



**Black & Minoritised  
Community Enterprise  
Development Programme (EDP)  
REPORT 2021-24**

## Executive Summary

In April 2021, the Ubele Initiative partnered with ACCESS Foundation for Social Investment and Social Investment Business (SIB) to deliver the Black and Minoritised Communities Enterprise Development Programme (B&MC EDP). The programme was concluded on 31st March 2024. The purpose of this report is to present some of the key findings from the programme, highlight the lessons learned, and showcase the successes of the Ubele Initiative CIC.

A total of 369 participants applied to participate in the B&MC EDP. Of this, 49 were accepted, and 47 completed it successfully. The programme was divided into four cohorts and provided grants of up to £30k for 12 months. It also offered wrap-around enterprise support, including executive coaching, online and in-person workshops and seminars, peer action learning sessions, and specialised and bespoke consulting sessions. Here are some key highlights of the Ubele Black and Minoritised Enterprise Development Programme from April 2021 to March 2024.

Between us, SIB and Ubele distributed over £1.4 million in Enterprise Support Grant Funding to Black and Minoritised Community organisations. These organisations were located in several cities across the UK, including Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol, Devon, Huddersfield, Hull, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Plymouth, Sheffield, Torbay, and Wolverhampton. Over 20 B&ME trainers and consultants supported the cohorts in their enterprise development. Thanks to the grant and support received through the Ubele B&MC EDP, an additional £2.6 million was leveraged.

**Special Mention:** The B&MC EDP was first delivered by Steve Conway and Yvonne Witter. Later, Yvonne Witter became the lead until July 2022. Yvonne played a significant role in setting the precedent for the B&MC EDP. Unfortunately, she passed away in December 2023, which brought shock and sadness to the Ubele Family. Her absence will be deeply felt, and she will be forever missed.

**By Jacyntha Stewart – Enterprise Development Manager (Aug 2022 - Mar 2024)**

UBELE ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME REPORT

Produced by For Business Sake

Jacy Stewart MA & Wendy McPherson, MBA – Author and Editor

Conor McCrory – Analyst and Author

George Boateng – Designer

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## 1. Introduction

The Enterprise Development Programme<sup>1</sup> is a five-year programme funded by Access – The Foundation for Social Investment. It is managed by a coalition of partners, including multiple infrastructure bodies (sector leads) and The Social Investment Business as a strategic grant partner. The Programme provides a blended package of support to organisations, including a grant of up to £30,000 and learning support to grow financial resilience and catalyse the growth of their business ideas. Originally piloted in the homelessness and youth sector in 2018, the Programme has grown to include numerous sectors, including equality, mental health, and most recently, the environmental and Black and minoritised communities strands in 2021.

The Ubele Initiative is the sector partner for the Black and minoritised communities strand of the Enterprise Development Programme. Following a series of dialogue sessions with African diaspora leaders which sought to find effective solutions to persistent social and economic issues in the UK, The Ubele Initiative was founded in 2014 as a community-rooted, collaborative community interest company (CIC).

Borrowing its name from the Swahili word for ‘future,’ the organisation undertakes four primary areas of work:

- Enterprise and asset development
- Advocating for equity and justice
- Strengthening community infrastructure and voice
- Developing people, groups, and organisations

The exact support package provided by the Programme varies from organisation to organisation and is identified and delivered collaboratively between Ubele and the successful applicant, but all organisations receive a grant of up to £30,000 to develop a new or existing trading idea. The remit of the programme is nationwide with a focus from a number of organisations in Bristol, Plymouth, Torbay, Wolverhampton, Sheffield, Manchester, and London on community wealth building.

## 2. Analysis

### **Organisational, Industries and Causes**

The Black and Minoritised Communities strand of the Enterprise Development Programme provided much-needed support to a wide range of organisations, all of which are working to address some of the most pressing social issues of our time.

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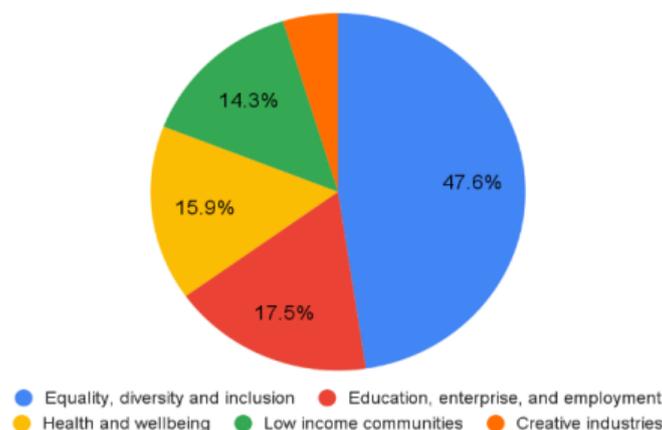
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.enterprisedevelopmentprogramme.org.uk/>

### Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

**47.6%** of the organisations on the Ubele Enterprise Development Programme specifically identified their industry or cause as equality, diversity, and inclusion, meaning that their work explicitly focuses on providing services to diverse communities. This includes but is not limited to:

- ethnically diverse communities
- disabled people
- children and young people, as well as the elderly
- refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants.

Industry or Cause Supported



### Education, Enterprise, and Employment

The next highest proportion of organisations (**17.5%**) on the Programme identified their industry or cause as relating to education, enterprise, and employment. Participating organisations working in this area provide support to both individuals and businesses seeking to develop their professional prospects through targeted support such as training and mentoring.

### Health and Wellbeing

**15.9%** of participating organisations identified their industry or cause as relating to health and wellbeing. This includes both mental and physical health and covers a wide variety of areas, including caring needs and responsibilities as well as counselling. Some organisations also focus on improving well-being in the community by addressing wider determinants of health through improving access to physical activity.

### Low-Income Communities

A similar proportion (**14.3%**) of participating organisations identified their industry or cause as supporting families and communities on lower incomes. Whilst more generalised, these services are a vital lifeline to people whose challenges may not fit into other categories. In addition, they are important means of fostering cohesion amongst the community and providing opportunities for diverse groups to come together in shared spaces such as community hubs.

### Creative Industries

The smallest proportion of organisations on the Programme (**4.8%**) identified their industry or cause as creative industries.

### Further findings

It is evident from the collected data that upon closer analysis, organisations are not necessarily selecting their business sector/industry but rather identifying with the 'impact' or purpose of their organisation. This suggests less confusion about the business sector but highlights that, in some instances, business purpose and its impact hold higher value when selecting the business sector/industry.

When businesses prioritise and identify more with their impact or purpose rather than their specific industry or sector, it is often referred to as being ‘purpose-driven’ or having a ‘mission-driven’ approach. This means that the organisation places a strong emphasis on its broader social or environmental goals, beyond just financial success or industry conventions.

This signals further evidence of the type of organisations accessing the Enterprise Development programme. A purpose-driven business typically seeks to make a positive impact on society or the environment, and this focus on a higher purpose can influence various aspects of the organisations’ operations, marketing, culture, staffing and corporate social responsibility initiatives.

Purpose-driven organisations often also emphasise values and a commitment to addressing societal or environmental challenges. This approach gains popularity with investors, clients and employees who are increasingly seeking to partner and work with and for organisations that align with their personal values and who want to contribute to positive social and environmental outcomes.

In conclusion, for future data collection/reporting, offering an option for selecting business impact/purpose in addition to sector/industry, may offer useful intersectional findings about which sectors are creating impact and where/how. The Programme is, therefore, offering a high density of Black and minoritised businesses in a single programme, collectively making a high impact in their communities.

This also raises the question as to how support for Programme participants is identified and delivered within the programme, and to respond to the needs of the trading arm of the organisation compared to that of the supported needed for the non-profit side. It would need to be understood to what extent the ‘purpose’ of the organisation is acting as the key driver for support (whether financial or otherwise) as opposed to the undertaking of scaling up and growth in the organisations’ sector/industry.



