



INVESTMENT IN THE WEST MIDLANDS

EXHIBITION PROGRAMME

THE BOND
FAZELEY ST
BIRMINGHAM
B5 5SE



WELCOME TO



Creative UK

West Midlands

Creative UK is proud of its 'boots on the ground' approach to making impact. We work in regions all across the UK to deliver a diverse range of programmes and activity. In 2023/24, we supported 630+ creative companies through various regional and national programmes, whilst growing our cohort of specialist B2E business mentors and investors.

In the West Midlands, Creative UK works with regional partners to deliver tailored business support for creative SMEs based in the region. We have been working in the region for one year, engaging 50 businesses in a programme of workshops, mentorship and connections with investors. Within this first year, we have seen the participating businesses secure commissions worth millions of pounds, raise investment in the hundreds of thousands, and pivot to commercial IP-led business models.

Creative UK, Create Central and West Midlands Combined Authority have worked in partnership to deliver this second iteration of the Create Growth Programme in the West Midlands.

The partnership has enabled us to leverage connections, opportunities and networks on the ground as well as opening out the investment potential of Creative UK's national networks.

The West Midlands region has a strong base in the creative industries, contributing an estimated £4bn in GVA, over 10,000 creative enterprises and supporting over 54,000 jobs. It is one of the largest creative economy regions in the UK, and the creative economy is the second fastest growing sector in the West Midlands. The WMCA area has a specialism in gaming and Createch and is developing its Film/TV sectors with the support of the BBC and private investment. The programme offers crucial opportunities for support for those businesses looking to scale, not just financially but around business development, industry collaboration, incubating creative talent and fostering cultural engagement in the region.



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AGENDA

14.00

Event opens

Registration and networking, Explore the expo area featuring businesses from the West Midlands Create Growth Programme. Teas and coffees served.

14.45

Introduction

Programme opened by **Marverine Cole** Journalist and broadcaster.

Introduction from Nick Pinks, board member of Create Central and founder Covatic.

15.00

Pitch presentations

Pitch presentations from:

S.theagency / Advidity – Saffron Houston

MIXD Reality – Pamela Aculey

Threewise Entertainment – Michael Ford

Mercurial Dance Ltd – Oliver Scott

Borro – Sarah Green

With feedback from a panel including Ali Kazmi, Craig McVoy, Anna Woźniak, Nick Pinks, and Anna Woźniak. Tea and coffee will be served at the break.

16.25

Panel

‘Investment in the Creative Industries’

Examining opportunities and problem-solving barriers.

Panel including

Moderated by **Nick Grimshaw**

Dr Yvonne Thompson CBE, Founder Wintrade

Global Women Intra & Entrepreneurs Network: Chair:
OKRE:org.

Helen Oldham investor and Co-Founder of the Lifted Project

Hayley Pepler, Head of Culture, Creative Industries and Digital Roadmap

17.00

Fireside chat

Fireside chat with **Caroline Norbury CEO** Creative UK and **Richard Parker**, Mayor of the West Midlands

17.40

Networking

Drinks reception

Served in the Gatehouse expo area

18.30

Event close



SPEAKER PROFILES



Host

Marverine Cole

Marverine Cole is a multi-award-winning journalist and broadcaster from

Birmingham. She can often be seen as newsreader on ITV1's Good Morning Britain.

She has been a regular media commentator on Channel 4's BAFTA-nominated daytime show, Steph's Packed Lunch and ITV1's This Morning, bringing her sharp journalistic knowledge and fantastic sense of humour to the table at every appearance.

Celebrating more than twenty years as a live news and current affairs broadcaster, Marverine's media career spans more than three decades. She has worked as Reporter, Producer, TV & Radio Presenter and News Anchor for many of the UK's most watched and listened to broadcasters, including ITV1, Sky News, 5 News, BBC 5 Live, the BBC & ITV in the Midlands and BBC Radio 4.

Pitch presentation

Feedback panel:

Ali Kazmi

Social entrepreneur Ali Kazmi has spent over a decade tackling inequality in the funding landscape by bringing solutions to market that turn the tables in favour of founders from marginalised communities.

Founder of both Ethical Equity - the UK's first ethical investment platform, empowering underserved founders - and AI Simulator - the world's only private market simulator - Ali helps entrepreneurs to overcome systemic challenges and bring their goals to life. A champion for change, a disruptor in the market, and an advocate for the underserved, Ali is breaking down barriers and creating a more inclusive future for entrepreneurs.

Nick Pinks

Nick is the CEO of Covatic and a Create Central Board Member. Having previously worked for the BBC and Imagine Communications, Nick has spent the majority of his career in the Broadcast and Media Industry. He has led key technical aspects of high-profile events such as the BBC's Broadcast of the Scottish Referendum, Glastonbury and Radio 1's Big Weekend.

As a technology transfer manager and R&D engineer at the BBC, he gained rare insight into the challenges of using technology to improve consumers' broadcast experience. It was this experience that led him to start Covatic. Nick has moved Covatic's HQ out of London into the Midlands, where the business has been able to build a team of phenomenal engineers, and data scientists.

