

Scale-up education from Scotland's universities

Introduction

1. The SFC, in partnership with Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (the partners), is inviting proposals from Scotland's universities for up to three, two year pilot entrepreneurial scale-up education programmes.

Background

2. The Scottish Government has explicitly committed in the Enterprise and Skills Review¹ to increase the number and quality of scale up businesses in Scotland working closely with all parts of the Scottish ecosystem including the enterprise agencies, universities and into the private sector.
3. The Can Do SCALE summer school, launched in 2014, is funded by the partners. The current school is led by Bill Aulet of MIT² and will run until 2019 under existing contractual arrangements. We would like to transition the future delivery of this training to a similar quality and approach from well-prepared universities and entrepreneurs based in Scotland.
4. To this end SFC has hosted a number of sessions with representatives from Scottish universities to explore a Scottish approach - using the Can Do SCALE summer school as a model of good practice. This call for proposals builds on the learning from these conversations.

Defining scale-up education and audience

5. Our definition of the scale-up audience we wish to support through this work follows the current definition in use for Can Do SCALE.

Diagram-one – the scale-up audience



6. Our learning to date suggests a particular approach to teaching this audience which has received positive feedback from participants – this includes:
 - Focus on the entrepreneur as an individual learning about themselves as much as about what they need to do to scale their business;

¹ <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/enterprise-and-skills-strategic-board-outline-plan/>

² <http://mitsloan.mit.edu/faculty-and-research/faculty-directory/detail/?id=9118>

- Practical learning focussed on UK and EU case studies chosen specifically to address known weaknesses in the current scale up system;
 - Inspirational practitioner-led teaching with strong academic rigour and theory;
 - Course material based on international good practice;
 - Teaching to cohorts of appropriate size and stage in their entrepreneurial journey in order to build communities and promote peer to peer support;
 - Follow-up activity and continuous support;
 - Accessible classroom based teaching **not** distance learning.
7. These then form the core teaching principles we would like to invite universities to build on as they develop their provision for entrepreneurial scale-up education.

Call for proposals

8. We are inviting proposals from Scotland's universities for up to three pilot scale-up entrepreneurial education programmes aimed at delivering inspirational practitioner-led teaching to ambitious scale-up entrepreneurs. Our goal will be to identify sustainable models with good potential for impact which can be replicated across Scotland. We will do this call in three stages.

Stage-one – expression of interest

9. We wish to take a cohort of up to 10 universities to MIT (Boston, USA), in the week commencing 5 November 2018, to take part in a learning programme. This will include substantial engagement with Bill Aulett who through prolonged engagement with Scotland has gained intimate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the Scottish entrepreneurial system and the opportunities for further development. Travel and accommodation costs would need to be borne by participating universities.
10. The agenda for the visit is being arranged and there will be an opportunity for the group to help shape it. We expect the agenda to include the following:
- Open session with Bill Aulett;
 - Learning from businesses that have successfully made the journey from start-up to scale-up;
 - Open session with MIT academics;
 - Observing delivery of MIT programmes.
11. Universities interested in being part of this visit are invited to submit a brief expression of interest (no more than 800 words) to SFC (scaleup@sfc.ac.uk) **by 15 October** – setting out:

- The university's ambition to deliver sustainable scale-up education to entrepreneurs and evidence of a recent track record in engagement with entrepreneurial businesses;
- A statement from the university's nominated representative of their personal commitment to engaging proactively in the programme and to disseminate learning within their employer university and other universities;
- The learning outcomes the nominated representative will wish to achieve;
- Commitment to cover the full costs of the trip.

12. The partners will select the cohort based on the quality of this information.

13. It is important to note that participation in this stage is **not** a prerequisite for stages two and three described later in this document.

Stage-two – pulling it all together

14. In late November 2018, we will bring the delegation together with other universities interested in being part of any pilot programme to disseminate the learning from the MIT visit and to consider other key evidence which will be available by this time – including:

- The report of the independent evaluation of the impact of the Can Do SCALE summer schools – commissioned by the partners;
- UK and EU case study material - which will be commissioned by the partners.

15. This event will also be used to encourage potential collaborative approaches.

Stage-three – call for proposals (indicative guidance)

16. Universities will be invited to submit proposals (to scaleup@sfc.ac.uk) for pilot scale-up programmes **by 31 January 2019**. We propose to support up to three pilots and successful proposals will receive development funding in FY2018/19. SFC will make funding available up to a total of £90K for this purpose in FY2018/19. These costs could include, for example, course development and the engagement of entrepreneur/practitioner teachers.

17. Successful proposals will receive a contribution to programme delivery costs in 2019 and 2020. SFC expects to make a total of up to £600K³ available for this purpose. Financial contribution from SE and HIE will need to be negotiated and is likely to take the form of subsidising business attendance on the pilot programmes.

³ Subject to availability of funds.

18. Proposals are likely to be in the form of a fully costed short business plan adopting the teaching principles referred to earlier in this document. Proposals will be assessed by a panel comprising the partners against the following criteria:

- Good fit with university strategy;
- Clear and convincing approach to curriculum development and expected outcomes for participants;
- Clear and convincing commitment to adopting practitioner-led teaching;
- Ability to attract a cohort of appropriate size and relevance meeting the target audience definition described earlier in this paper – for example, evidenced by the university's or collaboration's business contacts;
- Ideas on pre-and-post-programme activity and ongoing engagement with participants;
- Plan for sustainability;
- Good potential for outcomes to be disseminated widely to share good practice;
- Cost;
- Equality and diversity.

19. We encourage a diversity of response in terms of forms of delivery and focus – for example:

- Place/geography;
- Business type;
- Sector.

20. It is possible that we will aim to refine the guidance for full proposals at the 'pulling it all together' meeting in November 2018 (please confirm attendance by replying to scaleup@sfc.ac.uk).

What does success look like?

21. We will know the pilots have been successful when participating companies develop a robust plan to scale their companies through such measures as increase in number of employees, turnover, and international sales and over the following years implement this plan.

22. This type of impact will take time to be realised so shorter term outcomes such as positive participant feedback and going on to apply for more intensive support will act as indicators of success.

Equality and diversity

23. SFC considers equality and diversity in all its priorities. SFC asks institutions to be mindful of the Equality Act (2010), including the statutory requirement for Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments (EHRIs) of new and revised strategies and policies. **Proposals should include an EHRIA.** Further information and guidance is available from SFC's website⁴.

Timetable

24. The indicative timetable is as follows:

Date	Milestone
3 October	Call for proposals published
15 October	Deadline for EOIs
17 October	Confirmation of MIT visit group, agenda, and dates
w/c 5 November	Visit to MIT
23 November	Pulling it all together meeting
31 January 2019	Deadline for full proposals
February 2019	Successful pilots confirmed
2019 – 2020	Pilots run

Further information

25. For further information please contact Keith McDonald, Assistant Director, Research and Innovation, kmcdonald@sfc.ac.uk; Tel: 0131 313 6674.

⁴ www.sfc.ac.uk/access-inclusion/access-equality-diversity/access-equality-diversity.aspx