



Enterprise
Nation

NEXT GENERATION

Evaluation report
2019

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FORWARD

First of all, I want to thank everyone involved in the Next Generation programme. It's a fantastic achievement to have reached over 12,000 young people this year and inspired so many of them to take positive action on their business idea.

I was a young entrepreneur who ran and sold my first business, a fly fishing company before graduating from York University. That early experience taught me a lot of valuable lessons, not least how to seize an emerging opportunity. When I founded HomeServe in 1993, it was my determination and resilience that helped me get it off the ground. With a great team of people, we have turned the business into a £4 billion concern and HomeServe is now a growing global operation.

I set up my personal charity The Enterprise Trust, to support as many young people as possible to set up their own business because I recognised how important having a positive early experience of entrepreneurship can be. This report demonstrates that the Next Generation Programme has made a meaningful impact on the young people taking part, with 73% of them launching a business by the time the programme had ended.

It was interesting to see the direct correlation between hard work, learning and success, and that demographics and background weren't necessarily a barrier – but confidence was. It has reinforced the fact that learning techniques to overcome confidence issues at an early stage is vital going forward.

This could not be more clear in some of the feedback from the young entrepreneurs on the programme, and I can certainly relate to them:

- Never give up
- Every no is really a yes
- Failures are just learning points along the way
- It's not the idea, it's making it happen

It is great to see more young people than ever motivated to make the move to self-employment and that the programme has given them the confidence and support to launch a business they may otherwise never have achieved.

The Next Generation programme has created a positive, supportive community of like-minded individuals and we want this movement to continue. That's why next year we plan to extend it and support over 15,000 young people.

Well done to everyone who has set up their business or started a venture that they are proud of. I wish you every success in the future.

Best wishes



Richard Harpin

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MORE YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE UK WANT TO START BUSINESSES, BUT FEW DO

'Young entrepreneurs' are defined as people between the ages of 16 and 30 who have already started a business or intend to start a business in the future. There is a growing appetite for business creation amongst this group, which may be explained by the accessibility of relevant digital technology combined with the increasing desire young people have to 'work for themselves'. Entrepreneurship is also increasingly associated with doing work that interests young people and feels meaningful to them.

Yet, despite the growing popularity of entrepreneurship as a career choice, there is in fact relatively limited youth enterprise in the UK. Compared to older generations, young entrepreneurs tend to perceive greater barriers in accessing start-up capital, have smaller business-related networks and possess fewer business-relevant experiences and skills. This may lead to lack of self-confidence which then affects how many businesses are actually started by young entrepreneurs. Enterprise Nation's Next Generation campaign aims to change this.

12_k

**Young people reached by the
Next Generation campaign**

NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN HAS REACHED 12,000 YOUNG PEOPLE

In 2019 we were aiming to engage more than 10,000 16 to 30-year-olds across the UK. Building on experience in previous years, the campaign was delivered through online webinars and discussion groups and offline through a flagship six-week Start Something course, weekend bootcamps, evening events, participation in external conferences and larger start-up events, as well as running the Next Generation Awards and a day-long inspirational Next Gen Fest event. These efforts resulted in over 12,000 people reached throughout 2019. The Next Generation campaign has been generously supported by The Enterprise Trust and TSB.

THE START SOMETHING PROGRAMME WAS DESIGNED TO TRAIN ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCIES

This report focuses on evaluating the deeper impact achieved by the Start Something course, based on courses that ran in spring 2019 in London, Birmingham, Reading, Brighton and Manchester and were attended by 165 young entrepreneurs from diverse ethnic groups with a mix of work/life backgrounds (most participants being either in full-time work or full-time education).

The course was designed by adopting a view of entrepreneurship as a set of behaviours, or competencies, that can be developed and learned through training. Following best practice, we have adopted an experiential, action-based approach to entrepreneurship education with an aim to give young people opportunities to practice their learning and receive constructive feedback by peers and experienced facilitators.

CONFIDENCE, SKILLS AND HARD WORK RESULT IN NEW BUSINESSES BEING LAUNCHED

When young entrepreneurs started the course, most were in the early stages of launching their businesses and unsure what to do next; only a few joined the programme without a clear business idea. They were looking to gain more confidence, meet new people, learn new things and take their ideas further, ideally to launch stage. Time management was the biggest barrier participants foresaw when joining the programme.

We interviewed a group of young entrepreneurs three months after the course to look at the lasting impact the course has made. Many reported an increase in confidence, which came from practicing new things in a safe environment and being challenged to share their ideas in the 'real world'. We also saw a change in participants' mindset, through increased optimism and resilience and understanding the importance of taking initiative. Participants also reported their business, communication and digital skills increasing.

In addition, we measured their progress through surveys, which showed a far greater proportion of participants at the 'growth' stage of their journeys compared to at the start of the course, with an astonishing 73% reporting that they had started something since the start of the programme.

Through running the Start Something! programme, we gained interesting insights about this audience. We found that cultural background, employment, gender, age, family support, identifying as entrepreneur, and education level do not affect how likely someone is to start a business or progress their idea significantly. What does affect it is how confident someone feels, the level of relevant skills they feel they gained and how much time they dedicate to working on their business idea.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUPPORTING YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Based on what we learned, we outlined a set of recommendations that would, if implemented, go a long way to improve the rate of young people setting up and successfully running businesses:

- We encourage young entrepreneurs to actively look for support and dedicate time to learn business skills and work on their ideas;
- We invite educators to consider action-based programmes and a holistic view of the entrepreneurial journey;
- We recommend that business support providers consider young entrepreneurs as a distinct audience among first-time entrepreneurs and adapt their style of support to suit this audience;
- We call that policy makers provide more start-up grants for young entrepreneurs and introduce entrepreneurship into the education curriculum.

BIG PLANS AHEAD

In 2020, we aim to reach 15,000 young people and expand the Start Something! workshops across 15 towns and cities in the UK. The programme of other events will continue, including the Next Generation Awards and an even bigger festival for young entrepreneurs. We will also expand our e-learning course, to be able to support any young entrepreneur in the country.



A CASE FOR INTERVENTION

WHY AREN'T THERE MORE YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM?

The United Kingdom has the economic, social and legal infrastructure in place that should, in principle, nurture a climate of youth enterprise creation and young entrepreneurship¹. Yet, despite being one of the strongest global economies² and the UK Government's ongoing efforts to tackle youth unemployment through entrepreneurship³, young people starting a business in the UK face distinct challenges.

'Young entrepreneurs' are defined as people between the ages of 16 and 30 who have already started a business or intend to start a business in the future⁴. Compared to older cohorts, young entrepreneurs tend to perceive greater barriers in accessing start-up capital, have smaller business-related networks and possess fewer business-relevant experiences and skills^{4,5,6}.

Yet, in spite of these fundamental challenges, all data suggests young people are showing a growing appetite for business creation. This entrepreneurial spirit is seen among global millennials both in the UK and across the world⁴. The intention for entrepreneurship may be abundant amongst young people, but the results – in terms of enterprise creation – are lacking^{1,4}.

Why is it then, that in a context of high entrepreneurial spirit and where supportive regulatory and economic infrastructure is in place, so few young people successfully launch and grow businesses in the UK?

WHY ARE SO MANY CONSIDERING STARTING A BUSINESS?

