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**Nominee**: Susan Aktemel

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**Nominator Department**: RKES

**Nomination Category**: Society

**Citation**:
A leading entrepreneurial university, Strathclyde is dedicated to making a positive difference to society. Susan has dedicated her career to enterprise philanthropy. Recognition of this would underline the importance of nurturing entrepreneurial talent; our commitment to the community; and the role of non-profit approaches in dealing with social issues.

**Evidence**:
Susan founded Impact Arts in 1994, way before the concept of a social enterprise had been invented. For 17 years (until 2012 when she handed over the reins to a new CEO) Susan’s work helped people and communities across Scotland tackle issues such as employability and regeneration through creativity and arts. Impact Arts is Scotland's leading community arts charity. Susan is now focused on property development and management, and has created a new business, Homes for Good Ltd. It is a brand new concept in letting, and the first of its kind in Scotland. Recognising the growing housing crisis the company renovates properties for letting, and specialises in serving people on low incomes. Homes for Good Investments Ltd was subsequently created in 2014, the investment arm purchases empty and dilapidated properties and transforms them into high quality homes for people with limited choice in housing. Once developed, these properties are managed by Homes for Good Scotland (CIC). Susan’s business has expanded and she has opened new headquarters in Glasgow from the purchase of two unused shops in Bridgeton Main Street. Its new premises include office space and a hub for tenants offering drop-in sessions on subjects including housing and fuel poverty, financial inclusion and employability alongside tailored training sessions for local landlords. She is a mentor at Entrepreneurial Spark and guest lectures at Strathclyde's Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship and Glasgow Kelvin College (formerly Stow College). She has previously served as Vice-Chair for Social Enterprise Scotland; former Chair for the Glasgow Social Enterprise Network; was a steering group member for the Scottish Association of Landlords and former Board Member for Places for People Scotland. Mrs Aktemel is a current Committee Member for Blochairn Housing Association Ltd. Susan’s career has had a demonstrable impact on the public good, in particular in Glasgow and across Scotland where her organisations have tackled issues including employment, regeneration and housing. A trail blazer in social enterprise Susan is an inspiration to other entrepreneurs and a shining example of how enterprise philanthropy can make the world a better place.

**Awards**:
Her business acumen has been recognised through achieving a number of national and global awards as a social entrepreneur: 2011 Scottish Entrepreneur of the Year Winner, Ernst & Young Social Enterprise Leader of the Year, Scottish Social Enterprise Coalition 2012 Global Social Business Leader, Ogunte [promotes female social entrepreneurs around the world] 2014 Noted social impact fund Impact Venture UK awarded Homes for Good an investment of £2m in a joint property venture. 2016 Mrs Aktemel was presented with the Social Microentrepreneur Award at the Citi Microentrepreneurship Awards. Her business “Homes for Good Ltd” won Social Enterprise of the Year at the Scottish Social Enterprise Awards and the Scottish Business Awards

**Connection**:
Mrs Aktemel is an alumna: BA Hons Arts & Social Sciences 1990. She has continued to engage with the University through her participation in two alumni volunteering programmes (Business Fellows where she delivers guest lectures at the Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship and the Enterprise Partners programme where she has spoken at various events including delivering the keynote address at the Strathclyde 100 event in May 2012 during the University’s Engage week. Her social enterprises have been focused on the City of Glasgow and the betterment of its people, particularly those social tenants, often disadvantaged and ‘invisible’.

**Role**:
Our collective vision for Strathclyde is of a leading entrepreneurial university inspired by its founding mission as ‘the place of useful learning’, that makes a positive difference to the lives of its students, to society and to the world. Susan Aktemel epitomises this vision. She has and will continue to work with our students and alumni; a role model for the next generation of entrepreneurs and an inspiration for the growing number of social entrepreneurs at Strathclyde. A possible returning speaker at future Enterprise events, Susan is a potential advocate/ambassador of Strathclyde’s Enterprise activities. As social enterprises become more and more prevalent [of the 70 entrepreneurs currently in our pipeline, 8 are social enterprises and 15 have a clear social impact], the University will need to consider ways in which it can provide more practical support to social entrepreneurs. The University recently hosted a visit from the CEO of UnLtd - the leading provider of support to social entrepreneurs in the UK and offers the largest such network in the world. Susan – and her network of influential connections – would prove invaluable in the development of this relationship and any collaboration that may arise. Ms Aktemel has previously offered to help shape the case for any social enterprise or venture philanthropy case the University may develop. Susan is a community-minded ‘local hero’ who has identified key issues for Glasgow and addresses them practically. Many of the students who may take advantage of our work in widening access, and benefit from the Institute of Inspiring Children’s Futures may come from the demographic actively helped by Susan’s work. Any press release announcing Susan as an honorary graduate could emphasise the importance we place on entrepreneurs but also highlight Future Cities, Fraser of Allander Institute, and the applied nature of Strathclyde’s teaching and learning. Susan demonstrates the University’s values in spades.