
Supporting
Economic Growth
2007 – 2009

An evaluation of the Business & IP Centre's impact on London
February 2010

The London Development Agency

The London Development Agency (LDA) works across the capital with a range of partners to unlock the potential of London and Londoners and sustain its economic growth.

Its priorities focus on six key areas:

- Promoting London internationally
- Supporting regeneration
- Tackling climate change
- Supporting London's businesses
- Getting more Londoners working through skills and training
- Enabling a lasting legacy from the 2012 Games.

Foreword from Dame Lynne Brindley,
Chief Executive, British Library

Page 2

1. Summary

Page 3

2. Introduction

Page 4

3. Our successes

Page 7

3. Who we help

Page 11

4. What we offer

Page 16

5. Spreading the word

Page 20

6. Supporting London's businesses

Page 24

7. The future of the Centre

Page 26

8. Methodology

Page 27

Foreword

I am delighted to introduce this evaluation of the progress of the British Library's Business & IP Centre over the past two years. It is the most in-depth assessment of the Centre's impact that has been undertaken, and the results are truly inspiring.

At the Library we speak of 'the world's knowledge': our vast collections and the power they possess to enrich lives. In 2006 we opened the Centre with a £1 million investment from the London Development Agency, to enable entrepreneurs and experts to unlock the value this knowledge can hold for businesses. A year later we were granted a further £2.4 million to continue our work until March 2011. We are truly grateful for the LDA's support.

This evaluation pays testimony to the transformative effect that knowledge has had on those that come through our doors. Over 150,000 people have visited the Centre since it opened. Few come from a business background and many come from groups that are under-represented in enterprise: 50% are women, 4% have a disability and 37% come from black and minority ethnic groups.¹ In a recent survey of our users, over a quarter had experienced redundancy or a period of unemployment before starting their business.²

As these individuals make use of the wide range of services we provide at the Centre, we see a change come over them. With our help they develop the knowledge, skills and, perhaps most importantly, the confidence to start and grow businesses.

This report provides a glowing endorsement of the Centre, demonstrating both the immediate impacts on those that we support – our entrepreneurs – and the wider impacts that London feels as a result.

In the last two years we have:

- Helped to create 829 new businesses for London³
- Created a further 786 new jobs for Londoners
- The combined turnover for these businesses is £32 million
- 89% of their founders say this success would not have been achieved without our help.

¹ British Library workshop management system, April 2007 – March 2009.

² Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre, Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009.

³ Of the 471 people surveyed, 65 self-reported starting a business with the Centre's support, indicating that 829 businesses were started by the 6,007 entrepreneurs that used the Centre's services from 2007 – 2009. On that rationale, a further 786 jobs were created in the same period.

In a shifting economic climate, the Centre has been a constant for these businesses: helping them to understand new trends and exploit the opportunities they bring whilst safeguarding against risks.

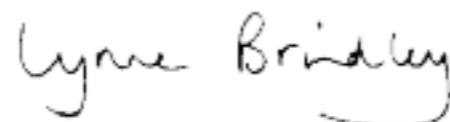
As we look to the future and avenues for ensuring the sustainability of the Centre, we take great satisfaction in the words of those most involved: our users, staff, partners and stakeholders, as they attest to the vital need for this work to continue.

Who better to summarise than one of our entrepreneurs:

The Centre is a vital service for people that are interested in setting up in business and exploiting their intellectual property. Sometimes I feel I have just stumbled across a world-class provider of business support to entrepreneurs, inspired and driven by innovation.

Ian Marshall
Innovator

This, and the facts and figures contained in this report, tells me that we are succeeding in nurturing a new generation of entrepreneurial talent, creating the strong, confident and innovative businesses that London needs. The next step is to embed the Business & IP Centre as a permanent fixture of London's business landscape, then take our model and 'replicate it' in libraries across the country, using our expertise and information to support businesses across the regions. To do so, further funding must be obtained.



Dame Lynne Brindley
Chief Executive,
British Library
February 2010



Summary

This report details the progress of the British Library's Business & IP Centre from April 2007 to March 2009.

The Library has received a total of £3.4 million in funding from the London Development Agency, to run workshops and advice sessions and provide business and intellectual property information for entrepreneurs and inventors.

This report demonstrates that all targets set by the LDA, as well as the overarching objectives set by the Library, have been achieved; indeed, targets for the number of attendees to workshops and events have been exceeded by 60%. In the last two years over 70,000 people have visited the Centre, with over 10,000 attending workshops and events.¹

This report draws from feedback from over 10,000 workshop and event attendees, interviews with our stakeholders, partners and staff, and a survey of 471 of our users. The research, interviews and analysis were completed by an independent research agency, Adroit Economics Ltd, forming the report 'Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre', Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009. For a full methodology, please turn to page 27.

Of the 471 people surveyed, 65 self-reported starting a business with the Centre's support, indicating that 829 businesses were started by the 6,007 entrepreneurs that used the Centre's services from 2007–2009. On that rationale, a further 786 jobs were created in the same period.² These enterprises represent more than three times the number of businesses in Westfield, Europe's largest shopping centre.

The survey demonstrates that the businesses supported by the Centre have generated a £32 million increase in turnover in the last two years. 89% of these businesses feel that they would not have achieved this success without the Centre's support; without our intervention a potential £28.5 million could have been lost from London's economy. For every £1 that the LDA has invested, our businesses have seen a £22 increase in turnover; this demonstrates that this is a highly cost-effective model. The businesses supported by the Centre have contributed £5.5 million to the public purse.

This is particularly significant in a time of economic uncertainty; the Centre is ensuring the survival of the innovative young businesses that will drive London's economy.

The benefits of extending this approach to cities across the UK are clear. We propose using the Centre as a blueprint for regional business hubs, based in public and/or university libraries, using our experience and information.

The services we currently provide (including high value information, webcasts, podcasts and e-courses) can be delivered through an online 'portal', meaning that entrepreneurs across the country can benefit from our expertise.

¹ British Library workshop management system, April 2007 – March 2009.

² Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre, Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009.

Introduction

We support entrepreneurs and innovators from that first spark of inspiration to successfully launching and developing a business.

Our unique offering:

- A distinctive approach: the only organisation to combine world-class intellectual property and business expertise
- Unrivalled access to hugely valuable business and intellectual property information
- Impartial advice from our expert staff and successful entrepreneurs
- Tailored workshops and events on everything from market research to business planning
- A destination for entrepreneurs to meet and collaborate
- A physical hub for the organisations that support businesses in London.

There are 750,000 enterprises in London, 90% of which are micro¹ or small² businesses.³ These small businesses are the backbone of London's economy. They are green, innovative, and have potential for exponential growth. They hire more women, older workers, part-timers and people who have been long-term unemployed.⁴ In short, they are essential to London, especially in a recession.

But London can be a tough place to do business. Small businesses face high operating costs, a tight labour market, a lack of cheap office space, and strong market competition. Businesses in London have lower survival rates than any other area in the UK, and micro businesses face particular challenges to growth.⁵

Our role: to arm entrepreneurs with the tools they need to navigate this environment. We give them the information, skills and confidence to start up and grow their businesses.

Where we began

The Library is the home of the Intellectual Property Office. Through legal deposit we collect market research and business information, and we subscribe to high-value online databases. These collections are worth over £5 million; they are the largest in the UK, if not the world, and for entrepreneurs they offer the answers to the questions that matter for any business:

- Is my idea unique?
- What size is my market?
- Who are my customers?
- What are my competitors doing?

