“It’s worth becoming an entrepreneur just to go on the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Programme!”
Kiran Tawadey, Founder, Hampstead Tea

Finding her feet as an entrepreneur
After many years as a tea broker, in 1987 Kiran Tawadey found herself at the Makaibari tea estate in Darjeeling, India, with its owner Rajah Banerjee. Inspired by his decision not to use pesticides or chemicals, she set out to educate a wider audience about organic teas. One early step in doing this was inviting a tea taster from a German company to try the Makaibari tea. He brought almost the whole crop from the estate. With this early assurance she was onto something, Kiran got the teas organically certified and worked towards making Makaibari a biodynamic tea estate. Soon she had an entrepreneurial brainwave – why not launch her own brand rather than just be a broker?

Reading the tea leaves
Hampstead Tea was the result of this brainwave. Over the years the business and its products have gone through numerous iterations.

“Things have changed a lot,” she says, “and we’ve now got 32 different products, with a strong focus on organic and biodynamic teas.”

Last year, Kiran went on the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses programme (10ksb), delivered in London by UCL Advances, for her business, Hampstead Tea London. An intensive ten-module programme, 10ksb supports small business owners as they plan for growth. Kiran’s son Raoul Tawadey, a UCL student (BSc Natural Sciences, 2012) who had already received advice and support from UCL Advances on his business Readwave, forwarded his mother an email about the course, and she applied, thinking that she’d never get on it. But she did – and six months of rigorous work began.

10ksb – the secret ingredient
Kiran found 10ksb transformational. “It was the best thing I’ve ever done,” she says. “I was just happily bumping along before, but it made me far more ambitious and I’ve learnt so much.” Kiran’s tutors and peers helped her realise the value in her prior achievements, as well as how to prioritise her work so she can focus on her vision.

Penny Daly, Kiran’s tutor, says, “it was a joy to watch Kiran learn to have confidence in herself as the course progressed. She is already a successful businesswoman and as she learns to implement what she has learnt, she will become an exceptional one.”

Time for tea
With a fire now lit under Hampstead Tea London, Kiran is doing her first round of raising investment and has already been successful. She can’t wait to take the business forward. “My advice for anyone on 10ksb is to throw as much time as you can at it, because it’s worth every single bit of sacrifice. I invested a lot and benefitted hugely – and I think all my cohort feels the same. It’s worth becoming an entrepreneur just to go on 10ksb!”
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.

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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.

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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. The UCL Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses is one of these programmes.

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