

Case Study: Capital City College Group

Capital City College Group formed in 2024 as a merger of City and Islington College, The College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London and Westminster Kingsway College. It has 5 campuses across 5 boroughs providing free training support to Londoners to help upskill people, develop confidence and employability and/or business skills. The College trains over 25,000 students every year, equipping them with the academic and vocational skills and knowledge to progress into higher education or employment.

Reasons for engaging with Grow London Local

The college first heard about the programme through the GLA network and attendance at various events.

Programme delivery started in early 2024, due to a similar ethos and shared aims to support local businesses and SMEs.

GLL has potential to help the college to widen its reach and engage more employers to access diverse talent pools.

Key benefits of working with Grow London Local

The GLL team has a great reputation and has helped promote the College's courses, as well as sharing insights on SME's needs.

As a result, the College has been able to adapt and develop new courses to meet this need.

The college has adapted training to include subjects like AI for business operations, digital content creation and digital marketing.

Key challenges in engaging with and supporting SMEs

Business owners are time poor, needing accessible courses, so the college has become more flexible to meet their needs.

Having a more streamlined offer to business owners or new entrepreneurs, helps them to decide which course is best for them.

Future plans / needs

There is a need to improve and tag data to ensure that it is clear the lead came via GLL, which will improve the tracking and understanding of the impact of support.

More joint events to promote the benefits of the programme and shared working activities with other providers.

"Working with Grow London Local aligns seamlessly with Capital City College Group; Skills Academies, empowering businesses to develop skills and drive growth. We fully support the 'Single Front Door' approach, enabling us to promote our training and reach the wider London business community. Collaborating with the Grow London Local Business Managers allows us to adapt training to meet the specific needs of businesses, ensuring a tailored and effective approach"

Carlo Liu - Head of Digital and Creative Academy

Case Study: Chic Marketing

Chic Marketing is owned and run by Chris Burniston. The organisation works to support businesses with their marketing needs, which mostly involves digital needs but also includes events, merchandising, copy writing, strategy and other traditional marketing methods.

Reasons for engaging with Grow London Local

Chic Marketing heard about Grow London Local through being involved in the Wayfinder Programme.

It was a way to engage micro and SMEs businesses who wanted support with their marketing needs to attract new customers. The Grow London Local platform provided traction for this.

Key benefits of working with Grow London Local

Chic Marketing has gained more business referrals than if they were not part of the programme.

The programme has helped the business to develop the offer and to be able to customise services to meet referrals needs.

Key challenges in engaging with and supporting SMEs

SMEs don't always have a budget for marketing and need to see instant results, especially if they are at an early stage or working with limited resources. GLL can be part of the solution.

Future plans / needs

Understanding where referrals came from, with more information about the business.

More information about the future of Grow London Local and their future needs.

“The programme has allowed me to develop skills to increase the service offer and support available to SMEs as a result of their needs”

Chris Burniston, owner of Chic Marketing

Case Study: London South East Colleges

Established in 2016 as an alignment of Bromley College, Greenwich Community College and Bexley College, London South East Colleges provides further and higher education courses across its eight campuses, offering vocational degrees and apprenticeships to around 13,000 students.

Reasons for engaging with Grow London Local

The college first heard about Grow London Local from a local authority (Bromley).

The college saw this as an opportunity to extend their outreach, to be able to provide more support to more people.

Key benefits of working with Grow London Local

The Grow London Local team has supported the promotion of the college, our events and the support offered via the Grow London Local platform.

Key challenges in engaging with and supporting SMEs

The landscape is difficult for employers to navigate. More engagement is needed with businesses who are looking to upskill their employees

Future plans / needs

To have greater access to updates on policy information and the implications on the programme e.g. changes to skills levy.

“Working with the Grow London Local team has been an incredibly rewarding experience. Their dedication to supporting our outreach efforts and promoting our events has significantly enhanced our ability to engage with local employers and provide valuable upskilling opportunities. The team's proactive approach and continuous support have been instrumental in helping us navigate the complex landscape of SME engagement and employer support.”