Seeing the untapped potential in these resources, and identifying a real need in London for a physical space offering information, workshops and advice for the business community, as well as a place to network, the Library gained £1million of funding from the London Development Agency to build the Business & IP Centre. In 2007 we were awarded a further £2.4 million to run the second phase of the project: a further four years to continue to develop our services.

More recently the changing economic climate has affected our entrepreneurs and added challenge to the already tough process of launching a business. Our resources help to safeguard these entrepreneurs, and give them the confidence to launch strong, sustainable businesses.

This is the best single resource a business start-up like me could have access to. The strengths of the Business & IP Centre? The central London location, the unmatched facilities, the level of expertise, the access to resources, the technical infrastructure, the depth of knowledge, the inspiring environment.

Aaron Savage

Entrepreneur, www.interactive-mix.com, 2009

There is a major gap in London in the provision of one place where entrepreneurs or 'would be' entrepreneurs can look for guidance and support. I believe that the Centre meets this need as it is in one physical space and offers services through a number of organisations.

Uday Thacker

Social Enterprise Mentor of the Year 2008 and founder, Red Ochre, 2009

¹ A business with 2–10 employees.

² A business with 11–14 employees.

³ Federation of Small Businesses, 2008.

⁴ Federation of Small Businesses and University of Westminster Business School, 'Small Businesses in the UK: New Perspectives on Evidence and Policy', 2008.

⁵ London Annual Business Survey, 2006.

Case study

Anthony Lau, Cyclehoop Ltd

'I was able to identify and prioritise the most important business objectives for my company.'

Anthony Lau is the founder of Cyclehoop Ltd, which designs and manufactures innovative bicycle parking solutions. The flagship product is the award-winning 'Cyclehoop' bicycle stand that turns existing street signposts into secure bicycle parking.

Anthony, a regular attendee of our networking events, had a one-to-one advice session with Mark Sheahan, our Inventor in Residence, when he was at a pivotal moment for his business.

'The Centre's team of friendly staff and experts are outstanding and offer excellent professional advice free of charge.'

With Mark's help I was able to identify and prioritise the most important business objectives for my company. Most importantly, he asked many questions which I could not answer fully and made me realise that there are many important topics I need to look into further. Without hesitation I would highly recommend the Centre to anyone thinking of starting a business.'

Cyclehoops have been installed around London following negotiations with local authorities.



Our successes

Our achievements April 2007 – March 2009

Achieving our targets¹

- Exceeded all targets set by the London Development Agency for the number of attendees in our workshops, events and advice sessions
- Reached a diverse audience: 50% of our users are women, 37% are from a black or minority ethnic background, 4% have a disability
- Delivered over 9,000 workshops and over 750 advice sessions.

Supporting London in difficult times⁴

- Created 829 businesses in London and a further 786 new jobs⁵
- Supported businesses with a combined turnover of £32 million
- Produced an increase in turnover of £22 for every £1 the LDA has invested
- 89% of our users feel that they would not have achieved their success without our support.

A programme designed solely for entrepreneurs

- Attracted role-model entrepreneurs as diverse as Tim Smit (Eden Project), Gurinder Chadha (director, *Bend it like Beckham*), and Toni Mascolo (Toni & Guy) to speak at our Inspiring Entrepreneurs series
- Cited as best practise for our participation in Global Entrepreneurship Week, running a comprehensive programme of events
- Helped 3,000 registered users of our three free online courses on intellectual property
- 98% of our users would recommend the Centre to others²
- On average, our users give our services a satisfaction rating of 4.4 out of 5 (5 being very satisfied).³

Raising our profile

- Worked with over 150 partner organisations from the public and private sectors to spread the word about our services
- Leveraged over £4.1 million of in-kind benefits, such as pro bono advice from seasoned entrepreneurs, sponsorship and press coverage
- Reached over 900,000 page views on our website and developed lively communities on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube
- Gained 144 press articles about our 'Weird and Wonderful' exhibition of 19th century inventions, including a homepage spot on the BBC website.

The British Library's Business & IP Centre is a vital resource that provides entrepreneurs the essential support to enable them to commercialise their ideas and grow their businesses. The Business & IP Centre has quickly become the first place to visit for budding entrepreneurs.

Stephen Timms MP
Minister of State for Competitiveness, 2008

¹ British Library workshop management system, April 2007 – March 2009.

² Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre, Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009.

³ British Library, as above.

⁴ Adroit, as above.

⁵ Of the 471 people surveyed, 65 self-reported starting a business with the Centre's support, indicating that 829 businesses were started by the 6,007 entrepreneurs that used the Centre's services from 2007 – 2009. On that rationale, a further 786 jobs were created in the same period.

What sets us apart is our combination of business and intellectual property expertise. The skills that entrepreneurs learn at the Centre give them the confidence to start and grow sustainable businesses.

These businesses are having a measurable impact on the London economy. The potential benefits of extending this approach across the country are apparent.

Supporting businesses, supporting London¹

We provide a valuable and appreciated service

98% would recommend the Centre to others
 97% will continue to use the Centre
 93% received the support they came to the Centre for
 91% had their expectations met, or mostly met

Our service gives entrepreneurs skills and confidence

51% I felt inspired
 50% I gained confidence
 49% It helped me to understand how to set up a business
 49% It helped me raise my awareness of intellectual property issues
 37% It helped me to change/refine my business idea
 32% It helped me to confirm my business idea was viable
 Average satisfaction levels of 4.4 out of 5²

These skills help them start and grow businesses

We have created 829 new businesses for London and sustained 632³
 We have created 786 new jobs, or 1,615 including the new business owners
 These businesses have increased their turnover by £32 million in the past two years

Their businesses drive London's economy

£9 million of net additional Gross Value Added has been generated
 Our businesses have contributed £5.5 million to the Exchequer in tax
 We have generated a Net Present Value of £11.3 million to the public purse
 Average turnover increase of £4.61 per £1 invested
 A benefit-cost ratio of 1.9

Our London Development Agency targets

We are proud to have exceeded all our London Development Agency targets in the last two years. These targets are for the number of entrepreneurs that attend our workshops and events, the diversity of these people, and the effects we have had on their businesses and skills.

These figures do not represent the full extent of those that we have helped, but those that live and work within the M25 and fulfil LDA requirements.

Data is taken from our workshop management system.¹

	2007/8			2008/9		
	Target	Actual	% Achieved	Target	Actual	% Achieved
Employment support: 1 hour of support for unemployed people ²	300	450	150%	300	505	168%
Business Support: 2 hours of support for business owners and self-employed people ³	750	821	109%	750	1370	183%
Other skills: 6 hours of support for individuals ⁴	50	51	102%	417	487	117%

	Target%	2007/8								
		Employment support			Business support			Other skills		
		Target#	Actual#	Achieved%	Target#	Actual#	Achieved%	Target#	Actual#	Achieved%
% Female	33	100	216	216	250	419	168	17	25	147
% Disabled	5	15	22	147	38	36	95	3	1	33
% BAME ⁵	29	87	238	274	218	328	150	15	24	160

	Target%	2008/9								
		Employment support			Business support			Other skills		
		Target#	Actual#	Achieved%	Target#	Actual#	Achieved%	Target#	Actual#	Achieved
% Female	33	100	245	245	250	570	228	138	192	139
% Disabled	5	15	20	133	38	37	97	21	19	90
% BAME	29	87	343	394	218	688	316	121	269	222

¹ Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre, Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009.

