

Dear Chancellor,

We write to you as a coalition of universities and over 300 businesses from across the UK. You and the Prime Minister have been clear about the central role that innovation should play in growing the UK economy, which we hope to see driven forward across government by the new Department for Science, Innovation and Technology.

As we approach the Spring Statement, we want to bring your attention to a funding cliff-edge for vitally important innovation projects across the UK, and how this could be remedied through existing funding commitments.

The European Structural Funds will stop running in the UK this year. This includes the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which had research, innovation and support for SMEs as key priority investment areas. The same emphasis has not been factored into the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), meaning innovation infrastructure, expertise and partnerships that have been built up since 2014 are at imminent risk of disappearing, including in less developed regions of the UK.

The members of University Alliance, a group of 16 technical and professional universities, attracted over £14 million of ERDF funding in 2020/21 to support research and innovation, SMEs and start-ups in their local areas. Birmingham City University, for example, have engaged and supported 3000 SMEs since ERDF was introduced.

ERDF finances between 50-85% of a project depending on the region and it has been successfully leveraged to attract significant co-investment from universities, the private sector, charities and local government. For instance, at the University of Derby the ERDF was used to generate additional funds which combined created a value of over £24m, and was reinvested into local businesses.

Many of these projects are being severely impacted by the withdrawal of ERDF. Without a clear replacement or bridge funding, they will have to make drastic cuts or pull the plug altogether.

Universities UK have estimated that ringfencing £170m, or 6%, of the UKSPF would provide continuation of university-led research and innovation projects across the UK to 2024-25. Ringfencing a relatively small amount of the UKSPF will pay dividends for the government's innovation and levelling-up ambitions and we urge you to support this approach.

Protecting these innovation investments in the short-term will contribute to nurturing and growing the green shoots of economic recovery. In the longer term, a more sustainable approach must be established, to support SMEs and other innovators in their development, irrespective of their size or region in the UK.

In order to allow for the pillars of 'enterprise, education, employment and everywhere' to truly fuel the economy with longevity, research and innovation needs to be at the heart of funding to support local economic growth. Without this vital innovation support, SMEs will struggle to start up or grow. As the lifeblood of our local economies, we need strong and innovative SMEs now more than ever.

Yours sincerely,

Small businesses across the UK, and the Vice-Chancellors of the University Alliance

Full list of signatories at Annexe 1 and testimonials from businesses at Annexe 2

Annexe 1: Signatories

Higher education

University Alliance, Vanessa Wilson, CEO

University of Brighton/University Alliance, Professor Debra Humphries, Vice Chancellor/Chair

University of the West of England, Professor Steve West, Vice Chancellor

University of Greenwich, Professor Jane Harrington, Vice Chancellor

Robert Gordon University, Professor Steve Olivier, Vice Chancellor

Middlesex University, Professor Nic Beech, Vice Chancellor

Birmingham City University, Professor Philip Plowden, Vice Chancellor

University of Derby, Professor Kathryn Mitchell, Vice Chancellor

Kingston University, Professor Steven Spier, Vice Chancellor

Oxford Brookes University, Professor Alistair Fitt, Vice Chancellor

University of South Wales, Professor Ben Calvert, Vice Chancellor

Leeds Beckett University, Professor Peter Slee, Vice Chancellor

Teesside University, Professor Paul Croney, Vice Chancellor

Anglia Ruskin University, Professor Roderick Watkins, Vice Chancellor

Coventry University, Professor John Latham, Vice Chancellor

University of Hertfordshire, Professor Quentin McKellar, Vice Chancellor

University of the West of London, Professor Peter John CBE, Vice Chancellor

Business

Claudio Zurzica, Chief Business Officer & Renee Kalia, Head of Operations & Debra Ainge, CEO, iEthico Ltd

Zeke Steer, CEO, Milbotix Ltd

Nigel Rogers, Director, Flixels limited

Hussain Abdeali, Director, SMS UK LTD

Parag Gogate, Founder& CEO, Climakt

Tony To, Director/CTO, Infyos Ltd

Kat Fisk, Small Business Owner, The Little Yorkshire Scone Company

Selwyn Owen, Director, Iona Minerals Limited

Daniel, Cox, Director, Ademen Limited

Agnes Gaspar, CEO, Jambalom Ltd

Lucy Barrow, Marketing Director, Longcroft Luxury Cat Hotels Limited

Jonathan McBride, CEO, fotostax

Ben Amanna, CEO, BOXRAW

JaiyeolaBalogun, Managing Director, Wrightsors Integrated Services Limited

Paul Hodson, Director, Grants Bio-Tech Ltd.

Enrique Ruiz-Trejo, Head of Battery R & D, Addionics

Nicola Alexander, CEO, Peep Club

Barry Poulter, Managing Director, Transporter Engineering

Oliver Pepper, Director, Circular Inc. Ltd

Sarah Ticho, Director, Hatsumi

Rupy Aujla, Doctor, The Doctor's Kitchen ltd

Warren Larkin, Director, Warren Larkin Associates

Tom Fenton, CEO, Drop Zero Digital Ltd

Oliver Mckay, Landscape Architect, Studio Bosk Ltd

Guy Stern, CEO, Connecting The World LTD

Mike Walker, Chief Operating Officer, TwelveTechnology Ltd

Pete Barr, Designer, Enayball LTD

Steve Hogan, CEO, VR Safety Ltd

Tom Bailey, Director, The National Energy Initiative

Reju Dcunha, Director, eLearningReality.com

Mark Thomason, Process Design Lead, OLG Consulting (formally BPE Design & SupportLtd)

Adrian Fry, CEO, virtualdesigncloud

Atma Heerah, Managing Director, Temporal Research Ltd.

JenniferGould, Director, Divine Company Performance Ltd.

Robert Villette, Managing Director, FPM Group

Ray Reynolds, Founder, Yawboard Limited

Lisa Baskott, Founder/CEO, 2nd Line of Defence Ltd

Thomas Meades, Co-founder / Designer, gomi

StJohn Smith, Founder, Skillsmart Ltd

Orsela Cani, CEO, mywage

Andrew Whapshott, Technical Director, Fluid Composites Ltd

João Bocas, CEO, Saludem - Digital Health LTD

James Lucas, Managing Director, Spliced Studios Ltd

Abigail Lock, Founder, Love Art Studios Limited

Jenny Kelly, Director, CmdShiftR Ltd

John Roberts, Director, Two Cousins Limited

Bryn Jones, Director, Niksen Ltd

Paul Blazdell, Sales Director, Consort Frozen Foods Ltd

Zoe Harris, Founder, Mycarematters

Bruce Leeke, Chief Executive, Suffolk Libraries

GraemeWolford, Managing Director, Judge Sampson Ltd

Jason Harding, Creative Director, Move Animation Ltd

Julien Lesage, MD, Lesage Design and EFpedia

Ekaterina Popova, Managing Director, InspoHub Ltd

Jame Kelly, Software Developer, CmdShiftR Ltd

Lynda Vowles, CEO, The Mary How Trust

Kathy Vuillaume, Director, EPM consultancy

Lauren Daly, Director, Natrie Ltd

Tracey Hudson, Director, Cohesion Health Ltd

Leigh Bell, Director, Baby Bell LTD

Syed Tauseen Tariq Ali, Director, MAD CAD LTD

JenniferPrice, AD plant Manger, Bryn Group

Cristian Gherhes, Founder & CEO, Lexverify

Syed Byhaqi, Director, Imobisoft Ltd

Chieko Chester, CEO, Judge's Choice Petfood Ltd

Mark Nicholls, Founder & Director, Pup & Kit Ltd

Aran Dasan, Chief Technology Officer, SafetyNet Technologies Ltd.

Anwar Almojarkesh, CEO & Founder, Innovation Factory Limited

Robin Harris, CEO, Hilo EV Limited

Akel Jounes, Founder, Zeedeo

David Powell, Director, Springboard Media Limited

Chisomo Mbango, Founder, Nurxmity Health

NickolaiVysokov, CEO, BrainPatch Ltd.

Jake OConnor, CEO, Mammoth mythics limited

Brian Stanley, Director, Fairway Cost Consultancy Limited.

HosseinSaidpour, Managing Director, Materials Technology Centre (MTC) Ltd

Laura Sparkes, Project Manager, Sparkes will fly

Steve Pomery, Director, Tottington Manor

Katharine Rose, Director, Your Sales Partners

Radovan Gallo, CEO, Flux Aviation Limited

John Miller, COO, ZPN Energy Limited

Leila Mehdizadeh, Managing Director, LMZ Trading

Lisa Osborne, Programmes Officer, AA International

Sally Bell, CEO, Blackbird Productions

Dominic Chippendale, Director, O-Innovations Ltd

Christopher Chavasse, Founder and CTO, Muddy Machines Ltd

Marc Bailey, DIRECTOR, Moflash Signalling Ltd

Liam Murphy, Co-Founder, Stix Mindfulness

Suzanne White, Director, Juni Cosmetics Ltd

Zhey Grudov, CEO, Reasonable electronics/Feathertail

Samantha Watkins, Tax Consultant, Cooden Tax Consulting Ltd

Eugene Patterson, Director, VibeZ Drinks

Rachael Taplin, Director, Media Matchmaker

Chris Grose, Director, IMA International

Kam Mistry, Managing Director, Kamistry Limited

John Sewell, Systems & Quality Development Manager, Storm Interface

Fenchi Kava, Creative Design Manager, Buckingham Pools

Tamsin Holland Brown, Paediatrician, Cambridge Community Services

Veena Adityan, Director, Cambridge Animal Technologies (Smartbell)

Daniella Wainwright, Director, Wainwright Consulting Limited

Leah Crawford, Founder, Koalamama

Jake Newton, Co-founder, Live Sounds Good Ltd

Monisha Bhalla, Commercial Director, Bowling Tours

Andy Higgs, Sales Director, AVRT - Adaptive VR Training C/O KIM Software Solutions

Stephen Crosher, CEO, RheEnergise Limited

Amie Hayes, Director, Equip Your Mind

Steve Peterkin, Director, Diamond Football Co Ltd

Ben Holland, CTO, Antiverse

Sridevi Kalidindi, Founder and CEO, Klip Global Ltd

Neo Mosudisa, Managing Director, Nemo Solutions Ltd

Valentina Dipietro, Director, Mykor Ltd

Toby Kress, Programmes Director, Plus X

Anastasia Dedyukhina, Director, Consciously Digital

Caroline Syson, Founder of Pocket PA, Zomsco Ltd t/a Pocket PA

Christopher Wright, CEO, TherapyAudit Limited

Michael Vere, Chief Technology Officer (Simulation), Graffica

Nick Goodwin, Director, TalentTech Recruitment Ltd

Ian Carter, Director, Impossible Creations Ltd

Zoe Tolkien, Director of Business Innovation, Advanced Furnace Technology Ltd.

