live shows and everything in between, our diverse range of industry-leading equipment and team of dedicated professionals will turn your events into experiences that resonate longer after the final curtain falls. We offer a comprehensive range of services including event production, installation, technical support and custom design to name a few.

At The Aventive Group, we don't just meet your expectations, we surpass them. With your vision and our expertise, the possibilities are endless.

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STRUTHERS

Beever and Struthers

Beever and Struthers are a firm of Chartered Accountants and Business Advisors with offices in Birmingham and London, and headquartered in Manchester, currently ranked as one of the top 10 firms in the North West.

With 16 partners who are all experts in their respective fields, aided by some of the industry's most talented directors, managers, and support staff, we've been helping clients overcome their financial problems and achieve their goals for over 100 years.

Like a lot of firms, we have many areas of expertise, but broadly speaking we tend to work with businesses, their owners and with third sector organisations. Our approach is to combine highly technical knowledge, with a problem-solving approach and a keep-it-simple attitude; all wrapped up in a very personal service.

Beever and Struthers can help in those moments of frustration. You know those moments when you wish you could do something faster or find something quicker? Our Digital Transformation team can help you to find a way to fix these problems.

If you find yourself spending too much time wrangling with spreadsheets or doing the same thing over and over again, Beever and Struthers can help you work smarter and faster by managing your data and data entry better, whilst helping you and your staff use your time more effectively.

Embracing the opportunities of the digital age to grow your business and achieve your goals sounds a bit grandiose, so Beever and Struthers put it another way... It's about guiding you to find the best tools for the job and making everyone that little bit happier!

www.beeverstruthers.co.uk

bruntwood
SciTech

Bruntwood SciTech

Bruntwood SciTech - a joint venture between Bruntwood, Legal & General, and Greater Manchester Pension Fund - is the UK's largest property portfolio serving the growth of the nation's knowledge economy to become a global science and technology superpower. We create the environments and ecosystems that enable companies in the innovation sector, particularly those working in science and technology, to form, collaborate, scale, and grow.

We provide high quality office and laboratory space, a range of scientific services, and specialist business support, offering businesses unrivalled direct access to talent, markets, universities, the NHS, finance, and mentorship. Our network of city-wide innovation ecosystems connects the UK's most ambitious cities, regions, and innovation communities through collaboration and a unique public, private, academic, and clinical partner network.

Having already invested heavily in renewable energy by purchasing an industry-first share in Kirk Hill wind farm, Bruntwood SciTech's ambitious sustainability plans include aiming for all new developments to be net zero in both construction and operation - in shared areas - as part of their target to become a fully net zero business by 2050.

www.bruntwood.co.uk/scitech

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University of
Salford
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Centre for Sustainable Innovation

Where embracing change and collaboration leads to positive transformation. The Centre for Sustainable Innovation (**CSI**) is a catalyst for collaboration between academia, industry, and policymakers aiming to bolster their innovation journey. Our focus and collaborative approach empowers businesses to overcome new and existing challenges facing them in today's everchanging business landscape: adopting sustainable solutions, embedding change management culture and utilising digital technologies in order for them to innovate and prosper.

www.sustainable-innovation.salford.ac.uk



Net Hub

Net Hub is a free mobile and desktop app that is the gateway to all things networking. It is a fully tracked and managed ecosystem of the best networkers, best networking organisations and the best networking events around. No more need for multiple networking apps or tracking tools, access everything all in one place, connect with your network and track the value of leads that you send and receive.

www.mynethub.com

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The University of Manchester

The University of Manchester

The University of Manchester is part of the prestigious Russell Group of universities, with outstanding facilities and the widest range of courses and a core purpose to advance education, knowledge and wisdom for the good of society.

We are highly respected across the globe as a centre of teaching excellence and innovative research. With 25 Nobel Prize winners among our current and former staff and students, we have a history of world firsts and brilliant discoveries, from splitting the atom to giving the world graphene. We're committed to world-class research, an outstanding learning and student experience, and social responsibility in everything we do and in 2021 has been named the world's number one university for Sustainability Impact in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings.

