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University**

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Research,
Enterprise &
Innovation

Entrepreneurship & Innovation Institute



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Our awards

Our work has been recognised with the following prestigious awards.

Times Higher Education – Entrepreneurial University of the Year

The Times Higher Education Awards are widely regarded as the Oscars of the higher education sector, shining a spotlight on the outstanding achievements of institutions, teams and individuals working in higher education across the UK.

The award recognised LSBU's work in 14/15. Over the year we supported 600 local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), boosting growth and creating jobs, engaged more than 10,000 students and staff in enterprising activities, and supported 220 student and graduate business ideas.

The judging panel commented:

"LSBU has demonstrated how a vision can be translated into action, within curricula, through the work of its staff and then more widely across their local, national and international networks. We are particularly impressed by the number of students engaged, the breadth of enterprising activity the University is involved in and the depth of employer engagement. LSBU shows a truly entrepreneurial approach to its pivotal role in the community and academic endeavours."



Global Consortium of Entrepreneurial Centers – Outstanding Emerging Entrepreneurship Center

This significant achievement celebrates LSBU's commitment to supporting students and graduates to develop their enterprise skills, and recognises the Clarence Centre for Enterprise and Innovation as a, where the Institute is based, central hub for this activity across campus.

The Clarence Centre provides a unique environment for LSBU students and alumni entrepreneurs to work alongside SME tenants, offering opportunities for skills development and start-up support.

Institute of Enterprise and Entrepreneurs (IOEE) Celebrating Enterprise Awards – Highly Commended

The IOEE awards, organised in partnership with the Small Firms Enterprise Development Initiative. (SFEDI Group), recognise the very best in enterprise learning and skills development across the UK.

The commendation celebrates LSBU's commitment to supporting students and graduates to become the next generation of entrepreneurs, develop their enterprise skills and start up their own businesses.

Introduction

We're here to motivate, connect, challenge and develop our students' and graduates' enterprise skills and entrepreneurial mindset.

All they need is a thirst for business and innovation. We provide support to explore their entrepreneurial ambitions and help them to become part of the thriving enterprise community at LSBU.



Make It Happen competition finalists 2015. Make It Happen is one of the enterprise competitions offered by the Institute for LSBU students.

As well as support during their academic studies, we also provide a full programme of activities, including workshops, events, competitions, membership of the Institute of Directors and Intellectual Property (IP) advice.

We use the knowledge of our academic and student community to build relationships with, and support, start-ups and SMEs beyond the University, through consultancy and internships. We also have a new Business Solutions Centre for local businesses at LSBU's Clarence Centre.

The Institute is supported by a network of start-ups, established businesses and organisations which share their knowledge, experience and creativity with our students.

Our partners, including our Entrepreneurs in Residence, give guest lectures, act as mentors to our students and sit on judging panels for our competitions. Covering a range of sectors, the entrepreneurs inspire our students by sharing their personal business experiences and areas of expertise. It's a great opportunity for them to give something back.

By bringing together students, graduates, start-ups and more established businesses, the Enterprise and Innovation Institute is creating a vibrant enterprise community at LSBU.

By bringing together students, graduates, start-ups and more established businesses, the Entrepreneurship & Innovation Institute is creating a vibrant enterprise community at LSBU.

Building and supporting a culture of enterprise at LSBU

Talks, events & resources



Start & Evolve talks
Successful entrepreneurs share their experiences to inspire students and graduates to take the next step on their business journey

Competitions and challenges
Students put their skills and ideas to the test, to gain funding and support to take their ideas further



Develop & Grow workshops
Supporting students to develop their enterprise skills and an entrepreneurial mindset



1-2-1 advice
Advice for students and graduates with a business idea



Boot Camps
Intensive practical advice and support for students and graduates to refine their business and social enterprise ideas



A certificate in enterprise

Students who take part in six activities gain a Certificate in Enterprise

Start-up support



Spark
A 6-month programme to help students validate an idea and identify their first customers

Rocket

A 6-month accelerator, supporting students and graduates to develop a Minimum Viable Product and secure their first sales



Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme
A 12-month programme for ambitious graduates, providing access to space, funding and advice/mentoring to take their business to the next level

Internships and consultancy projects with start-ups and SMEs

Supporting students to gain 'real-world' experiences



We aim to create

start-up businesses & entrepreneurial graduates



Intellectual Property advice and support



Improving the understanding and awareness of IP among the staff and student community

Enterprise in the curriculum



Activities to inspire and engage students in enterprise as part of their studies

We are supported by a network of entrepreneurs and partners



Entrepreneurial spirit knows no boundaries. It isn't defined by race, colour, religion or privilege. For some, it can be borne out of necessity – the realisation that the best way to get ahead in life is to pull yourself up, to take control and to push your own ideas relentlessly, day in, day out, even when others don't seem to want to listen. Stephen Addison is such a man.

Boxing clever

As a youngster, Stephen didn't have much opportunity to succeed. He was running with the wrong crowd, doing things he knew he shouldn't – but finding a way out was always going to be difficult. He escalated from petty crime to gang involvement to helping in drug deals – earning money that made his friends jealous – and he was on a path that was leading in only one direction.

For Stephen, his redemption was two-fold – he found God, and decided to turn his life around through boxing. A promising amateur, he got a degree from LSBU where he formulated a plan for what he now believes is his real calling: Box Up Crime.