The 21st century has seen a surge of interest in entrepreneurship by academics, practitioners and policy makers, as a strategy for national and international economic growth and development⁷. Entrepreneurial thinking and acting are now considered 'meta-skills' necessary for success in the global future of work⁸ and a resource that will need to be leveraged to navigate the rapidly changing economic and labour landscape – both in the UK and throughout the world.

The growing popularity of entrepreneurship has also engaged the attention of young people, who are reportedly more engaged with entrepreneurship as a desirable career choice than ever before^{9,10,11}. Globally, millennials are nearly twice as likely as their Generation X and Baby Boomer counterparts to want to start a business^{4,12}. The cause of this rise in interest is multi-faceted.

One explanation relates to the increased accessibility and advancement of digital technologies. Digital technology is in particular, credited with accelerating the pace of business growth and allowing global connections to foster, irrespective of geographical location^{13,14}. The application of digital technology to business has also meant time-intensive and technical business tasks have become automated, lowering the barrier to entry for young people who do not have prior technical or business experience.

1/5

Young people believe they have the skills to start a business.

Findings from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor and Youth Business International point to 'independence' and a desire to 'work for themselves' as the main drivers for young people who choose to start their own businesses¹⁵. The global crisis brought with it a significant loss of secure, salaried employment, making self-employment an important alternative for youth to safeguard their future career prospects^{16,17,18}.

We have also entered a world of the boundaryless career, in which younger generations are reported to make "almost twice as many job and organizational moves per year as the generation Xers, almost three times as many as the Boomers, and 4.5 times as many as the Matures"¹⁹ (p.18). Research attributes this to the importance that millennials place on five core work values:

- a) work that interests them;
- b) high achievement;
- c) good co-workers;
- d) doing work that helps people;
- e) pursuing a competitive salary²⁰.

Entrepreneurship is increasingly associated with the actualisation of these values for Millennials^{21,22}. So why is there such a gap between entrepreneurial intention and business creation among young people?

WHY DO SO FEW YOUNG PEOPLE ACTUALLY LAUNCH BUSINESSES?

Despite one in five young people believing they have the skills to start, limited youth enterprise creation takes place in the UK. This has been attributed to structural barriers that disadvantage young people¹⁶. Having less experience, market knowledge and financial capital, can make young people feel less competent and possess lower levels of self-confidence. This is believed to diminish the entrepreneurial intentions and personal initiative-taking of young people²³ and may account for the 'success gap' between older and younger entrepreneurs²⁴.

It's worth mentioning here, that entrepreneurship may not be a suitable career for everyone, nor will youth entrepreneurship programmes solve the rate of youth unemployment in the UK, for example. Nonetheless, undertaking entrepreneurship education can support young people beyond venture creation; both in terms of professional (e.g. innovations in the workplace) and personal (e.g. personal financial management) benefits.

UNLOCKING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL POTENTIAL OF UK YOUTH

Where research starting from the personality approach focuses on mostly inflexible traits and fixed dispositions of the individual, studies adopting a competency approach concentrate on aspects of entrepreneurship that can be developed.

(Kyndt and Baert, 2015)

Early entrepreneurship research set out to determine the specific personality traits that successful entrepreneurs possessed. This research points to traits such as *need for achievement*, *tolerance of ambiguity*, *risk propensity* and *locus of control* as predictive of entrepreneurial success²⁵.

Although a great deal has been learnt from this stream of research, there is still little agreement among academics about what defines an entrepreneur. This is because too many individual differences – such as socio-economic background, access to relatable role models, age, gender, ethnicity, education, social support – are known to affect the propensity for someone to become an entrepreneur²⁶. Another view focuses less on inherent *traits* and more on the actions and behaviours of successful entrepreneurs. We adopt this view and frame entrepreneurial competencies as states that can be developed and trained²⁷.

Academics, practitioners, policymakers and entrepreneurs alike, too often define entrepreneurs by the outcomes or outputs they produce e.g. a new product, business, service or value generation. This focus results in little attention being paid to the holistic journey of the entrepreneur, in particular the early stages of starting up. It fails to consider the early ideas entrepreneurs begin with, how these evolve, the false starts, business failures and the learnings.

Following best practice, we have adopted an experiential, action-based approach to entrepreneurship education with an aim to give young people opportunities to practice their learning and receive constructive feedback by peers and experienced facilitators^{29,30,31}.

Finally, we define entrepreneurship as more than being self-employed. Entrepreneurship is made up of all the “actions and processes” that enable the ideation, identification, creation and exploitation of business opportunities²⁸. In our work, we drew on academic research and best practice to identify trainable behaviours that maximise possibilities for young entrepreneurs at the early stages of their entrepreneurial journeys.





ABOUT NEXT GENERATION

OVERVIEW OF ENTERPRISE NATION'S NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN

More and more young people want to start a business, but don't feel that they have the knowledge to go about doing it. The Next Generation campaign aims to change that and in 2019 we were aiming to engage over 10,000 16 to 30-year-olds across the UK.

The campaign has been running for three years and is delivered by small business support network Enterprise Nation.

Enterprise Nation helps people start and grow a business and today has a community of over 70,000 founders. In 2018, Enterprise Nation delivered a campaign called Start Something to support the charity The Enterprise Trust in its ambition to help more young people develop an entrepreneurial idea or start a business and contribute to the growth of the UK economy. The campaign began to grow and was re-branded as Next Generation to include other elements on top of the training programme. It has since gone on to attract even more attendees and large corporate sponsors including the High Street bank TSB and social media channel Facebook.

The Start Something training programme was delivered both offline and online. The expert trainers have delivered 11 sets of workshops throughout eight locations in the U.K, including London, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Dundee, Cardiff, Reading and Brighton. The workshops have been conducted either as a six-week course covering key topics on becoming

an entrepreneur or a one-day bootcamp. This included 'starting a business' and/or developing skills that help young people take a more entrepreneurial approach in life. Attendance was free and took the form of either evening or weekend workshops.

Offline learning was complimented by online sessions, including Facebook Live sessions and webinars on business planning ensuring people could access support 'on demand' at a time that suits them.

Enterprise Nation also ran the Next Generation Awards – an annual competition that recognises ambitious and high potential entrepreneurs and their business ideas. The competition was split into three age categories; 16-18, 19-22 & 23-30. This year there were 200 entries from young entrepreneurs from across the UK. 30 semi-finalists were selected, before 4,789 public votes resulted in nine finalists (three in each of the age categories). The nine young entrepreneurs then pitched to a panel of judges and three winners were selected. The winners each received a £2,500 cash investment, a 12 months free co-working space and ongoing business support.

This year the Next Generation campaign also included the first 'Next Gen Fest', a day-long event to inspire and engage aspiring young entrepreneurs. It was a big success and saw 180 young people attend. They heard from established young entrepreneurs like Liv Conlon (founder of ThePropertyStagers), Sophie Tea (founder of Sophie Tea Art) and Ben Towers (award-winning young entrepreneur). As well as the inspirational on-stage content, sessions also included practical social media training and a finance and funding panel. Attendees could also receive one-to-one business advice with a drop-in business zone, as well as network with like-minded peers and the event partners TSB and Facebook.

In 2020 the campaign aims to engage over 15,000 young people (see 'Looking Forward' for more details).

DESIGN OF THE NEXT GEN: START SOMETHING PROGRAMME

The Start Something programme is an intensive series of workshops, taking place weekly over six weeks. It is designed to take a young person from idea or initial curiosity, all the way to first revenue.

