The following are examples of previous EMOY applications which were focused on Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in diverse ways.

1. **Applicants**: Olivia Kelly and Kelly Davies

**Module/School**: Schools of Management and Economics

**Themes**: Entrepreneurship, Student Society, Employability, Female Entrepreneurship, Networking

**Proposal:***The Board: a network to inspire and succeed*

Our Motivation

Founded at the end of 2020 by undergraduate students Kelly Davies and Olivia Kelly, The Board is a new, student-run organisation aiming to fill a gap in the St Andrews societal scene for driven female students seeking a head start in their career-focused endeavours. We study in different schools, Management and Economics respectively; both of which provide an enriching environment to allow students to excel. Whilst this enables students to be equipped in attaining industry knowledge through modules such as Financial Economics: Asset Pricing and International Business, opportunities created and personal development to forge a successful career is not accomplished. This is particularly evident for female students as they encounter challenges males are less likely to have to overcome, such as imposter syndrome or the workplace beauty trap. This creates a greater challenge for them given the male dominated nature of the financial and consulting industries.

Our Story

We created The Board to ameliorate this shortcoming, to produce a collective network that offers a seat at ‘the table’, inspiring female students to realise their value and develop professionally. With prior experience working together only in the successful hosting of an alumni panel for the University of St Andrews Consulting Society, our shared ambition and intrinsic motivation to create a positive difference has created a dynamic partnership. We have reflected on each other’s strengths, capitalising on these to ensure effective functioning of The Board. We created a team of ‘Directors’ of likeminded individuals with a friendship with either of us. We have allowed them to take on their roles in their own direction to encourage them to take pride in their work. This also serves to offer broader perspectives for ideas and for future events. We have already been able to share our advice and knowledge with less experienced Directors; we aim to generalise this across all members.

Our Challenges

We have overcome challenges of managing friends in directorial positions by setting boundaries to maintain these friendships. Having a key speaker postponing tested our innovative abilities to find a replacement on short notice. Further, administrative challenges of starting a society required decisions based upon our long-term growth strategy; for example, the decision of whether a PayPal bank account was sufficient or for long term stability an account with a bank would be more appropriate. Working as a partnership has allowed us to tackle issues as a team, inspiring confidence between us. Overcoming these challenges has led to the rise of creative solutions, including discovering new ways to motivate our team to support us in our endeavours. We have reflected on how seeing others within the team succeed has motivated individuals, and the team as a whole to succeed. This journey has taught us both the importance of effective communication, to manage our growing team and implement a clear future direction for The Board. Already we have had to change our communication style to ensure our ideas are better communicated, for example, creating mood boards to highlight our vision on social media.

Our Aims

The key aims of the board is to curate a network of driven female students and industry professionals, to give them a head start in their career centred endeavours. Active communication, as part of our inclusive strategy, will empower our network to be fostered. We will deliver corporate insight events to increased industry knowledge and improve industry specific skills to building upon what students have learnt through modules such as Intermediate Macroeconomics and Dynamic Strategic Management, and provide real-life application of this knowledge. We hope to develop understanding of unique industry and female related challenges in the workplace, and how to overcome these to achieve success. Our first event speaker was able to stimulate reflection and give insight into this. Our interactive platform will provide opportunities for members to develop personally and professionally. We sort out affiliation with the Women Societies Alliance, a central hub uniting EU university societies sharing our aims, to further grow our collective network. Their events provide opportunities to experience simulated real-life work learnt in Financial Economics: Asset Pricing. We chose to provide a range of events, to attract a diverse network of motivated women, whilst acquiring a broad assortment of industry specific skills. Events targeting excel skills taught in Econometrics allow for skill enhancement related to similar career work individuals will carry out. We will cover topics from industry insights, building a professional brand, overcoming daily challenges such as burnout and application process support. Research on Instagram pages with a similar vision to our own and consulting fellow students have contributed to these ideas. We will provide a mentorship programme once The Board is established to provide guidance for sub honours students, preparing them for their internship and graduate role endeavours. We have begun formulating an internship project within The Board, giving an opportunity for first years to obtain society experience, giving them a head start for securing a place on other societies in following years. Upon reflection, we have found this opportunity to be absent with the St Andrews societal scene.

Our Differentiation

Previous societies offer female encouragement, for example the Women in Work, and career advancement based on industry, notably The Banking and Finance Society. However, a common issue raised by fellow students is their active presence and dynamic career advancement in business. With rising competition in these male dominated industries, our differentiation is seen in active support that advances these driven students’ careers. Our internal forum on LinkedIn allows for direct advice from any member and the opportunity to provide valuable contacts offering new pathways for career advancement. “It is not what you know, but who you know”. It is through our collective network that we give our members the greatest advantage. Our creativity with the breadth of events offered and our ambition to reach out to those who are leading professionals in their field, including Kelly Hoey a networking expert, further serve to differentiate The Board.