

# Achievements of a Scaleup Enabler – 2+ years

The Scaleup Enabler role was designed and created as an innovation – to find the gaps in our already vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem and to work towards some solutions. After participation at the Scaleup Institute's Driving Economic Growth course, Nick Sturge built on the experience of running SETsquared Bristol and the needs of their member companies to create a role which would 'enable the ecosystem' to the same degree that SETsquared has enabled tech business acceleration. With the support, freedom and opportunity provided by University of Bristol he brought together key stakeholders to collaborate and make this innovation a reality.

Whilst other regions created scaleup programmes or scaleup relationship management services, Briony Phillips was appointed Scaleup Enabler for the West of England in June 2017. The role was an opportunity for our region to pioneer, and to create and enable solutions to the challenges faced by scaleup companies in the West of England. In the 2+ years that followed she worked in partnership with multiple funders, sponsors and supporters to help our region resolve the challenges experienced by our fastest growing companies.

## Deliverables in the first 2 years

### 1. Events

- a. 16 Events with nearly 600 attendees - Scaleup Briefings, top tips events and roundtables.
- b. 100s of new connections and introductions bringing scale ups together with support and opportunities.
- c. Inclusion of our work in the [Scale up Institute report 2017](#).
- d. Identified as an exemplar by the Scaleup Institute in their [2018 report](#) with recommendation for other regions to replicate the role. Spoke as part of the event at Canada House.
- e. Hosted and spoke at key events to support region e.g. SETsquared TechXpo, UKBAA/Innovate UK Connected Investing, TechNation Regional Launch event, Scaleup Institute Nov 2018 Review event (London), UKBAA Connected Investing.

### 2. Focus on Access to Investment

- a. Invented and launched Quarterly Investment Briefing Jan 2018
- b. 65+ applications to join the Bristol Angel Hub that we created in partnership with UKBAA.
- c. 285 subscribers to the Quarterly Investment Briefing, 60% open rate for QI in Brief newsletter.
- d. 6 Quarterly Investment Briefings run successfully with c. 40 - 70 attendees per session.
- e. Hosted 1 investment dinner bringing together investors and actors to push investment activity locally.
- f. Initiated regular Investor-in-Residence service with 4 different VC and social investment professionals.

### 3. Focus on Office Space

- a. Run 3 events to share insight into the challenge, expose good practice and build awareness of potential solutions.
- b. Spoke at SW Insider office space event at TLT.
- c. The region has gone from a 20-year low in 2016 to having 800,000+ sqft of flexible office space coming onto the market in 2020/2021.
- d. Shared regular insights and updated via blogs/articles.
- e. Individual companies have relocated, and the process has been simplified.
- g. Initiated regular Property-Adviser-in-Residence service with Engine Shed Partner, BPAA
- f. Runway East opened their first office outside London in Bristol.
- g. Explored possibility of big corporate companies sub-letting their space.
- h. V7 Asset Management (owners of Unum House) elected to lease the property to a co-working provider, Desklodge, counter to their original plan.

#### 4. Scaleup Generator website

- a. Worked with Rocketmakers to deliver [Scaleup Generator website](#). The website has av. 348 users per month and c. 2,300 pageviews per month with zero marketing budget. The site is home to:
  - i. Nearly 60 blogs articulating the scaleup challenges and solutions.
  - ii. Scaleup ecosystem support map.
  - iii. 81 scaleup meetings to explore the challenges they face.
  - iv. Over 750 scaleup businesses identified.
- b. Created West of England Growth Map with support from WECA Growth Hub and RocketMakers accompanied by an Augmented Reality app to help entrepreneurs and budding entrepreneurs/intrapreneurs access support.

#### 5. Story telling / Building awareness

- a. Creation of 6 scale up case studies with TechSPARK.
- b. Invited to speak at prestigious events including: Tech Nation regional roadshow 2018, UKBAA Connected Investing, Scaleup Institute Annual Review 2018, SW Insider Future of Bristol panel.
- c. 11 press articles including Bristol 24/7, SW Insider, TechSPARK and Business Leader.
- d. 457,312 Twitter impressions, 1500 impressions per day on average.
- e. 48,535 LinkedIn post views.
- f. 776 productive interactions with private and public sector colleagues.
- g. Scaleups and the Growth Map were featured over 3 nights on BBC Points West with 37% of viewers watching (totalling c. 832,000 viewers).
- h. Increased awareness of the scaleup agenda and widely shared information about the definition of a scaleup amongst the business community
- i. Unlocked locally sourced data on the scaleup community through partnership working with Estrella Green and others; lobbied for the release of data to enable identification of scaleup companies locally.
- j. Seeded and designed the concept of the Scaleup Summit with WECA Growth Hub.
- k. Built ongoing relationships with key press, corporate and scaleup organisations; secured £45K+ sponsorship for all outward-facing activities.