Participants engage in learning, networking and practical tasks throughout the programme. The weekly in-person session lasts for three hours, and then take-home tasks and challenges are set to be completed before the next session. At the end of the course, they join an alumni network of former students for ongoing support and accountability, which is guided by the training team.

The programme format is based on the latest academic research into entrepreneurial effectiveness and success.



Both the academic literature - and evidence from founders themselves - overwhelmingly supports the fact that personal initiative and an action-oriented approach are the prime factors in successful entrepreneurial ventures.

This fact is not common knowledge amongst nascent young entrepreneurs. In fact, our entry surveys (administered over the past three years to any new attendee on the programme) show that the primary disabling beliefs held by young aspiring entrepreneurs are *lack of knowledge*, and *lack of access to finance*.

With this in mind, the course structure has been carefully formulated to appeal to both the participants' perceived needs, and then deliver training that meets their actual needs, based on this academic research. The course is composed of six competencies, paired with personal initiative training in each competency.

We define entrepreneurship as more than being creating a start-up. Our church is a broad one, and we seek to support young people considering founding a start-up, taking on freelancing roles, creating a charity or social enterprise, or seeking to support themselves via the creative arts. We know that the principles behind each of these are similar, and therefore our programme can reach and support a wider range of young people. Entrepreneurship, to us, is made up of all the 'actions and processes' that facilitate the ideation, identification, creation and exploitation of these opportunities.

Our competency model is therefore concerned with the trainable and learnable behaviours that maximise the possibilities of young entrepreneurs.

THE SIX COMPETENCIES ARE:

1. YOUR IDEA

Covers idea creation, opportunity creation and recognition, creativity, innovation, analytical skills.

2. YOUR DRIVE

Commitment, attitude, motivation and engagement with work, mental wellness, confidence and resilience, bouncing back and recovering from failure.

3. YOUR PLAN

Strategic, setting, evaluating and implementing goals, business plans, short and long term thinking.

4. YOUR PEOPLE

Building a context of cooperation and trust, using contacts and connections, persuasive ability, communication and interpersonal skills, creating and nurturing networks.

5. YOUR SKILLS

Learning-orientation and commitment to self-development, gaining knowledge about business/market, all the elements of knowledge and hard/technical skills required.

6. YOUR APPROACH

Taking initiative, decision-making, absorbing and understanding complex information, and risk-taking.

Each workshop module covers one of these core competencies and sets personal initiative challenges to complete before the next module.

Using this methodology, young people gain both the skills – and confidence in themselves to apply those skills.

TEAM

Next Generation is led by an internal team at Enterprise Nation headed up by campaign manager Danielle Murphy, supported by Emma Greenfield, head of events, and Justina Markeviciene, evaluation lead.

The Start Something programme is designed and delivered by a team of expert external trainers led by training programme manager Henry C. Blanchard. Additional advice and support is also provided by experts from TSB who can advise on topics such as

business planning and also experts from Facebook who can support digital skill-based learning on Facebook and Instagram.

We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to our 2019 Next Generation partners, The Enterprise Trust and TSB. Without their valued support and commitment this year, our campaign activity would not have been possible.



Danielle Murphy
Campaign manager



Lauren Malone
Early stage campaign manager



Emma Greenfield
Head of events



Justina Markeviciene
Evaluation lead



Henry C. Blanchard
Programme lead



Julia Fernando
Training design & evaluation



Sophie Segal
Trainer



Janice Johnson
Trainer



Siobhan Kangataran
Trainer



Michelle Roche
Trainer

Our friends at TSB have been refreshingly committed to supporting young entrepreneurs to transform their idea into a business. Throughout the year, the TSB team have been helping to raise the profile of the campaign with activities including an in-branch marketing campaign, promotion of workshop activity with local press releases and a local radio media campaign in Dundee plus an 'out of home' campaign in Birmingham.

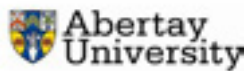
TSB also kindly offered prizes to our Next Generation Awards winners, with a financial reward as well as mentorship from TSB's Business Banking Executive team.

We would also like to thank Facebook for their partnership at our first Next Gen Fest event. Their involvement on the day allowed the young aspiring entrepreneurs in attendance to access free social media training and advice which was acknowledged in positive feedback comments post-event.

Boost with
facebook



Our thanks also goes out to our friends at the following venues for their generosity and support this year



PROGRAMME EVALUATION

EVALUATING OUR IMPACT

Our approach

We have worked hard to ensure that the Next Generation programme delivers high quality content and provides a positive impact for the young population of entrepreneurs we serve. To do this, an evaluation strategy was built into the overall design of the programme. We gathered data at three important time points:

- 1) survey before participants joined the programme
- 2) surveys during the programme after each of the six session
and
- 3) interviews three months after the programme

This approach enabled us to map the individual journeys of our programme members, as well as understand how the programme impacted members as a group. Rather than wait until the programme ended to implement improvements, we used live data post-workshops to actively improve the quality of forthcoming Next Generation modules.

Data sources

A multimethod approach to data-collection was used to gather a combination of quantitative and qualitative impact and outcome data. Table 1 provides a high-level overview of the main sources of data used to inform the findings of this evaluation report.

**TABLE 1
DATA SOURCES USED TO INFORM EVALUATION FINDINGS**

Data source	Sample	Administration	Data gathered
Impact survey (online)	Sent to all registered participants. 65 total responses before the programme and 54 after the programme.	Pre-programme (baseline); post-programme (outcome)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Motivations – Status of current business – Entrepreneurial identification – Perceived support – Skill confidence – Resilience – Demographics
Post-workshop feedback survey (online)	Sent to all participants post-workshop, variable response rate	After every workshop (6x per region)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Learning acquired – Accessibility of content – Relevance of material – Feedback on logistics – Feedback on facilitation
Post-programme semi-structured interviews (web calls)	Representative sample of 14 participants interviewed	3 months after the programme ended	<p>To ascertain the direct impact of the programme on participants. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Learning and business knowledge – Mindset and approach – Development of business – Launch of business Perceived levels of support

OUR REACH

Total reach through 2019

From January to December 2019, the Next Generation campaign reach has been 12,798, within which we engaged more 'deeply' with 941.

We define light and deep reach in the following fashion:

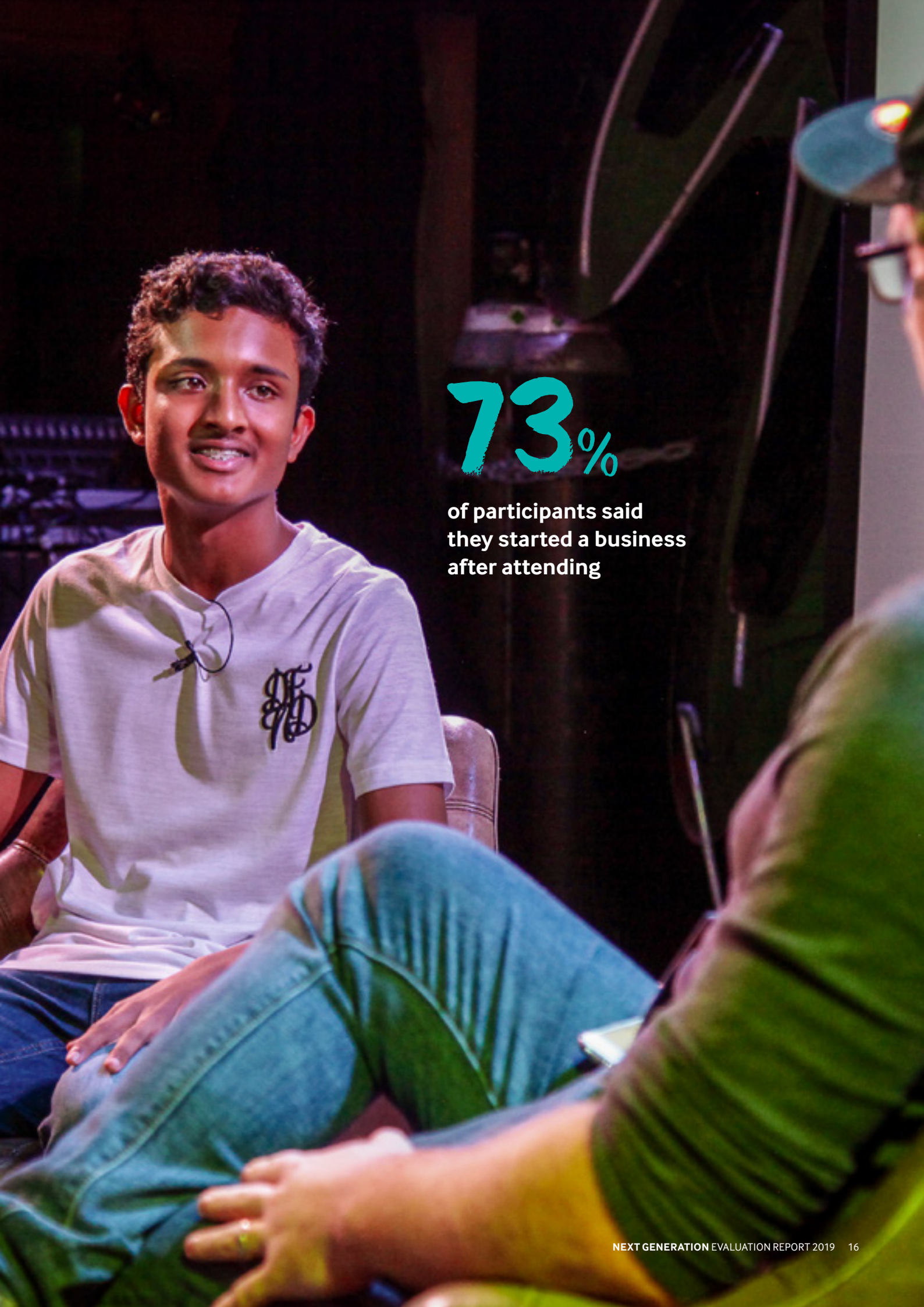
Light reach is the number of young people that are aware of the campaign, and have undertaken at least one meaningful interaction with it – attended a talk, interacted with our online hub, registered for a physical event after learning about the campaign, or interacting with online content.

Deep reach is the number of young people with which the campaign has the potential to have a meaningful impact. They will have had the opportunity to learn about our competencies – and crucially, the encouragement and support to then apply them to their own entrepreneurial venture. This deeper reach and impact comes about through sustained interaction with the campaign – through attending multiple workshop sessions, or full day festivals, bootcamps, and conferences.

These successful results well exceed the targets that we have created for this year. More detail is presented in the table below.

TABLE 2
LIGHT AND DEEP REACH OF THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN

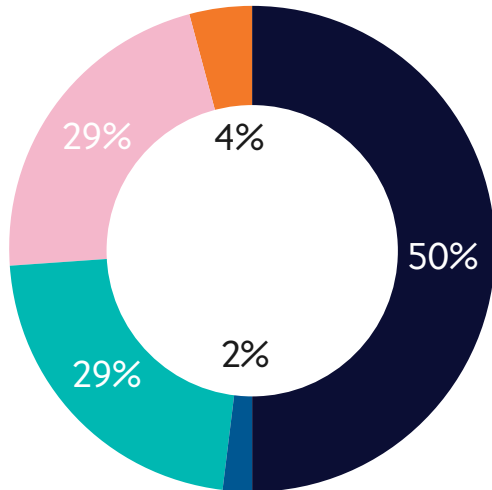
Source	Light	Deep
Start Something spring cohort (5 locations)	696	165
Start something autumn cohort (4 locations)	442	114
Start something bootcamps (2 locations)	41	41
Next Generation Awards	4,389	200
Next Generation Festival	180	180
Outreach at StartUp 2019 event and other conferences across the country	2,435	241
Online engagement through page views and social media	6,415	–
Total	12,798	941



73%

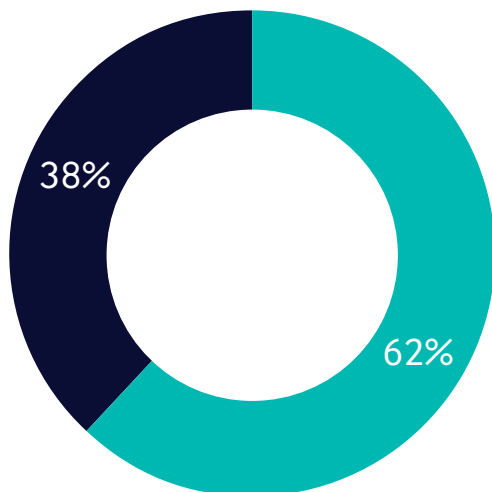
**of participants said
they started a business
after attending**

**CHART 1
ETHNICITY**



- White British
- Mixed British
- Asian / Asian British
- Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
- Other

**CHART 2
GENDER**



- Female
- Male

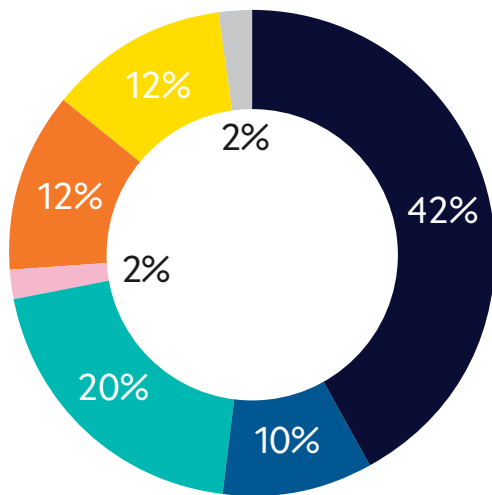
Who we are reaching?

We have included socio-demographic questions in our pre-and post-programme surveys, therefore the below statistics reflects the Start Something course reach rather than that of the whole campaign (data taken from T2 survey).

Looking at the ethnic background, the largest ethnic group we engaged with is white British (50%), while 22% came from Asian/Asian British and another 22% from Black/African/Caribbean/black British backgrounds. We consider this to be a very diverse and representative mix and that we have succeeded in our aim to reach a wide and diverse group of young people.

Women appear to be more likely to engage with the programme than men (62% vs 38%). We were targeting anyone between the ages of 16 to 30, and most attendees fell between 22-26 years old.