Box Up Crime delivers boxing sessions across Barking, teaching youngsters at risk of being excluded from school or facing prison the importance of

discipline, a healthy lifestyle and self-respect. LSBU helped him to launch the project, formulating a business plan and getting that all-important foot in the door. Everything since then is testament to Stephen's tenacity.

From humble beginnings, the organisation has grown at an astonishing rate. Throwing himself into every challenge, Stephen has helped Box Up Crime to grow to a stage where it reaches around 600 people a week, with a branch in Switzerland, a £250,000 gym of its own, a lifestyle brand about to launch and a self-sustaining business model that allows it to carry out charitable work without being solely dependent on grants and hand-outs – an approach Stephen describes as too risky to be worthwhile.

Box Up Crime works with schools, councils and youth offending services to train youngsters who could otherwise end up living the life Stephen did. Their success rate is phenomenal – lives are being turned around by the team through a wide range of activities.

The only drawback for Stephen? "I've actually had to give up boxing because I don't have the time any more," he laughs. "It's just been a crazy three years, and we're so much busier than I thought we would be." Despite his undoubted talent, you get the feeling that Stephen is quite happy that Box Up Crime's success has led him to hang up his gloves a little earlier than planned. "I guess you could say I've found my calling," he smiles.

Find out more: www.boxupcrime.org

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Food that's streets ahead

The popularity of street food has rocketed in the UK in recent years. The low start-up costs and relatively simple legal process involved mean that it's not too difficult to get a street food venture up and running – an opportunity that thousands of people have made the most of.

Starting out as part of LSBU's Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme, Rotsen was able to develop his business and received further funding along the way.

However, while starting a street food venture is relatively simple, growing and developing it as a business is a much more significant challenge – but it's a challenge that Rotsen Ibarra is tackling with relish (literally).

Having arrived in the UK to learn English and study at LSBU, Rotsen had a long-held hope of putting his passion for cooking into creating his own company. Seeing the diverse range of food sold across the capital gave Rotsen the confidence to give it a go for himself, using what he had learned

His business, Petare, offers London residents a taste of South America – specifically, Rotsen's native Venezuela. Serving up delicacies such as El Pabellón (the national dish of slow-cooked shredded beef brisket), Carayaca (consisting of chargrilled vegetables) and Reina Pepiada (shredded chicken salad), the last year has seen the business go from strength to strength.

Starting out as part of LSBU's Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme, Rotsen was able to develop his business and received further funding along the way. Enjoying the enthusiasm that the other entrepreneurs had for Petare, Rotsen is still based in the Clarence Centre, and regularly trades at markets and pop-up restaurants across London.

Rotsen now hosts regular pub pop-ups and trades every weekend at Street Feast, London's nomadic street food circus. He is finding that Venezuelan cuisine is as big a hit with the British public as he had hoped it would be – so next time you're tempted by the scent of some great-smelling street food, follow your nose. It might just lead you to Petare and an introduction to the fantastic food of Venezuela.

Find out more: www.petare.co.uk/

Planes, trains and automobiles

In an increasingly connected world, it's easy to take international travel for granted. Most of us think nothing of jumping on a plane for a holiday, a business trip or to visit family in far-flung corners of the world.



For many people across the world, however, such trips are far from straightforward. Those with an existing medical condition often find themselves unable to secure travel insurance, leaving their travel options severely limited. Simon Powell, an LSBU graduate and founder of FitzTrip, is looking to change that.

After spending over 20 years in the finance and travel insurance sectors, Simon was well placed to see that, outside the UK, travel insurance for people with pre-existing medical conditions was almost impossible to find. “Around 30% of people in the EU have some kind of existing condition that they would need to declare to

insurers before travelling – things like diabetes, dementia, heart problems and so on,” he says. “There was a real gap in the market, so I decided to see if I could use my experience and expertise to do it myself, rather than waiting for one of the bigger businesses to plug it.”

While undertaking his LSBU degree as a mature student, Simon was made redundant – and it was that which gave him the impetus to launch FitzTrip. He won a competition through the Institute for Entrepreneurship & Innovation that secured him free office space in the Clarence Centre for a year, and he hasn't looked back.

The company, which largely operates online to sell insurance to would-be EU travellers, has made an excellent start to life and Simon has plans to build on that success. “We're doing really well in Spain, and I'm keen to expand so that we are operating in other EU countries,” he says. “We also want to look beyond the EU into other parts of the world where this kind of insurance just isn't available. Our aim is to provide insurance for as many people as possible – ultimately, I want to move into business-to-business sales as well so that our products are available through travel agents and so on – get someone on the ground wearing out their shoe leather as well as having the website.”

It's an enterprise that goes beyond simple travel insurance, though – Simon believes that he is playing his own part in helping the wider European economy. “The older people who are more likely to have a pre-existing medical condition are often cash-rich, and by enabling them to travel you are helping to keep that money in circulation, so making sure they can still go on holiday can also provide a useful boost to the wider tourism economy,” he says.

With an agile approach to business development – Simon outsources call handling so the business can scale up and down easily in response to demand without incurring large overheads – FitzTrip is well placed to deal with the uncertainty of a post-Brexit landscape.

“Like most businesses, I'm waiting to see what it means for us,” says Simon. “It may be easier for us to move to a European base, so that we still only have one set of regulation as opposed to different rules for each country we operate in within the EU. But because we are a small, responsive company, doing so would be quite straightforward – so regardless of the final terms of Brexit, I think we are still well placed to succeed in the long term and build on what we've achieved so far.”