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Toranj Tuition Informal Science Club 1

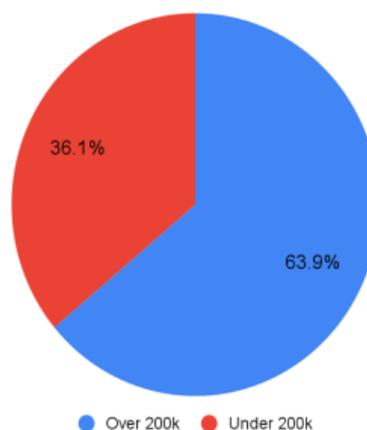


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Visible Outcomes 4 U

### EDP Cohorts Organisation Turnover

The majority of organisations on the Programme (**63.9%**) had a turnover of over £200,000 per annum, whereas a smaller proportion (**36.1%**) had a turnover of less than £200,000 per annum. This is broadly reflective of the Programme’s objective to support organisations in scaling new or existing trading ideas.

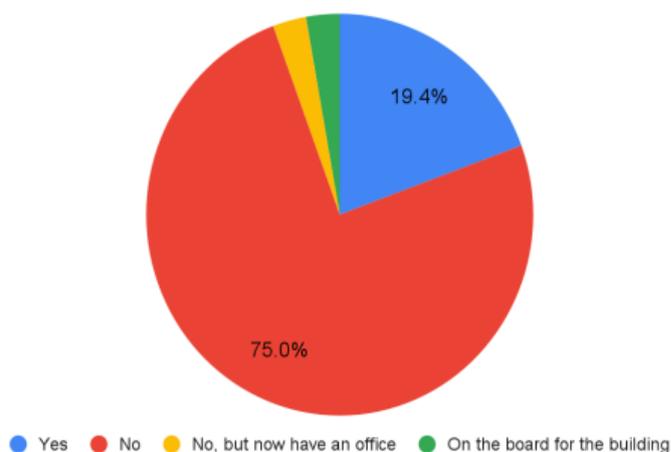
Is your turnover over £200k?



### EDP Cohorts Organisation Assets

Three-quarters (**75.0%**) of the organisations on the Programme do not own their own building, whilst less than one in five (**19.4%**) do. A further **2.8%** of participating organisations have been able to procure a shared working space through the Programme. The remaining **2.8%** of respondents indicated that, whilst they do not own their own building, they are on the board of the building in use by the organisation.

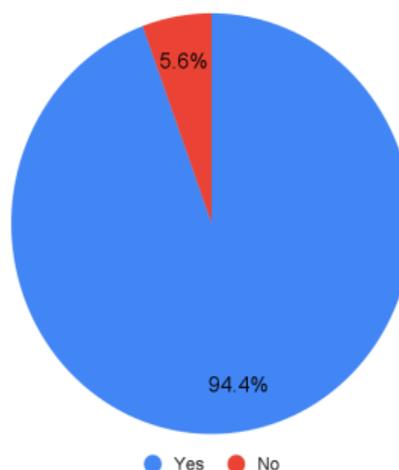
Do you own a building?



### EDP Cohorts Interest in Social Investment

An overwhelming majority of participating organisations (94.4%) indicated that they are interested in further social investment, whilst the remaining respondents (5.60%) indicated that they are not.

Are you interested in further social investment?



### 3. Programme Feedback

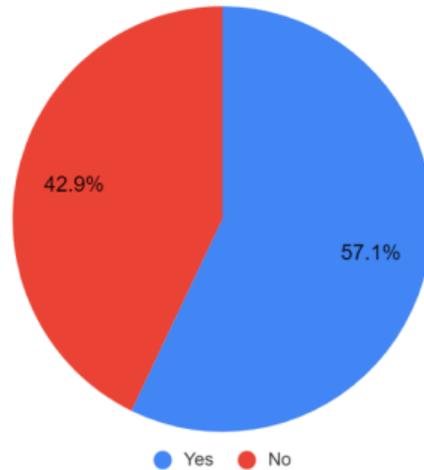
#### Executive Coaching

Organisational leaders received executive coaching to support their development and achieve their goals throughout the Programme. Feedback was collected on several metrics outlined below.

#### Previous Coaching Experience

Over half of the organisational leaders who responded to the survey (**57.1%**) had never collaborated with a coach previously, whereas **42.9%** had.

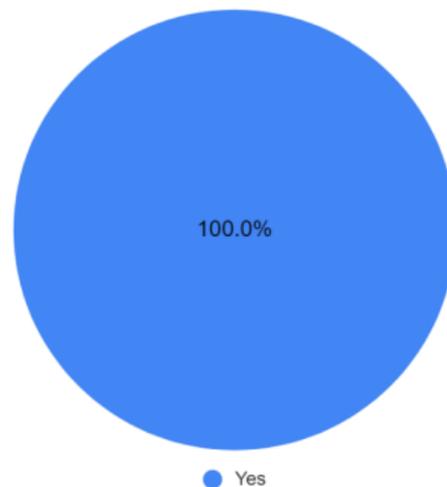
Was this your first time working with a coach?



#### Coaching Goals

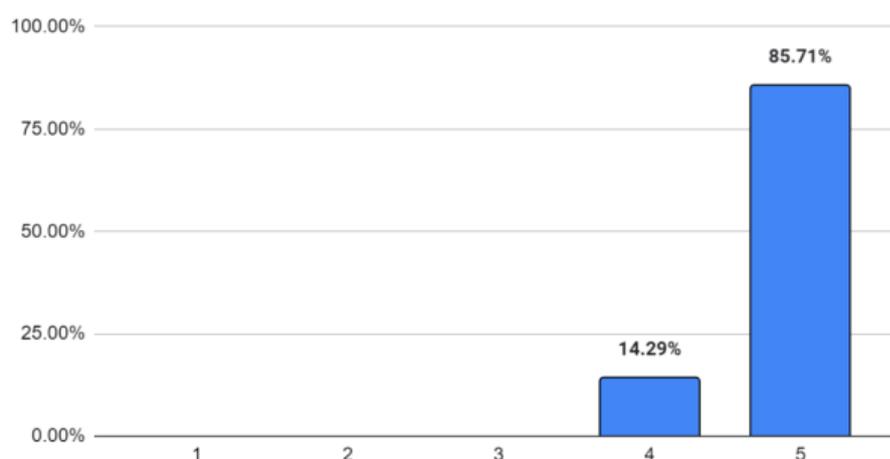
**100%** of organisational leaders surveyed indicated that their coaching goals had been met.

Were your coaching goals met?



## Coach Performance

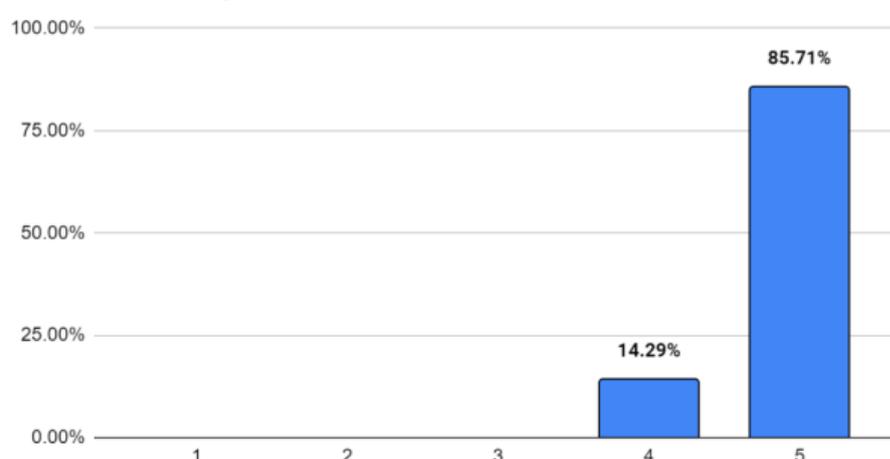
How would you rate your coach's performance in support of you and your coaching objectives on a scale of 1-5?



Feedback on coaching from organisational leaders was uniformly positive, with **85.71%** of respondents providing a rating of 5 out of 5 on a Likert scale and the remaining **14.29%** providing a rating of 4 out of 5.

## Coach Recommendations

How likely are you to recommend our coaching services to a friend or colleague?