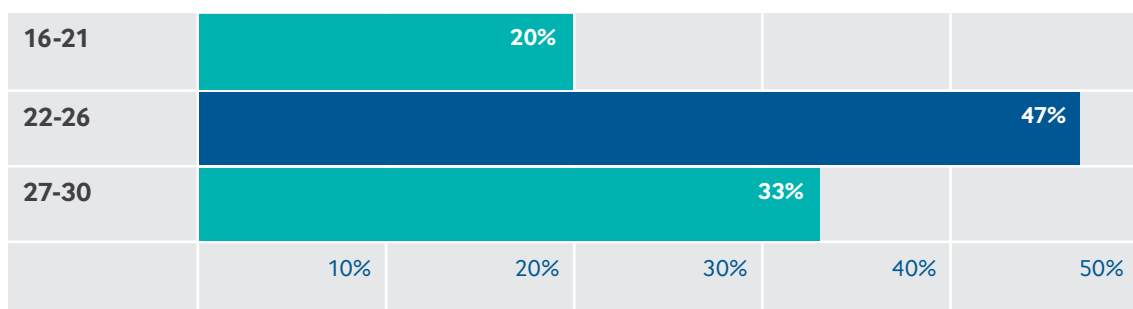
CHART 3
WORK/LIFE STATUS



- Full-time employed
- Part-time employed
- Full-time studying
- Part-time studying
- Unemployed
- Self-employed
- Other

In terms of occupation, most of the participants were in full-time employment (42%) or studying full-time (20%). At the time of taking the survey, 12% were self-employed and 12% unemployed.

CHART 4
AGE



85%

said they 'lacked' some kind of competency, resource or skill needed to succeed in business.

THE SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SEEKING

One of the questions we asked the participants before they started the programme was what they wanted to get out of it. The reasons for joining the course were varied, but mostly related to wanting to build more confidence, meet like-minded people, gain knowledge and skills, and develop their idea further (ideally all the way to launching the business).

Gain confidence

'Gaining' or 'building' confidence was a common reason for why participants joined the Next Generation programme. This related to a number of things – **confidence** in a new skill; taking initiative; making business-growth decisions; pitching/selling their idea; or simply; self-confidence.

This need for confidence was also a common theme reflected in the common barriers facing young entrepreneurs: 85% of respondents said they 'lacked' some kind of competency, resource or skill needed to succeed in business. They came on the programme to build capabilities and as a result, ultimately become a more confident entrepreneur:

"... above all, I hope I learn to find my voice. I have the knowledge but sometimes don't get heard – I hope to gain confidence."



WORD CLOUD

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE NEXT GENERATION PROGRAMME?

Meet new people

Meeting new people, progressing their business idea and learning about what it is like to run a business were the key reasons aspiring entrepreneurs decided to take the Next Generation course. Most of those interviewed gave 'meeting new people' as a key reason they wanted to come on a six-week course.

"I thought it would be nice to meet people who are interested in the same thing I am, and just like-minded people wanting to do something, to have an impact and I thought it was a great opportunity to do so. I think one of my expectations actually was just networking, meeting new people, getting to know what they're thinking, how they are approaching their plans and things like that."

"...and the more people I could access, and the more information I could access, the easier it would be, I suppose."

Gain new business knowledge and skills

Another important reason was increased awareness and knowledge of what it takes to run a business. As mentioned above, most participants came to the programme with a specific business idea but unsure what to do next – they didn't feel that they had enough experience of sales, marketing, the legal and accounting side, and other business activities that would be necessary to successfully run a business.

"When I joined at first, I literally didn't have much knowledge about marketing, or setting up a business, what makes up a business, how to get customers. The reason I signed up to [the programme] was just to get more knowledge..."

Taking their idea further

Many had an idea for a business but then were stuck and didn't know where to begin. They were looking for support in figuring out what their next steps could be and how to progress the idea further.

"I created a product, which people [...] kept getting more interest in, but I hadn't done anything with [it]."

"...there is something there, but I was looking to find out what the the next step was, how could take things further. You know, I have an idea of the end goal, but because the end goal is quite big and it's going to take quite some time, I was kind of trying to figure out...OK... how can I break this down further and work on those goals in the meantime."

This shows us that the course is not meant to inspire to start as much as to show concrete steps in taking the idea forward. People who come along have an inclination to start something, but are stuck on what to do next, they want to get a better sense of what it takes to run a business and they are looking for a network of like-minded people first and foremost.

Help to... Start something!

Although some joined the programme to gain access to a larger network (10%) and others to gain new skills (10%), the majority of participants who came on Next Generation, joined with the goal of starting a new business (80%). Most of these people had never run a business before. These participants saw the programme as a first step to launching their business:

"I want to gain the necessary skills and confidence to start something - even if it's just something small..."

"To connect with like-minded individuals and build up the confidence to launch my business start-up!"

"I want to start something properly, so I can make money out of doing something that I love."

Overall, people came on the **Next Generation** programme driven by ambition and passion, with a view to create or discover new market opportunities and start something meaningful and sustainable.





“It helped me grow in confidence massively. This is a huge difference to how I felt before the course, If I hadn’t gone to the course, I wouldn’t have pursued this journey”

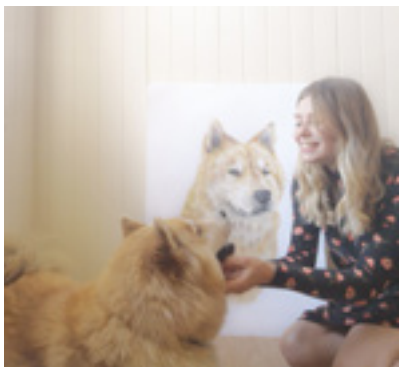
CHLOE BRYANT, CMJ ARTWORKS

CASE STUDY:

CMJ ARTWORKS

CHLOE BRYANT, READING

My personal hand-drawn pet portraits help pet owners to capture a moment or memory in a unique way. Bringing their best friends alive on quality paper, unlike the still image on a phone, tablet or laptop. I create pieces representing personality, emotion and a personal connection.



Why did you sign up to the Next Gen programme?

I was actually looking online for art courses, as I'm creative and my business is personalised pet portraits. However, the Next Generation course popped up on my screen and the more I thought about it, the more I thought it would be a good idea to go along. I'd started this little 'thing'... I wouldn't have even called it a business at that point. I had no background in business and was just selling my drawings to friends and family. The event page was well laid out, so I could see clearly what each of the week's topics were about. I went along to session one and stayed for the whole six weeks, as I just loved it!

How has Next Gen helped you start something?

It helped me grow in confidence massively. I now believe that what I'm doing is actually running a business and I can tell people that I am an entrepreneur. This is a huge difference to how I felt before the course, when I wouldn't have even said that it was a business. If I hadn't gone to the course, I wouldn't have pursued this journey, really. I just wouldn't have had the confidence, the know-how, or all that experience. It was a huge contribution.

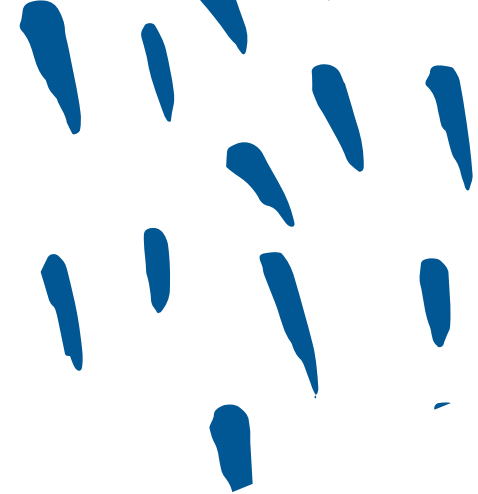
The course also taught me not be afraid to ask. I know that seems like a small thing, but it's actually a very big thing when you have the beginning of a business. Before the course, I was scared to ask someone for advice or an opinion. It was a massive confidence boost and I took what I learned and put it into practice. For example, I created some business cards and now have them set up in a veterinary practice, simply because I went in and asked. That's something I would never have done before.

