

## **PRESS RELEASE**

18 October 2007

### **Novas Chief Executive named as Social Enterprise Ambassador**

The Social Enterprise Coalition has appointed Novas' Co-Chief Executive/Founder as one of its Social Enterprise Ambassadors, a key part of the Government's Social Enterprise Action Plan, which was launched last year by then Chancellor Gordon Brown.

Maria Donoghue-Mills has been named as one of 25 Social Enterprise Ambassadors whose aim is to show Britain that companies with social good at their core can be successful and financially secure.

Through the stories and experiences of some of the most inspirational social entrepreneurs in the country, the Social Enterprise Ambassador's Programme will help the movement to achieve more by raising awareness among key groups and attracting new entrants.

Over the next three years, they will attend events, give speeches and media interviews and meet with key audiences. They will use their own stories to illustrate the potential and value of social enterprise.

The programme is funded by the Cabinet Office and led by the Social Enterprise Coalition.

Maria Donoghue-Mills says,

'This is a fantastic opportunity to showcase how Novas enables people back to work who have experienced difficulty in their lives. By giving people an opportunity to get good quality work experience with training they can turn this around and use their skills and talents for the wider benefit.'

**ENDS**

#### **Press contact:**

Alexandra Pryce  
Marketing & Communications Coordinator  
020 7424 3060  
[alexandra.pryce@novas.org](mailto:alexandra.pryce@novas.org)

## **NOTES TO EDITOR**

Novas is at the cutting edge of tackling social disadvantage through creating inclusive employment in social enterprises, providing flexible community based support services to vulnerable people and offering quality art and cultural programmes, which involve the wider community in understanding complex social issues.

Novas was established in 1998 and over the last three years the organisation has transformed itself from predominately a provider of large hostels for homeless people to be at the cutting edge of tackling social disadvantage through social enterprise, innovation and positive impact.

We aim to change lives through arts, enterprise and community support, developing opportunities for individuals and communities through community support, education, training, employment, art, culture and regeneration. We have developed a strong reputation for the delivery of quality community-based services, and for new and innovative approaches together with people who experience inequality, exclusion and discrimination.

We run a cutting edge designer clothes shop; contemporary urban centres offering integrated arts, performance, small business development and community activity; community support services working together with 6,000 people a year with customer input at every level; a translation and interpreting service utilising the skills of over 200 Black and Refugee people, and coffee shops offering fair trade and organic produce.

Our initiatives positively change the lives of people, including those experiencing homelessness, health issues, prejudice and isolation; and they all contribute to bringing communities together. All profits are reinvested back into Novas learning and development programmes for disadvantaged groups, and at least 50% of all jobs created are targeted for these groups.

We develop innovative community empowerment strategies that integrate our services and those that face deep exclusion to be at the centre of our communities, not on the margins. We are currently remodelling many of our large hostels to raise the living standards for people who are homeless, within buildings that will become a part of their local communities through business, market space, cultural quarters, performance spaces, retail and restaurants. These projects will also offer learning, cultural and enterprise space for a wide range of individuals and communities who experience exclusion.

We have many case histories of how disadvantaged people have successfully turned their lives around, and are successfully contributing to their communities. We can also set up media interviews with them.