Shemal Rajapakse, CEO, CAP Certified Ltd

Sam Barham, Director, Step2 Design Limited

Divia Bhatnagar, Co-founder, Medical Intelligence Group

Matt Haikin, Director, On Our Radar

Daniele Azzaro, Founder, CleverChain

Giannis Kostakis, Co-Founder, Leo CybSec

Charles Joynson, Managing Director, WaveData Ltd

Aeron Lloyd, Managing Director, Safety Devices International Ltd

Sarah Heycock, Director, Penny Lindop Designs/Papersheep

Lee-Anne Scott, Founder, Intelligent Revenue Ltd (UK)

Thomas Kirk, Co-founder, Ionech Limited

Sangha Chakravarty, Founder and CEO, InvictIQ

Peter Maddalena, Director, VRCraftworks Ltd

Abhishek Nakhate, Founder, Zoom Abroad

Martin Horsman, Managing Director, Connetick Limited

Kemi Madumere, Director, Brighter Futures Foundation

D Hillman, Director, The Shortbread Company

Tsong Kwong, Director, Audelation Ltd

Aristos Peters, CEO / Founder, D-Risk It Ltd

Lee Elliot, Director, EJ Electronics Ltd

Brian Shingleton, Director, Nagonic Design Ltd

Abhinav Bhansali, GP, CMUK

Kimberley Montgomery, CEO, Novlr Ltd

Charles Williams, Director, WorkSafe Design Ltd

Alan Mills, Managing Director, Falcon Global Ltd

Chloe Donovan, Managing Director, Natural Building Systems

Ahmad Mustaffar, Director, Correlativ

Steve Morris, Managing Director, Network 2 Supplies Ltd

Michael Watts, CEO, Blum Health Ltd

Mat Westergreen-Thorne, Co-CEO, Luma West

Geraldine Allen, Partner, Impulse Music Consultants LLP

James Thomas, CEO, Jet Engineering System Solutions

John Baker, Managing Director Drugloo International Limited

Jason Yip, Director, Tailor Bio

Florence Miremadi-Nafici, CEO, Nafici Environmental Research Ltd

Chris Stanton, Managing director, NeedleDock Limited

Peter Milton, Director, Pdm associates Ltd

Sam Curtis, Managing Director, Gold Sails Ltd

Bala Sirigireddy, CEO, The Scientists Laboratory

Sola Adeleke, Founder/CEO, Curenetics

Mark Trett, Founder, Brightchecker

David Higgins, Director, Neura Natural Cognitive Fuels Limited

Claire Forrest, Head of Business Development, Gas Assessment and Training Centre Ltd

Lisa Hamill, Co-founder, BraveGoose Ltd

Anthony Burns, Co-founder, Ecovery

John Rodgers, Director, Equatorial Crafts Ltd

Luke Sanger, Managing Director, Blossom Group Limited

Bobby Bradstock, Director, Serenity Psychotherapy Ltd

Deby Jackson, Editor, Readydebygo

Anna Wanczyk, Independent Graphic Designer, CZYK Design

Summer Kirk, Programmer, Kairos' Luck Games

Jonathan Boase, CEO, AROai Health

Lucy Critchley, Founder, Untold Creative

Nazar Amso, CEO, Advanced Medical Simulation Online Limited

Haroon Hussain, Managing Director, Spexx Digital

Gilbert Rolando Pomell, CEO, LOGOS WM CIC

Rory Dennis, CEO, ZUMEE LTD

Oliver Hills, CEO, Nonsensical

Ella Mesma, Director, Business Yoga

Deirdre Walters, Founder and partner, Untapped Innovation LLP

Azize Naji, Founder/CEO, Goggleminds

Joe Wadsworth, Founder/CEO, The Online Recording Studio

Deborah Birkett, Staff & Curriculum Development Manager, Educ8 Training

Justus Vermaak, Director, Skystrm Limited

Mario Spiridonov, Managing Director, Santa Sofia Ltd.

Heather Pitcher, Director, AA International Ltd

Andrew Lloyd Hughes, Commercial Director, Boundri Ltd.

Nestor Alonso, Co-Founder and Chief Underwriting Officer, Driverly Company Limited

Emma Dymond, CEO, Motion Rail

Richard Sykes, Founder, CloudCFO

Kirsten Antoncich, Clinical Director, Positive Progress

Chris Rose, Managing Director, TWENTY20-Creative Ltd

Andy Jenkins, Director, My Leadership Strengths

Angela Downs, Marketing Consultant, Halo Effect Marketing

Katharine Shipley, Food & Drink Consultant, Food Curious Food

Pamela Martin, Director, PM Training and Assessing Ltd

Savannah Smith, Marketing Executive, Savannah Smith

Suhaib Arogundade, Business Manager, Carbon Consult

Tim Wilson, Director, Temporal Junction Limited

William Stiles, CEO, Vertikit Ltd

Matthew Wheeler, Digital Director, Madeby.studio

Nicola Haigh, Managing Director, NJH& Associates

Tamsin Daniel, Co-Founder/Director, Atalante Marketing Limited

Gemma Hallett, Founder, miFuture Group Ltd

Alex Craven, CEO, The Data City

Zoe Wraith, Company Director, Noirwolf Group Limited

Brenda Etchells, Director, Carduus Ltd

Samantha Jackson, Operations Manager, AgriSound

Naudia Salmon, Founder, We Drifters

Ali Reza, Accountant, Debitscredits.co.UK Ltd

Tanya McCalmon, Director, Lennox Learning and Development

Joanne Harrison, Architect, Harrison Architectural Heritage Ltd

Emma Grant, Managing Director, Tchin-Tchin Ltd

Thomas Ridgeway, Director, BCN, Cloud2, Areti

Helen Kerrigan, Director, Future Finance Training Ltd

Mark Coates, Managing Director, Financial Performance Solutions Ltd

David Radley, Senior Commercial Manager, Structural Investigation Services

Claire MacDonald, Creative Director, MacMartin Ltd

Akindayo Akindolani, Founder/Managing Director, McAnderson Associates Limited

Gordon Swain, Match Secretary, Alfreton Golf Club

Qasim Bata, Founder, PBL Care Limited

Richard White, General Manager, Ormonde Fields Golf Club Ltd

Martyn Butcher, CCO, Aristi Limited

Julian Smith, Managing Director, Polestar Interactive Ltd

Clive Darby, Managing Director, Clive's Wines Ltd

Chris Claypole, Director, Aerodyn Ltd

Jessica Barber, Co-Director, LYNNEBEC

Richard FitzHerbert, Chief Executive, Tissington Estate

Alex Moxon, Freelance Director

Russ Taylor, Director, Inovaplus Limited

Utkarsha Joshi, Owner, UJES Ltd

DharamPal, Manager, DPS Photo Booths

Fi Burke, Artist

Laurentiu Nae, Managing Director, Blockchain Advisors Ltd

Rebecca Harrison, Research and Development, DHC Innovations Ltd

Helen Cope, Director, Trans-Sport.tv Limited

Gokhan Samuk, Director, SAM UK Software Consultancy Ltd

Dalbir Kaur, CEO, Makemefitclub

Gary Musson, Managing Director, G S Musson & Associates Limited

Kimberly Redway, Manager, Owlfire

Aija Rozenberga , Spa and wellness specialist, Wildhive

Stephen Salloway, Managing Director, Salloway Property Consultants

Anne Edwards, Founder/Director, Co-Creative Jewellers Ltd.

Catherine Dunn, Director, RuggaRobe Limited

Paul McGreevy, Business Co-Owner, Delightful Living Ltd

Matt Scott, Managing Director, Axiomatic Technology Ltd

Kevin Fegan, Playwright and Poet, Provenance Productions Ltd

Peter Davies, Chief Executive, James Lister and Sons Limited

April Young, Designer, April Young

Paul Stacey, Director, Erewash Sound CIC

Anita Jackson, Managing Director, Recruit 2 you

Sheila Collington, Sole Proprietor, Studio in the Park

Aleksandra Iljina, Counsellor

Joshua Cant, Director, Rugby Abroad Ltd

Paul Smith, Sculptor, Paul Smith Sculptures

Robin Newman, Director, Snug Media Ltd

Piotr Buraczewski, Founding Director, Mergia Ltd.

Sarah Kolawole, Writer

Jen Morton, Owner, Created by Jen

Mair Perkins, Managing Director and Animator, Mair Perkins Ltd Animation and Illustration

Elizabeth Esnouf, Managing Director, Derbyshire Community Transport

Christine Cawthorne, Director, Crocstar Media Ltd

Naomi Wilds, Producer, Adverse Camber

Roderick Auton, Secretary, Chesterfield Canal Trust Ltd.

Gary Bridges, Head of Sales, Fabrikat (Nottingham) Ltd

Stephen Chaytow, CEO, Manchester and East Midlands Rail Action Partnership

Paul Smith, Financial Adviser, Paul Smith Wealth Management Ltd

Israr Ahmed, Director, S.khan poultry Ltd

Bren Butler, Manager, Home-Start Erewash

Kevin Ellis, Managing Director, East Midlands Wood Recycling CIC

Stephen Strickland, Finance and Operations Manager, Hazid Technologies Ltd

Elizabeth Shouler, Director, Beth Shouler Productions

Isaac Gosling, Engineer, Des Gosling Mobility Ltd

Kate Hudson, Member, Haywyre LLP

Danny Wan, Marketing Communications Manager, Datapath Ltd.

