In 2009, entrepreneur Michelle Wright set up Cause4, an organisation that supports charities and social enterprises with fundraising and strategy. In the four and a half years since, Cause4 has flourished. The company now raises £10 million each year in fundraising for its clients, has doubled in turnover in the last year, employs 34 full-time staff and has a burgeoning international portfolio.

Cause4 has been supported along its entrepreneurial journey by UCL Advances, UCL’s centre for entrepreneurship and business interaction. Michelle and the Cause4 team have participated in some of UCL Advances’ key programmes, such as the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses programme (10ksb), delivered in London by UCL, and the Summer Internship Programme.

Connecting the dots
To boost her skills and Cause4’s capacity, Michelle participated in the 10ksb training course so that she could expand the business in line with her ambitious vision. A rigorous 10-week programme, 10ksb helps business owners develop their expansion strategies in order to help them manage and plan for growth.

10ksb also gives entrepreneurs a superb chance to network, which sent Michelle’s confidence skyrocketing: “Networking is a vital part of idea generation for any business. There are some brilliant training courses, such as 10ksb, that do this in spades. There’s nothing so levelling as networking with others, finding out the realities, sharing information and realising that everyone is facing the same issues…We all need to reach out to others, creating connections to support and redefine success.”

Another string to Cause4’s bow was the Student Internship Programme. In 2013, Michael Button (UCL BA European Social and Political Studies) participated in this programme as a Development Intern sponsored by UCL Advances. He now works for Cause4 full-time, and has helped to formalise graduate training within the company.

“Cause4 gives me just the right combination of social cause and business. I can work for the good of people, and enjoy the pressure and drive to perform that can sometimes be lacking in charities. It’s just right.”

A bright future
Through the support available from UCL Advances, Cause4 has not only found its feet but taken off. It now has a graduate training scheme in which 30 graduates are supported by charities, Arts Council England and a partnership to support creative businesses with the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and its future as a leader for fundraising and organisational strategy couldn’t look brighter. In 2014, Cause4 was a winner of the Big Venture Challenge, a UK-wide programme that supports the country’s most ambitious social entrepreneurs.
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
UCL Advances, UCL’s centre for entrepreneurship and business interaction, helps anyone who wants to learn about, start or grow a business. It’s primary role is to promote a culture of entrepreneurship on campus and engagement with entrepreneurs and small businesses beyond UCL’s boundaries. It works to support start-ups and small businesses across London by helping them to access the technical and business expertise of UCL’s staff and students through a series of programmes to help support ambitious young companies.

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 analysing 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 organisation whilst learning about enterprise.

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

About Student Engagement
UCL does more to help students learn about, start or grow a business than any other UK university, giving them the critical skills to get a job or start their own venture. A whole programme of support is available to students, taking them through their entrepreneurial journey.

The Summer Internship Programme (SIP) puts UCL students leaps and bounds ahead of the competition when it comes to professional development and applying for jobs. It offers over 100 students the chance to work for SMEs across London for eight weeks in the summer. It’s a brilliant opportunity to gain in-depth work experience and pick up entrepreneurial know-how directly from business owners.

Full-time internships receive a tax-free training allowance of £250 a week and are open to UCL students across all disciplines or very fresh graduates (students due to finish their course this summer).

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances/advances-programmes/summer-internships
www.ucl.ac.uk/advances/support/internship-programme/students