All the organisational leaders surveyed stated that they would recommend coaching to a friend or a colleague, with **85.71%** of respondents indicating a 5 out of 5 on a Likert scale and the remaining **14.29%** indicating a 4 out of 5.

## Impact of Coaching on Participants

Participants experienced a range of positive outcomes, the majority of which were linked to feeling empowered and setting actionable goals which related to the development of their organisations.

*“This has empowered me and I feel the session makes it easy for me to action relevant points that will help our organisation move forward.”*

Challenges faced throughout the founding and development of an organisation do not solely impact the organisations and their staff, but the founders too. Survey feedback indicated that coaching helped address such challenges in addition to supporting the organisation's growth.

*“I had a good experience where I felt heard and understood, I was able to have the space to be honest and open on my experience as an entrepreneur and juggling challenges within the business.”*

Participants also expressed that receiving support from a coach who was knowledgeable about equality, diversity and inclusion supported them in areas beyond business development and financial returns.

*“I was able to express my ideas and receive excellent suggestions and feedback. There’s also value in having a wealth of experience to tap into. I also received insightful knowledge about EDI approaches that I can now introduce and embed into my business.”*

Overall, coaching was viewed as a beneficial and integral element of the Enterprise Development Programme. Further feedback at a Peer learning workshop about coaching, recommended that the coachees would have liked to have access to coaching earlier on in the Programme.

### **Enterprise Development Support Workshops**

Through the Programme, participants underwent enterprise development capacity-building workshops designed to develop leaders’ knowledge of how to scale their new or existing trading ideas. Topics included:

1. Moving from Grants to Trading Income
2. Charity structures with a particular focus on the CIO structure
3. Identifying your Market
4. Introduction to Tendering
5. How to win Tenders
6. Digital Marketing - Your online
7. Importance of pricing in smaller organisations – Why it matters
8. Cyber Security and AI
9. Staff Recruitment Best Practices
10. Effective Staff Supervision and
11. Managing People
12. How to do Effective Monitoring
13. and Evaluation
14. Business Planning and Product/ Service Development
15. Understanding your target market
16. Understanding PR
17. Using AI in your business
18. Pitching under five minutes
19. Venture capital and grant funding
20. Understanding mentoring and coaching

The Enterprise Development Support workshops were designed as participation and information sessions and participants were contractually obligated as part of their grant agreement to attend 80%. Participant feedback suggested that the workshops provided them with added information which would otherwise be inaccessible.

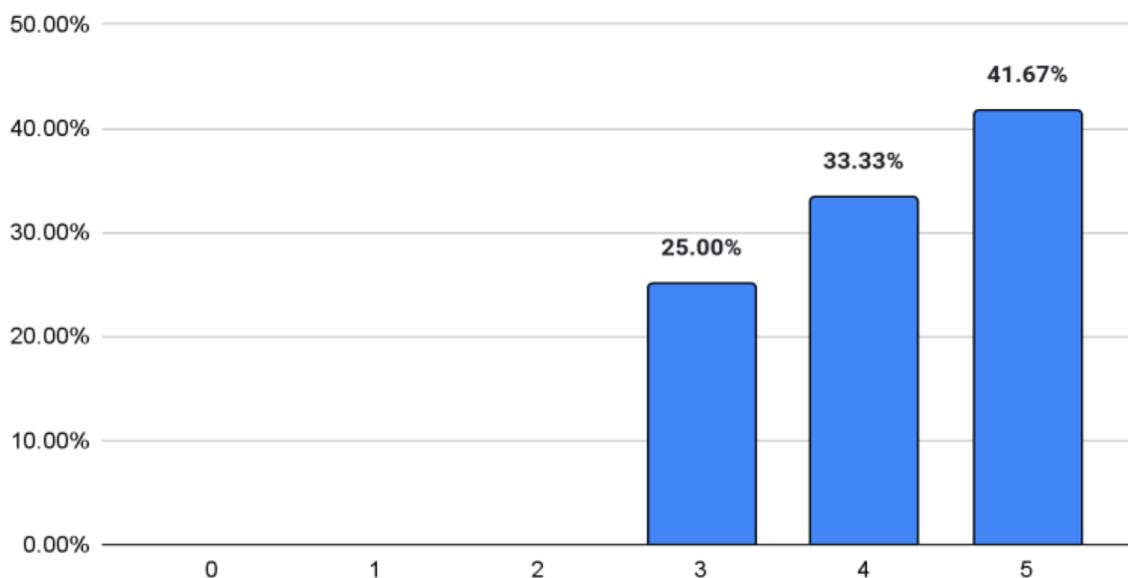
*“The workshop was full of very valuable and insightful advice and suggestions. It covered areas I hadn’t considered.”*

*“The workshop was informative, there was a lot of information”*

### Overall Quality

Feedback from participating organisations was largely positive. On average, those who attended the workshops rated their overall quality **4.2** out of **5**.

#### Overall, how would you rate the quality of the Workshops?

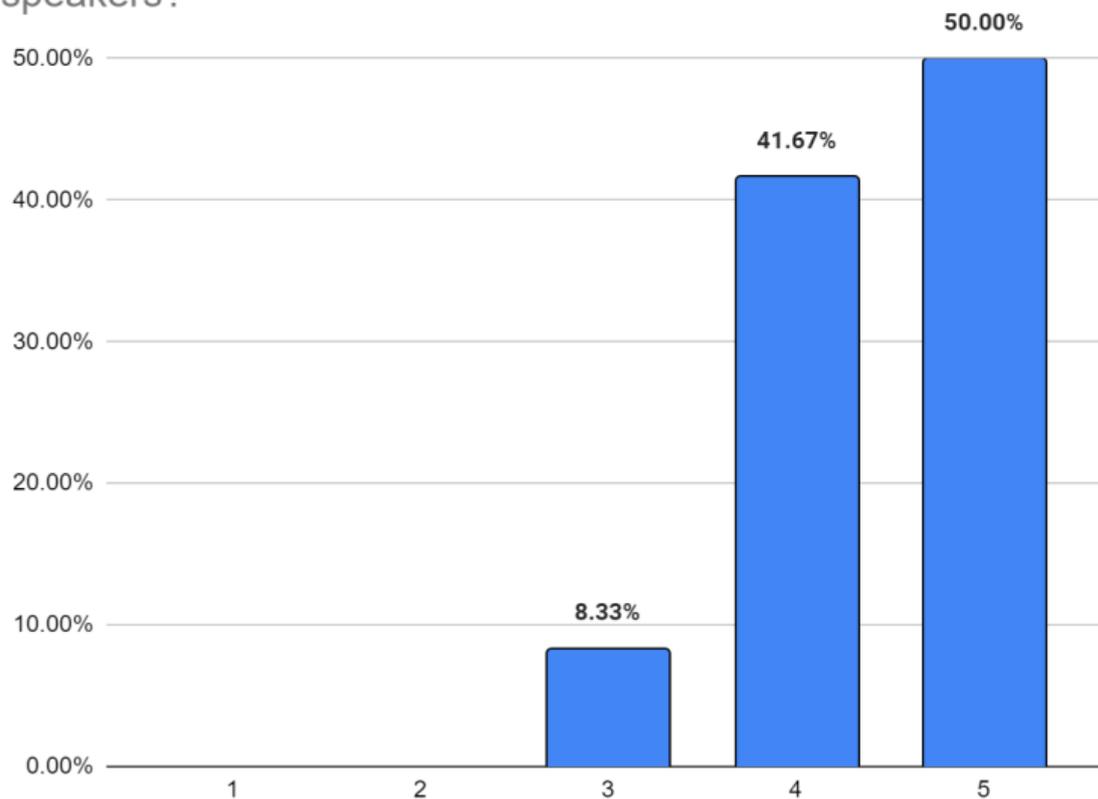


**41.68** of participating organisations rated the overall quality of the workshops a five on a Likert scale. A further **33.33%** rated it at 4 out of 5, and the remaining **25%** at 3 out of 5.

## Speaker Quality

On average, participants rated the overall quality of expert speakers **4.4** out of five.

Overall, how would you rate the quality of the expert speakers?