Find out more: www.fitztrip.es/en

With an agile approach to business development, FitzTrip is well placed to deal with the uncertainty of a post-Brexit landscape.

Level up

A Games Jam traditionally brings together games developers with the purpose of creating one or more digital games in a short space of time ranging from 48 to 72 hours. It's an intensely creative and highly productive event where the developers do everything from planning and designing to actually creating the game itself.

LSBU brought together Games Design students with Business Information Technology students to run a Games Jam with a twist: the basic objective was the same as a standard Games Jam, to create digital games, but the students were also required to focus on usability, accessibility and Intellectual Property (IP).

Having previously had IP training, the Informatics students acted as consultants. Their job was to make sure that the games, were original, that there were no copyright infringements and to offer broader feedback from the non-developer perspective.

The developers then took on board the feedback to improve their games.

At the end of the two-day session, the students had to present their ideas to a panel. The judges' criteria included a broad range of key skills such as communication and team work, in addition to the game development itself.

To be successful, the students had to tick all the boxes. The creators of the winning games, Dino Shooting and Eyes Wide Open, completed the task on time and gave an excellent presentation which



demonstrated consideration for IP, playability and user-friendliness. They also collaborated well and used feedback to make improvements.

Siobhan Thomas, Game Design and Development Course Director at LSBU, explains why it was such an important event. “We covered everything that matters in making a game a success here – it incorporates accessibility and usability, IP, and games developers and informatics students all at the same time, because that’s the nature of the world we are sending our students into. This kind of exercise makes sure they are prepared for it, whatever it is they are studying.”

Bringing students on different courses together is an unorthodox approach, one that is mirrored across the University. It helps to give students experience of working as part of a team of people they don’t know very well, teaching them the value of a diverse range of viewpoints in the development process. In the case of the Games Jam, students also learned to give and receive criticism and how to protect their ideas – all critical skills in the world of work.

The Games Jam was sponsored by the Intellectual Property Office via LSBU’s Ignite programme. This helped students and academics across all subjects understand and utilise IP through curricular and extra-curricular workshops, lectures and challenges.

The generation game

Charyl Pitts-Howard has a passion for education, a flair for the arts and a belief that all children have the potential for greatness.

Throughout her career, Charyl has combined her talents to help children achieve and succeed. Among her many achievements to date, she has taught in what was one of New York City's toughest schools, and developed a curriculum for London's Recovery College which provides parents with the skills to help their children recover after experiencing mental health issues.

A graduate of LSBU's MSc Occupational Therapy, Charyl is a new mother, and used her skills as an occupational therapist to develop a sensory play programme for her own baby. It was a hit not just with her own child, but other parents she shared it with too. Her idea, now branded WUNDERKIND, is being commercialised with the help of LSBU, and Charyl has high hopes for it.

Charyl took part in the Rocket programme which the Enterprise & Innovation Institute delivers – this helped her to turn WUNDERKIND from an idea into a Minimum Viable Product.

“Teaching my daughter with WUNDERKIND was an incredibly rewarding experience, just watching her develop and simply being a mum,” she says. “I really want the power of the WUNDERKIND platform to help parents everywhere so that they can jump-start their infant's development naturally.”

WUNDERKIND is a digital sensory play platform that teaches parents and carers how to play in a way that benefits their baby's development. Purchasing a kit includes membership of WUNDERKIND Sensory, with members receiving ongoing help and support in the shape of videos, music selections and personalised developmental updates that build on what the child has learned.

As Charyl's business idea developed, she entered and won a competition at LSBU. The money she won opened up exciting new horizons as she invested it into creating a prototype of the WUNDERKIND set. It was, she recalls, a pivotal moment in the product's development. “Creating the prototype was an invaluable experience, helping to validate the product idea and the business concept as well as giving an insight into refining the product to meet the needs of the audience,” she says.

As a result, Charyl stands on the verge of being able to launch three WUNDERKIND products, and is understandably excited about the impact they could have on the lives of babies and parents alike.