Anna Woźniak

Anna Woźniak is a researcher from the University of Cambridge, Cambridge Judge Business School, and the Founder and Chief Growth Officer of Dyme Consulting Group - a boutique impact investment advisory firm helping impact-first investment funds generate remarkable blended returns. Anna has 13 years of experience raising and deploying millions of dollars of impact capital into frontier markets and post-conflict

economies. She is a fervent advocate for refugee rights, a champion for diversity in investment finance, and a firm believer in the transformative power of social finance to reinvent the world - for the better. Originally from post-Soviet Poland, Anna believes in the power of anthropology to enable social innovation and effective fund management in "the riskiest" places on Earth.

Craig McVoy

Over 25 years' experience working with the most recognisable brands in the world, such as John Lewis, RBS, BMW, LV=, Mercedes Benz and Direct Line, to design and implement growth strategies, with responsibility for Operations, Projects, Marketing, Strategy, Customer & Product Development.

Craig formed his growth agency Beyond Brand in 2016 to help scale up businesses grow faster than their competition. Attracting more customers and then keeping them for longer, to become the default choice in their target markets.

In 2022, Craig launched a venture studio called Turnkey. Specifically focused on turning high potential startups into scaleups by giving them the board they can't afford in exchange for equity in their venture.

Panel: Investment in the Creative industries

Helen Oldham

Helen Oldham is Co-Founder of Lifted Ventures, whose mission is to increase the flow of early-stage capital to regional, female founders and promote the significant business benefits of backing women. The Lifted Ventures flywheel has an angel network at its core, alongside investment literacy and preparation, a lively female founder community and consultancy.

She is an Investor, a Board member of the UKBAA, a NED, and consultant for BHP Accountants. Previously, Helen was a Founding Board Director of multi award winning NorthInvest, and in 2020 she launched Fund Her North, a collective of women in VCs who support female founders to get equal access to finance. Prior to this Helen was Managing Director of the Yorkshire Post and The Scotsman.

Dr Yvonne Thompson CBE

Dr. Thompson continues to lead the WinTrade Global Women in Business Network which she founded as The European Federation of Black Women Business Owners, 28 years ago – the first Black Women in Business network, which subsequently widened participation and became Wintrade Global Women In Business Network.

A founding member of the UK's first Black-owned radio station, Choice FM (now Capital Xtra), Dr. Thompson has held significant roles, including Chair of the Radio Academy, representing the UK's radio industry, and serving on the Diversity Advisory Panel for OFCOM.

Dr. Thompson chairs OKRE.org, based at the Wellcome Trust, and the Steering Group of the Black Equality Organization' project F100 funding 100 black business across the UK. She formerly chaired the Black Cultural Archives.

Hayley Pepler

Hayley Pepler, Head of Culture and Creative Industries for the West Midlands Combined Authority, has a remit to galvanise and develop capacity and opportunity across the creative sectors for the West Midlands' region.

Previous to this, Hayley was Head of Content and Digital Broadcast for Coventry UK City of Culture in 2021, where she oversaw the digital team and delivery of more than 400 films, all social media, 40 live streams and produced the TV version of Nitin Sawney's Ghosts in the Ruins performance capture programme for BBC4. Hayley spent 2023 driving Factory International's Digital Strategy as the producing company delivered Manchester International Festival and opened Aviva Studios in the Autumn.

During this year she also produced the BBC 2 screen version of *Free Your Mind* – Aviva Studios' opening show directed by Danny Boyle. Hayley continues to create as a writer and director and this year is working with National Theatre at Home as a Screen Director.

Fireside chat

Richard Parker

Richard Parker, Mayor of the West Midlands, will lead a fireside chat at The Big Creative UK Summit: Investment in the West Midlands on 30th Jan at The Bond. Richard previously provided strategy, policy and governance advice to the public and private sector. As a Partner at PwC he helped broker the deal, working with Council Leaders, that led to the creation of the West Midlands Combined Authority in 2016. He remains passionate about devolution and is currently working on policy interventions that will improve opportunity, fairness, diversity and inclusion across the West Midlands.

Caroline Norbury OBE

Caroline Norbury, OBE is the founding Chief Executive of Creative UK. Dedicated to championing the creative industries, Creative UK invests in and supports creative ideas, talent and businesses, harnessing the power of the creative sector to build a fairer, more prosperous world. Creative UK has

leveraged over £100m into creative businesses and projects across the country and uses its extensive membership and networks as a change maker and advocate for a world where creativity is valued and recognised as a driving force of our future. Caroline began her career working in community arts before becoming a film and TV producer, focusing on supporting new talent and those whose voices had traditionally been absent from mainstream media and storytelling. A member of BAFTA and the Royal Society of Arts, Caroline sits on the Creative Industries Council and co-chairs the Growth working group of the Council. Caroline is a founding board member of the Creative Industries Independent Standards Agency, (CIISA) and Chairwoman of the cross-industry "Roundtable" group focused on reducing bullying, harassment, and discrimination in the Creative Sector. Caroline is a trustee of multi-award winning animation studio Aardman, as well as the PRS Foundation, which supports the development of new music and musicians. Previously she was Chairwoman of The Music Works, a small charity in Gloucestershire supporting young people in challenging circumstances to have better lives through music. She has two honorary doctorates from the University of Essex and Arts University Bournemouth.