Henderson Mullin, CEO, Writing East Midlands

Chris Bestwick, Director, Vortex Energies Ltd.

Rhys Schofield, Managing Director, Peak Mortgages and Protection

Faith Johnson, Managing Director, The Environmental Quality Mark CIC

Freya Padmore, CEO, Freya & Co Studio

Zaneta Musilova, Director, Infinity Flow Ltd

Paul Stanton, Architect, Guy Taylor Associates

David Smith, CEO, DS Performance

Wendy McCristal, Director, The Mental Wealth Company

Jennifer Raschbauer, Project Director, Derbyshire Voluntary Action

Heather Wright, Finance & Operations Manager, Writing East Midlands CIC

Keith Cox, Director, Bloc Digital

Beatrice Russell, Owner, Flomotion Limited

Tony Arnold, Director, Kalimbra Trading Ltd

Emily Holyoake, Artist

Rafia Hussain, Producer

Keith Howells, Managing Partner, Project4 Learning Lab

Mark Chimley, Director, Genus One Ltd

Callum Fox-Lang

Michelle Spaul, Customer Experience Consultant, Delta Swan Limited

Stephen Powley, Managing Director, Omflow Ltd.

Deborah O'Donovan, CEO, Chater Smart

Ying Bardsley

Paul Savadge, Business Development Director, National Healthcare Solutions

Wiktorija Lepczynska

Andrew Deighton, Director, AWD Development Solutions Ltd

Paul Rose, Managing Director, You Teach Me Ltd

Jan Rosovic

Steve Barbour, Managing Director, Composite Braiding Ltd

Nathan Bilo, Business Development representative, Checkmate podcast

Becky Rix, Marketing Director, Roadgas Limited

Glenn Needham, Director, Near Field Solutions Ltd

Geoff Love

Simon Parke, Managing Director , Peak NDT Limited

Hannah Limberger, Project Manager, Limberger Associates

Kirk Mason, Photographer and Science Communicator, Kirk Mason Photography

Christine Thomas, Artist Educator

Md Amirul Islam, Founder, MAI

Enid Kabanda , Founder, EK Kitchen Experience

Elena Micu

Annexe 2: Testimonials

Name	Job title	Organisation	Testimonial
Giannis Kostakis	Co-Founder	Leo CybSec	The Keep+ program provided Leo Cybsec with important technical knowledge and financial support that enabled them to expand their services and invest in the latest technologies to better

			serve their clients as well as accelerate their growth.
Md Amirul Islam	Founder	MAI	A lot of was benefited from ERDF, especially in the research and innovation field.
Mario Spiridonov	Managing Director	Santa Sofia Ltd.	Ad:Venture programme has been a great support as a young entrepreneur with no business knowledge of how to survive and and build a profitable business. It would be a massive shame to let programs like this go.
Matthew Wheeler	Digital Director	madeby.studio	Ad:venture has been pivotal in growing our company over the past few years. Without their help we wouldn't be where we are today providing job opportunities in Leeds.
Faith Johnson	Managing Director	The Environmental Quality Mark CIC	We used the grant funding we received to develop a simple online net zero tool for our clients, to help them envisage how they can play their part in achieving this crucial emissions reduction goal the government has rightly legislated for. The grant therefore not only benefited our business, but also will support many others along their decarbonisation journey.
Nazar Amso	CEO	Advanced Medical Simulation Online Limited	Advanced Medical Simulation Online Limited has benefited significantly from its

			collaboration with CEMET in that we were able to convert a vision for future remote education and training of technical skills into a proof of concept product. We believe it's organisations like CEMET that would prove to be pivotal to the creation of a sustainable digital future and establish Wales as the "Silicone Valley" of Great Britain. Funding is highly recommended!
Joe Wadsworth	Founder/CEO	The Online Recording Studio	Ad:Venture was incredibly valuable to me in learning how to scale up my business. We wouldn't be where we are today without it.
Tim Wilson	Director	Temporal Junction Limited	Amazing programme for help using the experience and creativity of the team. We wouldn't have been able to launch without them!
oliver mckay	landscape architect	Studio Bosk Ltd	An excellent programme that has really helped me progress and our business progress over the last year
Pamela Martin	director	PM Training and Assessing Ltd	As a micro business we would never have been able to create the VR that is now one of the key areas of our business.
Emma Grant	Managing director	Tchin-Tchin Ltd	As a small local business we have benefited greatly from not only the Grant funding provided by

			the Ad:Venture programme, but the course and learning provided.
Brenda Etchells	Director	Carduus Ltd	As a solo business owner looking to grow her business I received so much value and benefit through being part of the Accelerate programme - particularly the allocation of a mentor who really helped me stay focused on my growth plan. Now 4 years in I am running a successful, viable business contributing to the local economy
Chloe Donovan	Managing Director	Natural Building Systems	As a start-up company with limited resources our KEEP+ project allowed us to tap into a rich and diverse pool of academic knowledge which has helped accelerate our product research and development.
Laurentiu Nae	Managing Director	Blockchain Advisors Ltd	As a startup company, we've greatly benefited from the help of HLSM. They've conducted two recruitment campaigns, and we ended up recruiting three brilliant people. Thank you, HLSM.
Martyn Butcher	CCO	Aristi Limited	As an SME we have benefited considerably from the partnership with Birmingham City University in terms of finding and developing young talent via micro placements to support

			business growth. Without the funding this would not have been possible.
Geraldine Allen	Partner	Impulse Music Consultants LLP	At a time during the pandemic when our small business was in financial stress, we were able to receive supporting funds from KEEP+ in order to adapt, acquire new equipment and skills to enable new projects to be created which would otherwise have not been possible.
Ekaterina Popova	Managing Director	InspoHub Ltd	At Plus X Innovation Hub, I joined the fully funded programme called Pioneers. This opportunity was instrumental for me to shape our business proposition and start working on our commitments for people and the planet. Experts who gave lectures opened my eyes on new business opportunities, and through the cohort engagement I got new clients and the community of supporting and like-minded people. Being a resident at Plus X and having access to such expertise in the same business is highly beneficial for all residents.
Enid Kabanda	Founder	EK Kitchen Experience	Be my boss is a good opportunity for all new entrepreneurs you get to see the inside of a business

			and gain confidence to start your own, not forgetting the guidance and help you keep receiving.
Kirk Mason	Photographer and Science Communicator	Kirk Mason Photography	Be the Boss has been fantastic to me and many other students. Starting a business is an intimidating and complicated endeavour. Be the Boss has helped demystify this undertaking and has given me the confidence to become self-employed. It is a fantastic addition to the university, for those needing the same support as I have received, and it would be a shame if subsequent students are denied this service.
Paul Savadge	Business Development Director	National Healthcare Solutions	Be The Boss Programme run by the University Of Derby has been very instrumental in helping us build our business from the ground up. We started this business from scratch and we were supported by the aforementioned programme which was set up to help drive Innovation and Entrepreneurship among University students like myself. As a direct beneficiary of this programme, I have gone on to create several businesses and am in

			the midst of acquiring another business which would significantly contribute to the local economy. We wouldn't have done this without the support of the Be The Boss programme. Please continue to support such programmes.
Tom Fenton	CEO	Drop Zero Digital Ltd	Bright Pioneers was a fantastic workshop for me, and the things that were spun out of it really kickstarted me into being much better at networking and realising that collaboration is essential to lean on people who are happy to help those at an earlier stage of their journey, and in that sense, it has been incredibly beneficial, so I would love for the funding to continue so that this can continue to help other business owners!
Jason Harding	Creative Director	Move Animation Ltd	Brite taught me many skills to help grow my business, and I learnt invaluable lessons from the variety of other businesses on my cohort.
StJohn Smith	Founder	Skillsmart Ltd	BRITE, PLUSX and CRL are exactly the types of innovation-orientated organisations the UK needs to improve national productivity and competitiveness in the world following

			the series of own goals like leaving the Single Market. Backing orgs like PlusX does something to attempt to limit the damage. Filling the ERDF void is the very least that should be offered.
Justus Vermaak	Director	Skystrm Limited	CEMET was instrumental in turning a project idea into a viable starting product. Their work created an important building block towards further research and development. The services provided by CEMET have a powerful impact on the innovation landscape.
Zhey Grudov	CEO	Reasonable electronics/Feathertail	CRL are a unique accelerator focused on hardware startups. I benefited tremendously from being involved in their 2022 accelerator. I fully believe they should continue to receive funding so they can help other startups going forward.
Gordon Swain	Match Secretary	Alfreton Golf Club	Derby University gave the Golf Club ideas for lowering our carbon footprint.
Robin Harris	CEO	Hilo EV Limited	ERDF funding enabled our business to build the foundations of a viable investment proposition and realise equity investment that promises to deliver economic benefit to

			the UK by exporting product worldwide.
Kimberley Montgomery	CEO	Novlr Ltd	ERDF Funding has been instrumental in the changes we've been able to make to see a step change in our growth. We would not have been in a position to take a risk on R&D without it.
marc bailey	DIRECTOR	Moflash Signalling Ltd	ERDF funding has helped my company invest more & grow more quickly than otherwise would have been possible under normal conditions.
Laura Sparkes	Project Manager	Sparkes will fly	ERDF funding has underpinned the successful research and development of DriRun. The funding approval was a massive boost to my resources and confidence as a female founder to progress my idea. The product will be launching in the UK this year. If the funding is withdrawn, R&D of v2 and v3 will be extra financial strain on a small start-up.
Adrian Fry	CEO	virtualdesigncloud	ERDF has been essential to the growth of several of our companies in the last couple of years, and we fully support this initiative to continue their funding.
John Sewell	Systems & Quality Development Manager	Storm Interface	ERDF has helped us with tooling / consultancy and most importantly

			development of an app (Touchless-CX) which allows customers to use our ATP products in a COVID safe manner on a kiosk
Neo Mosudisa	Managing director	Nemo Solutions Ltd	ERDF have facilitated the growth of my business by helping to offset the significant start-up costs required to launch a brand new product into the market. This support will enable me to provide employment opportunities to people who may otherwise not have had them and help inspire entrepreneurs across the country.
Nigel Rogers	Director	Flixels limited	ERDF funding facilitated innovation across my business.
Radovan Gallo	CEO	Flux Aviation Limited	Flux Aviation is an early-stage company developing radically innovative electric propulsion technologies for the aviation sector. ERDF funding had a significant impact on our R&D activities and has allowed us to dramatically accelerate development of new technologies. The outcomes of these projects directly led to increased international competitiveness and securing new customers, which has allowed us to increase our operations and