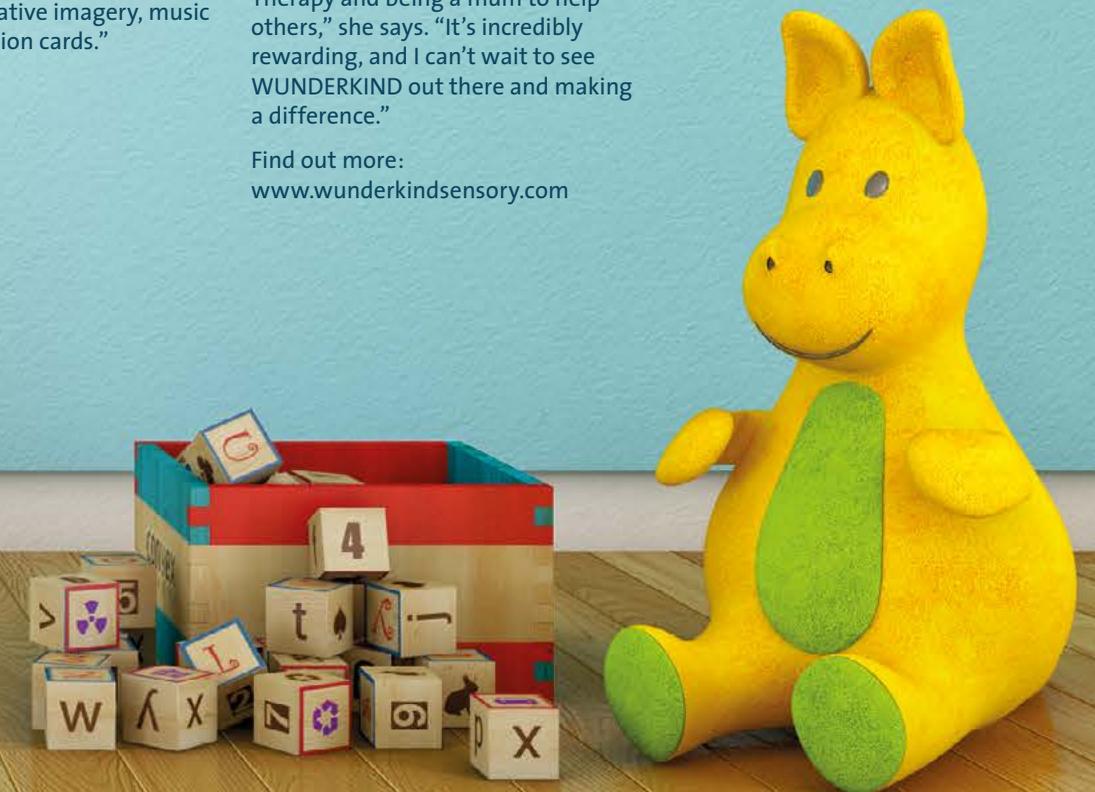
“The baby play programme includes hand-painted baby maracas, tactile toys, fun fabrics, magical lights, bubbles, bouncy balls, a shimmering space blanket, a colourful dancing ribbon, plush puppets and more,” says Charyl. “There's also a massage kit available, to help parents bond with baby and give their little one a soft and gentle pamper session, while the ‘Baby Babel’ set is designed to develop the communication skills of babies before they learn to speak, through hand signals, creative imagery, music and communication cards.”

Charyl's enthusiasm is not unfounded. She's already developed a relationship with the New York City Department of Education, which is aiming to use WUNDERKIND in some of its underperforming pre-schools, while Babies R Us is a confirmed partner, and will work with Charyl to get the full WUNDERKIND range onto the shelves.

For Charyl, it's all part of what she does. “I'm using the skills I've developed through Occupational Therapy and being a mum to help others,” she says. “It's incredibly rewarding, and I can't wait to see WUNDERKIND out there and making a difference.”

Find out more:
www.wunderkindsensory.com

WUNDERKIND is a digital sensory play platform that teaches parents and carers how to play in a way that benefits their baby's development.





(Not) lost in translation

Martina Eco was always fascinated with languages and cultures, and knew from an early age that she wanted to study them. It's hardly surprising then, that she is now the owner of a successful translation company, 3P Translation, and that LSBU is helping her to grow her business even further.

There are three strands to the business, which works with English, French and Italian: interpreting, translating and proofreading.

"Interpreting happens at events like conferences, and is usually done as people speak, enabling them to communicate with each other seamlessly," explains Martina. "Translating is text-based and involves documents like

websites, manuals and magazines. Proofreading is another important element, where I will check the work of other translators to make sure they are consistent and free from errors."

Martina had founded her company before coming to LSBU (where she studied for an MSc in Marketing) but freely admits that she would have loved access to the kind of support LSBU has been able to offer her from

the outset. "I don't really even know why I started my own business," she says. "I'm an adventurous person, and couldn't find any in-house interpreting jobs – so I took a leap of faith and decided to go for it on my own."

After running the business for a while, Martina felt she needed to develop her marketing skills so moved to the UK and LSBU to study. She's since moved the business over as well,

and has enjoyed considerable success, appearing at major language events trade shows and building her profile within the industry.

"I love being my own boss," she says. "I can work anywhere with a wifi connection, and experiment with my business without having to worry about anyone else. The freedom to be as adventurous as you want to be is the best part of running your own business."

Martina is now looking to grow her business and wants to become a mentor for young translators and interpreters. "One of the problems at the start of a career is you take work at low rates just to get some experience," she says. "You don't realise the value of the skill you have, and people are quick to take advantage of that. Educating young freelancers is that first step forwards, and I'm sure LSBU will help me with that part of the journey too."

Who knows, I might even end up renting a space at the Clarence Centre to hold my talks in." Martina has also put her skills in running a business into practice by becoming a Business Solutions Centre adviser. The Business Solutions Centre is a drop-in for local businesses to access support from the University, staffed by LSBU students.

Find out more:
www.3p-translation.com/

Building for the future

“It’s something that played a huge role in our studies,” says Pantelis, who met Vanessa on LSBU’s BSc (Hons) Architectural Technology degree. “For us, the idea of sustainable design covers many things, including minimising the damage done to the environment. For us, it comes as a moral responsibility and we kept that in mind when starting our business. Its key to what we do.”

However, as the pair found, implementing their ideas in business wasn’t simple and straightforward. In a difficult first year where they struggled to secure clients, the pair had to stay strong to remain faithful to their ideals – but it seems they are now reaping the rewards for that.

