
Date: 16th May 2016

Giant 10ft Beagle Dog on power boat in Albert Dock on 21st May asks people of Liverpool to vote for local entrepreneur's investment pitch to Richard Branson.

Vote for start-up pitch: **Speaking of Human Based Research** at www.vmbvroom.com

LJMU lecturer Alex Irving is calling the people of Liverpool to help her win a share of £1,000,000 in prizes with a business pitch to Richard Branson as part of the Virgin Media Business VOOM 2016 competition.

Currently Alex's pitch is in position 2 out of 4,894 other business pitches.

VOOM 2016 relies on public votes to shortlist the UK's most exciting entrepreneurs. Alex believes her idea of a PR company Speaking of Human Based Research, will dramatically accelerate the discovery of cures for cancer and other chronic diseases on the rise, benefit all species and the UK economy.

Alex says "Behind my business idea is a shocking truth that according to scientists and doctors around the world, current medical research is BROKE! Billions of pounds every year is wasted funding a traditional research method that modern science has proved ineffective."

Meanwhile, pioneering researchers developing and using effective human-relevant methods like 'organs on a chip' and human tissue tests, are starved of funding. And yet these are the pioneers who are capable of making cures a reality for patients. The objective of my PR business is to redirect billions of wasted pounds away from ineffective traditional methods to pioneering human-based research which is effective."

Alex adds "Speaking of Human Based Research is a WIN WIN for patients, animals, and the UK economy."

Sir Richard Branson says "Virgin Media Business VOOM 2016 is all about seeking out, supporting and celebrating the UK's most exciting businesses. It's the biggest and most valuable pitch competition out there - we're hoping everyone will find a way to get involved!"

Andy Farrell of Liverpool marine business - Bluepoint - who is providing the boat and crew says: "As a local entrepreneur in Liverpool I'm pleased to help another aspiring entrepreneur and especially when it's a business that will help us all, who are affected by Cancer and other chronic diseases like Alzheimers." As well as showing support for local business, increased public votes in Liverpool could result in Virgin Media Business crowning North West as Britain's most entrepreneurial region.

For more information on how to vote for us on social media and follow the Giant 10ft Beagle Dog on a power boat, visit Facebook @TheBigBeagle or Twitter @TheBigBeagle. Alternatively, visit www.TheBigBeagle.com

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For more information contact:

Alex Irving: 07739 531 256

Website: www.SpeakingOfHumanBasedResearch.com

Twitter [@TheBigBeagle](https://twitter.com/TheBigBeagle)

Facebook [@TheBigBeagle](https://www.facebook.com/TheBigBeagle)

Notes to editors:

The Big Beagle is a mascot of Speaking of Human Based Research used for fundraising.

History of organisation:

Alex has 20 years broadcasting experience working in network TV at BBC, ITV and Channel 4 and is a senior media lecturer at LJMU. Five years ago, Alex turned to the medical science community in the UK and abroad asking why cures have not yet been found for cancer and other chronic diseases. The answers she received from leading medical science experts and clinicians about the main obstacles sparked Alex's idea for this PR business, which will accelerate the discovery of cures for diseases such as cancer.

In 2014 Alex founded Speaking of Human-Based Research (SOHBR) - a voluntary public relations organisation to promote the work and achievements of underfunded pioneering medical research scientists. Since then Alex has promoted and represented human-based medical scientists on TV, Radio and in the press throughout the UK attempting to raise their profile and attract public and private investor attention.