This company is exhibiting

BORED WRECKERS MARKETPLACE LTD

Follow & find out more



David Pettifer, Founder



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boredwreckers.com

Bored Wreckers Marketplace is an online sales platform for indie board games. It was designed to help small and independent board game publishers get to market, reduce their overheads, and be part of a supportive community of other creators. Our ambition is to be more than just an ecommerce platform; we want to be the home of indie games, providing a centralised hub for publishers where we can work together to thrive in this massively expanding industry.

Notable business achievements

We're a very new company, however in four months we have achieved a lot. We built our platform MVP, including an end-to-end e-commerce system that streamlines orders across multiple sellers, and allows fully automated fulfilment, stock management, and handles sales and commission. We have on-boarded our first five publishers and started making sales, and we have also secured our first pre-seed angel investment, which is going towards our first big expo and in-person events to promote the platform to both sellers and customers.

How do you stand out in a competitive market place?

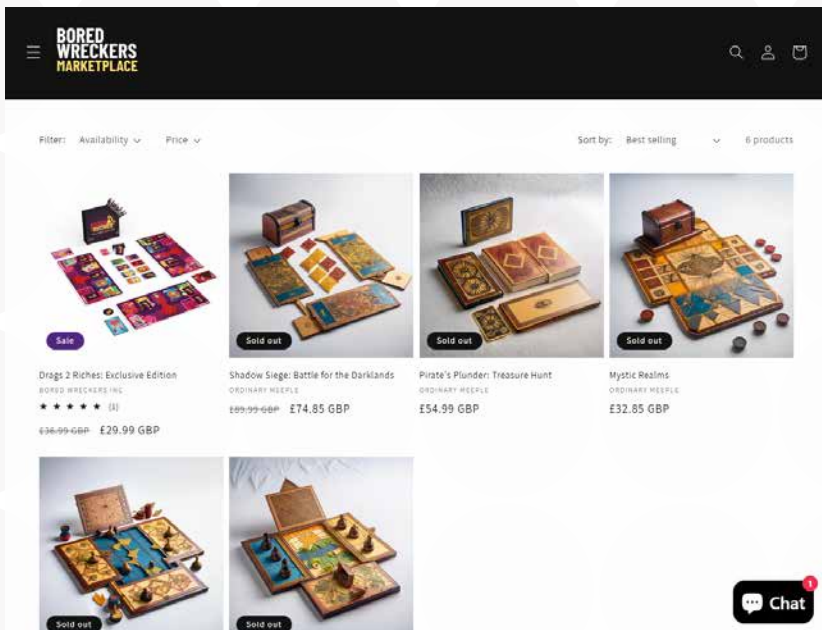
Our core offering is our Marketplace; we've built it to help indie publishers because we're indie publishers ourselves. We know the market, we know the opportunities, and we also know the challenges and barriers to entry. We built the solution that we really needed when we started out, and we hope to enhance and improve that offering as we grow, becoming a community hub for indie games creators.

Currently there are no similar platforms that cater specifically to indie board game publishers. The majority of indie publishers either rely on in-person sales at events, utilise their own e-commerce with high overheads and a steep learning curve, or rely on general ecommerce platforms like Amazon or Etsy, which do not

offer the tailored support and community engagement that we provide. On these platforms they have difficulty standing out from the crowd and capturing browsing traffic. However, our customers come to us specifically looking for new and exciting board games, so our publishers benefit from browsing traffic and increased visibility.

What are your ambitions for the future?

Our goals over the next 2-5 years are to build out our platform, improving its capabilities and features, and establishing new revenue streams. We want to rebuild our MVP into a bespoke platform that gives us the freedom to create the perfect solution for our sellers and our customers. We want to build a community hub and knowledgebase of articles for our creators that maximises the value of the platform and encourages new sellers to join us. We will be implementing a retailer ordering option, allowing us to act as a distributor to board game retailers and to ensure our sellers are on shelves as well as online, and generating a new income stream for us and them. We also want to include advertising options for sellers on our page, and create a paid supporter subscription option that gives customers priority access to new games, content, and access to discounts. Finally, our biggest asset will be our sales and retail data, from which we can derive insights and market trends that can be monetised, and help our sellers understand the wants and needs of the market.





BORRO

Follow & find out more

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Borro is on a mission to revolutionise the way we clothe our children. Babies and kids grow quickly, and buying new clothes all the time is expensive and wasteful. At Borro, we've created a truly circular model by allowing parents to rent, rather than buy, their baby and kids' clothing.

Notable business achievements

In September 2024 we closed our first SEIS round of £110k, we were also awarded an Innovate UK grant of £30k to develop our own tech. We've had some great press, over 70 paying subscribers and £14k annual revenue.

How do you stand out in a competitive market place?

