

## ShareSci

St Andrews, United Kingdom Whole of UK through web project, United Kingdom  
Alex Gibberd



### Organization type:

nonprofit/ngo/citizen sector

### Budget:

\$1,000 - \$10,000

### Website:

<http://www.sharesci.net>



- [Communications](#)
- [Citizen participation](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Media](#)
- [Networking](#)
- [Scholarships and grants](#)
- [Social enterprise](#)

### Project Summary

#### Elevator Pitch

#### **Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.**

An 21st century website to enable better communication of science to the public.

#### About Project

#### **Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?**

We are trying to tackle the confusion in the public domain surrounding science and its research, this may be on a variety of topics: climate change, drugs or even particle physics. This confusion is in part due to the disconnectedness of the science outreach community and the way science is reported in newspapers and conventional media. We plan to help scientists wanting to conduct public outreach by enabling them to better communicate with similar minded scientists but also the public. ShareSci provides a place where scientists can explain their work and let the public know where they can reliably find out more if they so wish.

#### **Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!**

We are developing a social media website that will allow scientists to write about their own research in a way that is accessible to the public. We will help scientists get in touch with writers and editors to help them write in a non-scientific setting. The website will allow both public and scientists to register, enabling the public to directly contact relevant scientists and experts with questions. In addition to helping communication with the public, the site will also include tools like groups/events that scientists can form to discuss public engagement events and promote these to the public. Integrity is maintained within the site as all scientific users must be registered through their host institution. When a university/organization signs up we send them a number of links which they can then disseminate to their most promising researchers. The site will provide a reliable and safe way for the public to access science more directly.

**Marketplace: Who else is addressing the problem outlined here? How does the proposed project differ from these approaches?**

There are several "networks" for public engagement, however these are often segregated according to discipline as opposed to ShareSci which aims to unify and promote public engagement activities. As far as articles, and scientific information is presented there are a great many professional journals like Science, Nature etc. These are not competitors to us, as their content is not targeted at a public audience. It is important to make clear the distinguishing feature of ShareSci with respect to newspapers and blogging websites is that content on ShareSci is of known quality. There will be initially competition for readers between these sources, however ShareSci's unique selling point with content being written by professional scientists will draw customers away from our competitors.

## About You

**Organization:**

ShareSci CIC

## Background Information

**First Name**

Alex

**Last Name**

Gibberd

**Twitter URL**[www.twitter.co.uk/#/AlexGibberd](http://www.twitter.co.uk/#/AlexGibberd)**Facebook URL**[www.facebook.com/gibberd](http://www.facebook.com/gibberd)

**The competition is only open to people between 18-34 years-old and resident in UK, Ireland, Sweden, Denmark or the Netherlands. Does this apply to you**

**Country of residence of entrepreneur**

**Tell us about your personal background. Why are you passionate about this issue? Making an idea a reality takes innovation, dedication and strong leadership. Do you have the necessary entrepreneurial skills to realize your vision?**

I am a science student in my last year of university. My time at university has taught me that scientists have a passion to improve but also to share their knowledge. One key aspect of this is trying to get the public involved with science. Seeing the disjointed nature of the public outreach community we decided to do something about it, forming the social media portal ShareSci.

With my colleague we have a varied skill set that is experienced in team management and the development of highly technical projects.

## About Your Organization

**Organization Name**

ShareSci CIC

**Organization Country**

, FIF, St Andrews

**Country where this project is creating social impact**

, XX, Whole of UK through web project

The information you provide here will be used to fill in any parts of your profile that have been left blank, such as interests, organization information, and website. No contact information will be made public. Please uncheck here if you do not want this to happen..

## Innovation

**The Model: Walk us through a specific example of how your solution makes a difference; include your primary activities**

Our primary activities are providing interesting scientific articles for the public to read and providing a platform for public outreach activities.

The public are more commonly getting their information and news from the internet. Say for example a parent has trouble answering her child's science questions (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-16612100>), they could go to ShareSci and find the answer themselves. Then if it's not there the site provides a method for them to ask the question to scientists who are experts in their fields. Because ShareSci has content targeted at three difficulty levels, this allows the content to be accessible to people of all ages. In this way we envisage ShareSci to be used as both a source of scientific news and a general reference on all things science.

Extending the situation above, lets say the parent wanted to find out more or encourage their child's interest in science. ShareSci allows targeted promotion of science events. In this way the parent can search for activities in their area and directly find events which interest them.

**Select the stage that best applies to your business**

Operating for less than a year

## Social Impact

### **What is the social impact you have had to date and how you measure it?**

At this date we are still developing the project both in concept and as a functioning site. ShareSci's impact will be measured through the public's understanding and participation within science. This may be evidenced through higher attendances at science outreach events, enhanced coverage of research and increased uptake of science subjects in school and higher education.

An enhanced understanding of science will give the public the ability to make better informed decisions regarding their own lives as well as others. This will help to alleviate uncertainty surrounding science within the public domain.

### **What barriers might hinder the success of your business? How do you plan to overcome them?**

The success of our business relies on both scientific and public user uptake. In order to encourage members of the public to use the site we plan a large advertising campaign, possibly with the use of high profile figures in science communication.

To encourage scientists we need to demonstrate the benefits of the site and how it can improve their research. In order to get researchers registered we need to persuade universities to adopt ShareSci. We plan to achieve this by offering trial periods to universities using our concept site to demonstrate the idea, this will provide institutional support before the full site is launched.

## Sustainability

### **How does your model address financial, social, and environmental sustainability?**

Currently we are looking for a small level of funding to develop a concept site that we can offer universities to demonstrate the idea of ShareSci.

On successful launch of this site, a small level of income will be generated from university subscribers (approx. £20-30k/year). This income (along with enhanced grant funding) will be reinvested in the development of a full scale site which will provide enhanced functionality, and management features which will allow a more scalable product. We expect the development of this site to take 1.5 years including testing, upon launch the site will be offered to universities across the UK.

After development of the main site and its launch, revenue can increase as we experience growth, with an estimated 10% of UK researchers (16,000) on board profits will be in the region of £100k/year. This money is raised through institutional subscription fees which will be set at a minimal level.

Any profits after re-investment in R&D will be used to generate grants to help support students in higher education or to organize conferences dedicated to public outreach.

## Awareness & learning

### **How do you see social entrepreneurship contributing to the improvement of developing countries?**

I see social entrepreneurship as a mechanism for redistribution of not only wealth but crucial knowledge and skills. The social aspect is important as it allows this transfer to occur even when it may not be deemed profitable for a profit-based organisation to do so.

I personally think social entrepreneurship puts social responsibility as the key motivator, above personal power and monetary gains. This plays a key role in developing countries as it enables an increased rate of development whilst maintaining valuable cultural and traditional values.

During an era of rapid development maintaining ones cultural identity is key, especially in the face of encroaching foreign influences. This is one area which I think social entrepreneurship can make a large difference.

### **What aspects of your stay in Uganda as part of the competition do you think you will find most challenging and rewarding?**

I think the most challenging part will be to observe the poverty surrounding the people. To see them do without so much we take for granted in our developed world will surely be an eye-opening experience and one which I may struggle to comprehend.

This relates to what I think will be the most rewarding part. This sees them as triumphing over adversity. Seeing them take what they have and make the most of it. The people of Uganda are surely some of the most entrepreneurial on the planet, even if they have to be just to survive.

**Source URL:** <https://www.changemakers.com/joinourcore/entries/sharesci#comment-0>