“Building a business is not easy – no-one’s ever said it was,” says Pantelis. “We’ve hit lots of bumps in the road on the way, and it’s easy to feel intimidated by those who have already made it. You think ‘what chance have we got?’ but that’s where we kept each other strong.

In that first year, we kept getting close but never landed a client, and we inevitably began to feel negative about what we were doing. But we never gave up. We would pick each other up and stay on the roller coaster, and we’ve realised that sometimes, the biggest obstacle to success is our own internal saboteurs.”

One recent project that the pair completed was for a business moving premises to a large 98m² office. “In a big space, it’s a challenge to make the most of light, but we did so by using glass walls that made the most of that natural resource,” says Pantelis. “We put in two meeting rooms, a kitchen and space for the staff to work, all the time keeping it warm and light.”

The clients were delighted with the results, which also mean that they don’t need to turn the lights on as early as they might need to in a darker office – the daylight streams through the space keeping it light

and airy – which is healthier for the staff working there too.

The airflow in the office is also sustainable, because the design of the office allows air to circulate naturally without the need for expensive air circulation equipment – another way that E+C Associates have helped their clients keep their costs down and stick to their principles of sustainability.

More sustainable building projects are already in the pipeline, and the pair hope to play their part in tackling the environmental issues facing the planet – an subject both are passionate about. “We need to take care of Earth – it’s where we live and the reason we are alive,” says Pantelis. “We may only be a small cog in a massive machine, but every cog matters. After all, if we don’t take care of our own home, who will?”

Find out more:
www.eandc-associates.com

For Pantelis Soteriou and Vanessa Cazaubon, sustainability isn’t an added extra when it comes to architecture and design – it’s an integral part of their business, E+C Associates.

More sustainable building projects are already in the pipeline, and the pair hope to play their part in tackling the environmental issues facing the planet.

A ray of sunshine for Brazil's energy industry

The Paris Agreement on climate change, negotiated during the summer of 2016, saw a number of countries agree to take large steps towards limiting the amount of carbon dioxide they produce in a bid to prevent widespread, irreversible damage to the planet.

Many were surprised when Brazil, the largest emitter of CO₂ in Latin America, committed to cutting emissions by 37% by 2025, but the government there is determined to play its part. “Our government is concerned about the future,” said President Michel Temer as he signed the agreement. “Everything we do today is not aimed at tomorrow, but rather at a future that preserves the living conditions of Brazilians.”

Attention will now turn to ways in which Brazil can achieve such significant cuts – and an LSBU-backed business venture is looking forward to playing its part in helping Brazilian business get on board.

BA (Hons) Accounting & Finance graduate Alessandra Lopes runs Luz Consultancy from the Clarence Centre, as part of LSBU's Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme. Alessandra works with her co-founder, Fergal McEntee. Fergal is the technical specialist who has expertise in installing solar. The business is focused on attracting investment into solar energy in Brazil, and Alessandra is optimistic that the future is – literally – bright.

“Brazil is pretty good at producing some forms of renewable energy – especially hydro-electric power,” says Alessandra. “But the solar power industry in Brazil is still in its infancy – despite the fact that it gets twice as much sunshine as most European countries.”

Alessandra's business idea is simple, bringing together UK investors and Brazilian businesses. The UK investors contribute to the cost of installing solar power systems on premises owned by the Brazilian businesses, and then selling the electricity generated by the system back to the company.

“Everyone wins,” says Alessandra. “The Brazilian business benefits from electricity that is cheaper than buying from the grid, while the UK investors will see a full return on their investment within five to seven years. The rest of the 20-year agreement will see the investors making a clear profit on every bill.”

Luz Consultancy would like to take their mission one step further, installing a smaller system at a school for every business installation they are funded to make. “It will help to teach the new generation of Brazilians about climate change and renewable energy,” says Alessandra. “It's something that's really important to me.”

It's a project that is close to Brazil-born Alessandra's heart, and, as a parent, one that she feels strongly about. “We can't deny that climate change is happening now – the evidence is all around us,” she says. “When I first considered getting involved in the scheme, it was all about the numbers – I'm a businesswoman first and foremost. However, helping to preserve the planet and slow climate change is something that I feel is really important. I'm a mother now, and might even become a grandmother one day – what kind of planet will my grandchildren have in 50 or 60 years' time?”

Find out more:
www.luzconsultancy.com

Alessandra's business idea is simple, bringing together UK investors and Brazilian businesses.

Tomorrow's world

When Inan Gokcek looks back on 2016, the odds are that his overriding emotion will be one of pride. At the start of the year, he took his place in the Clarence Centre for Enterprise and Innovation as one of LSBU's 2016 Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme cohort. As the year ends, he can reflect on his business (Studio Anares) going from strength to strength – completing some outstanding projects, and securing repeat business along the way.

After more than a decade working in architecture and interiors, Inan's quest for personal professional development saw him return to university, studying Architecture at LSBU. Even before he graduated, he knew that he wanted to build up his own practice, so a place on the scheme made perfect sense.

"I'd spent around 12 years improving my skills in a number of different fields by working for other designers," says Inan. "But if you want your own designs to become reality, being self-employed is pretty much essential. I figured it was better to start sooner rather than later."

Studio Anares is committed to sustainable design, mirroring Inan's own belief that architecture has a role

in shaping societies. "It's a beautiful thing to be involved with, and very powerful," he says. "It's rewarding to know that while I may only be making a small change, what I am doing is positive for the environment."