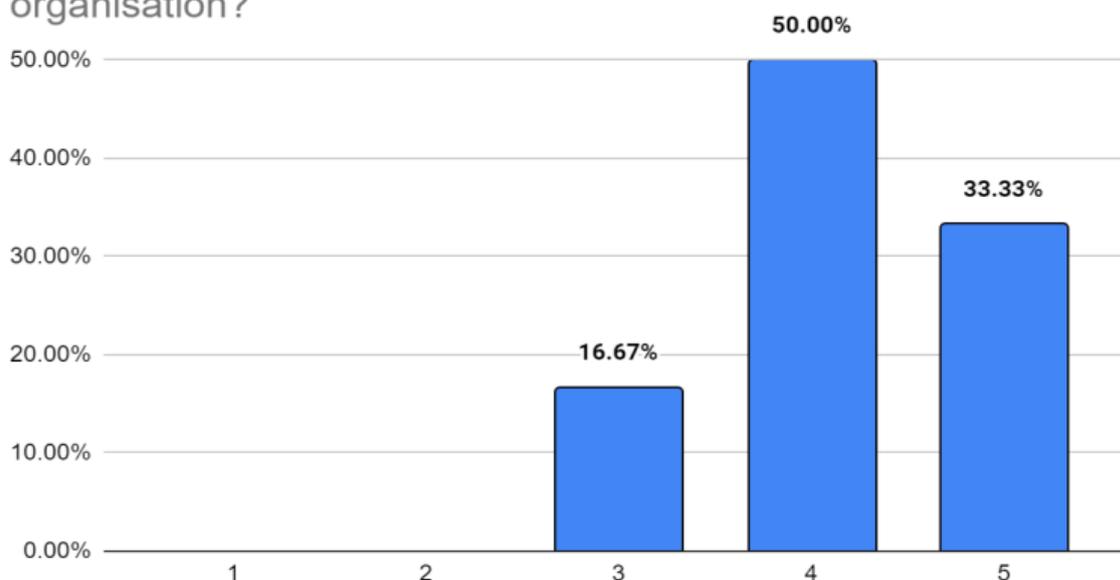


Exactly half of participants (**50%**) rated the overall quality of the expert speakers as **5** out of 5 on a Likert scale. A further **41.67%** of those surveyed gave a rating of **4** out of 5, and the remaining **8.33%** a **3** out of 5.

## Relevance and Helpfulness

On average, participants rated the relevance and helpfulness of workshops as **4.2** out of 5.

How relevant and helpful do you think it was for your organisation?



A third (**33.33%**) of participants rated the workshops as **5** out of 5 on a Likert scale for relevance to their organisation and helpfulness. Exactly half (**50%**) of participants rated them **4** out of 5, and the remaining **16.67%** a **3** out of 5.

## Action Learning Sets

Participants also attended facilitated action learning sets designed to inspire collective and collaborative problem-solving, pooling of expertise, and networking opportunities between organisations. Feedback from participants suggested that this was a highly valued element of the Programme.

*"I want to emphasise how valuable all of this information has been, as we have been able to implement many of these learnings into our new business model."*

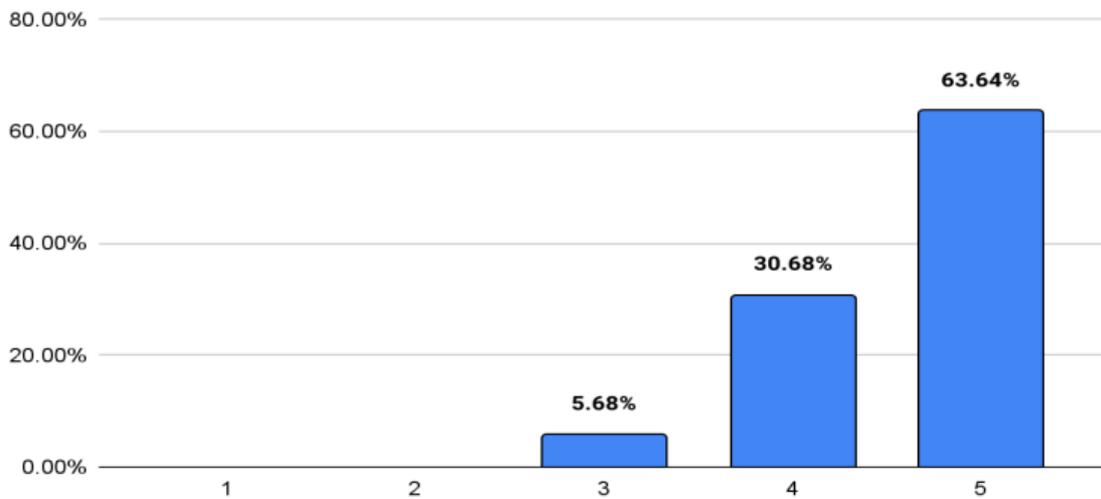
*"I thoroughly enjoyed the session for its vibrant and engaging atmosphere. It was evident that all participants actively contributed by posing insightful questions and providing valuable suggestions."*

*"I gained a deeper appreciation for the power of collaborative and interactive discussions. It reinforced the idea that diverse perspectives and thoughtful questions can ignite creativity and encourage individuals to think beyond their current boundaries."*

### Overall Quality

Feedback from those who attended the facilitated action learning set sessions was highly positive. On average, participants rated the sessions **4.6** out of 5 for overall quality.

#### How would you rate the quality of the facilitated sessions?

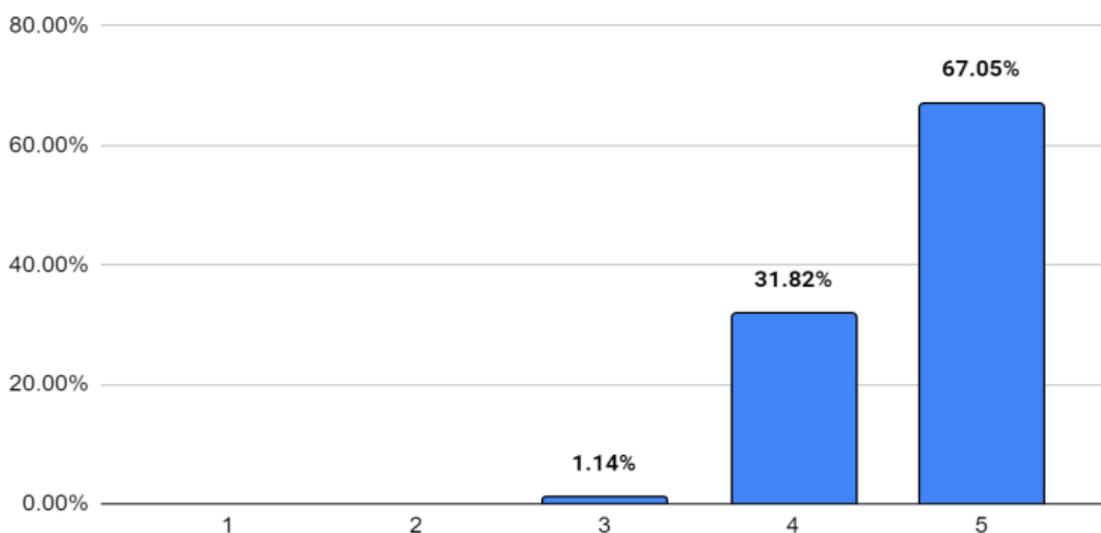


The majority of participants (**63.64%**) gave the sessions a **5** out of 5 for overall quality. A smaller but still considerable proportion of participants (**30.68%**) rated the sessions **4** out of 5, and the remaining **5.68%** a **3** out of 5.

### Facilitator Session Management

Overall, participants rated facilitators' management of the action learning set sessions **4.7** out of 5.

#### Overall, how would you rate the facilitator's management of the session?



Feedback from participating organisations concerning facilitators' management of the sessions was highly positive, with approximately two thirds (67.05%) giving a rating of 5 out of 5 on a Likert scale. A further 31.82% gave a rating of 4 out of 5, and the remaining 1.14% a 3 out of 5.