Nina Sian -Director of Employer Engagement, Partnerships & Commercial

Case Study: Digital Boost

Digital Boost is a charity owned organisation, founded in 2020. It aims to make business mentorship and personalised support easily available to all small businesses and charities. The company has a core team of nine employees and over 4,000 other volunteers who provide mentoring support in digital marketing, sales, finance, HR etc to businesses.

Reasons for engaging with Grow London Local

Grow London Local was highlighted to Digital Boost through the Mayor's office and the Wayfinder programme,

There is a strong alignment in terms of support being offered to those from a diverse backgrounds and supporting goals for achieving net zero.

Key benefits of working with Grow London Local

It has provided a larger number of business referrals, made by the Grow London Local team.

GLL is seen as having credibility, which has helped address the scepticism associated with 'free support'.

Case studies of the support Digital Boost has provided has been a beneficial tool for marketing purposes

Key challenges in engaging with and supporting SMEs

Lots of support available, can make it difficult for businesses to know who to approach.

Need for more online support for small businesses who are time scarce.

The fragmentation of different offers makes it hard to work in partnership.

Future plans / needs

Improve the online to make it easier to find the right support and encourage more referrals from the self-serve option.

Create an automated dashboards for each business supported, to understand support they have accessed

Encourage collaboration with other service providers to improve offer to businesses.

More feedback from Grow London Local on the types of support SMEs need, that aren't currently being met.

Case Study: Funding London

Funding London aims to bridge the funding gap for early-stage businesses in London and enable real opportunities for sustainable growth. Providing funding support for early stage start up businesses to gain access to Venture Capitalists and other forms of investment. The support is only available for London based founders. The company has circa 6 full time employees.

Reasons for engaging with Grow London Local

Funding London heard about the Grow London Local programme through the UKSPF information days and the GLA, as well as direct contact by the Grow London Local team.

As Funding London is a small organisation, this is a channel for increasing reach and leverage.

The pre-filtering of businesses by GLL will help in the targeting.

Key benefits of working with Grow London Local

The Grow London Local team has provided lots of referrals.

Streamlining of processes has made it more efficient for SMEs to get involved in suitable funding rounds.

Webinars and talks by Grow London Local has provided extra opportunities to get closer to early-stage founders.

Communication have been open and clear, through with regular catch ups.

Key challenges in engaging with and supporting SMEs

Managing demand for funding with up to 200 applications for each 20 person cohort.

Lack of awareness on Venture Capital and requirements.

Venture Capitalist can be quite specific in what they want to invest in with limited transparency on the investment process.

Future plans / needs

Continual improvements to match businesses to Venture Capital.

Increased feedback on all the support businesses have accessed

Continuation and expansion of the webinars as they have been beneficial.

“The opportunity to be involved in webinars through Grow London Local has allowed Funding London to break the barriers of knowledge that SMEs face about Venture Capitalist Funding. It has facilitated knowledge to be delivered efficiently and in quick succession to a larger number of SMEs and enabled more support to be provided as a result.

Jade Collins, Marketing and Community Executive for Funding London

Case Study: South Thames Colleges

South Thames Colleges have colleges in 4 different boroughs in South London; Merton, Sutton, Kingston and Wandsworth, working with 20,000 students aged 16-18. The Colleges provide higher education and apprenticeship courses to over 14,000 students.

Reasons for engaging with Grow London Local

The College heard about Grow London Local via the Association of Colleges, other events and promotion by the Deputy Mayor.

The Grow London Local team has a very good reach that the college wanted to tap into to promote their courses to a wide audience.

Key benefits of working with Grow London Local

The programme helps promote other courses available at the college

It provides a mechanism to get feedback from businesses and build insights into industry need e.g. simple start up courses, sign language etc.

The business advisors have added value in helping the colleges diversify and modify their offer.

Key challenges in engaging with and supporting SMEs

Matching the colleges many different offers to businesses to be able to meet all or the majority of their needs.

Future plans / needs

Greater ability to showcase the colleges offer via the platform, that is not time limited.

Improve the volume and quality of referrals, as well as the tracking of outcomes

“The partnership has been really valuable. It would be a struggle to reach as many businesses across London, without the extra support from the Grow London Local team”

Suna Marfe, Director of Marketing and Partnerships at South Thames Colleges Group