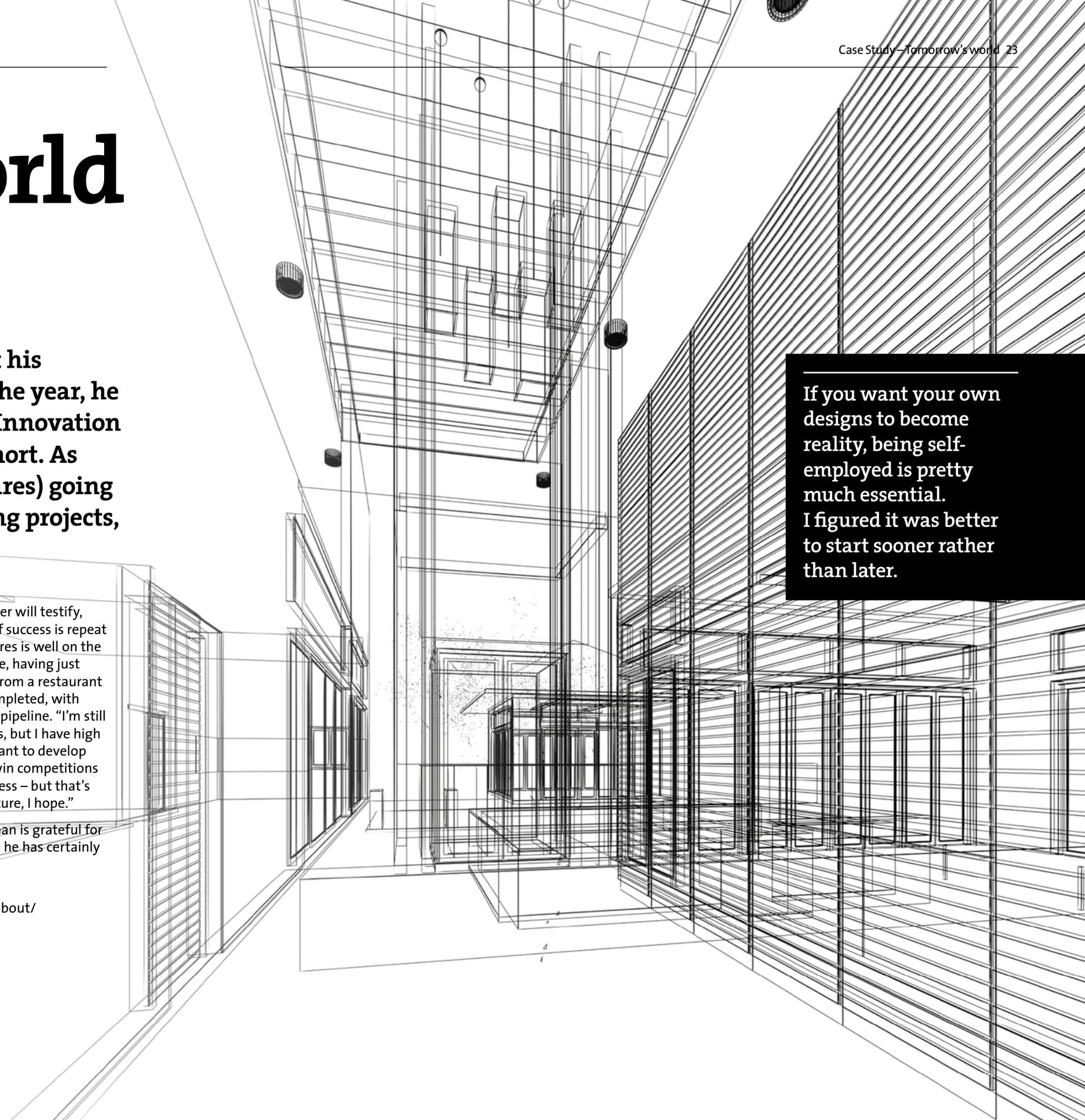
Inan is proud of the progress he has made in his first year – even if the business still faces challenges ahead. "It can be difficult," he admits. "With only a year under your belt, you are a long way from being financially stable and that can be frustrating – especially because you obviously have significant outgoings from the very start. It can be easy to lose confidence in yourself, but the people I've met on the graduate scheme have certainly been a major help when it comes to keeping my morale up."

As any business owner will testify, one good measure of success is repeat business. Studio Anares is well on the way if that is the case, having just secured more work from a restaurant project that Inan completed, with more projects in the pipeline. "I'm still building the business, but I have high hopes," he says. "I want to develop my reputation and win competitions as well as new business – but that's all to come in the future, I hope."

As for the scheme, Inan is grateful for the opportunity, one he has certainly made the most of.

Find out more:
www.anares.co.uk/about/

If you want your own designs to become reality, being self-employed is pretty much essential. I figured it was better to start sooner rather than later.



The concept of idea validation

It was one of the greatest inventors of them all, Thomas Edison, who best summed up how difficult it can be getting an idea off the ground. “Genius,” he said, “is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.”

It's one thing to have a brilliant idea, but without the willingness (and skills) to get to work making it a reality, that's all it will ever be. Key to building a successful business or inventing something new is to start from a sound basis – knowing that the idea itself is a good one, and that it will meet the needs of its intended market.