EDP Member Photo Credit:  
Reaching Higher Youth Charity  
Fundraiser



EDP Member Photo Credit:  
Hope Against Poverty CIC  
Mobile Food Hub



EDP Member Photo Credit:  
Colechi Clean Fashion Summit'23



EDP Member Photo Credit:  
The Mentoring Lab



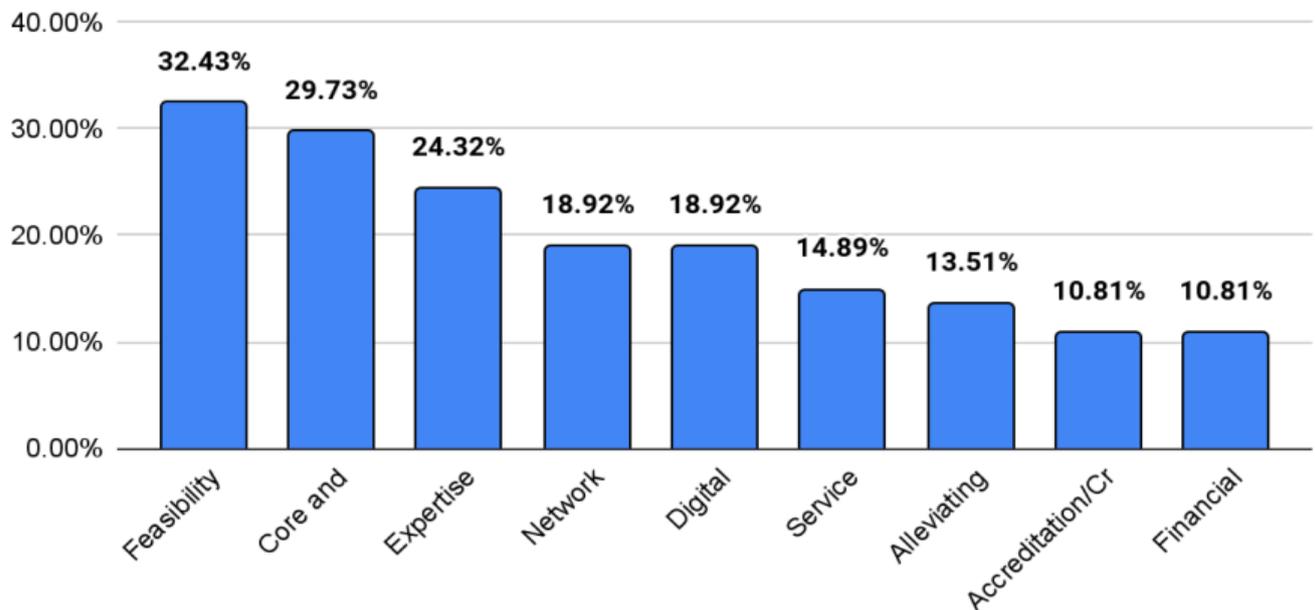
EDP Member Photo Credit:  
Chabad Lubavitch Leeds & Proverbs 31 Woman -  
Shabbat Dinner Packs Collaboration

## 4. Outcomes

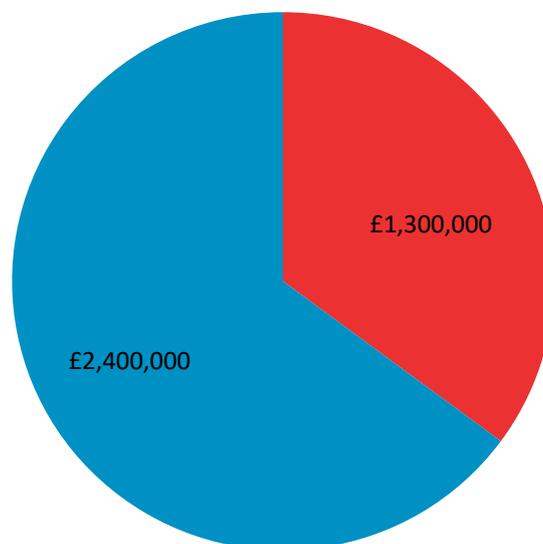
### Grant Funding Impact

Participating organisations reported that the grant funding element of the Programme resulted in a wide variety of positive outcomes. These outcomes have been grouped by impact theme and are outlined below.

### How has the EDP grant funding supported your enterprise idea so far?



Revenue increased significantly for all 49 organisations. EDP Partner SIB deployed grants totalling £1.3 million, resulting in approximately £2.4 million in revenue leveraged thanks to the Ubele Enterprise Support Programmes.



### Impact Theme 1: Feasibility/Market Research

More than three out of ten organisations (**32.43%**) reported that the grant funding allowed them to commission or conduct either a feasibility study or market research into whether their services or products are viable and in demand. For several organisations, this also translated into them being able to develop a business plan which would enable them to launch or further develop their products or services.

*“The EDP funding has helped us realise this idea/dream that was conceived over 5 years ago.”*

For some organisations, it was felt that the feasibility study and/or market research supported them to become more ‘investment ready’ and prepare to pitch their idea to prospective investors. For others, it provided vital inspiration for rebuilding their ambitions following the immense challenges of the pandemic or creating something new in its wake.

*“With the aid of this programme, we could get our organisation back on track. The coronavirus pandemic caused significant disruption to our services.”*

*“The funding provided us with an excellent opportunity to test and learn new products and see which products attract the most interest from stakeholders and build sustainable revenue streams.”*

### Impact Theme 2: Core and Revenue Costs

The second most impactful use of the funding reported by organisations (**29.73%**) was core and revenue costs, covering a wide range of critical business needs. In one example, an organisation reported that it was able to use a portion of the funding to ensure its building which was a vital space for the team to work collaboratively. In another, an organisation was able to use the time freed up from having to continuously focus on generating revenue to begin engaging with key decision-makers in their sector to effect change.

*“Getting the building insurance was a major boost to us as without it, we would not be able to progress on our enterprise idea.”*

Many organisations reported that they were able to recruit personnel who would support them in delivering projects or services. This indicates that the Programme has had a second-order effect of job creation and reaffirms the idea that social enterprises, when enabled, **“create jobs and employment in places which have been left behind by other forms of business.”**

*“It has enabled us to engage a project director who has been dedicated to growing the project.”*

*“The recruitment of staff was also a major boost to us as an organisation as the new staff have boosted our ability to deliver on our enterprise idea and to generate revenue.”*

### **Impact Theme 3: Expertise**

Just under a quarter (**24.32%**) of organisations reported that the grant funding element of the Programme was used to develop their expertise to develop new or existing trading ideas. This includes both the training and development of in-house expertise and outsourcing expertise in areas such as business development where necessary.

*“The funding helped pay for essential expertise and the process focused us on how to get this done.”*

*“The grant is also enabling us [...] pay our EDI trainers to review our current training and develop new training which will help us generate more income”*

Expertise and access to expertise is a recurrent theme in the impacts reported by organisations which have benefitted from the Enterprise Development Programme – whether used in the short term to catalyse business growth or developed internally with a view to ensuring longer-term sustainability.

*“It has facilitated the implementation of innovative strategies, enabling us to enhance our products/services and reach a wider audience.”*

*“We improved the quality assurance knowledge of our project managers, particularly in the areas of safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection and produced related policies.”*

### **Impact Theme 4: Network Building**

Just under a fifth (**18.92%**) of participating organisations reported that they had been able to access or develop networks which enhanced their ability to develop their service or product. This impact helped participants to consider their services beyond the bounds of their organisations and develop systems thinking with respect to their work.

*“Through access to the right people (networks) and training to give us the opportunity to think strategically and at scale. The space has been vital, as well as the opportunity to hear other people’s stories and challenge our own thinking, assumptions, and patterns.”*

In addition, networking opportunities enabled participating organisations to leverage knowledge that, in other circumstances, would have financial implications.

*“More importantly has been the regular networking and learning that has opened my eyes to invaluable information that I simply would not have access to because of market rate consultancy fees for such expertise.”*

During a period when operating costs are skyrocketing, support of this nature is a vital lifeline for businesses that may be concentrating more on surviving than scaling up.