			<p>head count. Without a suitable replacement for the ERDF funds, the rate of innovation within our business and supply chain will have to inevitably slow down and we might lose our market position to competitors from abroad.</p>
<p>Akel Jounes</p>	<p>Founder</p>	<p>Zeedeo</p>	<p>Founder of Zeedeo, the world's 1st Social App for jobs & network powered by real-time video. I have had the pleasure of working with KEEP+ and I can happily say that they were an exceptional partner for any start-up founders. The team were professional, always exceptionally supportive with valuable recommendations. Not only did they provide us with the funding we needed to develop and grow our business, but they also offered guidance and offer support throughout the process and appreciated their willingness to answer any questions or concerns we had. Thanks to their partnership, we were able to achieve our growth objectives and take our business to the next level. We definitely need more programmes like</p>

			KEEP+ that really understand the real founders and the need of grant funding that can result on creating better opportunities in future. Highly recommended and particularly MASSIVE thank you to Julie Ben Abdeljelil for her contribution and her human caring attributes to see us succeeding in our journey.
Robert Vilette	Managing Director	FPM Group	Funding and advice that we have received from Coventry University has always been very welcome in aiding our organisation. Without both of the above we would not have developed like we have. It is testament to Coventry University with their expertise and guidance that we have progressed and continue to do so.
Hussain Abdeali	Director	SMS UK LTD	Funding from the ERDF has helped numerous SMEs, including mine, which has given an opportunity in not only funding for innovation but also given the platform to make this a reality.
Michael Watts	CEO	Blum Health Ltd	Funding unlocks the ability to bring about change. The impacts these grants have given us are immeasurable.
Jonathan McBride	CEO	fotostax	Having graduated from CRL accelerator

			the experience was phenomenal in business support, hardware support, and investor support. I cannot recommend CRL higher.
Rebecca Harrison	Research and Development	DHC Innovations Ltd	Having moved from healthcare to business we would not have been able to navigate such aspects as design, manufacturing, finance, and IP etc. without assistance from university projects. We are now producing a medical device which is being used worldwide for patient testing and therapy, including clinical trials.
David Smith	CEO	DS Performance	I am a member of the Innovation Hothouse and through this program I have received support to develop my company. This support has led to the development of a long-term growth strategy, that is built around the adoption of new technology and its application of innovation. This will allow DS Performance to access new markets and customers, through the new products we are developing with the University.
Sally Bell	CEO	Blackbird Productions	I am an entrepreneur running my own television production company. The industry has been

			<p>badly affected in the last few years by a number of things but primarily the pandemic lockdown. I have had to move my career to business mentoring/ consultancy and my membership of RISE has been instrumental in making that happen. Networking, appropriate training and seminars together with peer support has been integral to the assistance from RISE. I do wish it would continue as the benefits are immeasurable.</p>
Jaiyeola Balogun	Managing Director	Wrightsors Integrated Services Limited	<p>I have attended a couple of programmes organised by CUE in partnership with various partners. Each event gave a different experience but comparable quality in terms of content, expert delivery, engagement, as well as pre and post event coordination and support. The already recorded and the potential impact of CUE's intervention especially on small business is immeasurable and would be far-reaching with continuous funding of such interventions and programmes.</p>
Lucy Critchley	Founder	Untold Creative	<p>I have benefitted from this funding and have been able to move my</p>

			business further on as a result of it. I found it extremely valuable and know other business owners who have got lots from the programme too.
Andrew Deighton	Director	AWD Development Solutions Ltd	I have benefitted in two ways from ERDF funds through my links to the ENSCITE programme in Derby. Firstly, when I set my business up nearly nine years ago I attended a number of their programmes which helped me to get my business started in the most effective way. Secondly, I have also delivered a number of programmes and activities for them. This was paid work and therefore also directly affected my business in a positive way.
Kimberly Redway	Manager	Owlfire	I have had the opportunity to access further training and assistance with student placements. This has been extremely useful for setting up my business. Having the support has meant being able to set up a proper foundation.
April Young	Designer	April Young	I was helped with a growth fund initiative, which transformed my business by enabling me to produce work which I was able to charge a premium for. Equally the more

			efficient economies of scale that came from these practice improvements fed back into even more time to develop better work. Without the help from this fund, I'm certain my business would not have survived Covid.
Gilbert Rolando Pomell	CEO	LOGOS WM CIC	I write to underscore the sentiments echoed in the letter because the value that this programme brings to bear cannot be underestimated.
Oliver Pepper	Director	Circular Inc. Ltd	If it wasn't for ERDF funding we could never have partnered with the University of Brighton in developing our clothing repair software platform. This won an eBay Circular Fashion Innovation Fund award and is key to expanding this nascent industry - providing an essential reduction in the environmental footprint of the fashion industry and much needed jobs in the circular economy.
Daniel Cox	Director	Ademen Limited	Ilektra and her team were very diligent during our application to make sure we were the correct fit for the funding and they took a genuine interest during our project. They also provided us with contacts and support to further the project outcomes

			once we had successfully completed it. These are the intangible, non-monetary benefits that also results from the provision of these funds.
Alex Craven	CEO	The Data City	It is essential that schemes like Ad:Venture continue to support start-ups in 'the regions'.
Julien Lesage	MD	Lesage Design and EFpedia	I've recently taken part in an ERDF-supported short course (PIONEERS) which has greatly helped to accelerate my plans for a new social enterprise. In particular I gained a lot of insight into articulation of values, purpose, inclusivity as well as potential business structures and routes of funding. We also had the opportunity to gain one-to-one advice from business leaders and to learn from each other over two inspiring days with very high-quality speakers. It would be a shame if this opportunity was not available to others like me in the future who want to introduce truly innovative businesses to the local and global arena.
Deborah O'Donovan	CEO	Chater Smart	Joining the ERDF funded ENSCITE programme helped Chater Smart to shape

			<p>the strategy, mission and vision we needed to relaunch our early stage business. Having worked for many years in London, as the founder of Chater Smart I returned to Derbyshire to launch a business that will provide local jobs and supplier opportunities as I strongly believe in the importance of levelling up the UK economy. Female founders and business owners in particular need to be able to access this sort of ongoing business support since we are statistically unlikely to receive external investor funding.</p>
REJU DCUNHA	DIRECTOR	ELEARNINGREALITY.COM	<p>The KEEP + programme has helped ER training and education limited to kickstart our commercial process. We are very pleased that programmes like this exist for startup support for SME's. Overall, the KEEP+ programme has been very valuable for the company to create an innovative product prototype and the process of application and ongoing support provided by the KEEP+ team was really good throughout the programme. More funding programmes similar to KEEP+ would be valuable for</p>

			start-up companies to accelerate the commercial process and contribute to the economic growth.
Abhishek Nakhate	Founder	Zoom Abroad	The KEEP+ programme has played an instrumental role in the research and development of our company and most importantly helped us develop a state-of-the-art technology product that will touch millions of businesses and add significant value to the country's economy. As a SME such support is transformational. A program like this must be supported in all possible wills and intentions.
Bala Sirigireddy	CEO	The Scientists Laboratory	KEEP+ was instrumental during our setup.
Divia Bhatnagar	Co-founder	Medical Intelligence Group	KEEP+ funding and the support from the team has been instrumental to our organisation which is focusing on reducing diabetic foot ulcers which are life threatening wounds for those with diabetes and are extremely costly to our public services. Thanks to the KEEP+ support we were able to develop a bespoke patient mobile application which lies at the heart of our technology. This has directly contributed to

			our upcoming NHS clinical trials for us to scale the business critical for our society and economy. Hearing that this funding is being withdrawn will inhibit organisations like ours that is on route to scaling.
Anastasia Dedyukhina	Director	Consciously Digital	KEEP+ funding gave us an opportunity to create a breakthrough tool to measure digital wellbeing in companies powered by AI. Without it, we as a small company would find it difficult to develop an innovative tech solution in a short time frame.
Hossein Saidpour	Managing Director	Materials Technology Centre (MTC) Ltd	KEEP+ funding scheme has enabled us to grow our business by developing new innovative products that compete well in the global market. This has resulted in significant increases in our sales. We are very grateful to the partners/ organisers for facilitating the smooth running of the programme.
rupy aujla	doctor	The Doctor's Kitchen Ltd	KEEP+ funding was critical to piloting our technology solution that aims to improve the health of millions of people through better daily nutrition. The team were excellent, understanding and extremely helpful at every step of the

