Entrepreneurship

UCL Advances is UCL’s centre for entrepreneurship and business interaction. We help our students to learn about, start or grow a business, and provide critical skills to get a job or start your own venture.

Helping you to get ahead
At UCL Advances we support you through your entrepreneurial journey, whether you want to learn about the fundamentals of business, start your own venture or grow an existing one. We aim to promote interaction among researchers, businesses and industry investors and students. We support our entrepreneurially minded students by providing training, business support services and funding.

UCL Advances can offer you:
// networking events, where you’ll have the chance to meet researchers, advisers and fellow entrepreneurs
// three-day Enterprise Boot Camps, run throughout the year to introduce you to the fundamentals of the modern business world
// training that covers all aspects of how to start your own business, or helps prepare you to enter the job market
// the chance to spend 8–12 weeks with a small to medium-sized enterprise gaining a first-hand look into how to run and start a business in London
// the opportunity to gain direct experience of small business consultancy by joining a student-led short-term consultancy project
// a two-week summer programme of workshops about business skills.

Got a bright idea?
If you have an idea for your very own business but don’t know how to get started, or if you’d like to grow your existing business, UCL Advances can help in several ways:
// Our students have the chance to enter various competitions, including the London Entrepreneurs’ Challenge, one of the largest business plan competitions in the country, with over 400 students participating each year.
// Our business advisers provide impartial, confidential advice and business support to UCL students and recent alumni looking to start or develop their business.
// If you are starting your own business you will need somewhere to run it from. We can provide free office space in our Student Business Hatchery.
// The UCL Bright Ideas Awards – established in 2008 to help new companies take their first steps into the market – offer a total of £50,000 in business loans to UCL student entrepreneurs.
// U-Create is a fantastic opportunity that challenges students to combine creativity with enterprise. Working in small teams you will be challenged to design, make and sell products across London.

Entrepreneurship

Aleks Mjakonkhihi,
Economics and Business with East European Studies BA (2014)

UCL Advances is brilliant for students seeking to join an early stage start-up, as start-ups always require bright people, but rarely have the funds to pay for an intern. For me, UCL Advances created an opportunity to join Aire, a financial services start-up, at the very beginning of the company’s life. I got to engage directly with the Techstars mentor network and work on various tasks throughout my internship. Following the internship I was offered a position at Aire on a full-time basis, which I gladly accepted.

Before the internship, a boot camp was organised for all interns, introducing students to serial entrepreneurs and the basics of running a company. The boot camp was highly useful. I gained insight from industry veterans and listened to inspirational stories from people who started with zero and created great companies and social initiatives.

Our entrepreneurship guest lecture series is delivered by leading and inspiring entrepreneurs.

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances
Set for success

2014/15 was a fantastic year for UCL Advances, with success stories including:
- 295 students with business ideas advised
- 32 business ideas pitched at the final of the London Entrepreneurs’ Challenge in 2015
- 29 student business winners of the UCL Bright Ideas awards and Summer Accelerator programme in 2015.

Entrepreneurial societies at UCL

There are a number of entrepreneurship societies at UCL that provide support, a forum for sharing ideas, events and networking opportunities. These include:

UCL Entrepreneurs Society
A hub for UCL entrepreneurs, offering skills classes, networking, consulting and funding
www.ucle.co

Enactus
A social enterprise and consulting society, creating sustainable solutions to social needs both at home and abroad
www.enactusucl.org

CleanTech Challenge
A business plan competition helping students from across the globe develop their clean technology business ideas
www.cleantechnologychallenge.com

Since winning the Entrepreneurathon in 2014 Livia’s Kitchen has featured in Vogue, won space in Selfridges department store and secured a book deal with a major London publisher.

Entrepreneurialism
Naomi Poyser, Third Year, Classics BA
UCL Advances has given me so much more than a standard university experience. I study Classics, but knew that I wanted to work for myself and be an entrepreneur. By getting involved with UCL Advances I have been able to bridge the gaps in my business knowledge, get internships each summer, and have now started on my own venture – Greenseed. In just one year UCL Advances gave us the support we needed to take it from an idea to a viable start-up, with office space, mentoring, and almost £10,000 in funding.

I now work for them as Student Enterprise Ambassador, a role enabling one student a year to develop their skills and encourage other students to consider entrepreneurship, whilst also spending time developing their own business. Without the support of UCL Advances my life would be very different, and working with them helps me appreciate how much care and support they give to students with entrepreneurship aspirations.

Recycling waste coffee grounds into biofuel, Bio-Bean were the winners of a UCL Bright Ideas Award.