



## PRESS RELEASE

May 9th, 2016

### **Public vote to give one Scottish start-up the chance to pitch for additional Scottish EDGE Funding of £100,000** *Edinburgh, United Kingdom*

For the first time ever, the public are being given the opportunity to judge start-up businesses in Scotland's largest business competition. Three Scottish businesses are participating in the Scottish EDGE Wild Card public vote in the hope of winning the chance to pitch for up to £100,000 in grant and loan funding at the Scottish EDGE final on June 20th, 2016. Having already won up to £10,000 in the Scottish EDGE's Wild Card EDGE competition, Blusho, Estendio and Pio Design now have until May 27th, 2016 to convince the public that their product or service is deserving of additional funding and business support.

The three start-up businesses taking part in the Scottish EDGE Wild Card public vote were selected from a pool of twelve Wild Card EDGE winners by a panel of expert judges, and represent the broad spectrum of businesses who apply for and win the support of Scottish EDGE twice a year. Allan Watt, Director of the Prince's Trust Scotland and chairman of the judges, said this about the businesses; "Blusho, Estendio and Pio Design are perfect examples of pushing the boundaries and creating an exciting new business with huge potential. They all capture your imagination and make it easy for the public to see how Scottish Edge might well be the kickstart to Scotland's next great success story."

Announcing the public vote, Evelyn McDonald, CEO of the Scottish EDGE, said; "for the first time ever, we're inviting the general public to participate in the Scottish EDGE process which looks to identify and support Scotland's innovative, high-growth potential entrepreneurial talent. We're really excited to offer one of our Wild Card EDGE winners the chance to pitch for additional funding of up to £100,000, on top of the funding of up to £10,000 which they have already won, and believe that the public – and entrepreneurship supporters in particular – will be keen to get involved."

This is a fantastic opportunity for the winner of our public vote, as it offers an invaluable learning experience regardless of whether or not the start-up business wins money as a result of their pitch. Many applicants to the Scottish EDGE process who are unsuccessful return to pitch successfully in future rounds and we hope this will be the case for some of our Wild Card EDGE winners.

To vote and for further information on each of the finalists, visit [www.scotedge.com/wildcard-vote/](http://www.scotedge.com/wildcard-vote/).

**ENDS**

#### **Photography & Enquiries**

Photography is available upon request.

All media enquiries should be directed to Christopher Sladdin, Marketing & Communications Assistant at [christopher.sladdin@scotedge.com](mailto:christopher.sladdin@scotedge.com) or on +44 (0) 7984 925 979.

**Notes to Editor**

## About Scottish EDGE

Scottish EDGE is a competition aimed at identifying and supporting Scotland's up-and-coming, innovative, high-growth potential entrepreneurial talent.

Scottish EDGE is made up of four categories; Scottish EDGE, for companies of all sectors and stages; Higgs EDGE, a special technology award aimed at entrepreneurs who have an engineering, science or technology based business and have a product, or product under development, which is scalable and capable of globalisation; Young EDGE, for companies where all directors are under the age of 30; and WildCard EDGE, for companies who are currently pre-trading.

Historically the Scottish EDGE was run by Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise alongside various partners, however, in August 2014 Sir Tom Hunter and the Royal Bank of Scotland agreed to extend the success of the fund and lead in its delivery going forward.

David Shearer chairs the Scottish EDGE board with directors from The Hunter Foundation and Royal Bank of Scotland, alongside an Advisory Board drawn from our partners in Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Business Gateway, Entrepreneurial Scotland, Prince's Trust and Social Investment Scotland.

## About Blusho

Did you know, there's ninety million #makeup images on Instagram alone? Yet the millions of people inspired by them become frustrated when they can't find what products were used to create the look, or how to buy them. Enter Blusho; bringing beauty to life through 'shoppable selfies.' Say goodbye to buying beauty online from a lifeless digital colour swatch and see how products really look on. We already feature 40,000 products including brands like MAC, Benefit and have partnered with big beauty retailers on an affiliate model, so global expansion is a real target.

Blusho, a Glasgow-based internet start-up, was founded in the summer of 2015 by Carla Mackay.

## About Estendio

Estendio, a Glasgow-based start-up founded by a participant in the University of Strathclyde's Entrepreneurial Program, Chris Hughes, aims to revolutionise the educational development of students with dyslexia throughout the world by delivering a range of innovative software and solutions - the first being Present Pal. With graded presentations now being such a significant element of further education, dyslexic students are put in a position of difficulty - one for which there is currently no solution. Present Pal is the first ever presentation support app designed for the specific needs of a dyslexic presenter, aiming to reduce the load on the working memory and encouraging the use of the long term memory, to increase the student's confidence and grades.

## About Pio Design

Pio Design Limited is a technology start-up company that has developed a revolutionary new computer keyboard (Pio 1) combining the practicality of conventional devices with the functionality of touch screen input. In short, each mechanical key can be assigned to display and perform any function, image, or language symbol according to needs. The keyboard layout can also respond to input from applications to interact with the user in a dynamic manner, e.g. as he/she progresses through a game. Priced to appeal to a mass market, the keyboard will improve productivity in the workplace, enhance the immersive

experience of game play, and support learning in educational settings, as well as removing current barriers for those involved in multi-language environments.

Pio Design Limited is based in Dunkeld, Perthshire and was founded by Euan and Bill Colley.