² British Library workshop management system, April 2007 – March 2009.

³ Of the 471 people surveyed, 65 self-reported starting a business with the Centre's support, indicating that 829 businesses were started by the 6,007 entrepreneurs that used the Centre's services from 2007 – 2009. On that rationale, a further 786 jobs were created in the same period.

¹ British Library workshop management system, April 2007 – March 2009.

² An intervention for unemployed or economically inactive users, attending one-to-one sessions, workshops or events to help them start their own business.

³ An intervention for owners or self-employed users, attending workshops or events for a minimum of 2 hours. A business can only be counted once.

⁴ An individual attending events, workshops or a one-to-one session for a minimum of 6 hours.

⁵ Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups.

Case study

William de Lucy, Amplify Trading



'We get ideas about how to run the business most effectively'

An ex-City trader, William de Lucy is the co-founder of Amplify Trading, which uses new systems and technology to find talented traders that may not have considered a career in trading before. William and his business partner Piers Curran realised that there is a great gap between the professionals on the trading floor and those people at home who are interested in trading but do not have access to the professional systems.

The business launched in January 2009, and the pair used the Centre as a base.

'We would meet there regularly to discuss new ideas and how were going to progress with the business. Just being in the Centre we get access to the databases and ideas about how to run the business most effectively, areas that we didn't know about before such as CRM, which is Customer Relationship Management. We get lots of ideas about how to satisfy our customers' needs so we can continue having a profitable relationship.'

As a new entrepreneur, William encountered many of the issues that small businesses face, and found a supportive environment in the Centre.

'There's been a great deal to learn, lots of challenges in areas that I didn't have experience in before, whether it was to do with the website, or tax, or VAT – all areas where we got a good grounding from the Business & IP Centre. You can build up contacts, people who have had experience in these areas; we intend to use these people as we grow.'

Who we help

Our users are a diverse group of inventors, innovators and entrepreneurs. They span all stages of the innovation cycle, from pre-start-ups to existing businesses, although the majority are in the early stages of starting up in business.

As the national library, anyone from the UK can access our services, but our LDA funding means we focus our marketing efforts on entrepreneurs within the London M25.

We actively target women, people with a disability and those from an ethnic minority. Research shows that these groups need more support and face additional barriers in setting up and developing a business. They also represent a huge area of potential growth:

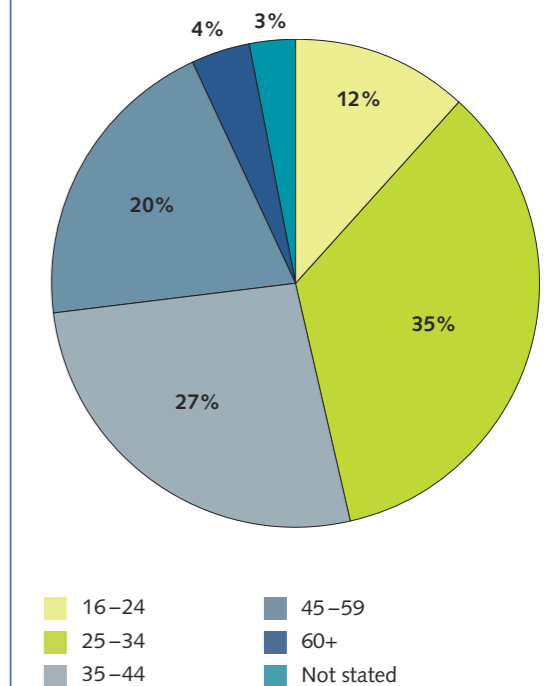
- If women in the UK were as entrepreneurial as their US counterparts the UK would have around 750,000 more businesses¹
- 8% of London's working age population are disabled and economically inactive, but would like to gain work in the future²
- Ethnic minority groups account for 55% of start-ups in London.³

We work with partner organisations such as the Association of Community-based Business Advice, Leonard Cheshire Disability and Women Unlimited to reach these audiences. In particular, we have focused our efforts in the past two years to improve our support for entrepreneurs with a disability, and in 2009 held a successful 'Make your Business Succeed' event with specific advice and support for this group.

Our entrepreneurs⁴

- 50% of our users are female
- 4% have a disability
- 37% are from black and minority ethnic groups
- 80% live or work inside the M25

The majority of our users are aged 25 – 44



¹ BBC website – <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/6146542.stm> 2006. Quote from Trade and Industry Secretary Alan Johnson.

² Disabled people and the labour market in London, key facts, GLA 2007.

³ Redefining London's BAME-owned Businesses, LDA, 2005.

⁴ British Library workshop management system, April 2007 – March 2009.

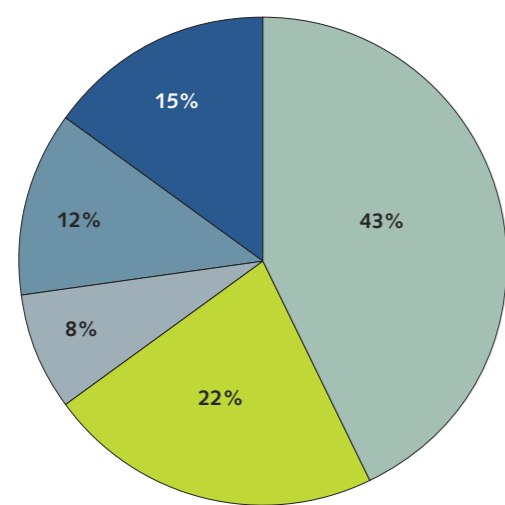
I came from a completely non-business background and I was made to feel like I was a 'proper person' – I wasn't looked down upon due to my lack of experience. I was made to feel relaxed and comfortable, which is amazingly important.

Entrepreneur (from survey), 2009

Having attracted these people through our doors, we focus on making our service the most approachable and flexible it can be, to ensure that they keep coming back. The majority of our users are completely new to entrepreneurship. This dictates our approach; we guide users through the process of starting up, explaining what they need to know to run a business, and where to find it.

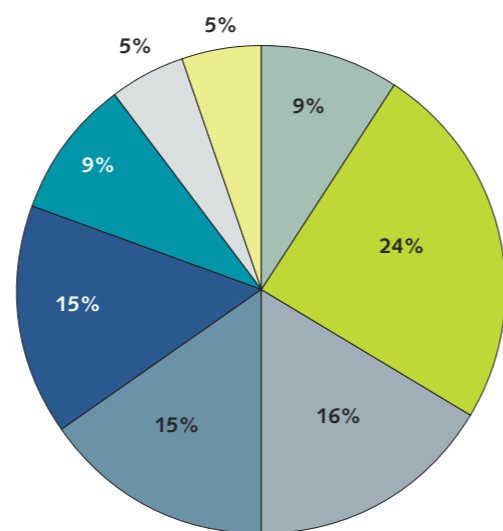
For those users whose confidence may have been dented by a period of unemployment, this is hugely beneficial. Our recent survey demonstrates that over a quarter of users had been out of work before starting their business.