#### 6. Wider benefits

- a. Multiple SETsquared referrals for potential members, mentors and BRP panellists. Referrals to multiple other incubators, accelerators and professional services organisations.
- b. 5 days shadowing colleagues at Scale up Institute and sharing findings.
- c. Key MPs are aware of and value this work and how unique and valuable it is.
- d. We have seeded the idea and supported multiple other regions to investigate employing a scaleup enabler – including Birmingham and Brighton.
- e. Relationships with UKBAA and SUI have delivered positive press for the region and positioned Engine Shed and West of England as exemplars – we opened the first of 8 regional Angel Hubs with UKBAA for example.
- f. The work of the Scaleup Enabler informed the creation of the Entrepreneur Engagement Managers by TechNation.
- g. British Business Bank consulted Briony when they were designing their National Network team to inform the role description – drawing on the intelligence that had been gathered and maps created.
- h. Helped build profile of the city region as an entrepreneurial, pioneering place with expertise in entrepreneurial ecosystems e.g. relationship with Dan Isenberg at Babson.
- i. Helped influence the shape and offer of various scaleup programmes locally.

In terms of benefits (direct, indirect or strategic) to the region as a whole and key institutions, we believe that this translates into:

- **Building profile** of the region amongst national organisations and the scaleup community e.g. Scaleup Institute and UK Business Angels Association (UKBAA), British Business Bank and TechNation
- **Creating brand association** with innovative and early stage companies – benefits from student perceptions to potential employees moving to the city
- Supporting the creation of and access to **increased funding sources**
- Improving the **investment and office space availability** across the region to benefit spinouts and companies across the region. Building
- Encouraging **greater uptake of internships** from all 4 local universities (e.g. blog published by TechSPARK)
- **Developing the profile** of the city region to be a more entrepreneurial place and encourage students, staff to relocate/remain living here.

In 2018 the Scaleup Enabler role was recognised in the Scaleup Institute’s Annual report as an exemplar for other regions.

## In the words of some of our partners

“In the face of considerable regional disparity in early stage equity investing, building a better connected and more visible community of investors is crucial to creating the necessary funding support for high-potential startups and scale ups. Briony has played a central role in helping to grow the investor community in and around Bristol, organising informative investor briefings and, working with UKBAA, delivering workshops for new and experienced angel investors too.

Because of her deep-rooted knowledge of the local ecosystem we chose to work with Briony to open our first Angel Hub at Engine Shed and again more recently in hosting our Connected Investing event in partnership with Innovate UK.”

### **Roderick Beer, MD at UK Business Angels Association (UKBAA)**

“The role of Scaleup Enabler in the Bristol and Bath region is a direct implementation of good practice shared and developed following the ScaleUp Institute Driving Economic Growth Programme, which Bristol attended in 2016.

The successful development and implementation of this role is featured as an example in our 2018 Annual Review, along with endorsement of the Engine Shed.

The connections made by engaging directly with the ecosystem in the Bristol and Bath region continues to show clear results, as deliberate focus on the scaleup community and strengthening the ecosystem in which they operate has allowed the Engine Shed and the Scaleup Enabler to optimise positive outcomes for scaleups.

Major focus areas have been identifying opportunities for new funding streams, supporting the design and conception of new programmes; creating a map of the scaleup business community the ‘Scaleup Generator’; a support and infrastructure tool which facilitates collaborations.

New networks and briefing events, such as the Quarterly Investment Briefing, foster engagement between the scaleup community and supporters and match potential investors with scaleups to explore investment options both nationally and locally. By creating a focal point for engagement it is much easier for scaleup businesses to engage with programmes and investors that can add value to their growth journey.

The role has also allowed better collaboration at an ecosystem level with the private sector. The role shows a clear commitment in the area to scaling businesses and has been instrumental in coordinating scaleup support programmes.”

**Irene Graham, CEO, Scaleup Institute**

“Briony has provided the team at UWE Bristol with some invaluable advice and insights into the scale-up and investor landscapes in the West of England. The knowledge and data she has shared has enabled us to develop a highly successful programme of support for aspiring scalers in the region (Scale Up 4 Growth) that has clearly resonated with regional businesses looking for funding and support to overcome barriers to growth. Briony’s role is a very important one, bringing together the region’s universities and business support agencies to deliver high quality and complementary support to growing businesses.”

**Lucy Wicksteed, Assistant Head of Business and Enterprise, UWE + Scaleup4Growth Programme**

“Engine Shed, and Briony in particular, played a big part in our choosing Bristol as the first city for our regional expansion outside of London. Briony had highlighted the chronic lack of scaleup space in the city, rallying founders of exciting startups and scaleups to her cause and presented a compelling narrative for us as we looked to expand outside of London. Regional expansion was always going to be a big risk for us but the fact that we sold all our offices within two months and have remained at capacity to this day shows the research was sound and case was as compelling as it was presented. If you could just replicate that in all cities in the UK it would make our lives a whole lot easier.”

**David Foreman, Head of Product, Runway East**

*The story of the first year Scaleup Enabler pilot, funded by Business West, the University of Bristol, the West of England Growth Hub/Combined Authority and Engine Shed is told in more detail in the Scaleup Yearbook published by Engine Shed in June 2018. <https://scaleup-cosmos-api.herokuapp.com/upload/f0a4254e-a92a-4339-bbba-171d94a820fe>*

*The Scaleup resources and insights are available on the Scaleup Generator website: <https://scaleupgenerator.co.uk/>*