

KnowledgeExchange

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Students meet with success at the Bright Ideas final

The fifth Bright Ideas competition, run by the WestFocus Entrepreneurship Centre, attracted more entries than ever before. 139 ideas were submitted from across the WestFocus Consortium, and with some being team entries, the total number of students involved was 162. There was a fantastic range of ideas, from a Total Care Service for elderly people to online software solutions.

The Bright Ideas Final Event and prize giving took place on 12 February at the University of Westminster's historic Regent Campus. All of the competition entrants attended, with

the hope of winning a share of the £11,000 prize fund.

The evening ceremony featured three entrepreneurial speakers, who also presented students with their prizes.

Robert Soltanie, Managing Director of the Best Property Company, previous Bright Ideas Winner, and Kingston University graduate, talked about the importance of learning from mistakes.

Tony Goodwin, CEO and founder of Antal International, a successful recruitment business, spoke about the importance of

perseverance, belief in your ideas and the ability to form a successful enterprise even during an economic downturn.

Nick Boles, Director of the London Innovation Centre, spoke on behalf of the judges. He described the intensity of the stringent judging process. He then referred to what he saw as the hallmarks of a successful idea: intellectual property, workable ideas for how to implement the idea, and a clear description of the target market and the problem which was to be solved.

Martha Mador, manager of the WestFocus Entrepreneurship Centre, spoke about the significance of failure in the entrepreneurial process, especially as most successful entrepreneurs have failures in their past and learned from their mistakes. To those who did not win a prize in this round of Bright Ideas, Martha's advice was to keep working on their ideas, and looking for opportunities.

The Bright Ideas final culminated with a networking session over wine and nibbles, which gave rise to even more business opportunities.

For a full list of all the Bright Ideas winners, please see the WestFocus Entrepreneurship Centre website: www.westfocus.org.uk/Entrepreneurship/n27_News.aspx.



Pictured, all of the winners at Bright Ideas 2009

Preparing for a Bright Future

The WestFocus Entrepreneurship Centre is gearing up for the next session of the successful Bright Futures programme. Having visited Roehampton University and Westminster University last year, the next course will be taking place at Brunel University in June.

The event gives students from all disciplines the opportunity to learn about, and gain valuable practice in, entrepreneurial activities such as creative thinking, pitching and networking. One of the key aspects of the three-day



Students enjoy a range of hands-on games during the Bright Futures course

programme is that successful entrepreneurs come to share their real-life experiences.

Many of the visiting speakers have previously attended Bright Futures as students themselves, which provides a real demonstration to the current students that the techniques they have been learning about really work, and can make a genuine difference to their future.

"The event turned out to be absolutely invaluable and nothing like I expected" Toni Sealey, 4th Year Creative Producing student, University of Kent.

For more information about Bright Ideas, please see www.westfocus.org.uk

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A Hive of Activity - Kingston University Enterprise



Deborah Lock,
Executive Director of Enterprise

They say if you want to get something done just ask a busy person. Deborah Lock certainly qualifies for the 'busy' category. In her role as Executive Director of Enterprise at Kingston University she is responsible for formulating and leading the strategic direction of the institution's enterprise agenda. She manages the department which covers business and commercial services, knowledge transfer, enterprise education, student enterprise and strategic project support services.

Deborah has oversight of all University HEIF (Higher Education Innovation Fund), funded positions such as those in Careers and Employability, the Academic Development Centre and the University Secretariat. More recently, she led the successful institutional Economic Challenge Investment Fund (ECIF) bid which will result in the establishment of a Graduate-2-Business, careers, enterprise and employability centre. She has just completed the first UK survey on HEI knowledge-technology transfer salary and incentive schemes in partnership with UNICO.

Describing herself as a strategist and change agent, Deborah has a clear vision for the university: "To work with business to overcome the barriers to viability and growth by sharing knowledge and inspiring development for the overall benefit of the community". This is why the WestFocus alliance is so significant. Deborah comments: "Our links with six other leading universities through the WestFocus activities add real strength and scope to our business offer. Projects such as Shell Step and LIPP (London Innovation Placement Programme) offer pragmatic solutions to enhance learning and assist business. The WestFocus initiatives complement the Kingston University strategy for the development of entrepreneurial skills for staff, students and the business community. We consider we have brought strength and relevance to this important partnership, and in turn, we benefit greatly from the regular interaction with our Higher Education Institution colleagues".