Before starting a business, 27% of our users were unemployed or had been made redundant¹



Employed elsewhere
 Self-employed
 Student
 Made redundant within last year
 Unemployed
 Unemployed

49% of our users are in the early stages of starting a business and 39% already run one²



Planning to be self-employed
 Established company (1-5 years old)
 Planning to start a business
 Established company (over 5 years)
 In process of setting up a business
 Not applicable
 A new company (less than 1 year old)
 Other

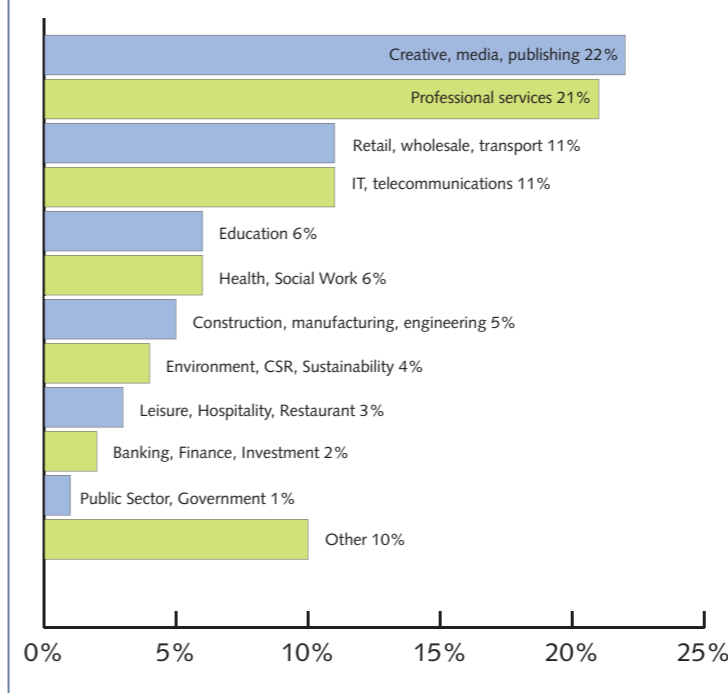
Our users are typically micro businesses, with an average of 5.7 employees. 47% are limited companies.

The Business & IP Centre makes great efforts to extend entrepreneurship to a range of diverse audiences that might otherwise miss the support available. It takes its responsibilities seriously in this important role.

Peter Grigg

Head of Policy and Research, Enterprise UK, August 2009

33% of our users are in the creative industries and ICT¹



Our services support entrepreneurs from all industries, although we are particularly popular with the creative industries; our collections provide a source of inspiration and our services offer a solid business grounding for people with an arts background. Designers and inventors particularly benefit from our intellectual property expertise, which facilitates and protects innovation. This is particularly important in a knowledge-based economy.

Many of our users are leaders in their field, winning awards for their work: from tailor Imtaz Khaliq, the 'Creative Business of the Year' at the Precious Awards 2008, to Jim Shaikh of Yoomi Ltd, winner of the 'Design & Engineering Sector Award' at the London Technology Fund competition 2008.

Whilst the proportion of users who are involved in the corporate social responsibility/sustainability industry is relatively small, 76% of our users have a green, ethical or social aspect to their business.² We have seen a huge rise in enquiries on this topic in the last two years, and have developed a 'Green and Ethical Industry Guide' to meet this demand.

The British Library supports business, the creative industries in particular, through networking events and tailored workshops. The Library's Business & IP Centre provides a combination of excellent facilities, information and expertise, offering a unique combination of business and IP information.

Creative Britain, 2008

¹ Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre, Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009.

² Adroit, as above.

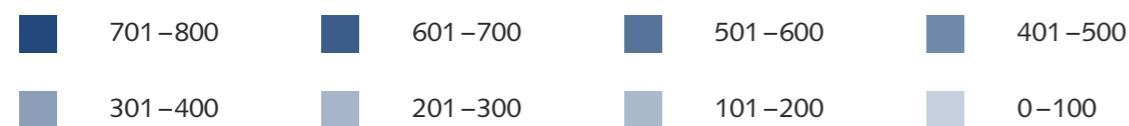
¹ Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre, Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009. DCMS defines 'creative industries' as including 'software, computer games and electronic publishing', 2006.

² Adroit, as above.

Where our users are based¹

The Library's location in the heart of London, in close proximity to King's Cross, Euston and St Pancras International rail stations, makes us accessible to entrepreneurs across the city.

Many of our users are based in the inner-city areas closest to the Library, although our outreach work and ever-expanding network of partners aims to redress this balance. We have been effective in reaching out to minority groups, with 45% of businesses considering themselves to be minority-led.



¹ British Library workshop management system, April 2007 – March 2009.

Case study

Sabina Ali, Motasem

'This research confirmed that I was definitely on the right track for my business'

Fashion designer Sabina Ali had always dreamt of running a business, but was waiting for the 'big idea'. Her spark of inspiration came when a friend requested a cocktail-style wedding dress. A few other orders followed, and she realised there was a potential market for wedding dresses that could be worn again.

'Once I'd had my idea, I didn't have a clue how to turn it into a viable business, so I started spending all my time at the Business & IP Centre, researching market research reports and looking at bridalwear trends and womenswear trends. It really helped put my business plan together.'

'The bridalwear, retail and womenswear reports showed that a lot of women were now choosing to get married abroad, which meant that you needed lighter fabrics and more non-traditional styles. The number of non-traditional weddings were on the rise too, and this also affected the kind of dress that people chose. This research confirmed that I was definitely on the right track for my business.'

Sabina launched her label, Motasem, and started working full-time on it in 2008. The business has flourished; the wear-again concept comes at a time when consumers are more keen than ever to get value for money and reduce wastage.

'I'm actually experiencing an increase in sales at the moment, because the dresses that I do are ones that you can wear again, and they are a lot more affordable than the traditional alternative.'

Motasem dresses recently featured on the red carpet at the premiere of *Twilight*, and can be bought online, or from Sabina's showroom on Brick Lane.



What we offer

We asked our users why they first came to the Centre. The most common answers?¹

1. Starting a new business
2. To help exploit their intellectual property
3. Growing their business
4. Networking opportunities
5. Skills/training

Our services range from one-to-one advice to major speaker events, providing support for entrepreneurs at each stage of the development of their idea.

A networking hub for entrepreneurs

The Centre, on the first floor of the Library in St Pancras, offers a hi-tech business environment in the heart of London. Visitors enter through the Networking Area, a vibrant informal meeting space for our entrepreneurs. Here we showcase the products and services of some of our successful users, and highlight information on other organisations that support small businesses. We aim to create a welcoming venue which encourages collaboration; starting a business can be a lonely process, so we do as much as possible to help our users to make those essential contacts that will help them on their way.

The Centre provides a community for people starting up their own business and in so doing offers these people freedom from the solitude this often entails and an arena to share their fears and experiences with like-minded people.

Entrepreneur (from survey), 2009

Invaluable business and intellectual property information

We have had over 70,000 visits to the Reading Room and get around 2,300 business and IP enquiries a month.¹ Users spend an average of 10 hours in the Reading Room.² The Business & IP Reading Room offers free access to the UK's most comprehensive collection of business and intellectual property information. 50 million patent specifications, 30 high-value electronic databases and market research reports have a total worth of over £5 million and all translate into practical tools for businesses, providing inspiration and details of competitors, customers and suppliers. Our information experts are on hand to guide users to the resources they need, and produce a range of resources to streamline access to our collections, including detailed industry information guides.