Borro provides parents with an innovative, convenient, and sustainable alternative—allowing them to choose exactly the clothes they need on our website, just like traditional online shopping. Each item is individually priced, so parents might rent a sleepsuit for £3/month and a coat for £5/month, there's no minimum order or fixed subscription required. Parents pay monthly for their selected items and can return them anytime they're no longer needed, with free returns included. Our two main direct competitors are Bundlee and The Little Loop who are also baby and kids' clothing rental companies. Borro's unique selling point is the ultimate convenience and flexibility we offer. With both Bundlee and The Little Loop, customers must sign up to a fixed plan which is a set price and set number of items. With Borro, parents can rent one item from as little as £1/month, and adjust what they rent by adding or returning items whenever. Having completed numerous customer interviews, we know that our customers really value this flexibility. It also means we offer a lower barrier to entry to encourage higher customer acquisition.

Resale marketplaces like Vinted and eBay are strong indirect competitors as they also offer an affordable, sustainable solution, and customers are more familiar

with the model. However, we know that the quantity of clothes that you need to buy, and dispose of, for fast-growing kids makes second-hand a time-consuming process. Borro's circular inventory system solves this problem, offering parents a seamless, high-quality solution without the hassle.

What are your ambitions for the future?





In three years' time, it's my ambition to have 10,000 paying subscribers, which would mean the business was profitable, generating £3.6m revenue. In a single year we'd save 750 tonnes CO₂e – the same as saving one and a half hectares from deforestation – just by renting kids' clothes. This is an ambitious but achievable target, as demonstrated by toy rental company Whirli, which reached similar subscriber growth within the same timeframe.

This company is exhibiting

EXTRAORDINARY US CIC

Follow & find out more



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Extraordinary Us is a creative production company dedicated to empowering individuals and communities by finding the extra in ordinary and making a fuss out of 'us'. Through innovative projects like The Museum of Me, we amplify personal stories, foster community connection, and challenge perceptions of significance.

Based in Coventry, we collaborate locally, nationally, and internationally to deliver impactful cultural initiatives that make even the most 'ordinary' of individuals feel seen, valued, and unashamedly proud of who they are.

Notable business achievements

Since its inception, Extraordinary Us has achieved significant milestones in fostering creativity and community connection. One of our standout achievements is The Museum of Me, which premiered as part of Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Festival and has been showcased in communities across Coventry and Birmingham. We have also been commissioned over the past year by National Theatre and Wolverhampton Grand Theatre to create Our Patch, which was listed by National Theatre as a highlight of their UK wide Speak Up programme in 2024. Our founder, Paul O'Donnell, has led the organisation to form meaningful partnerships with esteemed organisations across the UK, as well as international collaborators in Rwanda, Kosovo, USA, Slovenia, Viet Nam and South Korea. We are now at a position where we are expanding our team ready for significant growth to enable powerful impacts for our stakeholders.

"I feel like I've turned my biggest weakness into my biggest strength" - an autistic participant who was trained and supported by Extraordinary Us in 2024.

How do you stand out in a competitive market place?

We are defiantly proud of being completely ordinary; we have a relatable sense of humour, and we find ourselves combatting head first the global pressure to be perfect [...bog off perfection!]. Together, the above offers relaxed entry points for all stakeholders and customers, alongside universal messaging which feels refreshingly human. There are examples of isolated projects [E.g. Humans of New York] and branding strategies [E.g.: Dove] that celebrate individuality and demonstrate our viability, but



our unique vision and approach centre all of our work towards 'empowering the ordinary' creating clear pathways for our vision.

Extraordinary Us welcomes conversations about The Museum of Me [MoME] and wider partnerships or collaborations on other projects. We primarily want to champion the overlooked people in the world around us - be that your staff, your consumers, your stakeholders or communities that

you exist within. MoME is a project that mirrors our aim to be ambitious in this, and to accomplish it in the way that only we can.

We are specialists in creating bespoke projects that nobody else would achieve quite like us - ideas that connect with, build up, and reflect people in ways they didn't realise that they really needed right now. We are extra ordinary... and we are extra proud of it.

What are your ambitions for the future?

Extraordinary Us aims to grow into a leading force for creative innovation and community engagement, while achieving greater organisational sustainability. Our primary focus is on strengthening our internal capacity and operational infrastructure to support more ambitious projects and extend our reach. By building a solid foundation of financial sustainability, increasing our team capacity, and developing strategic partnerships, we aim to ensure that our impact remains both meaningful and scalable. We hope to work in partnership with other aligned brands to accomplish this.

A core part of our growth strategy lies in advancing our intellectual property (IP) portfolio. Projects such as Friendly Foodbank Monsters and Disco Football are already in motion and embody our commitment to merging culture with social impact. These concepts are highly adaptable, allowing us to address a range of societal challenges while maintaining their unique artistic appeal. By refining and expanding these projects, we aim to reach broader audiences and explore new revenue streams, from licensing opportunities to educational collaborations.





In the longer term, we aspire to position Extraordinary Us as a model for innovative cultural production that balances artistic excellence with deep community engagement. Through sustained investment in our IP, people, and partnerships, we aim to amplify Coventry's profile as a hub for inclusive and groundbreaking cultural practices. Our ambition is not only to grow as an organisation but also to inspire others to reimagine the role of creativity in fostering connection, pride, and transformation across communities.