One of the most interesting recent developments from WestFocus is the general willingness of the partners to continue collaborating even after direct funding has ceased.

Deborah concludes: "Kingston University Enterprise is certainly a hive of activity, and through WestFocus a lot of cross pollination is occurring!"

It's About Being a Business – Roehampton University Enterprise



The newest addition to the WestFocus Executive Team is Steve Hughes, Director of the Research and Business Development Office at Roehampton University. In his new role, Steve's main focus is to support the University's mission of building upon its strengths in research and teaching, through opening up new national and international markets. He is also committed to helping the University realise

maximum value from the commercialisation of intellectual property.

Steve views membership of the WestFocus Consortium as being a valuable asset in achieving these goals: "Clearly WestFocus offers Roehampton University access to a greater range of market opportunities whilst providing the appropriate economies of scale to allow universities of any size to participate fully and effectively in knowledge and technology transfer".

Having enjoyed a varied career, Steve has extensive experience in both the public and private sectors, most recently with an international venture investment company in the City. Before that, he worked for and with research intensive UK universities, most notably the University of Reading and Royal Holloway, University of London.

During this time Steve was heavily engaged in activities relating to the commercialisation of university technology and expertise and the development of entrepreneurship training for academics and students. He was also active in supporting the development of international partnerships and inter-university consortia, and, whilst at Royal Holloway, was part of the original team that conceived and developed WestFocus and its forerunner PARK.

This level of experience puts Steve in an ideal position to shape the future of enterprise within Roehampton University: "I'm keen to integrate enterprise into the core business of the University, supporting and adding value to research, and learning and teaching, thus bringing the whole weight of the organisation behind a more enterprising approach to all aspects of our work and realising tangible and quantifiable benefits on the bottom line.

"For me it's about being a business and not simply engaging with business".

DesignPlus has a new look

One of the most successful of the WestFocus Knowledge Development Networks has relaunched with a new website. DesignPlus will continue to run their highly popular events, with the support of Kingston University and Brunel University.

The new website will continue to use the existing URL of www.designplus.org.uk, so take a look and catch up with the latest news from the team.

'Apprentice Entrepreneur' steps into cyberspace

The WestFocus Centre for Knowledge Exchange has taken their range of experiential learning games to the next level, with the launch of DJ Life Online. DJ Life is the third game in the 'Apprentice Entrepreneur' series, following MarketPlace and E-Trader. DJ Life is the first of these to be available for online play, and so marks a significant addition to the catalogue of learning resources.

DJ Life is based around the concept of running a mobile DJ business. This will give students an insight into the day-to-day realities of managing a small enterprise. They will need to keep a close eye on their bank balance, ensure that they have access to all of the right equipment and make sure that they understand the needs of their audience.

By using 45 specially-commissioned music loops, DJ Life allows students to perform at the virtual gigs that are booked in their diaries. If the audiences like them, they can move on to bigger venues, with larger crowds and more profits. However, as with any business, there are also costs involved in expanding.

This is a fun, interactive way of teaching basic business skills, and it is now even easier for teachers to introduce DJ Life into their classes. Schools and universities can have their own game administrator, who is able to set up as many user accounts as they require. The students can be identified by their class,

so it is easy for teachers to monitor who is playing the game.

For more information about the benefits of DJ Life, and to arrange a trial, please contact admin@djlife.org.uk.



How to be an Entrepreneur (no matter what you're into)

One of the central principles of the WestFocus Consortium is to support and encourage entrepreneurship amongst students. The Entrepreneurship Centre has been instrumental in this activity, but has recently been given a helping hand by a new entrepreneurship module developed at Kingston University.

Dr Robert Mellor, Director of Enterprise at the Faculty of Computing, Information Systems and Mathematics, began the IT & Entrepreneurship module at Kingston four years ago. He further developed it at the IT University of Copenhagen, where it won two international prizes and he realised that many of the principles of the subject could be successfully taught in other academic fields.

To write a student text book that is relevant across a wide variety of disciplines is a big task, but that was the challenge that Dr Mellor set himself. The result, 'Entrepreneurship for Everyone', was published by Sage in November 2008.

