Who is ReadWave?
ReadWave, formerly known as Circalit, is an online social marketing platform and community for writers and screenwriters to market their books and scripts directly to agents and producers. Dubbed ‘the Facebook for screenwriters’, it mediates between industry professionals and individuals and also provides a forum for writers to discuss each other’s work. The idea was born by Raoul Tawadey, CEO and a former UCL student (Natural Sciences BSc, English Literature PhD) whilst working in a film production studio and seeing that scripts he enjoyed were being ignored.

How did UCL help?
UCL has helped through every stage of their development, from initial start-up advice to practical workspace, to growth opportunities through access to capital and to new qualified employees. From their initial beginnings, ReadWave (as Circalit) won the UCL Bright Ideas award in 2011 which gave them the necessary funding to continue with product development and specifically establish how the user interface would work. It also enabled them to attend the Touring Festival, Edinburgh which opened up new contacts and provided a networking opportunity.

They also sought help through the SMILE and HELO programmes offered by UCL Advances which provided hands-on support and mentoring whilst they were at the crucial phase of transitioning from a ‘bedroom business’ into a fully functioning operation.

“Our mentor had hands-on experience and his opinions helped validate our thinking, giving us the confidence to move forwards.”
Raoul Tawadey, CEO, ReadWave

Until January 2013, the two business partners spent 18 months working out of the UCL hatchery. It was here they were introduced to angels in the city and seed funding.

What were the results?
During their time in the hatchery, the company grew from 0–10,000 literary uploads with one book published and two films secured. Since their recent round of funding from the city, they have moved to their own premises, have doubled their workforce and are now experiencing 150,000 reads per month representing a growth of x10.

The company has gone on to partner with The Script Factory, which has links to both Disney and Sony Pictures. Raoul Tawadey is still closely involved with UCL Advances as the “advice is invaluable” and partakes in business events as a contributor.
About UCL
UCL (University College London) was established in 1826 and is ranked as one of the world’s top-ten universities. The university is a modern, outward-looking institution, with more than 4,000 academic and research staff committed to engaging with the major issues of our times. It has a global reach, with 34% of its students coming from outside the UK, from almost 140 countries.

www.ucl.ac.uk

About UCL Advances
The centre for entrepreneurship and business interaction at UCL, UCL Advances, offers training, networking and business support for staff, students and external entrepreneurs to encourage and enable new enterprises to get started and to support existing enterprises to grow and develop by tapping into UCL’s expertise. Unique in the UK Higher Education sector, its primary role is to promote a culture of entrepreneurship on campus and engagement with entrepreneurs and small businesses beyond UCL’s boundaries, and currently delivers over 30 activity programmes.

UCL Advances is affiliated with UCL Enterprise, which provides UCL’s structures for engaging with business for commercial and societal benefit.

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances
www.ucl.ac.uk/enterprise

About Business Support
UCL Advances provides direct business support for internal and external organisations through a variety of programmes and activities such as 1–1 advice, problem solving through student consultancy, student internships, mentoring and others.

• We help London-based businesses grow and develop by analyzing business needs and connecting them to relevant interventions such as industry mentors;
• Through pairing teams of UCL and LBS students with businesses we deliver short-term consultancy projects addressing specific organisation needs;
• We broker relationships and fund exchanges between new and aspiring entrepreneurs with experienced entrepreneurs in another member state of the European Union;
• Individual angel investors connected to UCL provide seed investment to SMEs engaged with UCL Advances programmes; and
• We offer fully funded SME Internships where UCL students spend eight weeks in a London SME working alongside the director(s) to deliver real results and lasting impact in the host organization whilst learning about enterprise.

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances/business/support

About Student Engagement
UCL is keen to help those students who are entrepreneurial to develop their ideas further. This is supported through the UCL Advances’ Student Venture Program – a complete programme of support for UCL students that wish to start a business. It includes access to training, mentoring, one-to-one business advice from our in-house advisor, access to loans and grant funding and the use of our Hatchery space.

www.ucl.ac.uk/studentventures