Whether you're an international blue chip, an ambitious SME, or a charity with an eye for innovation, a business engagement partnership with The University of Manchester can have a significant impact on your organisation. Our dedicated business engagement managers can put you in direct contact with experts who can help you achieve your objectives and face future challenges with confidence. From providing business solutions to nurturing talent, we will work with you to build a strategy for success.

www.manchester.ac.uk



TLT LLP

Named as Law Firm of the Year at the Legal Business Awards 2023, having previously been named Law Firm of the Year at the British Legal Awards 2022 and The Lawyer Awards 2021 and Large Law Firm of the Year at the Manchester Legal Awards 2022, TLT is one of the fastest growing law firms in the UK.

With local, national and international reach, we draw on our diverse expertise to find solutions and look ahead to create new opportunities. In an unpredictable world, your business adapts and evolves to succeed, and so do we. Bringing together our expertise with efficient processes and integrated technology, we'll anticipate change to keep you ahead of your challenges.

Whether it's building relationships or the sustainability of our actions, we think long term – working with you to put people, communities and the environment at the forefront. We are a top 50, full service commercial law firm built on ambition, innovation and a dedication to client service delivery.

www.tlt.com

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LATITUDE STRATEGIC MARKETING

Latitude Marketing

When was the last time your marketing or design agency mentioned a return on investment? When did they last question whether you needed to spend as much as you are? At Latitude, these are the things we consider first. It's not what's best for us, it's what works for you.

Providing outstanding, forward thinking and insightful creativity with a big budget is easy. Doing it within a sensible budget, well that requires skill, and talent, and thought.

We're a strategic marketing agency that put our client's requirements first following it with impressive creativity and advice. We don't do marketing speak, we speak plainly and speak our minds. This approach to business has meant we have a high level of client retention and referral, working with clients both locally and internationally, in some cases for over 15 years. When was the last time an agency pitched to you in a language you understood?

www.latitude.marketing

CHRISTABEL PANKHURST INSTITUTE

FOR HEALTH TECHNOLOGY
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The Christabel Pankhurst Institute

The Christabel Pankhurst Institute ("the Pankhurst") drives positive change to health and care through technology. Our mission is to make positive change in health and care for all through multidisciplinary and collaborative development, evaluation and implementation of new health technologies.

Innovative technologies have the potential to provide solutions to many current health and care challenges. From automating the ways people are diagnosed, by using AI, to developing wearable devices to monitor important physiological changes, health technology innovations can improve lives, the efficiency of our healthcare system, and catalyse economic growth.

Through a multidisciplinary approach, the Pankhurst fosters new collaborations between all those interested in, or affected by, health technology innovations. We enable researchers; patients; health professionals; and entrepreneurs to work together to develop needs-led innovative solutions to health and care challenges. The Institute provides end-to-end support to translate world-leading research into new products and services which improve lives and catalyse growth in Greater Manchester's health innovation sector.

With its flagship headquarters located on Manchester's Oxford Road corridor, the Pankhurst is a unique regional partnership between The University of Manchester, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Health Innovation Manchester, Bruntdwood SciTech and Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust.

As well as driving ideas to move from research to real world use, the Pankhurst explores the impacts of health technologies, and works to address the inequalities caused or exacerbated by introducing digital technology in health and social care.

www.pankhurst.manchester.ac.uk

Event Sponsors



MID Digital Solutions

MID Digital Solutions is the sister company of MID Communications, the largest independent franchise of O2 in the North West. During our 18 year history, we've built our business by selling O2 products under the O2 brand to business and personal customers from our retail stores in Greater Manchester, Cheshire, Merseyside, and the Fylde Coast.

MID Digital Solutions was created to expand and deliver our services to more than just mobile for business customers in the NW and UK. Our team's expertise covers mobile, Cellular, Cloud telephony & phone systems (VoIP), internet connectivity, I.T Managed services, Merchant services, Utilities covering business gas and electric while providing complete, all-in-one solutions for our customers' we are one call, one bill, one solution for our business communities with dedicated account management.

www.midcommunications.com



MagnifyB

MagnifyB is an affordable, 24/7, AI-driven, SaaS Application, which offers virtual advice, peer-benchmarking, performance management and tailored learning to businesses with between 1 & 49 employees. We aim to become "Mission Control for Business Success", measuring and improving the "fitness level" of your business.