This company is exhibiting

FORMAT FACTORY

Follow & find out more



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Format Factory is an award-winning Independent Production Company based in Birmingham, sister company to Free@Last TV and creator of first-class TV, formats and IP.

Incorporating Albert Road Studios; digital producer of podcasts, audio and radio. Producing brand new formats for television, radio, online and content platforms.

Wherever content is, so are we!

Notable business achievements

We have achieved numerous accolades and awards for our work, including recognition from the Edinburgh TV Festival's New Voices Award, The Broadcast Award for Best Children's Programme, and the Carmarthen Film Festival for Best Feature Documentary. We have also been nominated as Emerging Indie of the Year at the Broadcast Awards with a further two nominations in programming awards.


What are your ambitions for the future?

We are on a large growth trajectory with investment currently under discussion; our strategic plan is to self-fund programming and content and to forge new partnerships moving forwards using the extensive IP we own.

ROOSCREEN LTD


Follow & find out more

ROOSCREEN

 Becky Rooney, Creative Producer

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 @roo_screen

We make inclusive films that educate and entertain.

Notable business achievements

Rooscreen is a Midlands-based production company. We produce authentic, narrative films created by new and emerging writers and directors for use on a variety of platforms including broadcast, social media and internal and external communications. Rooscreen films all have social issues at their heart and are told through the lens of characters navigating their way through experiences familiar to us all – relationships, marriage, parenthood, careers, aging, grief and physical and mental health. Our content informs, educates and entertains, and gives marginalised voices an opportunity to tell their stories with honesty, sensitivity and humour. Our films have enjoyed festivals successes in the UK and internationally and have been nominated for Royal Television Society awards.

How do you stand out in a competitive market place?

Rooscreen offers a unique opportunity for brands to work with a network of talented and experienced creatives to tell their stories and engage their audience in new ways.

Image credit: Rooscreen Ltd

What are your ambitions for the future?

To become a leading Midlands based Production Company.



This company is pitching

MERCURIAL DANCE LTD

Follow & find out more

MERCURIAL DANCE



Oliver Scott,

Artistic Director and CEO



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At Mercurial Dance, we are building a world where more young people can effortlessly manage their mental and physical health. We move people. We are a pioneering company who merges the expressive power of dance with the immersive capabilities of XR technologies. We utilise XR technologies to create performances that blend dance with digital storytelling; immerse our audiences in live and augmented events; and connect with communities to co-author experiences that have a social impact.

We're achieving our vision this through our immersive products, education services and lives shows to bring a change. EmbodyXR is an anxiety management game that helps you to choreograph their mind-body connection, integrating CBT techniques with Dance to help you move into better mental health.

Notable business achievements

Mercurial Dance has a track record of 21 years as a creative force for change in UK, with strategic development plans in place to 2027. Since the pandemic our work has shifted to focus on immersive (XR/VR/AR) digital and performance work.

Mercurial Dance have woven a digital strand through our work since our foundation, creating Dance Film, touring interactive digital installations, collaborating with Creative Technologists and Coders and integrating this with our education programme.

Over the last three years, Mercurial Dance has invested substantially in time and new work, developing digitally mediated experiences for audiences. The week prior to lockdown, we led our team to move our entire learning programme online, creating a weekly series of blended learning resources for children and our schools and accessed across the world. Beyond 'streaming', we've created and launched Fame Game, an outdoor adventure game played on mobile phones. We created a short Dance animation Uplift (2019), which premiered at Dance Anime International Festival (France) and subsequently toured. A Coventry City of Culture 2021 commission enabled us to co-author and prototype DigiDance, a gamified AR experience to support dance-led health and wellbeing in children. Our current work, EmbodyXR, has significantly impacted the dance community, offering a new platform for collaboration and exploration. During a



two-week residency, four dancers trained in the art of sign spinning—a first in the UK—motion captured for the game in a first for VR. We've leveraged c.£217K for three phases of development from proof of concept, prototype for testing to MVP. We

currently are working on a smartphone prototype supported by a UKRI innovators grant and have £800k bids in consideration for the next phase of development.

How do you stand out in a competitive market place?

EmbodyXR is an anxiety management game. Our VR MVP has been touring libraries and community centres with Arts Council funding, and we are developing a smartphone prototype to accompany it. EmbodyXR will be rolled out as a B2B service offer with headsets, content and workshops (IRL/digital) to the wellbeing sector. Phase 2 is B2C scale on app stores.

EmbodyXR incorporates dance with movement tracking for feedback and is underpinned with therapeutic CBT techniques. We're creating a disruptive, dance-led intervention to digital mental health solutions for young people.

What are your ambitions for the future?

We're growing our business, seeking to enter the med-tech space by creating inventive preventative approaches to health and wellbeing underpinned by our core knowledge in dance and the moving body.

Our plans going forward include

- **2025-7** - EmbodyXR from MVP to launching B2B and B2C offers.
- **2025** - All I Need is A Sign – new outdoor arts performance touring UK festivals with an arts activism theme about mental health. Launched in parallel with our new business identity servicing event marketing needs with Sign Spinning to augment brand campaigns www.signspinning.co.uk
- **2026-8** - Movementium – an interactive choreographic rhythm game for young children played on a smartphone moving from RnD stage through MVP, to launch.