			<p>journey. It is without a doubt the best public funding experience I've had and they would be critical for many other SMEs looking to break into industry and beyond. I implore you to maintain funding for this organisation.</p>
Brian Shingleton	Director	Nagonic Design Ltd	<p>KEEP+ helped me to purchase a 3D printer which enabled me to accelerate the time to market for my product under development.</p>
Sola Adeleke	Founder/CEO	Curenetics	<p>KEEP+ was the basis for kick starting our Company. Without KEEP+ funding, Curenetics might have never become a reality. The funding enabled us to work with an academic collaborator who provided much needed support and expertise in developing our clinical AI decision support tool for predicting response to cancer treatment. We have now raised further Angel funding and also currently considering VC funding. We are currently sponsoring PhD studentship at our partner institution University of Hertfordshire. We also support 2 FTE staff following on the success of KEEP+ project. Funding such as KEEP+ is a lifeline for many SME</p>

			and local businesses such as ours. We hope the government will be able to provide this bridge funding at this time so that progress made by many companies on the back of KEEP+ will not go to waste.
Daniella Wainwright	Director	Wainwright Consulting Limited	Matched funding grants from Ad:Venture gave me the confidence to invest in my business during some very challenging economic backdrops. The training support was also very good.
Zeke Steer	CEO	Milbotix Ltd	Milbotix Ltd has benefitted from ERDF funding through schemes like KEEP+, the University of the West of England's Digital Innovation Fund and Launch Space programmes, and the West of England Combined Authority's Business Innovation Fund. The impactful social care innovation we are developing wouldn't have left the research labs without this funding, so I'm deeply concerned about the prospect of the ERDF not being replaced.
Sheila Collington	Sole Proprietor	Studio in the Park	My business had benefitted enormously from the interaction it had with Derby and Nottingham universities with regard to training

			programmes and internships. Without the relevant funding I would not have been able to access these facilities and feel the funding is vital for small business growth and development.
Abigail Lock	Founder	Love Art Studios Limited	My experience with RISE has been extremely positive and as a new business owner I don't know where else I could access this level of support and expertise
Nathan Bilo	Business Development representative	Checkmate podcast	My experience within be the boss was extraordinary as it allowed me to become more business focus, and more importantly, it gave me solutions and opened my mind about different ways to start a business. I am extremely grateful for this program because I've learned a lot, for example, the option to be an intrapreneur, meanwhile becoming an entrepreneur. I had so many ideas but they were just ideas and not businesses, but I genuinely believed that I could add some of my creativity to an established business, and be the boss gave me the structure and expanded my knowledge to do it! The University of

			Derby needs to be the boss.
Rory Dennis	CEO	ZUMEE LTD	Our collaboration with CEMET with support from the ERDF has been essential to our fledgling business. We developed and built a scale model Autonomous EV which we hope will improve people's lives and solve many of the net carbon issues society is struggling to address. Without support like this, many innovative projects like ours will struggle to find such great partners to work with.
Jennifer Raschbauer	Project Director	Derbyshire Voluntary Action	Our organisation has benefited enormously from this support - either from training or support to employ staff / students on a short-term basis to explore new ideas.
Toby Kress	Programmes Director	Plus X	Over the past 3 years Plus X has partnered with the University of Brighton deliver the ERDF funded BRITE programme. Over this time we have supported 115+ SMEs to innovate and grow, creating high value jobs, local economic opportunity, increasing private investment and launching new products and services into the market.
Kam Mistry	Managing Director	Kamistry Limited	Projects funded through ERDF are invaluable in helping many businesses, like

			mine, through the development phase. These should continue to help UK businesses achieve their goals.
Brian Stanley	Director	Fairway Cost Consultancy Limited.	Rise assisted our company in the start of developing a revolutionary recycled waterproofing product. Taking waste and creating an essential waterproofing product to replace the need for chemicals. Without their help and that of the wonderful scientist at Brighton uni, we wouldn't be in the position we are which is meetings with manufacturers.
Lauren Daly	Director	Natie Ltd	RISE has been a great programme to be a part of and has benefitted my business growth
Kathy Vuillaume	Director	EPM consultancy	RISE has helped us to launch a new service for our business. Excellent support received from the Academic Team, great expertise from the Advisors and networking opportunities. Thank you
Wendy McCristal	Director	The Mental Wealth Company	Starting a small business just before the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic could have spelled the end of my business. Having free access to training that helped me to grow my business, network

			with other small business owners AND find new clients meant that my business not only survived the pandemic but tripled its turnover and quadrupled its profit.
James Thomas	Ceo	Jet engineering system solutions	Thank you so much for your fantastic help.
Nestor Alonso	Co-Founder and Chief Underwriting Officer	Driverly Company Limited	Thanks to the collaboration with CEMET, Driverly has added further layers to its motor insurance pricing capabilities. As well as recording driving behaviour, our enhanced app can also draw on accident profiling of all the major roads in the UK, combined with real-time weather forecasts to build an AI-powered view of real-world driving conditions, thereby building a risk profile with a level of detail not seen before. The existence of initiatives like CEMET is vital for start-up businesses, especially in industries (like motor insurance, or more generally financial services) where technology and AI are important because it can help overcome the existing entry barriers and accelerate innovation.
Renee Kalia	Head of Operations	iethico	Thanks to the generous grant schemes, our innovative start up

			has made great strides from just an idea into a product that is now being adopted by customers. We are deeply grateful for this invaluable support!
Anna Wanczyk	Independent Graphic Designer	CZYK Design	The accelerate programme has been so valuable to me and my business, all the lessons have been useful and the access to a business mentor has helped me tonnes, it's so great that things like this exist to help people build the business of our future.
Katharine Shipley	Food & Drink Consultant	Food Curious Food	The Ad:venture programme has allowed me as a young small business to develop more effectively. Being able to access the support of grants and also training sessions has been invaluable to my business' success.
Akindayo Akindolani	Founder/Managing Director	McAnderson Associates Limited	Be the Boss has given me more clarity and built my confidence level to start amidst other discouraging factor. Also, I have got other referrals /signposting through the Be the Boss which I am exploring as I start my business.
Joshua Cant	Director	Rugby Abroad Ltd	The Be The Boss programme helped me to transform a vision into a business. Not knowing where to start or what was even possible, Be The Boss helped educate and further motivate

			me to put a physical footprint in place for me to be able to create Rugby Abroad Ltd.
Lisa Baskott	Founder/CEO	2nd Line of Defence Ltd	The Brite Pioneers programme introduced me to a wonderful network of purpose driven businesses in the Sussex (Coast to Capital) region. I was part of Cohort 2, and had the pleasure of collaborating with some of the most inspirational individuals I've met to- date on my entrepreneurial journey.
Claire Forrest	Head of Business Development	Gas Assessment and Training Centre Ltd	The CEMET team were fantastic to work with. We worked together to create a virtual reality 'game' which is innovative and unique in our industry and beyond. The game puts gas engineers in dangerous situations, safely. It drives the importance of compliance and competence with the goal to reduce gas related accidents and fatalities nationally. The training combined with the virtual reality product is incredible and never would've happened without the CEMET Team. As a company, we are keen to move away from the traditional "chalk and talk" teaching styles that are so

			often still used. In order for training to be effective, it must be memorable. The CEMET team were extremely competent and efficient to work with. It would be a huge shame to see the likes of CEMET end as without innovation, nothing moves forward.
Nickolai Vysokov	CEO	BrainPatch Ltd.	The CRL Hardware Acceleration Programme has been absolutely vital to our progress in 2019 and CRL keeps supporting our business through accessible equipment, space and network.
Mark Nicholls	Founder & Director	Pup & Kit Ltd	The EDRF funds have helped make our new innovative products become a reality, and probably more importantly, gave us the security and confidence to test new ideas.
Sangha Chakravarty	Founder and CEO	InvictIQ	The ERDF funds have been invaluable for us to develop an early product version with the help of talents from the university. The withdrawal of the funds means such experiments and collaborations, which fuel a culture of innovation and benefits the startups and students alike, cannot be conducted.
Dominic Chippendale	Director	O-Innovations Ltd	The ERDF funding allowed for us to build a working MVP of our novel wind turbine (O-

			<p>Wind turbine). This support was crucial in taking us through the next phase of development, opening doors for further funding, investment and commercial opportunities.</p>
<p>John Baker</p>	<p>Managing Director</p>	<p>Drugloo International Limited</p>	<p>The ERDF funding has been of immense assistance to us. It has enabled our company to prepare better for marketing and meeting international clients' expectations. Without that assistance we would not have been able to introduce our company products and services internationally. The funding has ultimately enabled us to secure new export markets for our products. Additionally, we have been able to employ two new members of staff as a direct result. This would not have been possible without the funding and the invaluable assistance provided by the support team. Whilst we have made significant headway over the past 2-years, we have only begun to explore the export market and without such future assistance will we struggle to maintain and develop further export opportunities. This will impact on our</p>

			employment levels and future growth.
Martin Horsman	Managing Director	CONNETICK LIMITED	<p>The ERDF funds have been a key contributor to my business growth over the recent years. The University of Derby have provided various support to our local business community. The turbulent wake of Covid, together with significant challenges and uncertainty from the range of adverse market conditions have impacted sales and business capability severely and will continue to do so. The expert advice, networking, informative events and funded workstreams have been an important aid in protecting and growing our businesses. From running a local business network, supported by the University of Derby, it is clear that businesses still desperately need this ongoing support. Upskilling, clustered peer networks and continued development funding will make a big difference over the next couple of years as we build capability and exploit digital technology advancements.</p>

Andrew Whapshott	Technical Director	Fluid Composites Ltd	<p>The ERDF has funded the RISE program which has been invaluable for us. On a personal level, it helped me develop a confidence with networking through its regular friendly audience. It is a unique forum which enables the most innovative businesses (non-competing) to meet and help solve issues. This has included ways to adopt the latest technology and how to manage individual issues using the action learning technique. I regularly recommend this program to other businesses and have found it of great use to see and understand how other business owners approach and resolves issues within their business.</p>
John RODGERS	Director	Equatorial Crafts Ltd	<p>The funded programme transformed my business as the skillset that came in allowed me to progress with a now thriving web business</p>
chris rose	MD	TWENTY20-Creative Ltd	<p>The funding and guidance we accessed through the ERDF grant allowed a small business like ours to accelerate growth. This will undoubtedly lead to additional employment and career opportunities within our business.</p>