"What we wanted was to put the generic stuff together but put in specialist chapters for each academic discipline, engineering, biology, etc, and bundle that together with slides and instructor guides so that any lecturer in any academic discipline will be able to deliver a cracking Entrepreneurship module with only a minimum of preparation", Dr Mellor said.

The book was written for students who don't have a strong business theory background, and fits well with WestFocus' aim to encourage

students from all disciplines to develop an entrepreneurial spirit. It has contributions by specialists from Kingston, Westminster University, St George's and Royal Holloway, University of London, and the module is suitable for teaching Entrepreneurship in IT, Health & Social Science, Life Sciences, Engineering, Journalism, Music and Film.

There is also a section on sustainability, written by international expert Anne Chick who is Reader in sustainability at Kingston. "Personally I think the big area is sustainability" said Dr Mellor "I think the next Bill Gates will be a green entrepreneur".

For more information about the module, please contact **Dr Mellor** via r.mellor@kingston.ac.uk.

Entrepreneurship educators get their hands on cutting-edge learning tools



L-R: Yuliana Topazly, Kingston University, Kim Fletcher, Business Link Kent and Matthew Beckford, Young Enterprise with Taktix, a board game developed by Business Link Kent

Sharing Expertise with HEEG

Five out of seven WestFocus universities continue to benefit from being part of a vibrant professional network of entrepreneurship educators. Brunel, Kingston, Roehampton, Royal Holloway and Thames Valley Universities have been taking part in events and activities organised by the Higher Education Entrepreneurship Group (HEEG).

HEEG is a regional University-based network committed to promoting entrepreneurship and enterprise in the South East of England. Inclusive and open, it is comprised of academics, business development, knowledge transfer and entrepreneurship professionals, careers services staff and sometimes students.

Formed in 2004, the group aims to increase the capability of Higher Education to develop more enterprising students and more graduate business start ups through up-skilling staff and sharing best practice.

The group was originally started by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA). Today, HEEG is a self-regulating network of 25 universities that is led by the Steering Group comprising representatives of the participating HEIs and managed by a consortium of three universities – Kingston, Portsmouth and Royal Holloway, University of London. SEEDA continues to support and co-fund HEEG's activities.

HEEG runs a number of events throughout the year, dedicated to providing opportunities to exchange experiences with world class entrepreneurship scholars and practitioners. These are open to colleagues from educational institutions from across the UK and to anyone interested in entrepreneurship education. Some of these events are academically focused whilst others are hands-on and practical, allowing delegates to experience first-hand entrepreneurship education tools and resources developed and used in the UK to teach entrepreneurship at all levels.

The group also manages a Small Projects Fund that awards up to £8,250 of matched funding for member universities' activities that support HEEG aims and objectives. Competitions run twice a year and attract a significant number of applications – 11 in the latest round of funding.

For more information, see www.heeg.org.uk

On March 26th, the University of Reading hosted a one-day HEEG conference titled 'Essential Tools for Entrepreneurship Education'. This event gave educators the chance to hear about the latest developments in the teaching of entrepreneurship.

The day began with an examination of experiential learning and the concept of self-efficacy. These talks highlighted the unique challenges faced by entrepreneurship educators and the difficulties that are often encountered when assessing the impact of these learning modules.

With delegates from more than 30 universities, from all parts of the United Kingdom, this was a fantastic opportunity to share best practice.

The afternoon session saw more than a dozen exhibitors showcase a wide range of experiential learning tools. With examples of hands-on, interactive board games and cutting edge simulations using the very latest technologies, the products on show covered the full spectrum of academic disciplines and abilities.

Attendees also had the opportunity to try many of these tools for themselves, which gave further insight into how they can be incorporated into a classroom module.

The day generated a great deal of positive feedback, with one delegate describing it as: "An excellent event which enabled me to keep up to date with research and new techniques in entrepreneurship education and meet colleagues involved in the subject".

For more details of this, and other HEEG events, see the HEEG website at www.heeg.org.uk

Exciting Future for KnowledgeLondon

The coming year promises to be a stimulating time for KnowledgeLondon members. Following the award of a 12-month contract extension, the KnowledgeLondon team are set to deliver at least 10 high-quality events in that time.