What was the highlight of the programme for you?

So much of it was good! It was inspiring, there was a great community, and everyone was very supportive. It was especially useful when guest speakers came along to share their stories about how they set up their businesses. Their techniques and advice were really useful.

What's next? Tell us your plans!

Art's a tricky one. People look at a drawing and think it took only two hours, but you need to consider lots of things, like the cost of materials and how much time you're actually spending on it. So moving to work on it full-time is not really an option right now, but it would be amazing if it was something that I could work towards doing two days a week. It's just about getting out there into the community and being pro-active with it now!



OUR IMPACT

After the programme finished, we issued another questionnaire to compare where the participants were on their entrepreneurial journey now compared to the start of the course. We asked had they started something (a business, a project, a blog, etc.) and what had changed for them. Three months after the completion of the programme we reached out to the participants and interviewed several of them to see what lasting impact the course has made and how they have progressed on their own. When asked about what they gained from the course, most young entrepreneurs talked about increase in their confidence, a shift towards a more entrepreneurial mindset, increased skills and the value provided by the course community.

CONFIDENCE

The *Next Generation* programme is very practical and 'hands on' – weekly challenges involve being encouraged to ask for support and participants are frequently challenged to pitch their idea to each other and give feedback. Being challenged to share their business idea with others and being able to practice their pitches in a safe supportive environment, played a key role in building the young entrepreneurs' confidence.

"I think my issue with my confidence was that I thought it was too scary to ask. I wasn't sure if it was OK to ask for advice or an opinion, or whether you could then ask people to tell someone else about your work, and that sort of stuff. I think it was just a massive confidence building in a sense that we did a lot of [...] activities where we had to reach out to people."

Creating a psychologically safe learning environment where learners can try out new things without fear of being laughed at or judged by their peers was a priority. By adopting an experiential learning approach, the *Next Generation* programme has responded to calls that demand a shift away from lecture-based didactic teaching of entrepreneurship, to an approach that builds confidence through interactive conversations, practical activities and constructive peer-to-peer feedback³⁴.

MINDSET

Increased optimism and resilience

When asked about their most important learnings, most participants talked about a shift in their mindset. This included, for example, a change in perception of failure:

"[I learned that] it's ok to make a few mistakes and it's ok to learn from them. And how [...] failure is not the last step..."

One participant shared how she used to have a lot of self-doubt when it came to her ideas, thinking whatever she came up with wasn't going to work or it was too difficult to achieve; however after the course, she felt a lot more optimistic about implementing ideas.

"Whenever I have an idea [now] I think about it and then jot it down and I know that [...] when the time comes, I can go off and make it into something..."

Investigating the effect of optimism on business performance produces mixed research findings. On the one hand, being an optimistic person is associated with ambitious goal-setting and high levels of resilience. However, optimism can also render entrepreneurs blind to negative information and make them less likely to learn from experience. Therefore, optimism ought to be moderated to avoid common pitfalls of highly optimistic entrepreneurs, who tend to “hold unrealistic expectations, suffer from over-confidence and discount negative information - tendencies which can interfere with their decision-making and judgment”³⁵.

Importance of taking initiative

A growing body of scientific research suggests that ‘personal initiative-taking’ (PI) is one of the most integral skills an entrepreneur can have in his/her toolkit. People who are high in PI are more likely to self-start, overcome barriers and adopt a more proactive approach to business. Compared to traditional entrepreneurship educational training, programmes that nurture PI, develop entrepreneurs who are more likely to adopt a long-term entrepreneurial mindset, employ more staff and sustain business growth.³⁶

Interviews showed that many participants started appreciating the importance of taking action and value of small steps more after the course.

“I think for me the biggest learning was to get out of your own head and take action. More than anything, just take action there and then, don’t wait, you can do one small thing even if it’s just a tweet, a message, a post, just do one thing each day and do it consistently.”

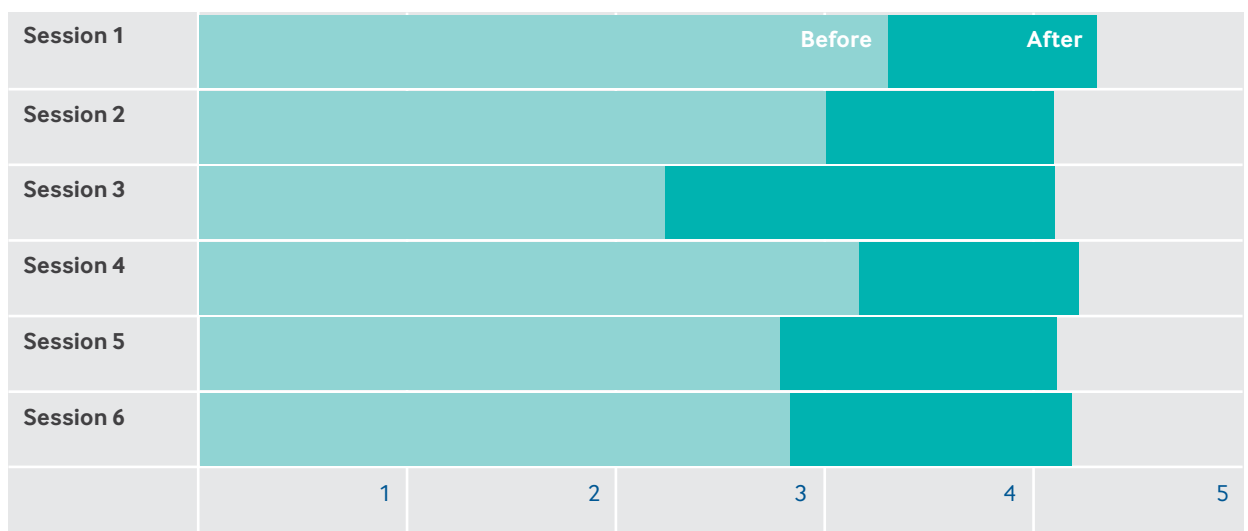
These shifts in perspective were typical of many interviewees. They shared how they learned there was no ‘perfect time’ to start, and how big business wouldn’t be here today if they hadn’t started small.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES (KSAS)

Increased business skills

Each of the six workshops had an overarching theme and a set of skills being addressed (e.g. branding and marketing). After each workshop, we asked attendees how confident they were in their skills in that area prior and post the workshop, on a scale from 1 to 5. The average score increase was of 1.22 points across all groups, ranging from 1.02 (session 1) to 1.88 (session 3). This shows that by attending each session the participants were able to significantly improve their key business skills across six areas we focus on.

CHART 5
CHANGE IN BUSINESS SKILL CAPABILITY (SELF REPORT)



Verbal communication skills

Throughout the course, participants were given several different elevator pitch models and were encouraged to pitch on the spot. Many of those interviewed found pitching practice one of the most valuable parts of the course and talked about how that improved their communication skills, i.e. their ability to clearly articulate their business.