Ray Reynolds	Founder	Yawboard Limited	The funding for the programme allowed CRL to offer an incredibly useful programme for both myself and my business, I learnt invaluable skills and made game changing connections.
Chisomo Mbango	Founder	Nurxmity Health	The funding was crucial to our startup as it facilitated in establishing our startup and development of the prototype which has led to us securing more funding for further development
Qasim Bata	Founder	PBL Care Limited	The funds have helped us create efficient systems and processes to mitigate risk related to our care activities.
Anwar Almojarkesh	CEO & Founder	Innovation Factory Limited	The grant funding allowed us to build a proof of concept as it was risky for us because we don't have enough budget for this. After that 2 clients approached us interested to test and buy our solutions, I believe the ERDF fund is really important to speed up the process of getting ideas validated and approach customers with confidence.
Barry Poulter	Managing Director	Transporter Engineering	The importance of this type of funding for knowledge transfers cannot be overstated. The impact on business and innovation

			improvements are vast.
Charles Joynson	Managing Director	WAVEDATA LTD	The KEEP+ ERDF funding helped us to understand what our customers want us to do next. Without this and the research it funded we could have gone in the wrong direction.
Sridevi Kalidindi	Founder and CEO	Klip Global Ltd	The KEEP+ funding was instrumental in Klip Global being able to complete the initial phases to start as a business. We are now providing crucial wellbeing and development services for employees paid for by their employers and individuals who are self-paying - keeping them healthy and in work. I strongly advocate for KEEP+ funding to be continued so other companies can start up and develop much needed services, tackling some of the challenges of our times.
Jason Yip	Director	Tailor Bio	The KEEP+ funding we received for the development of our bioinformatics pipeline by a specialist consultant was essential for our early stage development. As part of the project, we were able to build components of a pipeline that now has the ability to generate revenue for our company, in addition

			to our own internal product development.
Andy Higgs	Sales Director	AVRT - Adaptive VR Training C/O KIM Software Solutions	The KEEP+ grant allowed us to scale our hardware quickly, meaning that we could get our system into the hands of users to obtain effective feedback. This accelerated development of the product in a way that we wouldn't have achieved without the support.
Stephen Crosher	CEO	RheEnergise Limited	The KEEP+ grant provided RheEnergise with a phenomenal opportunity to collaborate with an expert team at the University of Greenwich and to achieve significant progress in our R&D programme.
Alan Mills	Managing Director	Falcon Global Ltd	The KEEP+ program has been enormously beneficial to my company in securing precious development funding. We have been the recipients of two KEEP+ grants and these have helped us take giant strides by securing further business with one of our largest customers. We will use the technology developed from the KEEP+ grants, advancing our mobile products and giving a productivity boost to all of our customers.

Veena Adityan	Director	Cambridge Animal Technologies (Smartbell)	The KEEP+ programme provides critical SME funding that fills a chasm between development and commercialisation. This is an often overlooked area, and our company Smartbell has hugely benefited by accelerating and strengthening our new product launch.
steve peterkin	director	diamond football co ltd	The KEEP+ scheme was instrumental in enabling us to design and develop an electronic product, totally made in the UK, which has reached the market place, both in the UK and Europe.
Mair Perkins	Managing Director and Animator	Mair Perkins Ltd Animation and Illustration	The Low Carbon Business Network helped me identify ways to reduce carbon emissions from my business operations, helped me identify new areas of business and network with other local businesses also on a decarbonisation journey. The Green Accelerator programme was particularly helpful. I hope this project continues so other businesses can benefit from the support, expertise and network.
Kemi Madumere	Director	Brighter futures foundation	The research project we were able to do with Greenwich

			<p>university was pivotal in us getting a better understanding of how companies and society as a whole can better support adults with learning disabilities in the work force, in terms of getting jobs and accessing services in the community. The work force gap of those with disabilities is high in the government agenda, especially with the cost-of-living crisis. There is still so much work to be done and learnt which can only be done with the support and expertise of universities such as University of Greenwich who can't support projects like this without sufficient funding.</p>
Steve Pomery	Director	Tottington Manor	<p>The RISE programme and other similar funded programmes that bring smaller developing businesses together to share experience, build support networks and develop sustainable business practices are essential, particularly in more rural areas such as Sussex. We have benefited from building relationships with local businesses, taking ideas and implementing them which was a direct impact on our productivity,</p>

			performance and employment of staff.
Lynda Vowles	CEO	The Mary How Trust	The RISE project has been an essential part of our networking and development strategy, during a challenging period, allowing us to tap into information and skills which are benefitting our charity. Without this our innovation would be hampered and may mean we would need to use essential funds which our charity needs to ensure our health screening services are available to all in the community.
Mark Trett	Founder	Brightchecker	The support from KEEP+ was invaluable in our early days to get a proof of concept built. Without it, we wouldn't be here today.
James Lucas	Managing Director	Spliced Studios Ltd	The support has been invaluable. It is helping us move to a much more profitable and sustainable model. We are also positioning the business to start to employ more staff, and help accelerate social mobility in the local area.
Helen Kerrigan	Director	Future Finance Training Ltd	The support I received from Ad:Venture was so valuable. As a start up the access to resources, training and network is invaluable. My business revenue has grown by 400% since I

			completed the programme.
Catherine Dunn	Director	RuggaRobe Limited	The support we have had from this programme for a new start up has been invaluable. We have had a number of student placements in particular who have really enabled our business to grow and succeed at a difficult time. Without access to this support and the resources I know it will not give businesses like ours the opportunity to flourish and grow.
Paul Rose	Managing Director	You Teach Me Ltd	The support we received through Encsite, which came at a crucial time in the company's development, supported us to understand our mission, business model and strategy. We were challenged and supported in equal measure and emerged much the stronger for it; in subsequent years we went on to receive grant funding from InnovateUK. The support we received through Encsite was hugely important to our early development. If we are to lead the world, as is the stated ambition of government, then this kind of support must

			continue to be made available.
John Roberts	Director	Two Cousins Limited	The team at Coventry University Enterprise have been instrumental in assisting us with funding for the prototyping of a technology accessory. Without this fabulous support, we would not have achieved all that we have to-date. I do hope that the government will realise that protecting these types of funding initiatives is key to the success of entrepreneurs and small businesses across the UK in a post-Covid world.
Dharam Pal	Manager/Prop.	DPS PHOTO BOOTHS	Universities are a shining light source to future economic growth & drive the engine of society, thus it requires funding to survive and assist future generations of business owners, so please assist them and businesses alike to grow and prosper.
Chris Grose	Director	IMA International	The work of the RISE team has been inspirational. With a clear focus on innovation they organised the first face to face workshop I attended following the pandemic. It was positive, sensitive and kind. The whole team's enthusiasm is infectious and I believe has benefited

			my team as well. Innovation has become one of our key values.
Geoff Love	Retired	Retired	They were a great help in establishing a company start up
Leigh Bell	Director	Baby Bell LTD	This facility has single handedly made it possible to explore and develop my ideas into reality- I couldn't have done this without it.
Chieko Chester	CEO	Judge's Choice Petfood Ltd	This funding has been invaluable to us and has helped us recognise and outline to our customers the environmental responsibilities that pet owners need to be aware of. Through this research we can raise awareness of the environmental cost of pet ownership and aid in solutions that allow for responsible pet ownership.
Zoe Harris	Founder	Mycarematters	This funding has enabled us to receive invaluable university researcher time to evaluate and refine our products and services.
Henderson Mullin	CEO	Writing East Midlands	This innovative and collaborative funding is vital to small organisations to support their contributions to dynamic communities. We would urge the Chancellor to address this issue, round the loss of ERDF.
Ben Amanna	Ceo	BOXRAW	This really enabled us to chase our dream.

			Support in a start-up is key
Rachael Taplin	Director	Media Matchmaker	This service and match funding has been crucial to my business and allowed me to develop new technology to continue to grow Media Matchmaker.
Selwyn Owen	Director	Iona Minerals Limited	Universities provide SMEs with important scientific and analytical support through funded Research & Development (R&D) collaborative projects, enabling them to de-risk and scale their innovative concepts into a range of innovative products and processes for further development and commercialisation. Innovation is integral to the growth and competitiveness of the UK as a leading nation in the global economy. The withdrawal of European Structural Funds, such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for Universities and SMEs, will have a huge and detrimental impact on the UK 'knowledge economy' and the UK's leadership as a 'nation of innovators' in a global context. The UK government needs to prioritise its funding for investment in

			<p>innovation, science, technology and research and development. Continuation of funding is paramount, and will enable the UK to leverage its world-class intellectual capital and scientific base through further academic-industry collaborations, leading to a resilient, competitive and sustainable economy for future generations. Iona Minerals Limited is a new and early-stage start-up company, involved in the Research and Development (R&D) of a 'natural mineral' with unique chemical and physical properties, with a view to develop and commercialise new applications and processes in industry. The wide-ranging R&D support from academics and scientists at the University of South Wales (USW) is crucial to help progress and fast-track the company's commercialisation endeavours.</p>
Lucy Barrow	Marketing Director	Longcroft Luxury Cat Hotels Limited	Valuable support for small businesses.
Steve Hogan	CEO	VR Safety Ltd	Very supportive and vital for the continued development of my business strategy.
Heather Wright	Finance & Operations Manager	Writing East Midlands CIC	We are a community interest company

			where the majority of our turnover is grant funding. The impact of imminently losing European funding with no replacement structure to replace it will be felt across the whole economy not just higher education.
João Bocas	CEO	Salutem - Digital Health LTD	We have benefited immensely from the programmes created.
Jame Kelly	Software Developer	CmdShiftR Ltd	We have benefitted from business advice, mentoring and leadership in helping our company to expand its offering and ultimately create more jobs. Our plan is to build a franchising system developing software for Franchisors to then package up their business and keep processes standardised. Without the help of the BRITE team at PlusX, who were funded by the ERDF, this offering would never have got off the page. It is now a reality and we were in discussions with our first Franchisor this morning
Lee Elliot	Director	Ej electronics Ltd	We have found the support through Birmingham City University invaluable in our growth
Syed Byhaqi	Director	Imobisoft Ltd	We have greatly benefited from CUE's innovation network programmes so have our partners. We

