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Cause4 joins the Big Venture Challenge cohort 2014

Today, award-winning fundraising and philanthropy enterprise *Cause4* joins 29 other ambitious social ventures across the UK to be part of social enterprise funder Unltd's Big Venture Challenge 2014.

The award is for social entrepreneurs that are at a stage of growth where up to £200,000 of debt or equity investment will help take their social venture to the next level and increase their social impact.

The successful ventures all needed to demonstrate strong leadership and a committed team, a disruptive model challenging the status quo, growing market traction with evidence of social impact and an ambitious growth vision.

Launched in May 2009, *Cause4* supports charities and social enterprises to grow. As the economy suffered, it was clear that charities and social enterprises would need to find radical new solutions to raising funds. *Cause4* specialises in developing innovative scalable programmes and developing partnerships to give charities the best chance of fundraising success.

Cause4's social impact and influence lies in the development of excellent charitable initiatives of innovation as well as the amount of funds raised – more than £27m since it was established in May 2009. Clients range from national institutions to smaller charities with ambitious plans for growth.

The organisation has also created many opportunities for employment including launching a flagship employment programme, the *Cause4* Entrepreneurship programme, which seeks to address the widely-acknowledged shortage of entrepreneurial development and fundraising personnel across the charitable sector. *Cause4* has so far trained 25 graduates and has another 10 training currently. Last year the company's graduates contributed £4m in charitable fundraising.

Cause4 has also developed a Fellowship graduate training programme for Arts Council England, which will train 50 graduates and apprentices across the UK each year from 2015. In addition, it developed the Creative Entrepreneurship Programme in partnership with the Guildhall School of Music & Drama to support start up creative businesses.

Cause4 also has an impressive philanthropy portfolio. The company works with top artists, entrepreneurs and sportspeople, as a professional one-stop shop to grow charitable giving. Through effective fundraising, it enables individuals to at least triple their investments. Current clients include Cineworld Foundation, a new £60m health foundation started by Dr Peter Sowerby, and a range of sports stars, artists and entrepreneurs.

Sir Thomas Hughes-Hallett, Chair of *Cause4* says: *"In a very short time Cause4 has had a significant impact on a wide range of charities and not-for-profit organisations. This award from Unltd comes at just the right time to enable us to prepare for the next stage of growth and to plan for a sustainable future, building on a range of exciting national and international opportunities."*

Michelle Wright, Founder and CEO of *Cause4* says: *"This is the most brilliant announcement for Cause4 as we come up to our fifth operating year. We will work with Unltd to manage investment in*

key areas – the appointment of new senior posts at Chief Operating Officer level, a Director Talent Programme, a Growth Advisory Board, infrastructure and IT. All of these areas will support us to grow our capacity to deliver excellent programmes nationally and to realise our international growth ambitions.”

For more information, or to request an interview with Michelle Wright or Sir Thomas Hughes-Hallett please contact:

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About Cause4 – www.cause4.co.uk

Cause4 was set up in May 2009 to support charities, social enterprises and philanthropists in development and fundraising across the charity, arts, sports and educational sectors. *Cause4* seeks to be a modernising influence and leader within the charitable sector, offering relevant, contemporary solutions for charities and social enterprises at a time when more creative, entrepreneurial approaches are much needed.

The organisation works in three main areas: strategy and fundraising, philanthropy and enterprise development.

Cause4 has won a string of awards including Michelle Wright CEO, as female entrepreneur of the year at the Natwest Start Up Awards 2011, a top 10 winner in the Ernst and Young Future 100 awards 2011 for demonstrating innovation in social enterprise. *Cause4* was also a winner in the 2012 Startups 100 list for most innovative small businesses across the UK and was a finalist in the Orange National Business Awards for Start Up Business of the Year 2012. In November 2012 and 2013 *Cause4* won three prestigious silver international Stevie Awards for innovation and entrepreneurship. The company also won a fast growth award from Unltd in 2013 to develop its Entrepreneurship programme.

In recent months *Cause4* was one of the first 50 businesses invited by Lord Young of Graffham and Sir Terry Leahy to join the Accelerate 250 for UK small businesses showing rapid growth and potential and was also invited to be part of the 2013 Silicon Valley 100 companies for fast-growth UK companies with international potential.

Cause4 is a recipient of two investment bursaries from the Goldman Sach's 10,000 small businesses programme, facilitating study at University College London and the Said Business School at the University of Oxford.

About the Big Venture Challenge

The Big Venture Challenge supports ambitious entrepreneurs with access to business support, powerful connections and match funding to help them raise investment and deliver social impact at scale. The programme is funded by the Big Lottery Fund

All teams on the programme work with an expert team to raise investment in their ventures in order to grow their companies and scale the social impact of their work.

In each individual case we care passionately and work relentlessly to find the most appropriate revenue model and investment strategy to maximise social impact.