Where nanotech meets business smarts

Working towards his PhD in Nanotechnology and Applied Biomedical Engineering is one of the many strings to Salman Malik’s bow, but at the same time he is building his business skills through UCL Advances’ courses. After taking an MSc in Biomaterials and Tissue Engineering and an MRes in Synthetic Biology, Salman embarked on a range of short courses and LBS electives to bolster his CV with transferable skills as he pursued his PhD.

“I wanted to gain business and commercial awareness and I didn’t want to remain a pure academic.” says Salman.

In the past two years, Salman has done courses in entrepreneurship, technology, innovation and social enterprise. His PhD research is at the cutting edge of nanotechnology, involving working with electrospinning and electrospraying techniques. These two techniques can fabricate nanofibres and micro/nano-particles that have a host of possible applications, from electronics and optics to biomaterials and drug delivery. By doing UCL Advances’ business-focused courses alongside his PhD, Salman has significantly widened the net for future opportunities.

Paving the way to a brighter future

The courses he’s done in 2013–14 include several LBS Electives, funded by UCL: New Technology Ventures, Paths to Power, Strategic Innovation and Achieving Strategic Agility. He has also taken the CPD courses in Communicating Science to Business, Effective Self-Management; Social Entrepreneurship and Financing Entrepreneurs. “From the start of his studies Salman realised the advantages of what UCL Advances can offer students – providing transferable skills and experiences not inherently part of his research degree,” says Oli Pinch, Training Manager, UCL Advances.

While all these courses have helped shaped Salman’s career outlook, he says the biggest eye-opener has been the Social Entrepreneurship course. “I’m very interested in social enterprise,” he says, “and would like to have an impact on society. Doing this course made me realise it was the avenue I had been looking for.”

The power of technology

Recently, Salman found a great way to combine his academic research with his passion for social enterprise – by setting up a fundraiser. “I wanted to make a philanthropic donation back to the Institute of Biomedical Engineering, so I set up a fundraiser to raise £5,000, to recognise the support I’ve received over the years.” His aim is to launch the first MedTech competition at UCL, to bring young entrepreneurial minds together and encourage innovation to improve healthcare and change lives.

Working through UCL Advances courses helped Salman consider his options within a wider framework and then establish exciting long-term career goals.

“UCL Advances has shown me what you can do with research outside academia, and more importantly, it’s made me aware of what really stimulates me.”

You can visit Salman’s JustGiving page here: www.justgiving.com/SAL-IBME

For more information see: www.ucl.ac.uk/enterprise
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. Its 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
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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. UCL Advances provides a range of programmes to students, taking them through their entrepreneurial journey.

One such programme is the Short Courses for Entrepreneurs – Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training in key business areas in a dynamic, engaging learning environment. Postgraduate students gain essential insights into the business environment; learn effective communication to business audiences, and learn the fundamentals for starting their own company.

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances/advances-programmes/short-courses-for-entrepreneurs