"It's a very unpleasant thing to do, to have to try to articulate [your business idea], and to be met with blank looks, or for people to misinterpret things, but actually that was incredibly valuable, in terms of being able to hone how you communicate something."

This quote is also representative of many other interviewees who found the pitching practice uncomfortable and challenging, but felt that in the end the experience was very useful and helped them learn how to tailor their communication style to promote their business ideas to a wide range of audiences – which is a crucial skill in entrepreneurship.

Digital skills and social media

Today it is easier than ever to launch a business using digital tools for research, web presence, marketing, even putting together a shop and taking payments – yet, many aspiring entrepreneurs are not aware of the plethora of free tools available to them, and many found the practical tips very useful:

"There were [...] various websites to visit, free logo generation, lots of different things like that that were thrown in that I didn't know about and was obviously really valuable to me, being able to understand and use these moving forward."

In terms of social media channels, almost every participant mentioned Instagram and learning a lot more about how to use it for business purposes, such as sharing knowledge to build credibility, reputation and a community.

COMMUNITY

A positive, supportive community of like-minded people, for many participants, was a key part of the course, as peers supported each other by providing a safe space to test ideas and held each other accountable. And being around 'people like me' was highly valued in itself.

Many interviewees talked about the value of group troubleshooting sessions, learning from each other's experiences and getting feedback on their own business idea. Being able to try things out in a safe and supportive environment was also crucial in practicing communicating, taking risks and building confidence.

"[I was] feeling like I could test and play around in a comfortable space, rather than just feeling like I couldn't mess it up and impress people all the time. So that was great, actually, that was really great..."

Community also meant accountability and made it easier for participants to commit to the course making sure that they completed their weekly challenges before coming back to the next week's session.

Very importantly, being surrounded by like-minded people was valued as a highly positive experience and a way that the course impacted the participants, beyond their businesses. This relates to research which shows the importance of feeling like you 'fit in' and belong, in terms of predicting levels of career ambition³⁷. Next Generation offered participants an opportunity to meet fellow entrepreneurs and in doing so, our young people were able to form meaningful connections with relatable peers.

"...It's so inspiring and so nice to see people, you know, the same age as you, or slightly older, younger, want to make a difference in the world and want to follow their dreams. I think this was, in itself, very life-changing."

STARTING SOMETHING!

The ethos of the Next Generation course is 'just start' and we emphasised the value of action and putting an idea 'out there' to be tested. Therefore, it is not straightforward to define whether or not someone has 'launched' a business. We did not restrict the definition of 'starting' by milestones such as 'creating web presence', 'making first sales', 'registering a company', etc and the participants self-defined and reported whether they feel they had started something.

Our results show that of the 52 responses, 38 said they had launched a business by the time the programme had ended, equal to an incredible 73% rate of business start-up success.

TABLE 3
SINCE COMING ON NEXTGEN, HAVE YOU STARTED A BUSINESS?

Data source	# responses	% responses
Yes	38	73%
No	14	27%

Before attending their first module, Next Generation participants were asked to share where they were, in terms of starting a business (see section: *How young people look for business support*). They were asked this again once the programme had ended. We also asked participants "since coming on the programme, have you started something?" Table 3 shows a comparison of how participants responded to these questions.

TABLE 4
BASELINE AND POST-PROGRAMME MEASURES OF PROGRESS

	Before Programme	After Programme	Change
Unsure	3%	0%	-3%
Intention	34%	15%	-19%
Nascent	47%	15%	-32%
Growth	16%	70%	54%

These findings suggest that post-programme, a greater proportion of participants are at the 'growth' stage of their entrepreneurial journeys than before.

In order to confirm this finding, we asked our interviewees the same question and found that the overwhelming majority attributed the progress they had made in developing their business idea to coming on the programme:

"It definitely gave me drive to actually do something about it, because I realised that it's actually more achievable than it seemed..."

"I made much progress in terms of evolving continuously and trying new things as fast as possible."

"[Without the programme] I wouldn't be pushing on as much as I am, I would have left it."

"I definitely moved [the business idea] along, otherwise I would still be sitting on this procrastinating."

Finally, every single interviewee attributed their business progress to the programme, said that the programme had met or exceeded their expectations, and that they would definitely recommend to programme to other young people wanting to start a business.

KEY INSIGHTS

Throughout this year we collected heaps of data through surveys, interviews, trainer reflections and team experiences, and we gathered valuable insights about young entrepreneurs, the challenges they face and what factors can be attributed to their success. We hope that these insights will provide a valuable addition to the literature on youth entrepreneurship.

Role models:

Relatable role models build ambition

Research shows that relatable role models can be a source of inspiration and motivation for aspiring young people³⁸. Organisational research shows that when we see people 'like us' in roles we aspire to have, we are more likely to believe success is achievable and be more career motivated³⁹. The same is true for aspiring entrepreneurs⁴⁰; across the surveys we administered and the interviews we conducted, we learned just how influential role models are.

"What I really took away was inspiration from [guest speakers] and hearing their stories and how they developed and battled through their challenges. That was very good at the end of each learning [session, and] also gave something for you to think about when you went away."

"One of the things that really resonated with me was the fact that most of the [guest entrepreneurs] started their side hustle while having their full-time job. [...] How someone came to form an idea, like a very small idea, to something great, like having a very, very successful business running, was also one of the things that resonated with me."

"It made me want to continue. I was around people and seeing that other people had actually done it, and that they had been in a very similar position to me, [I thought] I need to do something about this."

"The case studies that were sighted across the course were really mind-blowing, and just made me realise how people can make money out of nowhere, and as such the case studies were very inspiring."

Our findings were in line with the literature: Having access to relatable and successful role models increases how competent, confident and skilled participants see themselves as business owners⁴¹.

Finally, participants from families where at least one member owned a business were significantly more likely to see themselves as an entrepreneur. These participants reported higher levels of self-confidence in themselves and confidence in entrepreneurial skill, than participants who did not have such role models in their family environment⁴².

Personal stories as a source of inspiration

We observed how storytelling can be a very effective tool to provide inspiration, instil entrepreneurial mindset and teach business strategy. When selecting trainers and guest speakers we actively sought out diverse role models for the young entrepreneurs to relate to.

Many of those interviewed talked about how important guest speakers (young successful entrepreneurs invited to give a quick talk and share their personal experience) and case studies were for their learning and how hearing personal experiences was one of the most useful aspects of the course.

“Hearing from other people that did have a business [...] how they’ve overcome setbacks and what those setbacks were as well [...]. Actually people make hundreds of mistakes. Because when you go on social media, you only see the best bits. But it’s nice to see the other side.”

Personal stories provided inspiration and insights into what it takes to run and start a business, but the business strategies also resonated and stuck in the participants memories much more effectively than theory.

“I think it was really useful when we had people visiting us and talking about how they had set up their small business, because that’s where I found out most of the business techniques.”

Every young entrepreneur is unique

Our young entrepreneurs came from a variety of backgrounds and were impacted by the programme in different ways. They also benefitted hugely from some tailored support by peers and facilitators.

Different backgrounds

Research shows that contextual differences can affect the prevalence of young entrepreneurs⁴³, as well as regional differences in the support available to young people⁴⁴ to successfully launch their businesses.