As well as a full programme of knowledge exchange opportunities for knowledge transfer professionals from London-based Universities and Colleges of Further Education, and their colleagues from across the UK, there will be an increased focus on professional development. To support this, the "A to Z of Knowledge Transfer" series will comprise three full-day sessions during 2009/10, a 50% increase on previous years.

With a membership total of more than 1,000, KnowledgeLondon will seek to utilise the range of skills and expertise available by assisting members in creating sub-networks to focus on specific projects and disciplines. An early example of this is the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sub-network that is planning to run quarterly discussion meetings to improve the quality and uptake of CPD courses offered by the London universities in the competitive training market.

KnowledgeLondon will also seek to improve links with other organisations by running more events in conjunction with partners, such as the Technology Strategy Board and the London Technology Network.

For more information on KnowledgeLondon and details of forthcoming events, see the website: www.knowledgelondon.net

Eco-procurement in packaging and the role of design

In response to the increasing importance of sustainability in packaging, the Designplus team is exploring the topic with the aim of gaining a better understanding of industry issues and challenges for Design.

In this context the network has conducted an industry survey about eco-procurement for packaging among packaging stakeholders, of which the main conclusions are presented in this report. The received insights indicate that sustainability in packaging procurement is 'undermined' by barriers of information, knowledge and understanding, competitiveness and culture of the sector.

This survey offered a general view of the industry's concerns and opinions, which will be part of a further debate in an opinion former event, which in turn will provide deeper insights and a strategic direction for future activities between design and businesses. It was also established that design could play a greater role in helping businesses to address these challenging issues.

Further research will take place, based on the outcomes of this report, to determine the core priorities for action. The factors highlighted in this summary report are intended to inform an opinion formers workshop to be held at the Museum of Brands, Packaging and Advertising on the 19th May.

This is an initial step in exploring practical measures that might be taken to tackle these issues.

For more information about this work, please see www.designplus.org.uk.

Rewards for Enterprising Businesses

The WestFocus Entrepreneurship Centre recently launched the latest Enterprising Business Awards (EBA). This annual scheme sees ten owner-managers take part in a six-month business support programme designed to help them take their business to the next level.

A series of networking forums will give the award winners a chance to examine the challenges facing their businesses and to discuss them with like-minded entrepreneurs and experts to find solutions.

Participants will come away from the programme with a plan of action on how to overcome those obstacles that they have identified as hindering business growth and completion of the course will earn a Postgraduate Certificate in Enterprise and Innovation in recognition of their work.

Throughout the business support programme, business owners will be able to access a shared £10,000 fund to pay for the intelligent resources, normally undergraduates or graduates, to support the implementation of a business development strategy.

One of the previous winners, Lee Prince of Light + Design Associates, spoke about the benefit that the awards gave: "I now have a road map for the development of my company and like-minded people to discuss it with".

The Enterprising Business Awards are an annual programme with a new round of entries announced at the end of each year. For more information, see www.westfocus.org.uk/entrepreneurship

Stepping Out: a new stroke self-management programme

Stepping Out is a stroke self-management programme based in the Faculty of Health and Social Care, St George's University of London. Initially funded by a WestFocus stimulus fund, Stepping Out was originally conceived by Dr Fiona Jones in 2005.

Drawing on the concept of self-efficacy, the Stepping Out programme has two main features. Firstly, there is a training programme designed for practitioners working at all stages of the stroke journey, enhancing their skills to be able to deliver self-management training. To support this, there is also a personalised self-management training programme for stroke survivors and their carers, supported by an interactive stroke workbook.

Stepping Out recognises that stroke is a unique and complex event and this approach offers patients a programme that is tailored to their individual needs. It emphasises partnership, not dependency, and gives the opportunity for the patient to control individual progress and targets. The Stepping Out programme has been designed in consultation with stroke survivors and utilises current best evidence on self-management and stroke.

The programme was originally piloted in Inverness, London and Dorset, and feedback from these sites and the expert advisory group has been integral to the further development of the programme. The stroke workbook has also been evaluated and endorsed by Connect UK, a national charity for people with stroke and aphasia. Stepping Out was well received at the UK Stroke Forum in 2008 and by the Regional Stroke Networks and has been promoted on the Department of Health website.

