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BDA Celebrates Mentor Scheme Success

To wrap up Dyslexia Awareness Week the British Dyslexia Association is celebrating the success of its Mentoring scheme, launched with Cass Business School and Dyslexia Scotland in March.

Research by Professor Julie Logan, recently published in the Dyslexia Journal, suggests dyslexic people make up almost 20% of the UK entrepreneurial population and some of the strategies they have developed to overcome dyslexia are useful in business. The aim of the scheme is to encourage dyslexics who are already successful to share their tools and techniques with their mentees who are just starting out in their careers.

We already have group mentoring sessions from a number of high profile mentors, **David Richards**, CEO of Aston Martin, **Jonty Hearnden**, TV Antiques expert, and **Zenna Atkins**, Chair of Ofsted.

The BDA and Dyslexia Scotland believe that one of the key ways we can help people who are dyslexic is to provide role models who have excelled. This will demonstrate that being dyslexic does not have to be a barrier, an important message for the people involved in the programme as well as the world at large. The programme has so far linked 23 dyslexic adults with successful dyslexic people who have been sharing ideas, advice and coping strategies for work life with their mentee.

The Mentoring scheme is supported by technology companies Claro, Intel Corporation, Microlink, MindGenius, Nuance, and Olympus. Assistive technology can provide access to reading materials and increase independence for people with dyslexia and other reading-based challenges that make reading standard print an everyday challenge.

Julie Logan, Professor of Entrepreneurship at Cass Business School said: "The business world desperately needs people with great ideas and creativity, particularly now in time of recession. Many dyslexics are creative and have great business ideas; the assistive technology provided allows their ability to shine through."

Contacts

Rachel Lawson

BDA Media and Communications Officer

01344 381559 / 07884 383 202

Notes to Editors

1. The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) is the voice of dyslexic people. Our vision is that of a dyslexia friendly society that enables dyslexic people to reach their potential. We offer advice, information and help to dyslexic people, their families and the professionals who support them.
2. Dyslexia Scotland is the national voluntary organisation representing the needs and interests of people with dyslexia in Scotland. Our vision is to encourage and enable dyslexic people, regardless of their age and abilities, to reach their potential in education, employment and life. Dyslexia Scotland is running a number of events during Dyslexia Awareness Week to celebrate the strengths of dyslexia. For further information contact us on 01786 446650 or www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk
3. Cass Business School has carried out several pieces of research into the link between dyslexic people and entrepreneurs. They have also undertaken a piece of research for Microsoft called 'Unlocking the potential of the UK's Hidden Innovators'. This research discovered that dyslexic people make up almost 20% of the 3.5 million entrepreneurial population in the U.K., with the U.S. figure being even higher at 35% (J. Logan 2008).
4. * If US rates were matched a further 560,000 UK entrepreneurs would exist (J. Logan, C. Hendry, N. Courtney, J. Brown, 2008).
5. Mentee and Mentor's can apply to be a part of the scheme through the British Dyslexia Association's website: <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/get-involved-and-fundraising/mentoring.html>.
6. For more information on dyslexia please go to www.bdadyslexia.org.uk or call the helpline on 0845 251 9002.