			strongly believe this programme has helped many businesses become more efficient and expand especially during tough economic challenges.
Jenny Kelly	Director	CmdShiftR Ltd	We have taken part in two innovation rounds at Plus X, funded by the ERDF in conjunction with Brighton University. We hope that both programmes will help us grow our business over the next few years, creating jobs in the local area in software development for graduates and others alike.
Mike Walker	Chief Operating Officer	TwelveTechnology Ltd	We have worked with CMET and SmartCymru for 2 years now and the services and support provided have been invaluable in helping us develop our aviation platform from inception to being about to launch to market, hopefully providing much needed technology opportunities in Wales.
Deirdre Walters	Founder and partner	Untapped Innovation LLP	We received critical technical thought leadership from CEMET in the fields of AI and gameification. Their thinking created a foundational basis for new software that is now under development today. We are hugely

			thankful to the team and wish every business had access to this level of technical mentorship early in their journey.
Guy Stern	CEO	Connecting The World LTD trading as Legal Connection	We used this money to develop a prototype that we took to market. With this prototype we won business from DLA Piper, the 4th largest firm in the world. They are using our software to help refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and across Europe. We are really thankful to the ERDF. It's helped us as a company but also helped and will continue to help many people in need.
Charles Williams	Director	WorkSafe Design Ltd	We were very grateful to receive KEEP+ funding towards some tooling for our AirHood product. It is absolutely fair to say that without this funding we would have not been able to prepare to manufacture our product, which meant we would not have been able to help supply the NHS to protect medical staff from COVID-19 as we did. Withdrawing this type of funding will set back a lot of businesses like ours that are creative and innovative but just starting out on a journey with a very

			small amount of capital.
Heather Pitcher	Director	AA International Ltd	<p>We worked closely with the CEMET team in 2018, who provided quality technical support for the development of a mobile application for the collection of a food security data. The app has been piloted extensively in 4 countries in East Africa and its integration into regular food security assessments is taking place within the region, directly supporting food security actions. The technical support and expertise of the CEMET team was invaluable in this process.</p>
Tom Bailey	Director	The National Energy Initiative	<p>We worked with Ilektra Alma Fronista, from Coventry University - CUE Business Solutions for Proof of Concept grant funding. Firstly, it's important to recognise CUE and Ilektra (as well as her colleagues) are extremely helpful, supportive and knowledgeable in supporting local businesses. Ilektra was extremely helpful in supporting our business achieve our goals and made the process very easy. By working with CUE, it allowed us to</p>

			<p>develop the correct process to innovate a solution in our industry - creating a proof of concept before a true go-to-market solution and allowing us to develop a business which we are now very close to commercialising. We recognise that this was supported by ERDF Funding and without it, we would not be in the position we are today. A big thank you to Ilektra as well as CUE, for the knowledge and support to develop our innovation in the correct way via ERDF Funding.</p>
Suzanne White	Director	Juni Cosmetics Ltd	<p>We would not have been able to launch our innovative, award-winning cosmetic products without KEEP+. We have received 2 grants with the help of supportive staff.</p>
Tamsin Daniel	Co-Founder/Director	Atalante Marketing Limited	<p>When setting up our business as a partnership, we benefitted enormously from the mentoring we received. It really helped us to get fit for the joint journey ahead. We wouldn't have explored many of the issues raised without it and may have found it more difficult to survive and thrive as a business.</p>

Gemma Hallett	Founder	miFuture Group Ltd	<p>Without CEMET we would not be able to explore innovating ways to improve our technology. As a startup on a shoestring budget, access to a team like CEMET's is instrumental in us still being here today. I have no doubt their talent, skills and understanding of emerging and enabling technologies set us on a trajectory to still be operational. So many tech businesses will fail without this type of intervention; start up founders cannot afford this level of skilled staff to test innovative features, and I'm certain I couldn't find this level of skilled staff in the local talent pool. A resource like this allows us all to benefit from expertise we are essentially locked out of.</p>
Samantha Watkins	TAx Consultant	Cooden Tax Consulting Ltd	<p>Without programs like this Small Businesses really wouldn't have any free advice or help to grow. SMEs are the backbone of the economy and deserve impartial, good quality help.</p>
Kirsten Antoncich	Clinical Director	Positive Progress	<p>Without the funding, coaching and support, my business wouldn't exist, it's as simple as that.</p>

Zoe Tolkien	Director of Business Innovation	Advanced Furnace Technology Ltd.	Without the funds from KEEP+ the pace of innovation in our company would have been much slower. We would also not have been aware of all the other benefits that the KEEP+ programme can offer an innovating company, which we hope to benefit from in the future.
Lee-Anne Scott	Founder	INTELLIGENT REVENUE LTD (UK) (13323309)	Without the Keep+ grant I would not have been able to build my late payments app that will benefit 1000s of SMEs who suffer the impact of late payments every day. Keep+ provided the vital funds needed to prove concept.
Ian Carter	Director	Impossible Creations Ltd	Without the support & grant from KEEP+, there is no way we would have been able to offer a service of the latest technology for 3D scanning. This has led to new projects, particularly in the field of converting classic vehicles to electric vehicles.
Steve Morris	Managing Director	Network 2 Supplies Ltd	Without the support of ERDF, our award winning KTP project would not have been completed in the required timescale or achieved the level of success we see today.
Peter Maddalena	Director	VRcraftworks Ltd	Working with the KEEP+ team was a pleasure. With their guidance through the

			funding maze we managed to secure funding for a number of development laptops. An upgrade which we needed in order to reduce development time, increase employee engagement with projects and improve efficiency.
Anonymous			A very small amount of funding at a critical moment was vital for allowing our product to launch. The product since been shown to address a UK and global need.
Anonymous			Ad:venture was a great programme to allow us to develop the early stage concept of our service. The support from the team was fantastic.
Anonymous			Ad:Venture has made a huge impact on our business, and given us an opportunity to explore and expand further as well as the expansion of our team, which has created a new job in our team now. Thank you
Anonymous			As a regionally based SME we have received invaluable support from the ENSCITE programme with a range of training including 1-2-1 workshops, online forums and network events.
Anonymous			As a small business, the availability of

			short training and support programmes have been invaluable.
Anonymous			As a start-up company, the ERDF funding was essential in gaining proof of concept and feasibility studies. The UK stands to lose out massively in failing to provide any interim funding when moving away from ERDF.
Anonymous			As a start-up business, Be the Boss (funded by the ERDF) has helped me gain knowledge that I was missing to be successful. I benefited from taking part in their Ask the expert sessions, where you have a chance to hear from a person in a specific area of business/law/finance and more. I have also found their networking sessions very beneficial. They also offered a chance to compete in their pitch competition, which would bring essential start-up funds to the business. The withdrawal of funds will have a negative impact on my business, as I have not had a chance to complete the full programme yet due to the end of funding. I would also like to take part in their mentoring sessions and pitch

			competitions, and hopefully secure some funding into my start-up, which will not be possibly if the funds are withdrawn.
Anonymous			Be the Boss derby would greatly benefit from the funds since it will help students bring their ideas to life.
Anonymous			Being granted an opportunity to partake in the Ad:Venture (Accelerate) programme by Leeds Beckett University provided me the right thinking and approach to innovate and grow a business. The mere fact that I participated in the programme led me to rethink my business idea and gave me a better way to look at things and refocus my idea for possible success.
Anonymous			Big House supported me in setting up my own production company as a freelance artist
Anonymous			CEMET have been extremely helpful to us, as a tiny business, with drawing up specifications for an app and advice as to possibilities regarding app technology, which we, as a limited tech based firm found invaluable.
Anonymous			Developing new innovation is a driver for so many SMEs as

			<p>they strive to grow faster than their larger competitors. It's a high-risk game so having grant support goes an extremely long way to mitigating some of that risk, committing to a programme and providing the confidence to go for it!</p>
<p>Anonymous</p>			<p>ERDF funding was central to the development of our business. Without programs such as Accelerate, PAPI, and Aspire2Lead we would not have had access to the education and support that allowed us to get our business off the ground and engaging in opportunities. The knowledge, expertise and mentorship provided to empower entrepreneurs like myself to be successful has been priceless. It seems to me more important than ever to be encouraging innovators into business, and many of these innovators like myself will have no background in business. Understanding the principles and practicalities of running a business well is vital to making a new business successful and able to</p>

			contribute to the local economy and business network. Whatever the cost of such programs to run, the value they deliver in supporting the next generation of new businesses in their area cannot be overstated.
Anonymous			Encite has provided us with valuable support, providing really useful courses which were information to us as a business and a great opportunity to network with other companies. The Encite company profiling provided to us helped us to grow as a business and improve business processes. In difficult times this support is even more essential.
Anonymous			ERDF funding enabled us to create a minimum viable product which has allowed us to access further funding to bring our innovation into the real world!
Anonymous			ERDF funding has allowed us to accelerate our business's innovative proposition and test our first product. We have now raised a total of £1M in investment and grants thanks to the exploitation of our ERDF grant results.
Anonymous			ERDF funding has been pivotal to

			supporting our business and allowing us to develop to the next stage.
Anonymous			ERDF Funding helped our start up massively. It helped us build the foundations and a product offering that has increased customer interest in what we do and our offering to them. It helped us differentiate from other players in the market too.
Anonymous			Essential for small and growing businesses.
Anonymous			Funding for these projects is vitally important, it brings together university R&D projects with experienced engineers, with universities bring the novel/new ideas, and SMEs bringing the "how to design and fabricate at commercial scale" experience and knowledge. Together this makes for a strong well-balanced team, which should enable more projects being commercialised. Our project has broadened the organisation's awareness and knowledge of the alternative technologies for recovery and re-use of flue gas carbon dioxide. Whilst the project has not yet