Our platform combines three key areas of support for any small business, to increase business productivity, Profitability & Cashflow:

- Baselineing & Performance Management
- Benchmarking against peers
- Tailored Learning

Our "pièce de résistance" is our proprietary WhatIf Financial Scenario Planner, which allows you to see the impact of small changes to your business in real-time!

Described by accountants, consultants and membership organisations as "A Game Changer for Small Business", our application is intended to support SMEs, either directly or as part of an agreement with their current support channels.

www.magnifyb.com

Trailblazing Tech Award 2024

Our Trailblazing Tech Award celebrates our region's disruptors, recognises the best in class for pushing the boundaries of technology and inspiring all with ground-breaking, solutions across diverse sectors.

Our three finalists Carbon Neutral Fuels, Featherbed Tales and The path to Independence will showcase their innovative products and give a live demonstration in front of the audience at the conference. The winner from our three finalists will be picked by you the audience and announced at the end of the event.

We had more entries than in any previous year, cementing the fact that the North-West is at the forefront of Trailblazing Technology. This was condensed down to a shortlist of ten, then our panel of experts spent the day interviewing to narrow it down to the final three.

It was a very tough choice and our judges deliberated hard, as they were incredibly impressed with all that were shortlisted. Thanks to our judges Narinder Sandher – Beever and Struthers, Martin Keelagher – Agile Automations, Nicola Bilner – TLT LLP and Rob Bowley, Strategic Tech Advisor.

Carbon Neutral Fuels



Carbon Neutral Fuels is a technology integrator. We are in the midst of designing a first-of-a-kind e-fuels facility which recycles carbon dioxide from the air to make sustainable fuels for aviation. This unique approach to solving climate change is backed by the UK Government, with CNF winning £1.4 million of funding (after only being established 11 months!) to develop this ground breaking technology. Our drop-in replacement fuel represents an exciting viable alternative to current technology options, like biofuels, and our purpose-led start-up is set to grow rapidly as we launch our seed funding round later this spring.

www.cnf.energy

Featherbed Tales



Featherbed Tales is a digital platform enabling the user to quickly and easily create a personalised narration of a storybook. This is automatically overlaid onto a beautifully illustrated digital storybook, so that a child can read along, enjoy the pictures and hear the voice of a loved one reading to them -reconnecting separated families, comforting children in hospital and creating a legacy of forever memories. The personalised nature of the story narration is also extremely engaging – helping engage reluctant readers and enabling children to create their own recordings to build their speech, language and oracy (verbal communication) skills.

www.featherbedtales.com

The Path to Independence



One-third of young people leaving care lose their homes every year. They represent 25% of the homeless population and 41% are not in education, employment, or training. Even more alarming, care leavers are five times more likely to take their own lives. Path To Independence empowers young individuals not only to navigate through these concerning statistics but to thrive as they transition out of care. Through our app, we are dedicated to assisting every care leaver throughout the UK to become tenancy ready, financially confident, up- skills and employable and healthy individuals, conveniently accessible at their fingertips.



pro-manchester is the largest business development organisation in the North West. Often described as 'the gateway to the business community'.

With over 300 members from a huge variety of sectors, we are here to support the growth and development of businesses across the North of England. Established in 1986, pro-manchester is the member's organisation representing the business, financial and professional sector in Greater Manchester.

Our key success factors are membership, events, networking and business development. We host up to 150 events each calendar year and increase professional excellence through knowledge sharing, creating partnerships and staying ahead of the ever-changing business environment.

If you're interested in becoming a member or want to attend any more of our events, head to www.pro-manchester.co.uk

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If you're interested in sponsoring any of our future events please contact rachel.tetlow@pro-manchester.co.uk