Consistent with this, we found that the programme impacted people differently:

- **Gender:** Female participants were less likely to perceive themselves as equipped with the necessary skills to be a successful entrepreneur, compared to male participants
- **Ethnicity:** On average, participants who identified as BAME British were significantly less likely to see their business aspirations as supported by their friends and family, compared to students who self-identified as White British
- **Role models:** Participants who reported having at least one family member owning a business, were significantly more likely to perceive themselves as an entrepreneur, compared to participants who were the first person in their family to start a business
- **Employment:** Participants who were ‘self-employed’ or ‘unemployed’ were significantly more likely to perceive themselves as an entrepreneur, as equipped with the necessary business skills to succeed and score higher on self-confidence, compared to participants who were in full-time or part-time work

Factors influencing success

Our findings show that the more modules participants attended and the more time they spent working on their business in-between modules, the more likely they were to have launched their business within three months of leaving the Next Generation programme.

Another factor to affect how likely someone was to have launched was skill acquisition – the more business, communication, digital and other skills participants learned in each session, the more likely they were to make progress on their entrepreneurial journey.

Those interviewed who reported having made significant progress often spoke about prioritising attendance the workshops every week. Commitment and dedication play a crucial role in progressing ideas and launching a business.

Challenges facing young entrepreneurs

Before the programme began, we asked participants to share whether they were experiencing any challenges, or if they anticipated future challenges associated with starting a new business (see section How do Young people Look for Support?). We asked participants this question again, once the programme had ended. In the first survey we sent (pre-programme), we received 59 responses (total of 64), detailing a number of multifaceted challenges. The second survey we sent (post-programme) returned only 14 responses (total of 52) – a 66% reduction in frequency of perceived barriers reported.

Across both interviews and surveys, the most commonly quoted barrier in applying the learnings from the programme was a 'lack of time'. However, our interviewees did dedicate six full evenings and additional time in between sessions to undertake their challenges during the course. This perceived lack of time seemed to refer to the loss of a) structure and b) a community to be accountable to. We observed a trend where reported business progress was highest during the programme and lowest after the programme ended. This only highlights the importance of a supportive community that keeps individuals accountable, and we believe it is important for that to continue beyond the programme.

It is known that juggling multiple work-study-life commitments while also launching a new business, adds a layer of pressure for young aspiring entrepreneurs. Those who are able to balance these competing priorities by leveraging their resources, planning ahead and actively seeking out support from others, generally fair better⁴⁷.

While the programme has made a significant impact on many participants' levels of confidence, many still expressed lack of confidence and fear of failure to be behind their lack of progress.

It is interesting to note that very few interviewees mentioned financial resources as the main barrier to them progressing their idea. The programme's focus on bootstrapping and lean start up methodology seems to have succeeded in instilling into the participants the mindset that in 2019 an individual does not need to have a lot of capital before they take their first steps.

Our findings also show that cultural background, employment, gender, age, family support, identifying as entrepreneur, and education level did not affect how likely participants were to starting a business or progressing their idea. What does affect it is how confident someone feels, how much relevant skills they feel they gained and how much time they dedicate to working on their business idea.



RECOMMENDATIONS

We believe there is a lot we can learn from these findings and insights and it's important to share our key recommendations that would, if implemented, go a long way to improve the rate of young people setting up and successfully running businesses for the longer term benefit to the British economy.

Young entrepreneurs

If you are a young aspiring entrepreneur reading this report, we hope that you have found our conclusions encouraging. If your age, gender, education level, cultural background, employment and family support and role models have no influence over your business journey, then it's all in your power. If you make a commitment and dedicate time to learn relevant skills and work on your business idea, you have as much chance of launching a business as anyone else. We know it may still feel daunting and we are here to support you – visit enterprisenation.com/campaigns/nextgeneration to find opportunities available to you.

Educators

Our Start Something programme proves that action-based, experiential approach to entrepreneurship education is effective in training entrepreneurial competencies and enabling aspiring entrepreneurs to start businesses. We therefore invite education institutions to recognise the difference between the academic subject Business Studies and entrepreneurship education, and to consider introducing more practical and hands-on elements to enterprise programmes. We also encourage educators to consider the holistic journey of entrepreneur, and next to business skills also consider exploring development and evolution of ideas, resilience,

optimism, learning from failures, and other elements of entrepreneurial mindset. If we can assist in consulting on entrepreneurship education design, please contact us to discuss.

Business support organisations

It may appear that the support a first-time entrepreneur requires is the same regardless of age, and partly that is true; however, we see 'young entrepreneurs' as a group of people with a fairly unique set of needs. While they are digitally-savvy, they may need digital skills training to be pitched at a different level than standard training currently does, for example. Young aspiring entrepreneurs also want to be surrounded and inspired by like-minded people and would be less likely to join a community of mixed-age entrepreneurs, while being significantly more attracted to events and programmes designed specifically with young people in mind. We therefore encourage business support organisations to consider supporting young entrepreneurs in a slightly different way, and bringing fun and excitement to their support programmes.

We are always looking for ways to reach more young people, and if we can support young entrepreneurs in your audience, please get in touch to discuss how we could work together.

Policy makers

Our findings are clear – there is a growing appetite amongst young people in the UK to run business at some point in their career.

But because it is rare that this generation has access to lots of capital, the biggest barrier they face is juggling time between working on their business idea and other commitments (predominantly full-time employment and education to improve their long-term career outlook).

We therefore suggest more start up grants should be made available for aspiring entrepreneurs, to ease off the financial pressures at the early stages of their businesses. It is also important that these early stage grants should be more accessible and relevant. Onerous application processes, for example, can mean public funds only go to more experienced entrepreneurs who know how to 'work the system' rather than those young first-time entrepreneurs who would most benefit from the support.

Finally, we firmly believe that entrepreneurship and enterprise should be introduced into the school curriculum as distinct from the academic subject Business Studies. Entrepreneurship is a viable career option for many young people, but this study has shown that to be of value, any learning and support provision needs to be active, hands-on, and specifically designed to be in tune with the modern world of entrepreneurship, not a dry text book learning based course. In addition, undertaking entrepreneurship education can provide a life-long legacy by supporting young people beyond venture creation; both in terms of professional (e.g. innovations in the workplace or 'intrapreneurship' for the wider benefit of UK business) and personal (e.g. personal financial management, for example) accomplishment. Therefore, we see entrepreneurship as a meta-skill, crucial for success in the global future of work, and therefore a integral part of a well-rounded curriculum in an enterprise-focused country such as the UK.

Our team is available to participate in any relevant policy discussions to provide our views and experience.



LOOKING FORWARD

Looking to the year ahead, we plan to build on the success of the campaign so far and increase our reach to engage over 15,000 young aspiring entrepreneurs across the UK.

We plan to do this by expanding the Start Something! workshop courses across 15 towns and cities in 2020. We will encourage attendees to continue supporting one another and progress with their goals after the workshop sessions have finished, by assisting them in arranging their own meetups etc. The private Facebook group we have created will continue to act as a powerful tool to help us engage and encourage workshop attendees long after the courses have finished.

We will also run the Next Generation Awards again next year, as this proved to be an aspect of the campaign which was very highly engaged with. Following the success of the first Next Gen Fest event, we also plan to run this again and aim to increase the audience size to welcome 250+ young aspiring entrepreneurs.

As well as offline reach, we will develop an eLearning course using content from the Next Generation – Start Something! workshops. Broken up into modular learning, the course will continually ask questions and recap throughout, consistent with the methodology we have found to be the most appropriate for this audience. This will open-up the campaign content to young people right across the UK including those unable to attend the offline workshops.





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