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UK Government



Business Growth  
West Midlands

Investment Readiness

WMCA Investment Readiness  
Programme – A2F

Presented by Sharn Haywood – Higgs  
and Vernon Hogg



# → Objectives For Today

- Meet the Business Support Forum Partners
- Raise Awareness of the West Midlands Investment Readiness Programme
- To collaborate and work together for the benefit of our clients and region

# → Investment Readiness Programme

A bit about us...

A bit about our programme...

Government Funded Programme, supported via UK Shared Prosperity Funding

Funds are administered by WMCA – BGWM – and we are a chosen delivery partner

We support Pre-Start, Start-Up and Established Businesses in Birmingham, Solihull & Black Country

Our support is fully funded to the end user.

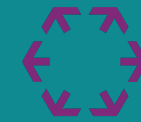
Businesses must be registered or reside in one of the Local Authority Areas

Less than 250 Employees, T/O of less than €50M or a balance sheet of less than €43M.  
Declarations are required for Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA).





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# Meet the Investment Readiness Team



Heather Coupland Programme Manager



Sharn Haywood – Higgs  
Business Finance  
Specialist



Helen Fortune  
Business Finance  
Specialist



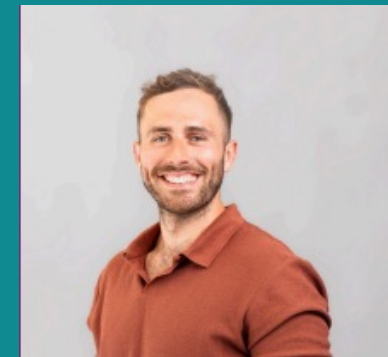
Robert Rabone  
Business Finance  
Specialist



Vernon Hogg  
Business Finance  
Specialist



Davies Okeowo  
Business Finance  
Specialist



Connor McManus  
Business Finance  
Specialist



## Programme Objectives

The WM Investment Readiness Programme's objectives are:

- To decrease the rate of rejection of SME funding applications
- To decrease the capital market dropout rates over the business cycle
- To decrease the West Midlands equity gap –

According to the British Business Bank's 2023 Equity Tracker, the West Midlands ranks as the third worst-performing region in the UK in terms of equity deals concentration.

- To increase the number of Venture Capital (VC) and Angel investments in West Midlands firms and growth in average deal values
- To increase the value of business investment.

## → Aims

- Increasing the awareness to company leaders and start-ups, to seek external finance
- Developing the of quality of investment propositions from the investor perspective
- Supporting Business Leaders with creating Investment Readiness propositions
- Build close relationships with Business Owners to understand their current barriers and opportunities in their business
- Help our clients understand the network and other Business Support Programmes, Local Partners and Key Stakeholders



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# How do we do it?



OXFORD  
INNOVATION  
ADVICE

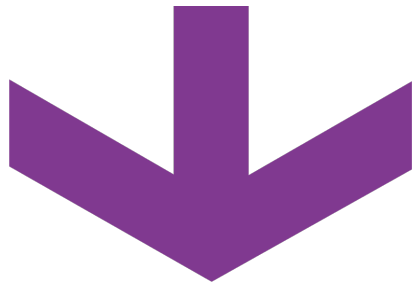


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**LEVELLING  
— UP —**

# Structure in Birmingham, Solihull, and the Black Country



## Engagement

Marketing  
Networking  
Stakeholders  
Referrals



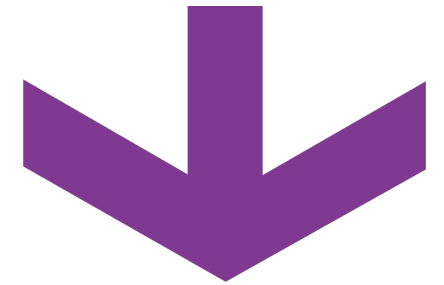
## Stage 1

Information and  
Advice Sessions  
Fact Finding 121  
Support  
Webinars



## Stage 2

Workshops  
Founders  
Collective  
121 Support



## Resources

GROWTHmapper®  
Online  
AcademyDigital  
Tools



# → Finance Readiness I&A Events

We have a new schedule of events which include webinars and venue-based sessions. Look out for the following themed events:

- Funding Landscape
- Raising Equity
- Assessing your financial needs
- Designing a compelling pitch deck
- Growth for early-stage businesses
- Silver Founders in partnership with BBB / Scale/Exit
- Held 25 I&A sessions to date

## ➔ Finance Readiness Two-day Workshops

Our two-day event is designed to enable clients to identify the best source of finance for their business needs and prepare for an application.

Clients will walk away prepared to begin their business finance journey.

### Day 1

- Business Planning
- Shopping list
- Finance options

### Day 2

- Financial Forecasting pricing, profit and loss
- Financial Forecasting cashflow
- Held 11 workshops to date



## → Founders Collective



The Founder's Collective is for SMEs and Startups across all industries who are actively seeking to raise capital in form of equity, debt, and/or crowdfunding.

Modules covered include:

- Fundraising landscape and Fundraising Strategy
- Pitch Deck Development and Curating Your Digital Presence
- Legal Agreements, Financial Modelling, SEIS/EIS
- Funding options, Grants and Talent Acquisition
- Raising Equity, Trademarks and IP, Managing Investor Relationships
- Held 7 FC Cohorts, with a total of 100 delegates

## → Case Study 1 Booghe Toys



- Large wholesale and retail, distributor of toys, trading 10 years
- First expansion into the retail High Street
- Launched 28<sup>th</sup> June at Forte Retail Park
- Krishna Yadlapalli is the Business Owner attended the Founders Collective in October 2023
- Business raised £1.2m for retail development
- Plans to further develop into 12 retail locations





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# MAI – Making Animals Important

## → Tina Salt



- Design and make high-quality kidswear with a conscience
- 18 years of experience in the fashion industry and saw the negative impact on the environment
- A percentage of each product goes towards protecting endangered species
- MAI Became incorporated in Nov 2020
- Tina attended the Founders Collective in October 2023
- Obtained £25k from the Start-Up Loan
- On the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 she pitched to Drapers Den in front of Touker Suleyman and an audience of 250 people

## → What our clients say about us!



[https://youtu.be/GTepcnW\\_yPs?si=HZoT426r2R08hW\\_p&t=106](https://youtu.be/GTepcnW_yPs?si=HZoT426r2R08hW_p&t=106)



## → Working In Collaboration

We are tasked to support over 1000 small to medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in Birmingham, the Black Country and the Solihull Regions.

The businesses will receive a major investment readiness boost with the support of the West Midlands Investment Readiness Programme. We want to work with you to achieve this!

- Sector-specific events (e.g manufacturing and creative)
- Themed events from sharing intel from Business Owner needs
- Share events on your social media platforms
- Encourage your teams to invite us to client meetings, if there is a financial need
- Use the program as part of your customer journey



## → Get In Touch

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Thank you

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