Commissions for workshops have been received from Stroke Networks and Primary Care Trusts throughout the UK. 11 workshops have been held since April 2008 and a further 13 have been commissioned by Stroke Networks in London, the Midlands and Scotland. More than 2,000 stroke workbooks have been distributed and approximately 220 practitioners have received training.

Stepping Out is currently working towards becoming a dedicated social enterprise jointly owned by St George's University of London and Kingston University.

More information about Stepping Out can be found on the website: www.steppingoutuk.org.uk, or by calling Stepping Out on **0208 725 2445**. Alternatively, you can email stepout@hscs.sgul.ac.uk or f.jones@sgul.kingston.ac.uk



The stroke workbook has been extremely well-received

The Music in Rehab Project: An Update

The Music in Rehab Project is an ambitious programme encompassing applied research, knowledge transfer and the establishment of music policy for secondary care environments within the National Health Service.

Led by Brunel University's Dr Costas Karageorghis and supported by colleagues at the University of Westminster and Kingston University, the work aims to maximise the benefits of age-congruent, functional music in physiotherapy.

"Age-congruence" refers to music which has been selected for a specific age group, and "functional" denotes music that is closely matched to the tasks and specifics of a physiotherapy rehabilitation session.

Over the last 3 years, this exciting and innovative programme has been supported by the WestFocus Consortium through the HEIF-3 funding scheme and a subsequent Executive grant.

Following ethical clearance from the local NHS, and a pilot study in 2007, the effects of an age-congruent, functional music programme were tested in the physiotherapy department of the Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust from January to July 2008. The test involved two groups of patients, one which attended rehabilitation classes accompanied by the scientifically-selected music while another group attended classes without musical accompaniment.



Dr Karageorghis assessing the psychophysical effects of music in his lab at Brunel University

The research team used a range of physical and psychological assessments to measure the performance of each group and to determine whether the music had any effect. The results of these tests indicated that the

musical accompaniment led to numerous positive benefits including distraction from pain, increased social interaction and an improved overall mood. Such effects have the potential to improve patients' commitment to rehabilitation and, therefore, enable them to regain and maintain functional mobility.

The most recent phase of the project included a number of focus groups and knowledge transfer events. Dr Karageorghis organised a symposium at the Music, Health and Happiness Conference hosted by the Royal Northern College of Music in November 2008 to which he invited several leading UK academics. This was followed in December by a focus group session assessing the impact of the music programme with the physiotherapy department staff at Hillingdon Hospital and a presentation on the application of music.

Through consultation with physiotherapists and other health professionals, Dr Karageorghis and his team hope to distil the work of the Music in Rehab Project into a music policy which can influence best practice.

A music programme has already been rolled out at the Hillingdon Hospital physiotherapy department with carefully-crafted playlists for a range of age groups.

For more information about this project, please contact costas.karageorghis@brunel.ac.uk.

Event Update

'Packaging Strategy Workshop - Unwrapping the Future' has a new date: **11th June 09**.

This professional development course (CPD) was developed by the Designplus team at Brunel University, and aims to help packaging professionals and businesses to develop strategic thinking skills, for business competitiveness. See www.designplus.org.uk for further details.

2009 Calendar of events

Brand Strategy Workshop: Contemporary & Emerging Issues in Branding

21 May

Conference Centre, Brunel University
www.designplus.org.uk/courses.aspx

Lunchtime Seminar: Why is Social Enterprise relevant to you?

21 May, 12.30pm – 2.30pm

St George's University of London

Packaging Strategy Workshop

11 June

BITLab, Brunel University
www.designplus.org.uk/courses.aspx

Brand Strategy Workshop: Designing & Delivering Effective Brand Experience

18 June

Conference Centre, Brunel University
www.designplus.org.uk/courses.aspx

HEEG Annual Conference & Dinner

29 & 30 June

University of Portsmouth
www.heeg.org.uk

Brand Strategy Workshop: Brand-Lab: Consultation Workshop for Practical Design Solutions

23 July

Conference Centre, Brunel University
www.designplus.org.uk/courses.aspx

For more information about these and other events please go to www.westfocus.org.uk

Should you have any comments or suggestions or have a story to tell please contact Nadia Zernina, the Editor, at nadia.zernina@brunel.ac.uk