Workshops

We have held nearly 950 workshops, with over 7,100 attendees, with an average rating from our users of 4.4 out of 5.³ We run a diverse programme of workshops on all the essential topics for anyone starting a business. British Library staff guide users through the basics of intellectual property and market research, helping to make our collections more accessible. Our wide network of partner organisations, from the public and private sectors, cover a broad range of business topics, from the core essentials such as business planning and finance, to niche topics such as search engine optimisation, social enterprise and branding.

Confidential one-to-one advice

We have held nearly 750 advice sessions, with a rating of 4.7 out of 5.⁴ The checklist of tasks to achieve for anyone to start a business can be lengthy, and the array of resources available to small businesses in London can be overwhelming. This is why we offer Business & IP Information Advice Clinics: a chance for entrepreneurs to talk through their business idea in confidence with our trained staff during a free one-hour session, and develop an action plan.

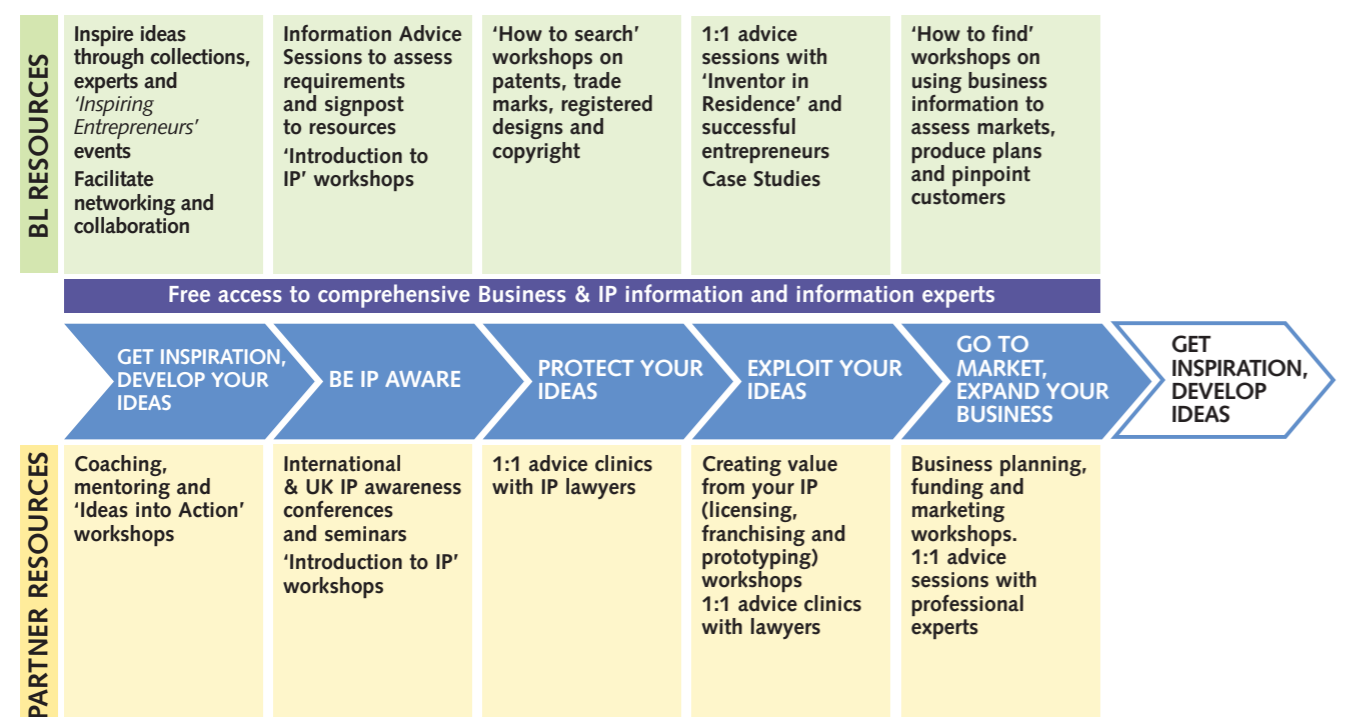
For an insider's view, we are lucky to have four successful business-people offering our Ask an Expert service. Each gives a few hours a month; entrepreneurs apply to meet the expert of their choice and benefit from their expertise and experience:

- Our 'Inventor in Residence' Mark Sheahan provides practical advice for inventors and innovators on taking a product to market
- Legal expert Helen Parkins helps to unravel the rules and regulations around starting up and growing a business
- Eco-entrepreneur Kresse Wesling gives advice on social enterprise and ethical business
- Former BBC 'Dragon' and startup coach Rachel Elnaugh offers an insight into marketing and branding.

A unique knowledge of intellectual property that helped me to understand the issues around patents, trade marks etc. Without this I would never have understood the complete minefield that is IP. I feel far better prepared as a result of the British Library's services.

Ashley Elsdon
Director, Virtual Nomad Ltd, 2009

How we support the innovation cycle



¹ Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre, Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009.

¹ British Library workshop management system, April 2007 – March 2009.

² Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre, Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009.

³ British Library, as above.

⁴ British Library, as above.

Consistently the Business & IP Centre staff impress me with their independent and ethical advice and comments. As a sounding board for other sources of information their integrity is second to none.

Chris Wheeler

Entrepreneur, Imago Creations Ltd and Yes Master, 2009

Inspiring Entrepreneurs

12 events have been held, with over 1,700 attendees and an average rating of 4 out of 5.¹ The 'Inspiring Entrepreneurs' series, in partnership with HSBC, offers entrepreneurs a chance to hear from, and put their questions to, a panel of hugely successful high-profile entrepreneurs, as well as providing the opportunity to network. In the past two years we have welcomed speakers as diverse as Tim Smit (Eden Project), Doug Richard (former BBC Dragon) and Toni Mascolo (Toni & Guy).

'The Centre is quite different as they are unique in bringing real experts to entrepreneurs. The Centre leverages high profile names because of the brand of the British Library which you just don't find elsewhere.'

Rachel Elnaugh

Rachel Elnaugh Ltd

I already had a reasonable knowledge and understanding of many of the aspects covered, but found the material easy to follow and understand and it gave many new insights, as well as reinforcing existing knowledge. Overall an excellent programme and one I have already recommended to other colleagues.

Gwyn Jones

e-courses user, 2009

Free professional research

55 projects have been undertaken, an equivalent of £7,156 worth of research. We understand that sometimes busy entrepreneurs do not have the time to do their research themselves, and that it can often prove too complex for the inexperienced. Since April 2007, with funding from the LDA, we have offered three hours of free research from our professional Research Service. This could be a patent search, market analysis or locating mailing lists of suppliers or potential customers.

Online courses

We have over 3,000 registered users, with 960 courses completed, 82% ranked them 'excellent' or 'good'.² For those that want an introduction to intellectual property, we offer three free online courses. Launched in April 2008, the courses guide users through the essentials of IP, searching the major intellectual property databases, and analysing market information – excellent starting points for any business. The courses are interactive and allow users to go at their own pace and learn through case studies, quizzes and fact sheets. This service has given us international reach, with 40% coming from outside the UK.³

Case study

Emma-Jayne Parkes and Viviane Jaeger, SquidLondon

'We always come away with a contact or four'

Design duo Emma-Jayne Parkes and Viviane Jaeger are SquidLondon, creating innovative umbrellas that change into a walking piece of art when it rains, as a colourful design is revealed.