To achieve this we're seeking to build our in-house team to augment our highly skilled group of freelancers, leveraging innovation grants and public funding in a strategic approach towards revenue generation.

This company is pitching and exhibiting

MIXD REALITY

Follow & find out more



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MIXD Reality is an award-winning creative tech company revolutionizing storytelling through cutting-edge augmented reality (AR) technology. As pioneers of the world's first inclusive AR children's book, we bring stories to life in innovative ways that champion diversity and inclusion. Our mission is to redefine content experiences, with a dedicated focus on transforming publishing and education. By merging innovation with accessibility, we empower creators and educators to deliver truly engaging and impactful experiences that inspire and connect.

Notable business achievements

MIXD Reality has achieved remarkable milestones, including the creation of the world's first inclusive and interactive augmented reality children's book, *Buster Finds His Beat*, which has redefined how stories are told and experienced. This innovative project has allowed us to foster partnerships and engage in discussions with organizations such as Penguin Publishers, The British Library, and schools that champion accessible and diverse learning. Our achievements have been recognized with prestigious awards such as the Great British Entrepreneur Awards and the Midlands Women in Tech Awards. We've been featured live on Good Morning Britain and highlighted in *The Independent* as one of the best children's books celebrating diversity. Endorsed by Davina McCall and narrated by actor Will Poulter, our work has gained widespread acclaim. The business has seen significant growth, expanding its reach and influence within the publishing and education sectors, as we continue to inspire and innovate through our unique approach to storytelling.

How do you stand out in a competitive market place?

At MIXD Reality, we specialize in creating innovative augmented reality (AR) experiences that transform traditional storytelling into interactive and inclusive

adventures. Our flagship product, *Buster Finds His Beat*, combines engaging narratives with cutting-edge AR technology to captivate children and promote diversity and inclusion. This unique offering has resonated with educators, parents, and children, making it a trailblazer in accessible and diverse learning materials. Beyond our AR books, we collaborate with organizations to explore AR's potential in creating meaningful educational tools and immersive content tailored to diverse audiences. What sets us apart is our commitment to inclusion and innovation. Unlike many competitors, we prioritize accessibility and representation in every product, ensuring children of all backgrounds can see themselves in the stories they engage with. Additionally, our AR technology enriches the reading experience, offering interactive elements that support learning and engagement in ways traditional books cannot. Investors should back MIXD Reality because we operate at the intersection of technology, education, and inclusion—sectors with tremendous growth potential. By investing in MIXD Reality, stakeholders join a mission to reshape how stories are told and experienced, with a focus on creating a more inclusive and connected future.

What are your ambitions for the future?

Over the next 2-5 years, MIXD Reality aims to revolutionize how immersive storytelling and educational content are experienced globally. We plan to expand our product range, introducing new AR books and interactive learning tools that continue to prioritize diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. As we grow, we aim to foster deeper partnerships with educational institutions and publishers, positioning our products as essential resources for inclusive learning environments. One of our key ambitions is to launch the MIXD Reality SaaS platform, which will unlock new opportunities for educators, publishers, and content creators to seamlessly integrate AR into their work. This platform will empower users to create customized, interactive content that enhances learning and engagement, further establishing MIXD Reality as a leader in the intersection of education, technology, and inclusivity.

This company is pitching

S.THEAGENCY / ADVIDITY

Follow & find out more

S. the agency
advidity

 Saffron Houston, Founder

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 s-theagency.com

 @stheagency

advidity is an innovative platform designed to bridge the gap between young creatives and the evolving freelance economy. We empower emerging talent by providing access to industry mentors, tailored training resources, and a supportive community to build confidence and skills. Focused on inclusivity and adaptability, advidity equips Gen Z with the tools to thrive on their terms, transforming aspirations into sustainable careers. Join us in shaping a creative workforce that champions flexibility, innovation, and independence.

Notable business achievements

advidity is a trailblazer in addressing the needs of young creatives in the freelance economy. In a major milestone, advidity won an Innovate UK Creative Catalyst Award of £50,000, enabling us to bring the development of our app to approximately 75% completion. This funding reflects both the industry's recognition of our vision and the platform's potential to make a meaningful impact on the creative workforce. Our focus on inclusivity and bridging the skills gap has led to us being in the running for a round table talk at the inaugural SXSW London 2025, showcasing our vision to industry leaders and gaining traction within the creative and tech ecosystems. These milestones reflect our commitment to redefining the freelance economy and empowering the next generation of creatives.

How do you stand out in a competitive market place?

advidity offers a comprehensive digital platform designed to empower young creatives by connecting them with businesses, mentors, and training opportunities tailored to the freelance economy. Our app simplifies the entry into the creative industries by providing tools such as mentorship matching, curated job boards, and

upskilling resources, enabling users to navigate their freelance careers confidently. Unlike other platforms, advidity focuses exclusively on the unique needs of Gen Z freelancers and entry-level talent, addressing critical gaps in accessibility, inclusivity, and support for this demographic. This targeted approach positions us as a leader in fostering the next generation of creative professionals.

