



DISTILL VENTURES WELCOMES NEW STRATEGIC HIRES, ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP PROMOTIONS TO BOLSTER KEY GLOBAL PRACTICE AREAS

London, UK – June 29, 2020 – Distill Ventures (DV), the world's first independent drinks accelerator devoted to building and scaling the best drinks brands of the future, is pleased to announce the appointment of Charlie Steel and Sophie Saunders as Whiskey Portfolio Director and eCommerce Director respectively. In addition to its new talent, DV has promoted two key leaders to further bolster the company's Investment & Finance capabilities: Dan Shrimpton as Managing Director, Finance & Investments, and Vishal Patel as Investment Director for Rest of World.

In his role, Charlie Steel will lead the Rest of World (ROW) whiskey portfolio acceleration and DV's whiskey category-leadership programming as he supports a group of distinct, scalable brands around the world, including Stauning, one of Europe's standout new whiskies from Denmark and Starward, a distinctive Australian whisky exclusively matured in wine barrels. Additionally, he will support the company's global search strategy as DV continues to look for the most exciting founder-led whiskey brands.

Charlie, who is based in Scotland, brings over 15 years of senior drinks experience to DV, having worked with some of the biggest brands in the industry. Prior to joining, he spent nearly five years leading the development of Glenmorangie and Ardbeg across EMEA and more recently APAC, where he directed all areas of the brands, from sales and marketing to finance and operations. Charlie also spent several years working on the commercial side of Moët Hennessy across the entire portfolio, before becoming Global Marketing Manager for Veuve Clicquot.

As eCommerce Director, Sophie Saunders will work directly with DV's 15+ founder-led brands to devise, implement and optimise eCommerce strategies for both brand-building and commercial objectives through the companies' brand websites, Amazon and key eCommerce partners. In her role, Sophie will identify online retail best practice and emerging digital trends that can be adopted by the portfolio to deliver the best eCommerce experience for their customers. She will work closely with DV's team of digital and data specialists to keep the portfolio at the forefront of online purchasing trends as well as support in the search for and continued investment in digitally native drinks brands.

Prior to joining Distill Ventures, Sophie specialised in eCommerce at The Hut Group, one of the world's leading online retail organisations. As Commercial Director for their eCommerce white-label division, now THG Ingenuity, Sophie worked with brands to develop a full direct-to-consumer route to market from fulfilment, website development and UX to digital marketing for acquisition and retention of online customers. She has since spent the last three years working with global CPG brands to build strategy and execution for winning online as a Principal Consultant in Kantar's Digital Commerce consulting team.

Dan Shrimpton has played a critical role unlocking growth for DV's portfolio of brands and will continue that in his expanded role as he manages all finance and investments across the entire global portfolio. Over the past five years, he has played an integral role as Investment Director, where he oversaw all ROW investments and leveraged his experience to identify, fund and grow the world's best drinks startups. An entrepreneur himself, Dan spent the first part of his career working in Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMGG) start-ups, initially at Innocent Drinks and later at his own start-up, Peppersmith.

Vishal brings extensive experience advising companies on a wide range of investment, commercial and legal matters across venture capital, private equity and mergers & acquisitions including SABMiller, Pluto and Anthemis Group. In his new role, he will lead new investments to expand the spirits and non-alcoholic drinks portfolio in Rest of World. He will also liaise with existing portfolio companies to enable brands to scale and realise their full potential.

"We are thrilled to welcome Charlie and Sophie to Distill Ventures, and recognise the contributions of Dan and Vishal with new roles, as we continue to ensure our team is aligned to meeting the needs of our portfolio companies," said Frank Lampen. "They join a seasoned group of drinks industry experts across established and nascent drinks categories, with deep knowledge of brand marketing channels, and route to market best practices. Their skill sets – coupled with the financial acumen from veteran leaders like Dan and Vishal - will be an excellent asset as we continue to move our portfolio forward."

About Distill Ventures

Established in 2013, Distill Ventures is the drinks industry's first accelerator for new and growing brands whose aim is to support entrepreneurs to develop, scale and sell the drinks brands of the future. Through a combination of cash investment, mentoring support and access to a network of experts, Distill Ventures works with founders to help brands go further, faster. Distill Ventures operates across both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drink categories, and invests at all stages, from pre-launch (or "seed" businesses) through to those requiring significant growth and expansion capital. It is operated independently and backed by Diageo, the world's leading premium drinks company, providing investment funding, as well as resources and access through its global network of experts.

To date, Distill Ventures has invested over £100 million in 15+ drinks brands including: Stauning, one of Europe's standout new whiskies from Denmark; Starward, a distinctive Australian whisky, exclusively matured in Australian wine barrels; Westward, a leading American single malt whiskey inspired by the Pacific Northwest's craft beer traditions; Ritual Zero Proof, the first spirit alternative distilled in America that echoes the taste and smell of spirits; Seedlip, the world's first non-alcohol distilled spirits brand, which exited into the Diageo portfolio in 2019; and Belsazar, a German aperitif integrated into the Diageo portfolio in 2018. Further information on Distill Ventures and details on how acceleration works for drinks brands is available at www.distillventures.com.

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