It is the networking opportunities at the Business & IP Centre which have proved invaluable for SquidLondon, helping Emma-Jayne and Viviane make contacts that are driving their young business forward, fast.

'There is a high calibre of exciting minds and conversation flows from ideas to developments to business propositions.'

There is always a great age range which really helps the atmosphere and everybody is interested in other people's ideas, inventions or businesses.

We always come away with a contact or four, either people wishing to give us advice, people wanting advice or exciting people wanting to collaborate and work together with us.'

Recent highlights for the pair include a commission from the Tate to produce a one-off design and a major award win; they received the Shell LiveWIRE 2009 Grand Ideas award for their inventive work.



¹ British Library workshop management system, April 2007 – March 2009.

² Nelson Croom, April 2007 – March 2009.

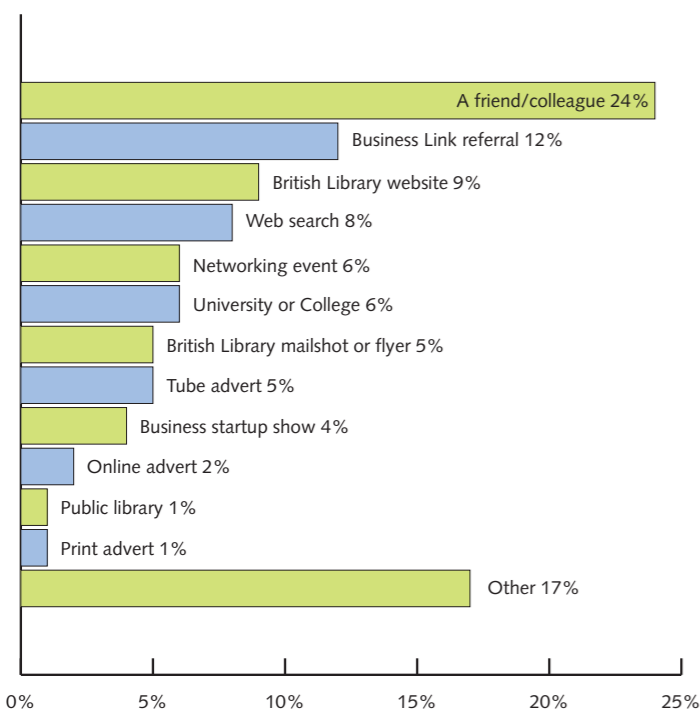
³ Nelson Croom, as above.

Spreading the word

Networking is essential for our users, and equally important to the Centre's success; our network of partners and users is our greatest marketing tool. 24% of our users hear about us through word-of-mouth.¹

Our marketing strategy combines the development of this network with a London-wide advertising campaign and a strong online presence. We target our core audience of small and micro London businesses, across all sectors, with a focus on black and minority ethnic groups, women and users with a disability.

24% of our users first hear about us through word-of-mouth²



Building partnerships

We have built a network of over 150 partner organisations that support businesses, 12% of our users are referred by Business Link.³

Our location in the heart of London and the free access we offer to business and intellectual property information makes us well-placed to act as a physical hub for the diverse and complex business support community in London. Our network of over 150 organisations helps us to extend the reach of the Centre, spreading the word to communities across London, and enabling us to connect our users to expertise in all areas of business and offer a service that is both wide-ranging and specific.

These organisations range from our strategic partners, key public sector business organisations such as Business Link and the Intellectual Property Office; service delivery partners that run regular and acclaimed workshops in the Centre, such as Red Ochre and She's Ingenious!; and marketing partners, public and private sector organisations that cross-market services with us and run occasional workshops. We ensure that our staff know these organisations well, and that they know us, so that users are pointed in the right direction. This helps to increase our referrals and fully embed ourselves within the business support infrastructure.

[The Business & IP Centre's] partner working is very impressive; they are really assertive in engaging with other agencies.

Rob Grover
Partnership Manager,
Business Link in London, 2009

I think the programme has added to mainstream provision as it has a certain niche and the British Library has a role as an honest broker. It offers very good 'bangs for the buck' and it would be a travesty if the Centre couldn't continue.

Nick Winch
Policy Manager, Federation of Small Businesses

Extending our reach

Over 100 public librarians have taken a tour of the Centre. To help us to engage with those hard-to-reach communities, we also hold close relationships with the other groups that meet entrepreneurs, such as chambers of commerce, community organisations, prisons, public libraries and universities. We raise awareness of our services so that when an entrepreneur crosses their path, they are pointed in our direction. For example, over 100 public librarians have taken a tour of the Centre during the past year.

We also exhibit at profile-raising events such as the Business Startup Show at Olympia; in 2008 over 800 entrepreneurs signed up to hear more about our services.

Since 2008 we have been taking our workshops on the road around London, allowing us to widen our reach and give attendees a taster of the support the Centre can provide.

Marketing our services

We have 500,000 page views each year on our websites, over 51,000 views of our blogs.¹ Over 38,000 videos have been watched on our YouTube channel. Our London-wide advertising campaign features three designs centring around a key message: 'You've got an idea. We'll help you turn it into a business.' We regularly survey our users to judge the effectiveness of these campaigns, and focus on online, print and tube advertising, as these media have been most successful in raising awareness of the Centre.

As befits a truly modern business environment, we put great emphasis on our online shop front. 19% of our users discover us online; our website acts as a gateway to our events, e-courses and collections. In 2009 a new, more user-friendly website was developed, launching to much acclaim in June. We understand the value of the web in enabling us to interact with our users, disseminate our inspirational content and facilitate networking. We have a lively presence on key web 2.0 sites and continue to investigate new opportunities in this fast-developing area.

Raising our profile

The Centre has generated over £3.4 million in press coverage.² We developed a number of close relationships across the media, raising our profile on both a national and regional level. In particular, we have strong links with the Financial Times, the Daily Telegraph and the Financial Mail, achieving regular coverage, including interviews with high profile supporters, expert comment and advice pieces, event profiles and case studies. On a regional level, we have also developed positive relationships with London media including the Camden New Journal, the Islington Gazette and the Chiswick Times.

The Centre is regularly covered by a variety of industry specific titles and SME trade press including Startups.co.uk, Growing Business Magazine, smallbizpod, Real Business, the Institute of Small Business and Enterprise Online Magazine.

The exhibition of Weird and Wonderful inventions in the summer of 2008 secured over £450,000 worth of print, broadcast, and online coverage.³

¹ Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre, Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009.

² Adroit, as above.

³ Adroit, as above.

¹ British Library, April 2007 – March 2009.

² Precise Media AVE, April 2007 – March 2009.

³ Precise Media, as above.

[The Business & IP Centre is] an exemplar of how we should move forward.