### **Impact Theme 5: Digital Infrastructure/Transformation**

**18.92%** of participating organisations reported that the grant funding element of the Programme has enabled them to invest in building digital infrastructure for their businesses. As noted by both ‘Reclaiming the Future’ and the World Economic Forum, digital transformation is an expensive yet vital part of ensuring social enterprises are prepared to address the social issues of today. Key software such as customer/client relationship management (CRM) systems as well as improved websites were investments that the Programme supported.

*“The grant enabled us to set up systems such as Customer Relationship Management systems and marketing systems to generate more leads.”*

*“It has enabled us to develop a new website that incorporates our vision and the enterprise idea we are promoting.”*

Such tools not only ensure that social enterprises are able to keep pace with the demand for digital services but also enable them to engage better and communicate with their stakeholders and service users.<sup>2</sup>

### **Impact Theme 6: Service Delivery Development**

Another key theme which emerged was being able to invest in upgrading existing services or products or developing new ones entirely beyond the feasibility stage. **14.89%** of participating organisations reported having reinvested their grant funding for such a purpose. For one organisation, this meant deferring the introduction of a new scheme to take a more focused, impactful approach to scaling an existing scheme which meant that they were better able to manage staff capacity. For others, it meant delivering services to more people through being able to better engage with organisations which could benefit from their offering.

*“The funding and monitoring process itself has helped us to focus minds on the tasks needed to kickstart our enterprise activities.”*

*“The EDP grant has enabled [us] to ringfence time to research, learn and develop our online career mentoring platform.”*

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/05/how-digital-tech-turbo-charge-social-enterprises/>

The ability to innovate services and products is crucial to ensuring that social enterprises are sustainable in the long term, although the ability to do so is often swallowed by the necessity to maintain income streams by continually delivering business as usual.

### **Impact Theme 7: Alleviating Capacity Burden**

Several organisations chose to use the grant funding to commission external expertise or develop in-house capability. However, the reality for many participants is that internally held expertise is being subsumed by tasks which would otherwise be someone else's responsibility instead of being used effectively due to the demands placed upon the organisation.

*"It has helped to pay for training sessions for new coaches and pay for admin/networking/meeting time for me to attend."*

*"The support from the teams has been able to backfill aspects of my role which has meant that I have had more time to think more broadly about ourselves and income generation."*

*"We have also built internal capacity by hiring a business development officer who has focused on developing our trading arm."*

In fact, **13.51%** of the participating organisations chose to use the funding to alleviate capacity burdens within the business to focus on other things, such as innovating services or products, learning and development, and business strategy. This suggests that skills to undertake these tasks are limited to Programme participants/business leaders and an area into which participating organisations could immediately identify was insufficiently developed within existing resources.

This also signals the imbalance that can occur when trying to scale up at the same time as delivering on the day-to-day business activities – it cannot always be achieved by the same people at the same time. Given the small number of participating organisations choosing to utilise their funding in this area and, given the purpose of the funding, it is a lower-than-expected utilisation figure. This may mean that staff have the capacity to do both themselves, have the skills already within the organisation to split the workload, or have prioritised other activities for funding over this.

### **Impact Theme 8: Accreditation/Credibility**

Roughly one in ten (**10.81%**) of participating organisations made use of the grant funding element of the programme by seeking either an accreditation or qualification, which gives their business more credibility.

*"It has supported [the] founder in attending workshops and obtaining teaching qualification to facilitate adult learning."*

*"It has supported us by enabling us to pay for the participants to get the food hygiene and manufacturing certificate."*

*"It has helped us to pay for an organisation to write our training manual, to get it accredited."*

Many certifications are desirable, if not essential, when entering a market and can position social enterprises to expand the scale of their trading idea and this is evidently something the Programme has been able to support.

Efforts to address iniquity, promote equality and address system barriers can be particularly impactful in supporting the success of Black and Minoritised people. Initiatives that focus on reducing disparities in educational resources, access to professional mentors/coaches, addressing implicit biases, and fostering inclusive work environments contribute to a more equitable playing field. Black-led organisations have been singled out as a separate investment group (as opposed to other groups that are thematic/sectors). This further highlights the evidence base that Black and Minoritised organisations have experienced a range of experiences that have led to less success and reduced access to low-hanging fruit, be it business opportunities within their existing sector and/or support compared to other demographic groups.

Diversity and inclusion in the Programme can and have led to innovation and creativity, which can support sustainable success. The Programme values and supports the development of the Programme participants and it is the development of these individuals from Black and Minoritised backgrounds that future businesses may choose to work with because of these accreditations and enhanced learning and development. In addition, an increased sense of confidence and resilience of a more certain future can be an intangible outcome that serves to improve the quality of life for many Black-led business leaders.

#### **Impact Theme 9: Financial Resilience**

Another second order effect of the previous eight impacts experienced was financial resilience, as identified by **10.81%** of organisations. Activities such as the feasibility studies and market research were considered vital to securing long-term sustainability.

*“[The] EDP Grant helped us improve our trading activities and through these, we could improve our financial resilience and increase our revenue to rebuild our reserves.”*

*“The support has not only bolstered our financial stability but has also positioned us for sustainable success in the competitive market.”*

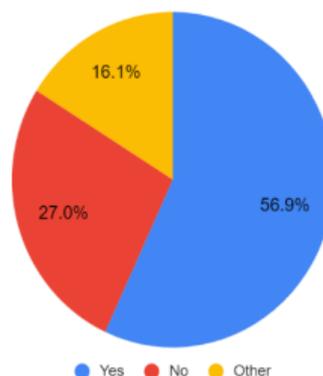
Other outcomes, such as additional business development expertise, which allowed organisations to develop a trading arm, were key to improving financial resilience.

## Sales Revenue

Participating organisations experienced largely positive outcomes from the Programme with respect to sales revenue.

Over half (**56.8%**) of organisations have established increased sales revenue from their enterprise idea through the Programme, whilst just over a quarter (**27.0%**) have not. For organisations classified as 'other,' several explanatory factors were offered in addition to their answer.

Have you managed to establish sales revenue from your Enterprise Idea?



**8.1%** of organisations had engaged in activities in preparation for increasing their revenue which, whilst considered critical steps for doing so, had not yet resulted in increased revenue. For example, one organisation noted that they had conducted market research, established a pricing model and launched their provision, although had not realised additional sales due to the early stage of the process. Another organisation stated that their objective was to establish a shopfront in addition to their online retailing business and that this was what they were working on.

**2.7%** of organisations clarified that their support through the Programme has been intended to increase sponsorship income rather than revenue. A further **2.7%** currently have 'potential sales,' and the remaining **2.7%** have maintained their revenue streams.

## Jobs Created

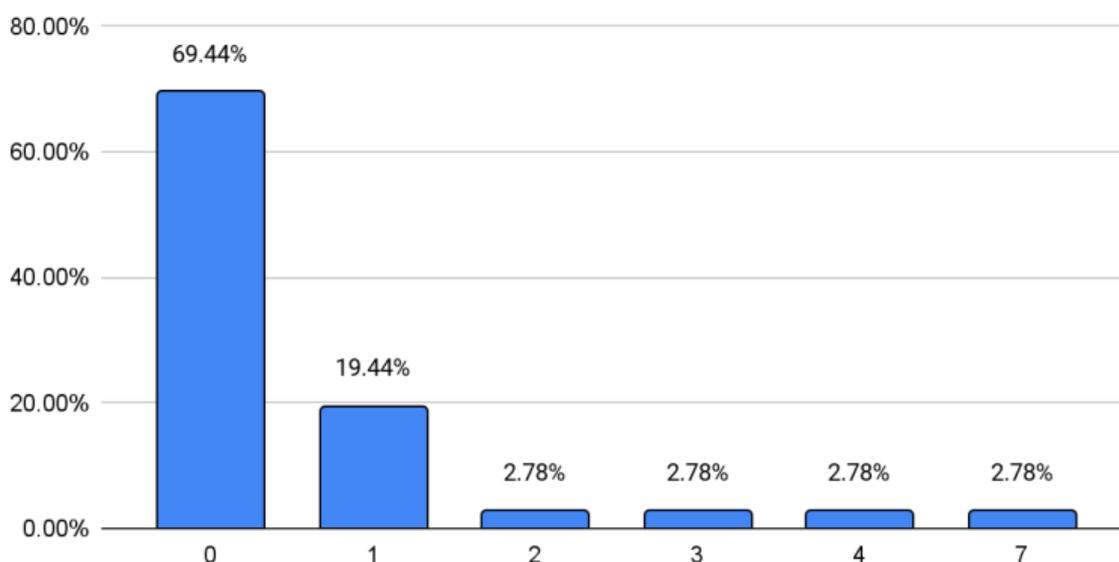
As previously referenced, one of the second order effects of the grant funding element of the Programme is job creation. It is important to note that organisations are limited in what they can achieve in terms of funding staff members with £30,000 whilst achieving their other ambitions. For example, according to Glassdoor, the average full-time salary of a project officer in December 2023 ranges between £29,000-39,000.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, the Ubele Enterprise Development Programme has succeeded in funding vital capacity and expertise which is supporting organisations to scale new and existing trading ideas, particularly with reference to hiring fixed-term, project-based staff members.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/Salaries/project-officer-salary-SRCH\\_KO0,15.htm](https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/Salaries/project-officer-salary-SRCH_KO0,15.htm)

## Full Time

How many full-time jobs have you managed to create as a result of the Ubele EDP?



