
Nottingham Trent University

Contact Details

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Model

Find, Fund and Support

Starting Point

Nottingham Trent University (NTU) has been developing in relation to their specific targeted support for Social Entrepreneurs during this Programme.

Delivery Structure

The delivery structure has been embedded into their existing Enterprise provision. In some cases, they've used existing start-up support programmes, such as HeadStart, to support social entrepreneurs more intensively.

Background on the Delivery Team

Sean came to NTU having managed a team of Business Mentors on a successful ERDF funded project in conjunction with Sheffield College creating new businesses and jobs. Previously he was a Mentor for the PJEa, worked on other LEGL and ERDF start-up projects and helped set up the Sheffield City Council First Point for Business initiative from Pilot stage - now recognised for Best Practice. Sean actively worked with both Sheffield Hallam and Sheffield University and sat on a local government cabinet steering group, called Generate. This was a city-wide project to establish a cohesive Enterprise strategy for 12-24 year olds.

A large part of his working life has been in business/self-employment and he is still actively involved in business now. Sean has a great deal of experience with the Social Enterprise (SE) Sector, both as a business adviser and as a board member.

Delivery Approach

The Hive is an existing start-up support business incubator. The UnLtd project has been useful as a tool for curriculum based enterprise education. This has been most evident with the Schools of Social Sciences and the Law School, both of which are developing an increased engagement with 'Business with a Social Purpose' as a result. There are a number of embedded enterprise projects planned for next academic year, including degrees



such as Design Psychology (Gotham Woods Project), using 'home grown' social entrepreneurs.

Did it go according to plan?

The project has exceeded expectations with its success at NTU. From Sean's experience in working in a mainstream enterprise agency, the HE Sector has a much higher interest in and quantity of potential social entrepreneurs. The Hive's aim was to use the UnLtd funding to create quality start-ups that were designed for longevity and to work with some existing early stage social entrepreneurs where appropriate. To this end, the vast majority of people supported financially are staff, recent graduates, PhD and Masters students. The only undergraduates supported have been those coming to the end of their 3rd year (with the exception of one Try It award).

Milestones

The project has helped in creating embedded enterprise degree content for the next academic year and also in generating inspiring case studies to be used across the University. The Law School spin-out social enterprise legal advice business is a real testament to the genuine buy-in that is starting to happen at NTU.

This project has also helped with engagement with The Hive from a wider spectrum of staff and students. The Hive does not differentiate between the types of entrepreneur; social entrepreneurship has an equal footing. HeadStart is their flagship entrepreneurship programme. In the last cohort of 12 start-up entrepreneurs, 3 of those were social entrepreneurs.

Changing the perceptions of SE, and the move from the 'not for profit' philosophy, has been really helpful. The Hive has not overly focussed on business legal structures and instead concentrated on business viability and social impact. They've helped set up CICs, a CIO, Ltd companies and sole traders, all of whom are clearly businesses with a

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social purpose.

Partnerships

The Hive has developed a number of formal and informal partnerships that have benefited this project. These include Nottingham City Council's New Business Development Manager for Social Care (specifically around the personalised social care agenda), supporting the Springs of Joy Start-Up, Whatton Prison, a prison for sex offenders, and the Psychology School, supporting the Safer Living Foundation Start-Up, Nottingham City Volunteers Service, Creative Quarter, SEEM, The Law School, Art and Design School, NCN Nottingham, Renewal Trust, Projector at Broadway and the University of Nottingham.

Achievements and Successes

The number of meaningful start-ups created is in itself a success and many of these have already started to trade. The Law School spin-out has also been a real achievement. Merkato, one of their start-ups, is about to launch a kick-starter campaign with some significant backing and has just won a Ben and Jerry's social entrepreneurship pitching competition in London.

Results

- 21 Businesses/Individuals Funded
- 1 Spitalfields Market Team (will continue trading afterwards)
- 12 now set up as a legal entity
- 7 setting up soon
- 2 'speculative' (only Try It funded)
- Law School SE spin-out supporting SE
- Over 200 staff and students engaged

Outcomes and Impacts

There is a very high level of interest at HE level in SE, which is more than Sean anticipated. He believes that the potential for SE linked to HE is huge, in particular the synergy this should have with academia and the by-products of enterprise education that this creates.

Lessons Learned

This needs to be a sustained approach.

The Future

The Hive will continue to support start-up SEs just as they have done with the current venture and have been doing for the last 12 years. However to really integrate Social Entrepreneurship into the fabric of the University rather than supporting individuals who come forward, a more sustained

approach is needed, beyond this one-year HEFCE/UnLtd Phase 2. Sean believes they've made a good start and increased activity across the University, but really would need an extended project for another couple of years to really inculcate the SE agenda within NTU.

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