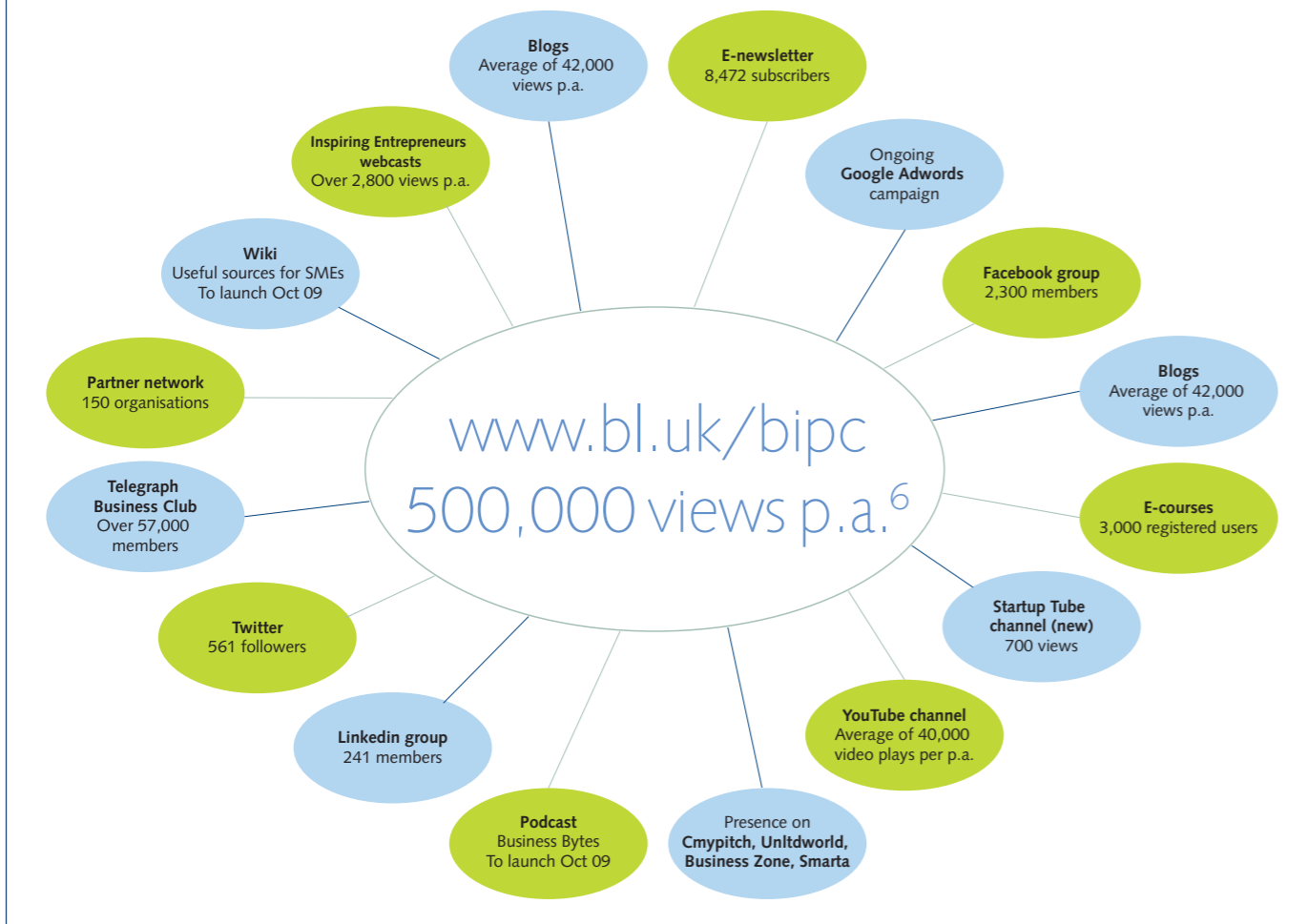
Mark Prisk MP
Shadow Minister Business and Enterprise, 2008

Engaging with influencers

The Centre has hosted 25 VIP visits over the past two years and has regularly briefed staff from BIS, DIUS, DCMS and IPO¹. We work to raise awareness of the Centre among opinion leaders. Civil servants, MPs, Ministers, local politicians, business leaders and other VIPs visit the Library on a regular basis. In 2008 alone, the Business & IP Centre was recognised as

a best practice model for business support in three central Government reports: Annual Innovation Report 2008²; Delivering Digital Inclusion: An Action Plan for Consultation³; and, Creative Britain, New Talents for the New Economy⁴. In addition, the Business & IP Centre was heralded as a best practice case study in a report commissioned by the Shadow Cabinet Small Business Task Force, and has been cited as an exemplar of good business support by politicians in both Houses of Parliament.

Our online presence



Case study

Cally Robson, She's Ingenious!

'The workshops were invaluable in helping me understand intellectual property'

She's Ingenious! is the brainchild of Cally Robson. Cally has been using the resources at the Library since 2003, and has launched several businesses with the Centre's support.

As a fledgling inventor, Cally first used the Centre to understand the value of intellectual property.

'The workshops were invaluable in helping me understand intellectual property and in showing me how to do my own patent searches for a new product I wanted to develop. Without the Centre's informed and helpful staff I wouldn't have been able to find business and market information that has been key to consultancy work I have carried out too.'

In 2006 Cally started Invention Intelligence, a coaching service to help people develop their invention ideas. She became a partner of the Centre, delivering workshops and advice sessions for aspiring inventors. Early in 2008 she set about transforming the concept of Invention Intelligence into a self-sustaining online community that could reach and help more people develop their innovative product and service ideas into successful businesses.

Cally decided to re-brand, calling the business She's Ingenious! and targeting female entrepreneurs, as women face greater barriers to getting their ideas off the ground.

'Without all the resources, the inspiration and the support of the Business & IP Centre I wouldn't have been able to evolve and launch She's Ingenious! as a business venture to help support other women inventor-entrepreneurs. Now I always refer She's Ingenious! members to the Centre as the first port of call for researching their new product ideas and inventions.'

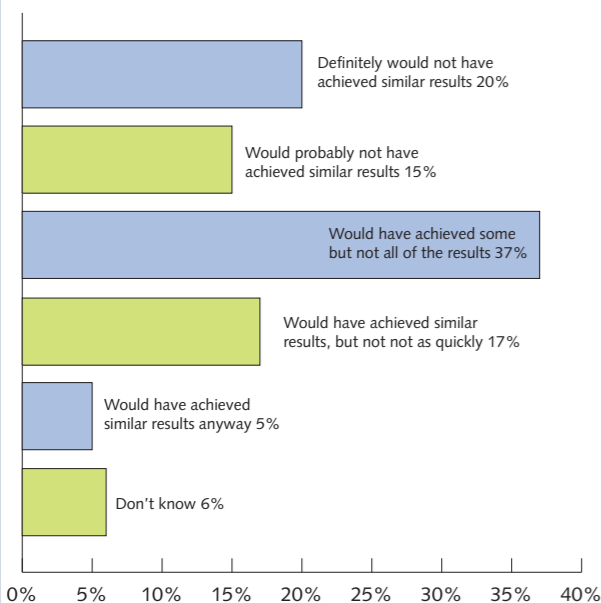
She's Ingenious! runs monthly events at the Centre, and its online following continues to expand.



¹ BIS – Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, DIUS – Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, DCMS – Department for Culture, Media and Sport, IPO – Intellectual Property Office.
² DIUS, December 2008.
³ DCLG, October 2008.
⁴ DCMS/BERR February 2008.
⁵ The Richard Report, July 2008.
⁶ British Library tracking, April 2007 – March 2009.