Most organisations (69.44%) did not use the grant element of the Programme to fund internal job creation and instead used the funding to invest in areas such as building digital infrastructure building, learning and development, and core costs such as insurance. It is also notable that several participating organisations ‘bought in’ expertise in order to conduct feasibility studies or market research. One organisation noted that, whilst they have not created any new roles, they have used the funding to maintain their current staffing levels.

**19.44%** of organisations used the funding to create one full-time job such as a project officer, administrator, or people with marketing and communications expertise. **2.78%** of organisations reported that the grant funding was leveraged to secure additional investment which allowed them to increase the hours of one staff member and create a new role.

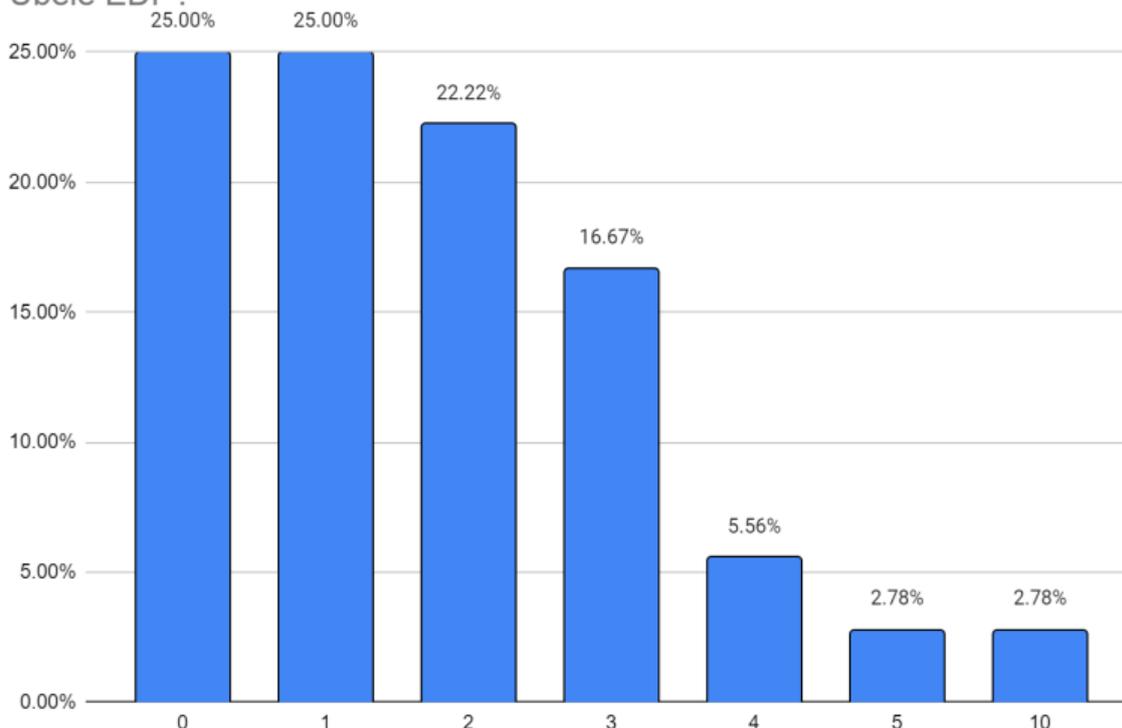
**2.78%** and **2.78%** of organisations reported having created three and four full-time jobs, respectively but did not elaborate further.

A further **2.78%** of organisations were able to create seven seasonal full-time roles to support the development of their new or existing trading idea.

In total, **23 full-time roles were created** using the grant funding from the Programme.

## Part Time

How many part-time jobs have you managed to create as a result of the Ubele EDP?



One quarter (**25%**) of organisations did not use the grant funding element of the Programme to create any part-time jobs, although one organisation stated that it intended to use the investment to create two in future. Another quarter (**25%**) of organisations reported having created one part-time job with the investment, one of which had also created an internship for its social media function.

**22.22%** of participating organisations had created two fixed-term, part-time roles to launch or scale their projects as a result of the investment. A slightly smaller proportion of organisations (**16.67%**) had done the same thing but created three part-time jobs.

**5.56%** of participating organisations had created four jobs using the funding, **2.78%** five jobs, and **2.78%** ten jobs.

In total, **66 part-time roles were created** using the grant funding element of the Programme.

## 5. EDP Case Studies

These EDP Case Studies celebrate and promote the organisations that participated in the the Ubele Initiative Black and Minoritised Enterprise Development Programme. To provide a snapshot of those who chose to be in this report.

### Case Study 1: The Mentoring Lab: EDP Cohort 4



Based in Hackney, The Mentoring Lab provides youth mentoring training and development consultancy to statutory services, voluntary and community organisations, parents, and independent youth practitioners, upskilling those working with young people to use Youth Mentoring as a Practice.

Thanks to the EDP grant, The Mentoring Lab has been able to allocate dedicated time and resources to thoroughly research, learn, and further develop an innovative online career mentoring platform. The financial support has been instrumental in allowing the organisation the necessary breathing space to fully explore and enhance the functionalities of its platform to plan to deliver seamless and effective career mentoring experiences for its users.

Furthermore, the grant has facilitated the opportunity for The Mentoring Lab to engage with both new and existing corporate and community stakeholders. Through comprehensive consultations and discussions, the organisation has been able to gain invaluable insights into their specific needs, preferences, and expectations with regards to its online platform. This collaborative approach has been mutually beneficial, as their input has enriched the organisation's understanding of the market and helped to align the platform with the evolving demands of key stakeholders.

Equally important has been the networking and learning opportunities that the EDP grant has afforded The Mentoring Lab. By participating in various industry events, conferences, and workshops, the team has connected with experts and professionals in the field. This exposure has been particularly crucial, as it has allowed them to access a wealth of knowledge that would otherwise be restricted by the expensive fees associated with market rate consultancy services. The insights and advice gained through these interactions have proven to be invaluable in shaping strategic decisions and expanding horizons.

Overall, the support provided by the EDP grant has been instrumental in enabling The Mentoring Lab to invest the necessary time and gain the essential knowledge needed to secure the long-term future of the organisation. By equipping it with the resources and opportunities to research, engage stakeholders, and learn from industry experts, the grant has played a crucial role in ensuring the continued growth and success of The Mentoring Lab and our online career mentoring platform.

## Case Study 2: Impact Hub Bradford CIC: EDP Cohort 2



Impact Hub Bradford is a locally rooted, globally connected social innovation hub and coworking space based in Bradford's historic Little Germany district. The organisation's objective is to inspire, connect and support changemakers, social entrepreneurs, businesses, and startups to build solutions that create positive social impact.

Impact Hub Bradford has experienced successful results from the Enterprise Development Programme, generating sales revenue for its enterprise idea through well-executed strategic programmes and memberships. By implementing targeted initiatives and forging valuable partnerships, the organisation has cultivated a dynamic ecosystem that not only attracts customers but also fosters ongoing engagement. The membership programmes, in particular, have played a pivotal role in this success by offering exclusive benefits and incentives that resonate with target audiences.