That's what the Spark programme at LSBU is all about. Any student with an idea for a business or social enterprise can apply for a place on Spark, which will support them in a number of different ways. They'll take part in a series of workshops, have use of a hotdesking area at the Clarence Centre and get access to LSBU's Entrepreneurs in Residence. They can also apply for a grant of up to £500 to test their idea.

The scheme is all about idea validation. It gives students the time, knowledge and skills to test their idea, so that they are better informed about whether or not it is a good venture – before they've wasted lots of time and money on an idea that no-one else is interested in.

It's all based on the principles of 'lean start-up', first proposed in 2008 by Eric Ries, a veteran of working in a number of US start-ups. The overall belief is that start-ups should build their products and services iteratively to meet the needs of early customers – reducing market risks and avoiding the need for large funding and potentially expensive mistakes and failures.

Although lean start-up began life as a concept for tech companies in Silicon Valley, it has been adopted all over the world in the eight years since Ries first proposed the technique – and it is working well for a number of LSBU start-ups so far.

Muizz Almaroof is one example from the latest crop of student entrepreneurs making the most of the scheme. His idea, Motivez, is an app that helps young people to find out about events that can help their personal and professional development.

Muizz and his co-founder George Imafidon have used the scheme to make dramatic changes to the app itself and their business model as they have worked their way through the programme. They've refined the app's features and the interface, moves which have attracted potential investors and helped them to understand their market better.

Muizz and George, like all the students on the Spark programme, have a long way to go before their product is ready for market. However, the iterative improvements they've been able to make as part of the programme mean they can have confidence that the inspiration behind their plans is there. All that's needed now is the perspiration.

Find out more: www.lsbu.ac.uk/student-life/student-enterprise

National Federation of Roofing Contractors

The Graduate Internship Programme at LSBU gives SMEs the chance to work with a recent graduate. The graduates benefit from putting their learning into practice and improving their CV, while the organisation benefits from the fresh insights, enthusiasm and professionalism that LSBU graduates possess in abundance.

Existing links

One organisation that has recently benefited from the programme is the National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC), as Trade Association Manager Debbie Simcock explains. “We already had links with LSBU, so when the Graduate Internship Programme was mentioned, we thought it would be a good initiative to be involved with.”

Work intensively

One of the advantages of hiring an LSBU intern over a temp, Debbie feels, is the opportunity for the intern to work intensively and focus on specific projects: “We felt that the focus on specific projects was a more worthwhile route to take, which is how we came to engage with the programme,” she explains.

Extra viewpoint

To help match NFRC to suitable candidates, LSBU undertook shortlisting on behalf of the organisation, recommending three candidates for interview. “LSBU then went a step further when it came to the interviews,” says Debbie. “A member of staff sat in on the interviews with us, offering an extra viewpoint, which helped us to make a decision quickly.”

Lasting impact

The successful candidate, Miguel John, worked on several projects for NFRC, some of which have had a lasting impact on the organisation. One such task was a market research and benchmarking report for NFRC, something he was entrusted with due to the marketing specialisation he had undertaken as part of his degree. “The report collected data that we had not previously had access to,” says Debbie. “It’s going to become the basis for a more in-depth analysis, carried out by a consultancy.”

Advice for others

Debbie feels that to get the most out of an internship, as NFRC did with Miguel, it pays to be prepared. “There are a few bits of advice I would pass on to other companies which can really help you to make the internship a success for both parties – it’s a great thing to be involved with and I’m delighted that Miguel took so much away from the time he spent with us.”

Debbie’s checklist for a successful internship:

- Be prepared! The internship passes quickly, so plan what you want, and estimate how long each task will take
- Carry out a full induction, making sure that your intern knows how to use all the programmes and equipment they will need to fulfil their role
- Hold regular meetings – a weekly debrief can help both you and the intern, and reviewing progress and offering feedback help to make sure you are using their skills efficiently.

LSBU’s Graduate Internship Programme is a great way for Graduates to hone their skills and bolster their CV – Miguel John tells us about his internship experience.

After graduating with a BA (Hons) in Business Administration, Miguel found the job market challenging. He started thinking about how he could make his CV stand out from the crowd, when an email from LSBU arrived containing the solution he was looking for.

Email opportunity

“I’d signed up for email updates from LSBU that could help me with my career, and after looking for work for a while, I realised what an invaluable opportunity the Graduate Internship Programme was,” says Miguel. “I needed more practical experience to bolster my CV, as well as gaining new skills – so I decided to give it a go.”

Miguel applied and was shortlisted for two opportunities. “It was a nice confidence boost, and after looking at the roles, I decided to progress with an opportunity at the National Federation of Roofing Contractors,” he says.

Market research project

After a successful interview, Miguel got to know the organisation while working on the reception desk. From there, he moved on to helping with smaller tasks such as chasing

membership fees, mailing letters, dealing with customer queries and consolidating potential customer details.

“After that, the new CEO asked me to carry out some market research,” says Miguel. “He knew I had studied marketing as my final year pathway for my degree, so that became the focus of my internship. I used several resources I was familiar with to create a marketing report and provide raw data to the organisation.

Actually working for a real organisation will bring the things you studied on your course to life – as well as boosting your confidence and making you more employable.”