Supporting London's businesses

89% of our users feel that they would not have achieved the same success with their business without us¹



Our impact on London's economy²

We have had a significant impact on the businesses that come through our doors. With the Centre's support, 829 businesses have been created in the last two years; three times as many as in Westfield, Europe's largest shopping centre.³ Although the majority of these have been established in the last 12 months, 12% have been operating for over a year, demonstrating that we are making a contribution to sustaining the economy. 54% of these are owned by women, 40% are BAME-led and 6% of owners have a disability; we have helped these people overcome potential barriers to starting a business. 30% of our users already run businesses, which have seen a turnover growth of 46%: an increase of £32 million. These growing businesses have created 786 new jobs for Londoners.⁴

The Centre has provided excellent return-on-investment for both the LDA and the Library.

- The net additional turnover that has been generated is £32 million; this means for every £1 the LDA has invested in the Centre, this has produced an increase in turnover of £22
- The Centre has contributed £5.5 million to the Exchequer
- £9 million of net additional Gross Value Added has been generated
- We have generated a positive Net Present Value of £11.3 million to the public purse, rising to £20.6 million from the LDA funding only.
- This equates to a benefit-cost ratio of 1.9 for all public funds and 9.2 for LDA funding, suggesting we are offering excellent value for money.

Investing in the existing infrastructure of the Library has enabled the LDA to achieve a much greater return on investment. Equally, through our partnership programme and in-kind support from the private sector we have been able to provide a greater impact on the economy than if we were operating alone.

It's a calm, relaxing surrounding which gave me the impression of being part of something – so a boost of confidence – and I also did not feel so alone trying to start up after redundancy.

Christine Bouquet

Entrepreneur, Multilingual Business Support, 2009

Economic climate

Supporting London means adapting to the changing economic climate.

The 750,000 enterprises in London provide jobs for nearly two million people – about 40% of London's business employment.¹ As a creator of businesses and jobs for London, the Centre has a vital role to play in pulling the city out of the recession.

Over a quarter of our users were unemployed or made redundant before starting their business.² We have given these people the confidence and skills to make the leap into self-employment. Without this support, they may well have abandoned their business dreams. Equally, our support for student entrepreneurs encourages the potential next generation of entrepreneurs, by highlighting an alternative to seeking employment when graduates' confidence in the job market is at an all-time low.³

The businesses we support are not just striving to stay afloat. 30% of our users have been up and running for more than a year, and our services help these businesses get bigger and better.⁴ Our entrepreneurs are constantly mining our market research collections

for new trends and opportunities. Specialised workshops on topics such as search engine optimisation, encourage businesses to get better at attracting and keeping customers. Inspiring stories from role model entrepreneurs at our speaker events give out a rallying cry: remain positive, aim high, pursue aggressive growth strategies. We continue to adapt our programme to meet the needs of our users as the economic climate changes.

We help our users evaluate their business ideas and make an informed decision about whether entrepreneurship is right for them, helping to reduce the number of business failures. However, not everyone is a born entrepreneur. In our recent survey 7% of respondents decided that their idea was not viable and 9% decided that they were not ready to set up a business, after visiting the Centre.⁵

Another short survey, which we ran between October 2008 and February 2009, demonstrated that our users are more optimistic about the outlook for their business than the economy as a whole; 49% of users felt confident about their businesses, compared with 34% that felt confident about the economy.⁶ Yet if this optimism is reflected in success for these businesses, the economy cannot help but benefit.

[The Centre is a] boiler room for budding entrepreneurs to research their ideas and learn from those who have made fortunes already.

Financial Times, 2007

¹ Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre, Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009.

² All data Adroit Economics, as above.

³ Of the 471 people surveyed, 65 self-reported starting a business with the Centre's support, indicating that 829 businesses were started by the 6,007 entrepreneurs that used the Centre's services from 2007 – 2009. On that rationale, a further 786 jobs were created in the same period.

⁴ See footnote 3.

¹ Federation of Small Businesses, 2008.

² Interim Economic Impact Evaluation of the British Library's Business & IP Centre, Adroit Economics Ltd, October 2009.

³ The UK Graduate Careers Survey 2009.

⁴ Adroit, as above.

⁵ Adroit, as above.

⁶ British Library, February 2009.

The future of the Centre

The Business & IP Centre will be funded until March 2011 by the London Development Agency. One of our objectives for Phase 2 of the project is to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Centre so that we can go on supporting London and its businesses.

As this evaluation demonstrates, the consensus amongst our users, partners, stakeholders and staff is that the Centre is an invaluable resource for London's entrepreneurial community, and must continue.

One thing is certain. As innovators, entrepreneurs will be at the forefront of digital developments, and we know that, however the Centre proceeds, adapting to suit the demands of the digital economy will be essential. The British Library is committed to digitising its collections, improving its digital infrastructure and developing partnerships to widen access to and uses of the collections. The Centre will play a key role in these developments.

The government must keep an eye on the long term investment in this facility as it is empowering a generation to enjoy a sustainable revenue streams for years on the back of their IP.

Ian Marshall
Innovator

Replicating our success

Earlier this year *Real Business* magazine wrote a manifesto for saving Britain's future. The third step was to build on the Centre's success by replicating the model across the country.

Following the Centre's impact on London's entrepreneurial scene, the logical move would be to open Business & IP Centres in Cardiff, Belfast, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Leeds and Bristol, creating a nationwide network. In truth, the sums required to create a network would be tiny.

Real Business, 2009

These words reiterate the Richard Report on small business:

This task force advocates for the British Library's Centre to serve as a model for other similar centres to be rolled out across the country.

**Small Business and Government:
The Richard Report, 2008**

With funding, we could provide a regional portal to give city libraries across the country access to our high-value information exploiting web 2.0 technology, with the Centre's structure as a blueprint.

This portal could offer access to our content, including webcasts, e-courses and the electronic databases. We are also best placed to advise on best practice, the skills required, change management and most importantly, evaluation of such a project.

Methodology

The research and analysis upon which this report is based was undertaken by Adroit Economics Ltd in August 2009 as an independent evaluation of the Business & IP Centre Phase 2 (April 2007 – March 2009) on behalf of the British Library and the London Development Agency.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods have been used to evaluate the Centre's success over the past two years. The approach has been designed to be fully compliant with the Impact Evaluation Framework (IEF).

The main research methods employed were:

- Research and initial consultations, to gain a full understanding of the Centre and the services on offer
- In-depth interviews with key British Library staff, representatives from the LDA and partner organisations
- A detailed review of project monitoring and management systems
- In-depth interviews with the key stakeholders for the project, by telephone and face-to-face
- An online survey, sent to users of the Centre. Some users were also contacted by telephone to complete their answers. The survey produced 471 valid completions, a response rate of 10 % of the surveyed population. This provides a statistically valid sample at 95 % confidence of ± 4.3 %, within LDA requirements of ± 5 %
- A researcher attending a day of workshop sessions at the Centre to observe the running and reception of the events
- An economic impact assessment and cost benefit analysis, based on IEF and LDA standards.

In addition, this report draws on the Library's project monitoring systems.

Our workshop management system records key details about each attendee and their use of the Centre.

Sample sizes:

- Approximately 70,000 users have visited the Centre in the last two years, measured by a daily count of the people in the Centre
- Of these there have been over 10,000 attendees of workshops, events or advice sessions
- 6,007 of this group are eligible for LDA targets, as they reside within the M25, have completed a signed feedback form, and fall within the relevant groups and have completed enough sessions for the specific targets (see page 6).

About Adroit Economics Ltd

adroit
economics ltd

Adroit Economics offers specialist consultancy advice in economic development and regeneration, with particular expertise in the knowledge economy and local/regional development.

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