1. **Applicant Details**

Name and Title of Lead Applicant

Mr John Brown

University/Research Institute

University of XXXXX (and state if a joint application, with whom)

Address

Postal Address

Position

Senior Lecturer

Your Email Address

j.smith@XXXX.ac.uk

Your Mobile Number

07xxxxxxxxx

Company Twitter

@xyz

Company Facebook

Company Linkedin

Name and Institution of your PhD Supervisor/Principal Investigator

Dr Mary Black

**For students:** I can confirm that my Supervisor/PI has given me permission to enter this Competition (tick box to confirm)

**For staff:** I can confirm that I have spoken to my TTO and they are supportive of the application (tick box to confirm) X

1. **Your Team**

Same as above, please include any others involved

Dr Mary Black

University of XXXXXXXXXXX

Building A

Room B

Town/City

Email: m.black@XXXXXXXX.ac.uk

Phone: 07xxxxxxxxx

1. **Programme applied for (Please tick one)**
* Converge Challenge - plan to incorporate a company within 12-18 months X
* KickStart – early stage idea
* Social Enterprise –a positive impact on social or environmental issues

1. **Title of Innovation/Business Idea**
* Including Proposed company name if you have one

**Boutique 2100**

1. **Non-confidential summary of your Innovation/Business Idea (max. 100 words – in laymen terms)**

Clothes shopping is often frustrating these days. Buying online offers choice but no opportunity to try and feel an item, going into the shops results in frustration of limited availability of sizes and models. The solution is Boutique 2100, which enables to display all available sizes and models on the shop floor for customers to try and purchase, with goods delivered to a home address or collect+ point.

Starting from small and up and coming brands and then diversifying into high street Boutique 2100 will be targeting the £59 billion clothing and footwear market in the UK and then globally.

1. **Your product or service (max. 450 words). Please describe your idea.**
* What problem does it solve?
* Who are your competitors and why is your idea better?
* What stage of development is it at (idea, proof-of-concept, prototype, fully developed)?
* Do you have intellectual property protection?
* What previous funding you had (for e.g. Proof-of-Concept, Follow-on Fund, RSE Enterprise Fellowship, other)
* Please include an artist’s impression or image - yes

**Problem**

We are all familiar with frustration of clothes and shoe shopping. Most of the shopping brands, from dedicated websites such as ASOS and Net-a-Porter to websites of known brands such as M&S and Next offer a huge variety of models on-line with great availability of sizes. The delivery charges are usually quite small and most brands offer free returns.

However, shopping on-line always has a number of limitations. You can’t try the item on, can’t feel the material and the colours on screen are often very different to those in real life. In addition, the social experience and enjoyment of shopping is ultimately non-existence when sitting in front of a computer or a tablet.

Going into the shops offers a very different type of frustration. There is a much reduced choice of models due to a limited area of shop floors and even those that are displayed often miss required sizes. And the standard answer of any sales assistant of “you can order it on-line” defies the whole point of going into a shop in the first place.

**Solution**

The solution is Boutique 2100, which is a novel retail model that has been developed through extensive research into consumer behaviours, retail marketing, paired with mathematical model that would power the backend of the system.

Boutique 2100 model will have all available sizes and models of clothes on the shop floor for customers to try and have all benefits of social shopping experience. If a customer decides to go ahead, he or she can simply pay for a purchase and get it delivered to their home address or collect+ point for a small fee.

Our service/product offering consists of 3 elements:

* a model for a novel design of a shop floor combining displays, comfortable waiting areas with refreshments and fitting rooms.
* a training manual for shopping assistants enabling them to advice and support customers
* back-end software powered by a novel mathematical model enabling retailers to optimize number of items in each sizes, availability and manage the flow of goods.

**Competition**

We don’t have direct competition but our indirect competitors are apps like Mallzee who offer options to share your shopping experience on-line with friends. Polyvore and other personalised fashion apps. However, none of them offer a combination of choice and ability to try and feel-best parts of a shopping experience.

I**P**

Currently the back-end model is protected through trade secrets, the manuals through copyright and shop floor designs through design rights. We would like to explore potential of patenting the mathematical algorithms powering the back-end software.

1. **Your target market (max. 250 words)**
* What is your market?
* How will you get your product to market?
* How will your business make money?

The global clothing and footwear market is estimated at $2.2 trillion (59 billion Euros in the UK and 380 billion Euros in Europe, $250 billion in the US). Of the 50 largest markets 24 are in Europe, hence Boutique 2100 will be first targeting the UK and then expand to the EU retailers. Currently a third of the consumer spending goes through the shops, online sales are growing by 26% a year.

Our customers will be high street retailers. We have initially started engagement with new fashion brands that use exhibitions to raise their profile. Our model has been already piloted at a 3 different fashion design exhibitions where the floor space is at an absolute premium. Our plan is to expand to the premium high street brands that are generally located in the city centres where floor space is limited and expensive. The ultimate, longer-term goal (3-5 years) would be to target department store like John Lewis and Marks and Spencer.

We have recently begun discussions with some of the high street brands such as X, Y and Z and have obtained significant interest. Our aim is to have 2 pilots running within next 3-8 months. We will be particularly targeting new shops that are planning for opening within 12 months.

Our model will be to license Boutique 2100 software and store layout designs in return for an annual renewable license. Plus all retailers have to purchase train the trainer manual and workshops to imbed new customer service practices with staff.

1. **Benefits to the customers (max. 200 words)**
* Who are your customers?
* Are they different from the end users?
* Have you spoken to your customers and/or end users?

Our customers will be high street retailers, first individual premium brands such as Coast, Whistles, Karen Millen and ultimately department stores like John Lewis. The users of Boutique 2100 offering will be both consumers and retailers. We are looking to deliver completely different experience for a consumer and change the way people shop. We have conducted extensive surveys of shoppers on Princess St in Edinburgh as well as through Survey Monkey among staff and students of University of X. Both have confirmed that people want to go shopping in town combining retail therapy with a social occasion of going out with friends/partners. People were open to the model of Boutique 2100 and highlighted that the key concern for them would be amount of the delivery charge and the length of time having to wait for an item to try on.

We have also identified other key stakeholders such as local councils who are looking for ways to reinvigorate high streets and restaurant/café owners who will benefit from the increased footfall of shoppers in city centres. Since Boutique 2100 will improve shopping experience, we envisage that Councils might be able to offer some incentives for retailers to adopt our model.

1. **Requirements for development (Please tick all applicable)**
* Finance X
* Contacts X
* Intellectual property advice
* Market research X

1. **For Social Enterprise applications only: Provide a summary of your project’s social aims (max. 200 words)**

“A Social Enterprise is a business which focuses on tackling social problems, strengthening communities, improving people’s life chances or protecting the environment, as opposed to generating income for private individuals or bodies. Whilst social enterprises still aim to generate profits like any other business, those profits are principally reinvested in the business, or in the community, to help further the enterprise’s social aims.”

* Detail the kinds of benefits you would plan to deliver to individuals, the communities and/or the environment.
* What would your organisation plan to do with any surplus profits it generates?

1. **Will your proposed business be selling products or services?** **(Please tick one)**
* Product x
* Service x
* Both
* Don’t know
1. **Commercialisation Training Programme**

The Converge Challenge Training Programme will take place in Edinburgh on May 29 –May 31, 2018.  Please indicate whether or not you would like to apply for a place on this free residential course.  YES

1. **How did you hear about us?**
* University x
* Social Media x
* Posters x
* Other, news story
1. **Please confirm that you have read our terms and conditions. (Please tick )x**