Transferable skills

As well as putting his skills into practice, Miguel feels he got a lot out of his internship. “I’ve learned to trust my instincts, and that everything can be improved with a little extra time or effort – the first ‘final’ copy is never the real final copy,” he says. “I’ve managed to transfer my good interpersonal skills into a new context, and gained confidence – something that I feel has helped me to secure the job I have now.”

Miguel was also able to learn from the experiences of other interns, thanks to monthly meetings at LSBU. “It was good for self-development,” he says. “We would interact and discuss our experiences at our workplace, which I found helpful and a welcome addition to the Graduate Internship Programme.”

Challenging convention

Miguel’s advice to others considering the programme is to make the most of the opportunity. “Work hard, and build on whatever you may think you already know,” he says. “Keep an open mind, and don’t be scared to voice your opinions or suggestions because it is a two-way relationship where you are learning from each other – so challenging convention and breaking the mould is nothing to be scared of.”

Bringing your course to life

Miguel recommends the Graduate Internship Programme to other students and graduates looking for extra insight and experience. “Actually working for a real organisation will bring the things you studied on your course to life – as well as boosting your confidence and making you more employable.”



Stoked with success

Professional skateboarder Marc Johnson once described his profession in very simple terms. “All skateboarding is,” he said, “is putting ideas into action.” Skate enthusiast and LSBU graduate Will Thompson is a man who has taken that concept very literally with the launch of *Wood Pusher*, a skateboarding magazine, with a little help from LSBU’s Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme.

Will has been skateboarding for 12 years and also admits that’s probably the longest commitment he has managed in his relatively short life. It’s more than just a hobby – for Will, like many others, skateboarding has been at the centre of most of his significant friendships, memories and holidays.

“In fact,” he concedes, “one of the reasons I studied at LSBU in the first place was the location – the chance to be at the heart of the British skateboarding scene.” Thankfully, Will spent as much time in lecture theatres as he did on half pipes, and when he graduated, he knew that LSBU could offer him the support he

needed to launch the skateboard magazine he always dreamed of running.

As people willing to propel themselves through the air on little more than a plank of wood with wheels, skateboarders are not known for their circumspect approach to life. For that reason, Will was ready to rush in with his new project, especially when he heard that the UK’s biggest skateboard magazine, *Sidewalk*, was moving to a web-only model. Fortunately, some expert intervention prevented what could have been a costly error.

“Our first few seminars with the Entrepreneurs in Residence really helped us to define the

strategy for *Wood Pusher*, and probably stopped us making some big mistakes,” says Will. “We decided on an online test rather than heading straight for print, and invested in market research so that we had useful information we could pitch to potential advertisers. Without that help in the development stage, we’d have gone out blind, and a printed version would probably be out of our reach by now.”

That said, there have still been bumps in the road for *Wood Pusher*. Unfortunately for Will, one of these proved to be literal, resulting in a skateboard accident and a dislocated shoulder that ultimately delayed the online launch. “I’m pretty much healed again now, but yeah that

was tough,” he grins ruefully. “Spending all day looking at skateboarding and not being able to go out and ride mine really got under my skin.”

As it is, *Wood Pusher*’s first issue can be seen at www.woodpushermag.com, and that printed version is firmly on track – to Will’s clear delight. “Yes, it’s true that I could have gone out and aimed for a job at an existing company,” he says. “I’d have more money in my back pocket for sure – but this is about following my dream, owning my own business and working in skateboarding – and that’s what I really want to do right now.”

Find out more:
www.woodpushermag.com/

Life through a lens

With a turnover of over £40,000 and 35 client jobs completed in its first nine months, it's fair to say that South Bank Collective (SBC) CIC has made a great start to life as a photographic agency.

Major contracts have also been secured, including shooting the prestigious Fassi 2017 calendar in Italy and being commissioned by the Photographers' Gallery. It's a remarkable tale of success that is all the more impressive when you realise that the agency is staffed entirely by students from LSBU's BA (Hons) Photography degree.

"Students from creative backgrounds engage less with traditional enterprise programmes like business plan competitions and bootcamps,"

explains SBC Director and Head of LSBU's Entrepreneurship & Innovation Institute Linsey Cole. "SBC changes that, preparing our students for a portfolio career by letting them run their own photography agency while they study. It also means that the south-east London business community can access fresh creative talent at competitive rates."

The students don't just get the chance to work on real briefs from real clients, though – they have been

involved with SBC's development at every step. They have developed internal and external client bases, and created work to populate their website (which was designed by – you guessed it – LSBU web design graduates). They were involved in its incorporation at Companies House, and meet weekly to plan work, monitor finance and discuss future plans.

"Our students are now freelancers for the SBC," says Linsey. "It's teaching them the skills they will need once they get out there into the world,

but it's also helping to bring on their photography as well. Everyone wins – especially our clients who have access to some of London's brightest new talent without having to break the bank."

The Fassi calendar

The SBC's highest-profile work to date is arguably shooting the prestigious Fassi Crane calendar in Italy. Ten students from SBC were flown out for the shoot, capturing Fassi machinery in action – see some of the results for yourself: www.southbankcollective.co.uk

Preparing our students for a portfolio career by letting them run their own photography agency while they study.

London South Bank University has been transforming lives, businesses and communities for more than 125 years

When it first opened, the aims of the University were to improve the employment opportunities for the people of south London and to support the community by providing access to relevant applied knowledge.

The core of our mission remains unchanged today.



Our Borough Road building in 1892 and today

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