

# Welcome to the August edition of the BCU Business School Newsletter!

As the academic year comes to a close, we'd like to reflect on the huge achievements and success of the business school. Over the past year, Birmingham City University has supported **over 400 businesses through our services and expert knowledge.**

This is exemplified by **our successful completion of our reassessment for the Small Business Charter Award** and we will continue to hold this prestigious accolade for a further 5 years. This demonstrates our continued excellent work in **supporting businesses, student entrepreneurship and the local economy.**

We are also proud to announce the conclusion of the **Small Business Leadership Programme.** The Small Business Leadership Programme was a 10-week programme that took place this spring **supporting senior leaders in enhancing their business's resilience and recovery from the impact of COVID-19.**

We're looking forward to the beginning of the new academic year at BCU and continuing to support you and your business with plenty of exciting plans. We are eager to replicate the success of the Small Business Leadership programme with the [Help to Grow: Management](#) programme

If you're looking to inject some **fresh thinking** into your business, our **live Business Innovation Workshops** are back! Join our **FREE** workshops to gain some new insights, generate and share ideas, and mix with a group of like-minded professionals, to kick-start your innovation process, and drive your business forward.

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## Help To Grow: Management



Following on from the success of the Small Business Leadership Programme, learn more about taking part in a practical management training programme delivered by **Birmingham City University** and other world-class business schools, accredited by the Small Business Charter.

**Help to Grow: Management** will support senior managers of small and medium-sized businesses to **boost their business's performance, resilience, and long-term growth.**

The **12-week programme is 90% funded by the Government** and has been designed to allow participants to complete it alongside full-time work.

Benefits to your business include:

- Enhance your management and strategic capabilities
- Produce a growth plan for your business
- Build resilience to future shocks
- Learn how to innovate in your business
- Adopt digital technologies to boost productivity and operational agility
- Develop your value proposition and reach into growth markets
- Improve employee engagement and responsible business practices

To join **Help to Grow: Management**, your business must:

- Be a Small or Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) based in the United Kingdom
- From any business sector, employing between 5 and 249 people
- Have been operational for at least one year
- You must be a decision-maker or member of senior management
- Not be a charity

We are currently taking registrations for Cohort 2 of this programme starting in October 2021 with cohorts 3 and 4 starting in January and March 2022 respectively.

[\*\*Register for Cohort 2 Here!\*\*](#)

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**Student Live Projects – Do you have a business challenge we can assist with?**



Every business faces challenges and knowing how to deal with them is part of being a business owner or manager.

Sometimes these challenges are small enough for us to manage on our own or within the team but sometimes we may need external assistance, particularly if we do not have the time, resources or knowledge to overcome it.

If this is the case then we might be able to assist you. Our Student Live Projects give our undergraduate and postgraduate students the opportunity to put theory into practice by working on a real life business **challenge** provided by businesses like yours.

We will work with you in scoping the project around marketing, accounting, finance, economics and other general management areas to provide a business solution or growth opportunities.

Our Student Live Projects have supported businesses with:

- Marketing strategies across various channels such as PR, sales, SWOT, PESTLE and competitor analysis, creativity and development
- Commercial viability and sustainability of products
- Structure and makeup of the local business community; including challenges in relation to Brexit.

- Bringing new products and services to market
- Wellbeing and mind health during the Corona virus pandemic.
- Researching old and current industry trends, and supporting strategies for entries into foreign markets.

We have assisted many businesses across various sectors and they have benefitted from having:

- Free, no cost support around high quality research, data analysis and resolving outcomes carried out by motivated, young professionals supported by sector - experienced academics
- Fresh eyes on your business, offering a different perspective on challenges you may be facing.
- Providing an in-depth analysis of business goals

If you would like further information about our Student Live Projects then please just email: [BAC@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:BAC@bcu.ac.uk)

Or visit:

<https://www.bcu.ac.uk/business-school/services-for-business/business-advice-centre-businesses>

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**Our live Business Innovation Workshops  
are back!**



### **Are you looking for new insights to take your business forward?**

Coming up with new ideas for your business can be a great way to overcome obstacles, and can lead to the realisation of new products, services and processes, and ultimately, more sales.

Sometimes it can be hard to implement this on your own, and this is where our **Business Innovation Workshops** can help to introduce you to new ways of thinking, tools and techniques to try, and a great space to generate and share your ideas with like-minded professionals.

#### **Business Innovation Workshops**

**Wednesdays: 8, 15, 29 September 2021**

**Connect Space, Millennium Point**

**9.30am – 4.30pm**

Our business support specialists will help SMEs\* develop new knowledge, experiment with practical exercises, and drive innovation across three specific topics:

- **Envisioning for Growth through Innovation**
- **Strategy and Leadership for Innovation**

- **Marketing for Innovation**

You will gain an understanding of the concepts, tools, and techniques needed to create a culture of innovation and develop a framework to implement in your own company to drive business growth.

During our three full-day workshops, we will help you to identify, understand, and assess your company's strategic and cultural abilities, and create a business environment of innovation and growth:

- Scanning and Analysing your Environment
- Developing a Strategy for your Business
- The BIG 10 Capabilities of Growth
- Entrepreneurial Process, Competitive Positioning, and Business Modelling
- Innovation, Leadership, and Culture for Innovation
- Marketing in Turbulent Times and Understanding Customers
- Understanding and Developing your Value Proposition

Innovation is crucial to the success of any organisation.

**Sandra Carter, Director of Higher Arts Productions**, attended our last workshops and found the programme very beneficial for generating new ideas and creating a culture of innovation for her business.

***“Working alone as a creative, it was great to have a group of peers to interact with – to share ideas with others and gain input on how they innovate in their own business.***

***It gave me a new approach to how I strategize my business and it helped to hear from a range of lecturers, and to learn from their specialist areas of expertise.***

***The handouts were a fantastic resource that have helped develop my thinking and create content to add to my strategy. It was all well-organised by a professional team.”***

**Register here**



SMEs in need of a cash injection to drive innovation and growth could be eligible for up to £2,500 match-funding through the Innovation Vouchers scheme. <https://www.innovation-vouchers.com/>

For every £1 a company can put up towards innovation and growth, it will be matched with a £1 contribution from the project. Where a company puts forward up to £2,500, this is match-funded from the project. The programme is only available to those businesses located within the GBSLEP area: Birmingham, Solihull, Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Tamworth, Bromsgrove, Redditch, and Wyre Forest, through funding from GBSLEP partners and the European Regional Development Fund.

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# Support Andy Salmon's Charity Bike Ride!



Our very own Andy Salmon, lecturer in Marketing, will be completing a **482km cycle ride from London to Paris on 9th September!**

The day will be particularly meaningful for Andy: *"Unfortunately, I lost a friend to Leukaemia not so long ago and in some way I feel as though he'll be willing me on to Paris. It's going to be a tough few days, but if I can do a little bit to help raise money in memory of my friend, then it would be a privilege."*

Andy is preparing for the challenge by riding 70 miles per week on his road bike, which is bolstered by training sessions on his exercise bike three times a week.

He is aiming to raise **£1500 for Cure Leukaemia** - the money raised will go towards funding specialist research nurses at 12 blood cancer centres across the UK.

You can help Andy reach his goal by donating to his JustGiving page below!

[Donate Here!](#)