



This project is funded by:



Project Case Study

Higher Education Enterprise Skills Routeway, Liverpool John Moores University

Project Overview

Higher Education Enterprise Skills Routeway (HEESR) provides students with a customised programme of training and support to raise awareness of entrepreneurship.

How it Works

The initiative, funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) as part of its 2007-10 European Social Fund (ESF) Co-finance Plan, aims to harness the creativity of Merseyside students who wish to set up their own business and supports them in the development of their concept. As part of the project, participants can benefit from a fast track enterprise development scheme that provides an intensive business course and staged bursary payments over a nine month period. Bespoke business advice and support is provided at quarterly intervals.

The project is delivered by Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) in partnership with Young Enterprise North West and Creativebias.

Impact and Success

22-year-old Talia Baccino and her sister Kayleigh, 23, enrolled on the programme in 2008 and have since launched their own successful company, Trendy Vend, which, via a number of vending machines in bars across the city, supplies high quality cosmetic products to girls enjoying a night out on the town.

Talia, who has since graduated in Marketing and Consumer Behaviour from LJMU, found inspiration for her business concept while enjoying an evening out with friends in Liverpool city centre. The HEESR programme has helped Talia develop her idea

and now Trendy Vend has nine vending machines in venues across Liverpool, with ambitions to roll out the service over the next year.

The HEESR project encourages students to pursue starting up their own business and supports them in the process.

Talia says: “The ESF funding has made it possible for us to get our business venture off the ground. We were able to pay for a prototype to be built and have had assistance with the manufacturing costs of the actual units.

“We’ve worked hard on marketing our product and researching what the most popular products would be. We now have nine machines in bars across Liverpool city centre and ultimately hope to franchise Trendy Vend in other cities across the country.”

Head of Student Enterprise at LJMU, Emma Hunter, said: “The project aims to encourage more students to become self employed and create successful, sustainable businesses.

“As part of the initiative, we provide the participants with the practical business skills needed to back up the theoretical knowledge they’ve gained as part of their University education. We’re able to offer them support and guidance from successful local business people and networking opportunities. They can also benefit from peer support.

Emma added: “There’s no way we could run the programme without the ESF funding, yet it’s a very cost-effective way to encourage entrepreneurship and to feed back into the regional economy. Ultimately, even if some of the business ideas don’t take off, the participants are more employable and have gained valuable skills to help them in whatever direction they choose to take.”

Talia and Kayleigh were recently named Best Young Entrepreneur in the Morgan Foundation Entrepreneur Awards and scooped the Innovation Award at the LJMU Graduate Entrepreneurs Awards.