



Trustee: Anthony Mackay

Since I was a kid I've always been passionate about technology. This led me into the BBC Young Scientist of the Year competition which we won in 1980 with a computerised stage lighting system using a Commodore PET computer. After a short spell at medical school I ended up at Durham university studying electronics and computing and after a few brief spells in industry, including with Nortel, I decided to go contracting. Whilst doing this I studied for a diploma in marketing which, apart from being highly enjoyable, was to prove invaluable in the next stage of my career. The contracting had exposed me to a new US technology known as Interactive Voice Systems or IVR. It struck me how powerful IVR could be and I started a business with an ex Nortel colleague which we called Telephonetics. We specialised in IVR and made a niche for ourselves in the cinema industry providing over-the-phone automated film information and booking systems. Initially push-button based, we then moved into something that had always excited me – speech recognition – and moved the application to be predominantly drive by voice by 2003. We then diversified into other speech-driven systems such as auto-receptionists, now deployed across many councils and hospitals. We floated the business on AIM in 2005 and grew through acquisitions over the next 5 years. I left the business when it was acquired by Netcall PLC in 2010. Since then I dabbled in local politics, becoming an elected borough and then county councillor in Hertfordshire where I sat on the Business, Education and Skills committee. In 2014 I discovered STEM ambassadors whilst at a Raspberry Jam session at Bletchley Park and in 2015 I became a STEM ambassador and joined the board of Setpoint Hertfordshire. I left politics in 2017 and with re-engaged with business in 2019 becoming a director of a start-up fintech company called Property-Master. I am now their CTO and once again using my STEM, business and marketing experience to help drive the business forwards.