



Houses of Parliament confirmed as the venue for the SJL National Start-Up Business Awards 2020

Entries are open. The winner will receive a £2,000 business grant and mentorship, plus the opportunity to present their new business idea in the House of Parliament

- *Closing date for entries is Monday 2 March 2020*
- *The final will be on Wednesday 3 June 2020 in the House of Commons*

Monday 13 January 2020, UK: The SJL Foundation charity is today launching its 2020 initiative to help people across the UK set up their own business.

Start-up owners can now apply to become one of several finalists in with a chance of winning a free grant of £2,000 and a mentorship programme with the businessman Simon Lancaster, the staff at SJL Insurance, their suppliers and associates.

The chosen finalists from across the country will pitch to a panel of judges and an audience of invited guests at the Houses of Parliament on 3 June 2020. The SJL Foundation aims to give 45% of all proceeds to the business start-up fund, of which it hopes to put at least £45,000 towards that this year. The remaining 45% will go to Acorn's children's hospices and 10% to SJL staff's own charitable endeavours. 100% of donations to the SJL Foundation go to the charity.

The judges will include:

- Simon Lancaster, CEO and founder of global insurance broker SJL Insurance which is one of the UK's largest owner-owned insurance brokers, founder and trustee of the SJL Foundation
- Rachel Elnaugh, Dragon in BBC Dragons Den series 1 and 2, founder of Red Letter Days, co-founder of Source.TV, author, speaker, and business mentor
- Kerry Hopkins, CEO of broadcast PR agency Broadcast Ready, who has experience of PR'ing the world's largest corporations and start-ups and former national ITV and former BBC TV journalist



- John Auckland, CEO of Tribe First, crowdfunding expert who's raised over £30m, and Virgin start-up crowdfunding trainer

Simon Lancaster, Trustee, SJL Foundation said: "After the success of last year's awards, I am excited about what the SJL National Start-Up Business Awards can achieve for next generation entrepreneurs in 2020. I established SJL Insurance 18 years ago with a Worcester council grant of £500, which I used to buy a desk and computer. I want the story to go full circle and help others do the same with our PayItForward movement."

To enter the competition, entrants need to email foundation@sjlins.co.uk to ask for an application form and submit their completed application form by the closing date of Monday 2 March 2020. All applicants must be available to travel to London on the 3rd of June 2020 for the event, if they are chosen as a successful finalist.

MP Robin Walker, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State serving jointly between the Scotland Office and the Northern Ireland Office in the UK Government is hosting the drinks reception at the House of Commons on behalf of the SJL Foundation.

The £2,000 grant package will be given to each winner no later than 15 August 2020.

Press enquiries

Please contact Kerry Hopkins, PR director, [Broadcast Ready](mailto:kerry@broadcastready.co.uk) on +44 (0) 7900 981 751 or email kerry@broadcastready.co.uk

About the SJL Foundation

The SJL Foundation is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) which was approved by the Charity Commission in June 2019 and has registered charity number 1183875.

For more information of our fundraising activities throughout the year, to buy tickets to our charity events or to sponsor our events listed, please visit

<https://www.sjlins.co.uk/foundation/>