

8 January 2008

## Media Release

### **Win £2,000 with your business bright ideas**

The hunt is on to find the best new business idea in Greater Peterborough.

The annual Start Doing Something New Today competition to find the city's best new entrepreneurs was launched today (TUES).

Organised by Peterborough Enterprise Programme, the competition is aimed at people who think they have a great business idea but are yet to turn it into reality, or those who have started their new firm in the last six months.

The winner gets a £2,000 cash prize, trophy, and a year's free business mentoring from the panel of judges including representatives from Hegarty Solicitors, MacIntyre Hudson Chartered Accountants, HSBC, Athene Communications and the Evening Telegraph.

Past winners and finalists have gone on to launch successful businesses and say the competition was key to their motivation.

Mum-of-three Saida Ebrahim, 40, scooped last year's award with her idea to import and distribute halal and vegetarian marshmallows and jelly sweets. Saida, who fled Tanzania for Peterborough due to ethnic cleansing, launched Scrumptious Sweets in May.

She said: "To win the competition last year was overwhelming. Originally I entered to get some good experience but in fact it has made a huge difference to the business. I have the support of business professionals like accountants and solicitors and my mentor at PEP has been wonderful.

“It’s been a huge learning curve but I know the product has great potential and winning the competition really boosted my confidence.”

Former housewife Saida started out selling to a handful of shops in Peterborough but within weeks orders doubled and she extended to Birmingham, Bradford, Luton and Leeds.

Katie Hart, director at Peterborough Enterprise Programme, said: “This competition isn’t about finding an Alan Sugar or a Richard Branson, it’s about showing that real people – you, your friends, neighbours and family – can do it too.

“Hundreds of great business ideas never get off the ground because people don’t have the confidence or the support to see it through. This competition is about proving it can be done, and offers a helping hand to the most promising ideas.”

Sponsored by Hegarty Solicitors, MacIntyre Hudson, Athene Communications, HSBC and the Evening Telegraph, the competition culminates in an awards evening on March 12. Previous guest speakers include Ruth Badger, TV presenter and former star of The Apprentice, and entrepreneur Doug Richard, best known for his involvement in TV’s Dragon’s Den.

Entry forms are available by ringing PEP on 01733 426500, emailing [businessidea2008@cambenterprise.co.uk](mailto:businessidea2008@cambenterprise.co.uk), or picking them up from the PEP offices in Cathedral Square or other sponsors offices. The closing date is February 18.

### **Notes to Editors**

Peterborough Enterprise Programme is part of Cambridgeshire Enterprise Services. Other enterprise offices are based in Cambridge, Ely, Huntingdon and St Neots. Services they offer include one-to-one support, networking events, advice on available workshops and access to a comprehensive range of on-line information.

**-Ends-**

For further information please contact Sarah Dade on 01733 865040 or Rebecca Stephens on 07879 633796.