Smalls businesses benefit from more than just light touch support

Natalie Blakeley was juggling working for a national chain of cosmetic clinics and two small children when it struck her that she wanted to set up her own business. “It seemed obvious to me,” says Natalie, 38, from Weybridge in Surrey. “I was a doctor specialising in cosmetic procedures having to travel the country a lot, working in an area where I knew I could set up by myself.”

Three years on from that moment in 2009, Natalie now runs the Light Touch Clinic in Guildford, specialising in a range of cosmetic procedures and employs four staff.

Natalie is also one of several women who are benefiting from the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses programme, which this year has launched for the first time in London. Designed to provide the very best in both practical business education and support to owners of small business and social enterprises which are seeking to grow, the programme in the capital is being delivered by business experts at University College London’s centre for entrepreneurship, UCL Advances.

The Light Touch Clinic had been up and running for just over two years when Natalie decided to apply for the programme. “I’m a doctor, not a business person,” says Natalie, “and I thought if I could do some more formal training, rather than just muddling along, it would help me massively with building my business.”

Natalie has already seen the benefits of the programme to maximise the growth of her business. “Starting the programme was really exciting – and now I’m beginning to realise why and how I should grow my business.”

Natalie has already seen the benefits of the programme to maximise the growth of her business. “Starting the programme was really exciting – and now I’m beginning to realise why and how I should grow my business.”

“Starting the programme was really exciting – and now I’m beginning to realise why and how I should grow my business.”

“Starting the programme was really exciting – and now I’m beginning to realise why and how I should grow my business.”

With more support out there than ever to help them thrive, it seems the future’s bright for the Light Touch Clinic and hundreds of other small businesses like it.

Visit the Light Touch Clinic website www.lighttouchclinic.co.uk
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 at UCL, UCL Advances, offers training, networking and business support for staff, students and external entrepreneurs to encourage and enable new enterprises to get going. 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 provides direct business support for internal and external organisations through a variety of programmes, such as grants, space provision, training, advice and problem solving. The Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses is one of these programmes.

The Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses programme is designed to unlock the economic and job creation potential of small businesses and social enterprises operating in the United Kingdom. The programme is based on the broadly held view of leading experts that greater access to a combination of education and business support services best addresses barriers to growth. 10,000 Small Businesses is targeted at small businesses and social enterprises with clear ambitions to expand. The goal of the programme is to provide participants with tools and resources to help them lay the foundations for long-term sustainable growth and job creation in their communities. It is funded by Goldman Sachs and the Goldman Sachs Foundation and delivered by UCL Advances.

www.ucl.ac.uk/10ksb