

Caledonian  
**Family Business Centre** : an introduction





## Introduction

By Renee S. Reid, Director, Caledonian Family Business Centre

Welcome to you as a member of a very special business – a family business.

I have enclosed this brochure to give you some idea of who we are and what we do. I have listed some of our current activities, an example of a recent success and most importantly some comments made by family business owners who want to share with you their own personal experience of the Centre. As you can imagine the breadth and volume of activity is much more than could be included in this brochure so this is really just to give you a flavour of how we represent the needs of families in business throughout Scotland.

Firstly, your business is a member of up to 70% of all Scotland's businesses; that is - a family owned enterprise, so it is important that your business needs are voiced. We take our responsibility seriously in developing awareness of these needs by policy-makers, advisers and non-government organisations.

As academics we need to ensure that the work we carry out on your behalf is not only rigorous but that it is relevant to you and most importantly that it has the potential to make a difference to your company's performance and competitiveness. Pursuing excellence in research is the strategic focus of the newly named Caledonian Family Business Centre and this will build on the achievements of the previous centre's commercial activity.

### Firstly who are we?

Caledonian Family Business Centre is part of the Caledonian Business School and we specialise in the provision of:

- Excellence in Family Business Research.
- Learning and teaching through undergraduate, post-graduate and continuing personal development programmes.
- And importantly for you we operate 'A Network Forum for Family Businesses'.

### Therefore our mission statement is to:-

"Ensure the longevity of family businesses in Scotland through the provision of excellence in research, teaching and business support".

### Our objectives are to:-

- Provide Scotland's policy makers, advisors and family businesses with relevant, innovative research projects.
- Identify clear links between business best practices and firm performance to ensure the sustainability and growth of family businesses in the global market.
- Designing programme initiatives for Scotland's policy makers and advisers to support family businesses based on best practice research findings.

*"Ensure the longevity of family businesses in Scotland through the provision of excellence in research, teaching and business support".*

International  
recognition of the  
relevance and rigour  
of our research.

### One recent success:

The University's Caledonian Family Business Centre received the highest accolade when its Director was presented with the Best Practice Paper award at the 48th World Congress of the International Council for Small Business Conference (ICSB).

Renee Reid delivered a paper on the subject of Employee Involvement in Family and Non-Family Owned Businesses in Great Britain, to an audience of policy-makers, financiers, practitioners, researchers and trainers. She said: - "It was an honour to be recognised for the best practice paper at what is without doubt the most important conference in the sector."

We will be undertaking many research projects in the future some of which will include the following:-

- Best Practice & Benchmarking Barriers in the Family Firm

- Family Female Entrepreneurs

Please think about the Centre and the value we could add to your company by for example:-

- Becoming more involved in research projects

- Working with us on joint-funded commercial projects

- Using our facilities and contacts to build your networks with other family businesses who understand 'what makes a family business more than just a business'

### Why Your Family Firm Should Become Involved with the Centre?

The following comments made by family business owners are just some of the reasons why you should become involved.

*"The Centre has provided a vehicle for honest and forthright discussions between our family members involved in working together in the GP group of companies beyond any of our expectations. The result for us as a family in business is that we work together to reach the strategic goals that we have been able to share and plan."*

Jimmy Gilchrist, Managing Director - GP Plantscape, Lanark.

*"Myself and my family found the seminars on both governance control and intergenerational transfer of the family business extraordinarily worthwhile. From them we learnt the crucial importance of putting in place formal procedures that link the family objectives with business objectives".*

Dr Maitland Mackie, Mackies of Scotland Ltd, Aberdeenshire

Linking Universities

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Business Owners

>

Government

Remember all companies - large & smes - benefit from network links!

Building on an already established market presence we can ensure that your company will have automatic links to other national and international institutions. Benefits include such things as:

- Quick access to information your particular company needs.

- An ability to build your company through association with others.

- Ready made solutions-don't reinvent the wheel

- Commercial activity (business and university) – this provides you with a network of support and an avenue to explore possible future commercial activity without taking all the risk.

Linking business owners with academics and government agencies will ensure that Scotland utilises every opportunity to enhance its global competitiveness.

## Types of Activity

Following are some of the types of activity you could engage in:-

- Knowledge Networks
- Forums for Senior and Next Generation
- Training and Awareness Seminars
- Family Business Audit
- Research, Teaching and Learning

## Knowledge Networks

The Centre would like to be your first point of contact to provide introductions to other family businesses throughout Scotland and abroad. We would also like to demonstrate to you that Universities have changed – we want to work with you to ensure that you are provided with the best opportunity to make your company more competitive and effective. ‘Knowledge Networks’ are designed to be informal, supportive, non-threatening environments where experience and knowledge is shared. They are effective because ‘you’ decide what it is your company wants to explore. We provide the environment where the sharing of information takes places effectively.

## Family Business Forums

### \*Senior Generation Forum:-

Access to a network of owners who understand the challenges of business ownership and family involvement.

Relevant seminars exploring issues such as ‘Innovative Exit Strategies’ (realise capital yet leave a healthy business for the next generation).

### \*Futures Group – Next Generation:-

A network forum for those preparing for ownership and management.

Seminars include ‘How to prepare yourself as the next leader’; ‘Understanding financial and management accounting’.

*\*Both these ventures will be situated in Caledonian Family Business Centre, but will be ‘for families, by families’ - it is our intention that by adopting this structure we can encourage family businesses to become more active and vocal in the business community.*

## Training & awareness seminars

Training and awareness half day seminars for family businesses are available on the dynamics of the family firm. We explore issues such as:-

- Differences between family and non-family firms?
- Playing to your strengths?
- Manage family conflict in the boardroom?

## Family Business Audit

The provision of a ‘family business audit’ (undertaken by Centre staff as a consultancy service to individual companies) provides a method by which companies can examine the demands of family, management and ownership and the likely affects these dimensions may have on future business decisions.

## Research Teaching & Learning

We can provide your company with business information through the provision of pamphlets, government reports, biographies and of course our own research on family business practices. All of this information provides the background for all our teaching materials. We offer participants on all programmes of study; from CPD to postgraduate (including the MBA) an opportunity to learn the dynamics of a family business in an interactive environment. The Centre also actively involves Scottish Business Leaders and Advisors as guest speakers in the delivery of all programmes to ensure learning and teaching relates to the needs of the market place.

How can you ensure your family business has the best chance of succession to the next generation?

By participating in some or ALL of the following events

- Knowledge Networks – learn through sharing with your peers – these are views you respect and value.
- Join and influence the direction of Network Forums – Senior or Next Generation.
- Training and Awareness Seminars – understand what makes your family business special.
- Family Business Audit – what business/ownership challenges will you need to prepare for?
- Research, Teaching and Learning – You can ensure that teaching and research relates to a workplace you operate within – work with us.
- We value your expertise – particularly if you have time to spare – your own business story is a learning resource – please share it.
- Retired? – Please become involved. Retired family businesses owners have years of business experience, together with fascinating stories of how they developed their own businesses. We welcome the involvement of any retired owners (regardless of company size or sector) who would like to become involved formally or informally with the Centre.

Caledonian  
**FamilyBusinessCentre**



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