What sets advidity apart is its commitment to holistic support, blending technological innovation with industry expertise. Unlike competitors that emphasise transactional services, our platform prioritises long-term career development. By aligning with the evolving expectations of Gen Z—who prioritize flexibility, independence, and alignment with their passions—advidity captures a unique market opportunity while addressing systemic barriers in the creative economy.

Investors should choose advidity because of its clear vision, proven traction, and scalable impact. We are not just building a product; we are cultivating a movement that empowers young creatives while meeting a growing market demand. By supporting us, investors contribute to supporting the next generation of creatives.

What are your ambitions for the future?

Over the next 2–5 years, advidity aims to become the leading platform for empowering young creatives in the freelance economy. Our ambition is to achieve this by completing and launching our app, scaling user acquisition, and forming strategic partnerships with businesses and educational institutions. Within two years, we aim to onboard at least 10,000 users, focusing on Gen Z creatives seeking mentorship, training, and job opportunities. By year five, we envision advidity as a global community with over 100,000 active users, supported by collaborations with top-tier brands and industry leaders.


In addition to scaling our platform, we aim to expand our offerings, introducing advanced features such as AI-driven career mapping and skill-gap analysis to provide hyper-personalized support to our users. We also plan to implement innovative revenue streams, including premium membership tiers and B2B services for businesses looking to connect with top creative talent. Our long-term goal is to influence systemic change in the creative industries, creating a more inclusive, accessible, and thriving freelance economy. With a clear roadmap and the right investment, advidity is poised to redefine how emerging creatives build sustainable careers.

This company is exhibiting

SICK IN THE CITY CIC

Follow & find out more



 Alice Hargreaves,
CEO & Founder

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SIC has been working to close the disability employment gap since 2021. As a business that has designed and created accessible e-learning, the next step is to create an accessible e-learning platform via Inconvenient Limited. This new tech product, with an MVP due in Spring 2025, will allow learning companies to develop universal online education.

Notable business achievements

As a social enterprise, we have supported over 280 businesses and 500 individuals to date. We have worked as consultants, trainers, and workshop facilitators in the area of disability and neurodivergence in the workplace. In 2025, we received the RIDI award for disability specialist of the year and were named as a WISE100 one to watch and on the SE100.

In 2024, SIC received seed investment to do market research and co-creation of their e-learning product and at the end of the year received in-kind investment of an MVP build.

How do you stand out in a competitive market place?

Our e-learning product is the first of its kind. Designed alongside disabled and neurodivergent learners, this is the first opportunity for businesses and education institutions to have one universal e-learning opportunity.

Picture a scenario - you start to onboard a new disabled employee, and your usual e-learning package isn't suitable. So, someone in-house has to do the teaching themselves - what a waste of time! The solution is to have something that's accessible from the beginning. Simple right?

With our new company - Inconvenient Limited - we're making things that have wasted time for organisations simpler with a convenient e-learning solution. MVP launch Spring 2025.



What are your ambitions for the future?

With the launch of Inconvenient Ltd, we are creating a socially conscious technology company that will support Sick in the City as a beneficiary.

As Inconvenient expands, we will be able to support SIC's community with free support, employment opportunities, and resources whilst creating a business with a wide pool of customers (universities, colleges, university providers, and businesses who use e-learning to onboard).




In future, we plan to look at similar inaccessible digital experiences, and see how we can create a product that works for everyone.

This company is pitching and exhibiting

THREEWISE ENTERTAINMENT

Follow & find out more



-  Michael Ford,
CEO + Chief Content Officer
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-  threewise.com

Threewise Entertainment is a Kids & Family production company fusing storytelling and tech to create licensable Character IP in a £115 Billion annual Entertainment & Character Licensing Market. Our “Reanimation” Pipeline converts human-performance into 3D characters to create high-end animated programming at a fraction of traditional costs (think ‘Avatar’ meets ‘Paddington’). The way young audiences engage with moving image entertainment has fundamentally changed, but the need for great storytelling has not. Threewise is on a mission: to supercharge the silver screen for families and build the “Disney for Digital Natives”.

Business achievements to date

Pact Future30 indie as chosen by the UK Screen Sector Trade Body (only indie in East and West Midlands). We launched in October 2020 and in the last four years Threewise has produced and developed traditional kids programmes with global media giants from CBBC, to Nickelodeon and Warner Bros. Discovery. In January 2025, we secured rights to 50 year old British Heritage Kids IP (Details Available upon Request prior to Press Launch).



How do you stand out from the crowd

Young audiences have abandoned traditional “TV” for on-demand viewing. But online ‘Creators’ don’t know how to launch the next Mickey Mouse or Minions, any more than their great-grandparents know how to like and subscribe. And that’s where Threewise comes in.

The ‘Good, Fast, Cheap’ triangle states that you can only choose two of these factors when producing goods and services. However, Threewise’s “Reanimation” Pipeline will be able to deliver Quality Programming quickly AND affordably, allowing us to compete on price, whilst meeting modern audience demand for snackable online content.

Our aim is to produce story-driven animated characters for Film and “TV” Series (Linear Broadcast, Streaming and VOD) that can drive Consumer Products: from the cuddly toy that soothes children to sleep as toddlers, to the video games they play after school, and the movies that stay with them long after they’re grown. Our team’s decades of combined expertise handling franchise IP will enable us to create memorable characters who become tomorrow’s “Childhood Heroes”.