			<p>reached the commercialisation stage, our clients have a desire to reduce their carbon dioxide emission, our project provides an alternative to CCUS, and provides a commercial product that benefits not companies and industries but the environment and people at large. Removal of funding would massively limit our ability to support these vital R&D projects.</p>
Anonymous			<p>Funding received through this programme has prompted investment in technology that has transformed our design processes as a business, helping to take us from solely an installer of adaptations to a manufacturer of our own vehicle adaptations which are now sold across the country and even further afield. Alongside the funding, support from individuals involved with this has helped us to progress our internal structures to cope with this business growth.</p>
Anonymous			<p>I attended the SketchUp workshop in 2023, which gave me the opportunity to learn, but also identify</p>

			<p>how I could best use the software within my creative role. I now use it to produce innovative concepts for residential and commercial clients. Many thanks to the team, who were accommodating and supportive throughout the 2-day course.</p>
Anonymous			<p>I have benefitted greatly from programs and organisations that were supported by ERDF funding through helping support and fund the business and prototyping stages within my company. I was able to develop my main product and business structure through these programs and with the funding they provided, which has been a crucial turning point within the overall development of my business. Without these kinds of funding and support opportunities, I believe funding options will become extremely competitive and may become biased towards certain industry sectors, leaving the ecosystem unbalanced.</p>
Anonymous			<p>I was lucky enough to get a KEEP+ grant towards the cost of vital new equipment that has given me control of my production processes</p>

			enabling me to offer new services to my customers.
Anonymous			I was very grateful to have the opportunity to learn about a technology new to me - 3D printing. I was taken through the various processes and even went away with a finished product at the end. Really useful and I found the staff very helpful and friendly. Thank you
Anonymous			I'm imagining that we could possibly be one of a small group of companies that were the perfect match for the KEEP+ grant. It's a relatively small amount but it was just enough to help us get a new product under development. With angel investment not a realistic option for many, grants help us move into new business opportunities. We are really grateful that we were able to access a KEEP+ grant - it has helped us launch into a new client segment.
Anonymous			Incredibly supportive team that helped us deliver our MVP quicker and more effectively. Thank you.
Anonymous			The programme has been financially helpful for one of our projects. It got us to where we were heading, and we hope

			there will be more help like this.
Anonymous			It has helped us grow the business from 2 people based from a coffee table at home, to a 9 strong local business employing locally based people, 1 intern from Coventry University and an Apprentice Digital Marketeer. All would have been potentially unachievable or taken longer (if at all) without the support.
Anonymous			It has helped us work through decisions about how to move towards low-carbon solutions for our charity.
Anonymous			It kicked us off on our journey to develop our product.
Anonymous			KEEP+ grants and the support we received from the KEEP+ team helped us when we needed help the most. Like a baby or a plant, startups need help and support to grow and do good for the society. There's no strong venture capital or angel investor support in the UK like there is in the US. Removing the little support available to UK startups will further damage the startup scene and force founders to move to other countries. The UK government should be strengthening the

			support, not withdrawing.
Anonymous			KEEP+ has been instrumental to our growth as a small business. With the help of their funding, we have been able to invest in cutting-edge software that has allowed us to expand our client base, offer new services as a business (keeping us competitive) and most importantly, it has directly contributed to the employment of an additional staff member. KEEP+ has been invaluable to our growth and we hope that schemes such as these will continue to be offered in the future.
Anonymous			My company was able to receive business development support which was useful in developing overseas contacts.
Anonymous			Our company has benefited greatly from the receipt of ERDF funding under the KEEP+ programme. This funding has enabled us to accelerate the development of our patent pending display technology to acquire equipment that would otherwise have been out of reach. This equipment allows us to scale our innovation more quickly, reduce the

			time to market and demonstrate to both the public and private sector to secure ongoing funding.
Anonymous			Our company has previously benefitted from ERDF funds. As a result our company has provided new skilled jobs, training and expert advice to private and public sectors. The financial capital provided by ERDF funds has allowed us to invest in technology, take on new skilled employees and invest in the training of existing employees. Despite restrictions imposed during the pandemic our company has doubled its turnover since 2019.
Anonymous			The RISE programme has been instrumental in helping the company (a) do USA market research via their STEP graduate placement in 2021 and (b) currently via their Access to Expertise with a business advisor as we add new technology and prepare for fundraising. With RISE funding (and their innovate application of ERDF funds) we would not be in such a good position to grow and create new UK-based jobs. Organisations like RISE need to be funded by

			the UK government now, before ERDF ends - otherwise investment and innovation will suffer in this country
Anonymous			Spexx has benefited greatly from the support provided by this funding. We have had both broad and specific support, from getting our business structure right for our business, to getting one to one sales training and practice, which has helped to grow our business. We have also been signposted to grant funding which helped us to update our IT resources enabling improved efficiency and productivity. It would be a terrible loss to SMEs like ourselves that need guidance and support in order to flourish and create both employment and taxable profits, which will ultimately benefit the local and national economy.
Anonymous			Support from innovation funding such as the ERDF has been instrumental in enabling my business to develop new concepts and ideas that I simply would not have had the resources to implement without the help of the universities and the

			funding provided by ERDF. Without their support, my business would have ceased to exist.
Anonymous			Support from KEEP+ enabled us to bring skilled talent into the company at a critical time, as we were bringing an innovative new product to market. Without this support, our progress towards commercialisation would have been slower. Timely product release helped us beat international competitors in a competitive marketplace.
Anonymous			The Ad:Venture programme was a great experience and enabled me to gain clarity on my business plan as well as having the opportunity to network with other SME owners in the region. The programme is an invaluable resource to start ups in the region.
Anonymous			The Ad:Venture scheme has helped my business start on the right footing. As a small start-up there would be no other way for me to get this kind of free support.
Anonymous			The ERDF Keep+ fund made a real practical difference to my development journey

			as a solo female tech founder.
Anonymous			The funding we have received has been invaluable in driving forward our development of engaging resources for apprenticeship learners.
Anonymous			The funds were critical for us - they allowed us to develop a piece of innovation very quickly. Without it we might not have been able to win a customer contract and create the team we have today!
Anonymous			The funds will impact the scalability and commerciality of the business, which is fundamental to me as founder.
Anonymous			The grant helped our business immensely and will encourage growth in the community and in local businesses. Also, this will enable us to take on staff should the need arise as it is the perfect stimulus for our business.
Anonymous			The HSLM has helped our start-up to launch and hire our first employees from Birmingham City University. Not only does it help us as a business, it also helps students gain employment with local companies like ours with great progression pathways.

Anonymous			<p>Keep+ funding has been critical in allowing us to develop our business, it is not hyperbole to say that we would not exist and we certainly would not be growing at the rate we are, unless we had benefitted from the Keep+ intervention. I am extremely grateful to the programme and would be happy to go into more detail should it be required.</p>
Anonymous			<p>The KEEP+ grant was absolutely invaluable in helping us learn more about a very underserved area - we would simply never have been able to work with a university of this regard or move the needle on our R&D without this support.</p>
Anonymous			<p>The programme has provided essential support, advice and connections for helping my business grow.</p>
Anonymous			<p>The proof-of-concept grant funding we received from Coventry University enabled us to accelerate the development of our product and to secure interest from potential clients. In the current economic environment, with investment slowing down due to economic uncertainty,</p>

			such grants can be instrumental in supporting innovation and growth in SMEs.
Anonymous			The support I have received from Encsite at University of Derby, provided through ERDF funding, has been vital to my continued business success and that of my clients.
Anonymous			The University of Derby provided me with support through their "Be the Boss" programme, which helped me to launch my own business. I received a range of training from budgeting, business structures and marketing. I don't think I'd be where I am without them, and they certainly gave me the confidence to pursue my business dreams. I hope to see other students have access to such invaluable resources in the future.
Anonymous			There is very little business training for theatre-makers and yet our industry and skill set brings in substantial revenue in the national ecology. Business training has been vital to growing the work I do and having a broader impact within my community.
Anonymous			This financial support was essential in

			helping us as a SME to achieve an important accreditation certification which, in time, will enable us to export our services to a wider market.
Anonymous			This funding was extremely useful to our organisation and the process was much simpler compared to other funds. These types of grants are crucial to businesses like ours that include Research and Development to develop sustainable products and processes.
Anonymous			This initiative was a bit of a god send to us with our start-up. Having one impartial place to go to who have their fingers on the pulse was incredibly useful and supportive. We need more like this not less!
Anonymous			This programme is essential particularly for young people leaving university. The support offered is high quality and with Derby working towards getting creative city status it's essential to support creatives in their own industry.
Anonymous			We are designers and manufacturers of giftware for the UK tourist industry. This grant has enabled us to invest in new equipment to reduce our reliance on far

			<p>East sourced products and satisfy our customers' requirements with more innovative designs, shorter run lengths and quicker lead-times. We have numerous other capital projects we would like to invest in and the withdrawal of this funding will slow the pace of our manufacturing growth.</p>
Anonymous			<p>We have benefited significantly from: the training on topics we wouldn't have been able to access, and mentoring and grants to invest in our business growth and recruitment. Essential for small businesses.</p>
Anonymous			<p>We used a KEEP+ project to help our start-up company develop methodologies to assess the quality of our prototype materials. The level of support from our academic supervisor was excellent and we were also very satisfied with the intern that worked with us and we have now offered her a permanent position. Opportunities like this really help small companies like us thrive and increase our engagement with customers.</p>

Anonymous			We used ERDF funds a few years ago now, in funding an internship with the University of Derby for our small personalised online gift business. This led to a full-time job position being created. Without the access to that funding, a business of our scale and size would not have been able to make that investment.
Anonymous			We were helped in producing a De-Carbonisation report through University of Derby. It has helped us educate our membership greatly!
Anonymous			We won 2 Keep+ grants and they were essential in our product development, especially during the COVID era when appetite for private investment nose-dived.
Anonymous			We would not have been able to start our project without the proof-of-concept funding from Coventry University.
Anonymous			Were it not for ERDF funding we would likely not have created at least 2 of our roles. It's mind-blowing that there still isn't replacement funding in place.
Anonymous			Without support from an ERDF-funded accelerator, our business would not have even started, let

			alone have grown to the size we are today.
Anonymous			Without the help of ERDF funding, the project would not have been successful. Please continue to support UK innovation.