



Association of
Crowdfunding Experts

PRESS RELEASE – 19TH AUGUST 2014

The Corporate Finance Network, a national network of accountants who advise SMEs on corporate finance matters, has today announced which of its member firms have already met the criteria to become accredited members of their newly-formed specialised group, the Association of Crowdfunding Experts.

Just 9 firms across the country have so far met the criteria for membership, to be known as experts in this fast-growing form of business finance, and *[insert name of firm]* based in *[insert name of region]* is one of this select group.

[insert name of person/people] at the firm has been designated a ‘Crowdfunding Master’ and will be the first port of call for any clients or businesses interested in understanding if crowdfunding or peer-to-peer lending is right for their business.

The Association of Crowdfunding Experts is the brainchild of Kirsty McGregor, also the Founder of The Corporate Finance Network. In 2013 she created the world’s first crowdfunding app for business owners, “Crowdfunding Options”, and regularly speaks to British and international audiences of business owners and other finance professionals about crowdfunding and peer-to-peer lending. Kirsty is the author of the “Crowdfunding Masterclass” for advisers and she explains the reason behind this new initiative:

“For many years I have been carefully studying the development of crowdfunding and the efinance industry in the UK, and felt that now, due to its



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phenomenal growth and more mainstream appeal to business owners, a brand was required to differentiate the experts in this ever-changing marketplace. There are many platforms launching every month, both in the UK and overseas, and I would like to ensure that business owners have the best advice possible, so that they don't make costly mistakes when attempting to utilise this brilliant, but very new, form of finance. Therefore I hope that in the future entrepreneurs will look to us for direction on which adviser to use, and I would welcome all accountants, finance brokers and business advisers to join us, so that we can develop this brand into one that is recognised for being the place to find the UK's experts of the highest quality."

Notes for Editors

- Crowdfunding is a way of obtaining a large number of new shareholders using online platforms such as Crowdcube or Seedrs. In addition, the ability for businesses to raise debt (loans) from a number of different lenders is known as peer-to-peer lending and some of the largest platforms in the UK that offer this to SME businesses are Funding Circle, Market Invoice, Platform Black and Assetz Capital. The UK is the world leader in these forms of crowdfunding to small businesses.
- According to a report by NESTA, Crowdfunding for business finance raised almost \$1bn (excl finance raised by pure donation) in UK between 2011-2013. The prediction is that peer-to-peer lending alone (loans, not equity) will be worth £12bn in the UK within the decade.
- For more information, contact Kirsty McGregor on Kirsty@crowdfundingexperts.org or telephone 07867 982561 (not to be printed)