Business ambitions

Threewise is on a mission: to supercharge the silver screen for families and build the “Disney for Digital Natives”.

In plain terms, we’re seeking to 1) produce family feature films for the international market on economical budgets which can compete with their Hollywood counterparts in terms of both quality and box office performance; and 2) produce scripted kids and family series for the digital generations (Gen Alpha, Gen Beta and beyond) on their go-to platforms.

Threewise launched with a valuation of £2.5M with a Target 10 Year Valuation of £500M+ to be achieved through a combination of: 1) the direct sale and commercialisation of our Character IP (externally valued at up to £256M within 5 Years); and 2) strategic M&A.



This company is exhibiting

ZEDMILL

Follow & find out more

zedmill

 Carl Woods, Director

 carl@zedmill.com

 zedmill.com

Zedmill is a storytelling agency that believes in the power of film to challenge perceptions and rewrite narratives.

Born in Brum, we produce human-led stories across documentary, commercial, and film, for global brands and organisations, such as Citroen, Merck, and Adidas.

Our work engages broad audiences, creating emotional connections through character-driven stories that entertain and inform - and through which, enable us to change their perspective on your brand, organisation, or city.

Notable business achievements

Over the past 18 months we have set ourselves apart as the leading documentary and storytelling agency in the West Midlands. In 2023, we released our debut feature film, 'My Everest' in cinemas across the UK to critical acclaim, becoming the most successful West Midlands film of the year. On the commercial side, we have created new client relationships with the likes of University of Wolverhampton and West Midlands Growth Company, amongst others. With our focus on the local region, our cultural network is key; and our social enterprise project, Made By Brum, has released two short films, won major awards, and enabled us to gain trust with communities and business across the region.

How do you stand out in a competitive market place?

Zedmill offers a storytelling service, specialising in commercial video and documentary film production. As a trusted storyteller for global brands, we tell human-led stories that engage broad audiences, strengthening brand awareness and brand perception.

Our greatest strength is the trust we build with all of our stakeholders. From the participants of our branded documentary stories, who believe in us to tell their story with dignity and care - to the brands and agencies who trust us to deliver incredible work that engages audiences, and leaves a lasting impression.

We don't just make films and videos; we understand marketing and perception. And we design stories that we know will create an impact, and change the narrative the audience believes about our clients; from brands, social issues, and city-regions.

What are your ambitions for the future?

Over the next five years, Zedmill wants to reach a stage where we are an industry leader in storytelling across tourism and branded documentary, supported by the release of at least two feature films.

We see our growth beginning in the West Midlands, as we capture more local clients who usually use London-based agencies. And from this additional work, we are able to train up our local team, provide efficient and value-for-money services based in Birmingham for nationwide clients, and be at the forefront of the regions growth within the creative sector.

We also see a lot of opportunity within the tech sector, and are developing our second feature film to push the boundaries of a usual documentary release in ways which utilise the IP, and take the film experience to audiences through VR, AR, and projection-mapping.

And for our social-enterprise project, Made By Brum, we are working towards it becoming a trusted cultural and creative force, partnering with corporates and cultural organisations, to shape the narrative, cultural identity, and audience perception of the West Midlands.

Finally, as AI grows better across all of creative production, one thing it can't do is to tell a human story. As marketers understand the power of authentic human-led storytelling, we are in a great position to shape how these stories are told, and to tell them for brands, cities, and countries, across the world.

Image credit: Adam Gerber



OUR OTHER SUMMITS

This event will run alongside a few other Investment Summits throughout the UK, celebrating the Create Growth Programme, in partnership with Creative UK. These dynamic events showcase the UK's creative industries, featuring bold conversations with industry-leading speakers, dynamic pitching sessions, and exhibitions of creative companies supported by Creative UK, and invaluable networking and investment opportunities.

This series of events will highlight the vibrant creative sectors in the North East, West Midlands, West Yorkshire, Cornwall & Devon, and beyond. All providing a platform for investment and growth in the creative industries.

For more information, go to investment.wearecreative.uk/west-yorkshire
Suzie West (Cornwall & Devon):
suzie.west@wearecreative.uk



INVESTMENT IN WEST YORKSHIRE

FEB 6
3PM - 5.30PM



INVESTMENT IN CORNWALL & DEVON

FEB 7
10AM - 5:30 PM

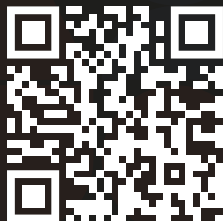


INVESTMENT FOR GROWTH

4TH MARCH

The Big Creative UK Summit: Investment for Growth is a landmark event, showcasing the extraordinary power of the UK's creative sector to supercharge economic growth through gaming, film, TV, media, fashion, design, publishing, CreaTech, heritage, culture and more.

It will be the coming-together of Investors, creatives, entrepreneurs and policy makers, from all across the country, for a day of bold conversations, dynamic pitching, and insightful networking.



Secure your space at
investment.wearecreative.uk







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