Through these programmes, the organisation has not only enhanced customer loyalty but also increased overall sales income, creating a sustainable revenue stream. This approach has proven to be instrumental in driving initial sales and cultivating long-term relationships with valued members. The funding provided by the Enterprise Development Programme Grant has played a crucial role in supporting this progress. It has allowed Impact Hub Bradford to invest in critical areas, including research and development, technology infrastructure, and talent acquisition. As a result, it has been able to hire ten additional part-time staff members, contributing to both the growth of the organisation and the local economy.

Moreover, the Programme has facilitated the implementation of innovative strategies, enabling Impact Hub Bradford to enhance its products and services to reach a wider audience. The grant has served as a catalyst for growth, providing the necessary resources to expand operations and improve efficiency. This support has not only bolstered financial stability but has also positioned the organisation for sustainable success in a highly competitive market.

### Case Study 3: Saathi House: EDP Cohort 3



With over 25 years of history, Saathi House is an anchor organisation based in Birmingham that is committed to supporting women to drive positive change in their lives, in their family's lives, and in the local communities.

Through the Enterprise Development Programme, Saathi House has achieved initial success in increasing its trading revenue. One significant milestone has been the acquisition of various food orders for community events in Saathi House's local area. This newfound triumph has been made possible due to the invaluable support provided by the programme.

The grant funding element of the Programme enabled Saathi House to pay for participants to obtain essential certifications such as the food hygiene and manufacturing certificates. By equipping the Saathi House team with these qualifications, the programme has proven instrumental in ensuring that the enterprise operates in compliance with industry standards and regulations.

Furthermore, the Programme has also guided Saathi House in exploring the concept of branding and its application to their enterprise idea, aptly named 'Saathi Snacks'. By offering valuable insights and strategies, the programme has played a pivotal role in shaping the identity and market positioning of "Saathi Snacks", enabling it to stand out amongst competitors.

The organisation is currently undertaking a crucial initiative focused on empowering the women involved in the enterprise. This undertaking involves providing them with thorough knowledge and understanding of the dynamics of self-employment, specifically emphasising the ins and outs of running a food business from the comfort of their own homes.

In addition, the Programme has enabled Saathi House to expand both its capacity and expertise by taking on five new members of staff.

## 5. Key Challenges

There were several challenges experienced throughout the programme that should be considered should there be future iterations. These challenges did not detract from the overall positive impact of the Programme and are to be expected with any initiative of this kind, especially for pilot programmes. However, it is important that they are addressed for continuous improvement.

Attendance at training workshops was possibly the most significant challenge in delivering the programme. Organisational attendance ranged widely from **0-44%**, with no single participating organisation attending all six of the workshops. By definition, the participants supported by the Programme are incredibly busy. It is evident from the fact that some organisations used the grant funding to “backfill capacity”, that releasing personnel to attend workshops is a difficult, sometimes impossible choice for businesses of this nature.

Participant feedback highlighted that the length of the workshops may have been off-putting for some and that clearer communication about the fact that there was a break scheduled may have increased attendance. It was also noted that higher attendance would have been beneficial for those who did attend, as elements such as the question-and-answer section would have been more valuable with greater collective experience. It was suggested by several participants that splitting the workshop sessions in two may make them more accessible. This is a resource-intensive decision, but it still bears consideration for further programme design/improvement.

A second key challenge for the Programme could also be considered a key strength. Programmes, which, by definition are broad, are often required to compromise on depth. The diversity of organisations receiving support from the Enterprise Development Programme meant that the benefits of workshops, action learning sets, executive coaching and grant funding could be realised across several sectors and regions. However, each of these organisations, sectors and regions is experiencing its own challenges, which could to varying extents be addressed by different elements of the programme.

Founders experience shared challenges that can be addressed by common solutions. On the other hand, many experience idiosyncratic challenges that require tailored – if not bespoke – advice, guidance, and support. The flexibility of the Programme and Ubele’s adaptability meant that the exact package of support could be tailored. However, there are limitations to what can be done without more individualised support.

The programme could consider a workshop selection model that includes essential attendance and sessions that could be attended via video. Variations to the learning and development pedagogy could support greater attendance/completion of the set workshops, while action learning sets could be as such used for the Q&A session and peer learning opportunities.

The third and final key challenge is closely linked with the second; the systemic disadvantages faced by Black and minoritised-led businesses are complex and deeply ingrained in the social and economic landscape of the United Kingdom.

It is evident from the feedback and the outcomes of the Programme that the package of support provided by Access and facilitated by The Ubele Initiative was hugely impactful. Businesses were able to invest in key areas such as capacity, expertise, digital infrastructure, and accreditation. However, the Enterprise Development Programme should be seen as a critical first step on a roadmap to equity of opportunity, not the solution in itself.

Given the current state of the economy, £30,000 in grant funding is too restrictive to make the kinds of investments needed to successfully launch a new trading idea or scale an existing one, as it barely covers the cost of a project officer for 12 months. The levels of professional isolation faced by Black and Minoritised entrepreneurs are evident in the fact that even the knowledge of what constitutes reasonable market rates for business consultancy was considered a closely guarded secret by some participants. Demand for support currently far outstrips supply.

It is the hope that this programme will form part of an evidence base for future investment which continues to level the playing field in a time where social issues are more acute than ever, and social enterprises need support in order to address them. An intentional addition to the Programme would be to include funding for capacity building such as consultancy support, business support, project management support, and enterprise investment support.

To use backfilling grants more effectively, it's essential to tailor them to the specific needs and circumstances of Black and minoritised community organisations. Rather than dispersing grants broadly, they should be targeted to regions or organisations where they will have the most impact. This must involve assessing areas with significant resource gaps and where there's a demonstrated need for additional support. In addition, this must be aligned with Ubele's current and future programming. Whilst Cohorts 3 and 4 were encouraged to apply based on assets, exceptions were given based on the qualifying criteria of the overall programme.

While needs assessments were conducted throughout the selection stage of the process to identify where grants can best address gaps in resources or services, this could be improved by consulting with local communities, organisations, and stakeholders to understand their specific challenges and requirements, specifically the Ubele National Strategic Alliance Partners.

By using grants to not only fill immediate gaps but also to build long-term capacity within organisations or communities, providing training, resources, and infrastructure improvements that enable Black and minoritised community organisations to better meet their needs in the future is also highly recommended.

As SIB were responsible for the Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms to track the effectiveness of the grants, The Ubele Initiative should continue tracking attendance, assessing outcomes, and gathering feedback from cohorts to continuously refine and improve the enterprise support programme.

As for the correlation between backfilling grants and attendance, analysing attendance data in relation to the timing and distribution of grants could provide insights into whether there's a correlation between the two.

However, it's important to consider other factors that might influence attendance, such as the workshops' relevance, the programming quality, and external factors like scheduling conflicts or logistical barriers. When attendance at workshops became very low, a survey was conducted requesting all 49 of the cohort to respond with the main reason for not attending, which they understood was not compulsory.

Determining the optimum workshop length can depend on various factors, including the content being covered, the preferences of the target audience, and logistical considerations. Conducting surveys and gathering feedback from participants helped identify the ideal method of delivery. Through the experimentation of different workshop lengths and formats and measuring their effectiveness in achieving desired outcomes we discovered that 1-2-1 specialised bespoke 1hour consultancy was the preferred and best approach.

## 6. Methodology

The Ubele Enterprise Development Programme, a strand of Access – The Foundation for Social Investment's Enterprise Development Programme focusing on Black and minoritised communities, sought to understand the initial impacts of the initiative on participating organisations and make recommendations going forward. A wide variety of organisations participated in the Programme, from CICs to private companies operating in a range of sectors:

- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Education, Enterprise, and Employment
- Health and Wellbeing
- Creative Industries

Two online surveys were designed and distributed to all the participating organisations following delivery of the Programme. Surveys included both quantitative and qualitative metrics which explored several key areas, including:

### **Organisation:**

- Industry/social value impact
- Turnover
- Tangible assets
- Interest in further social investment

### **Programme Impact:**

- Increase in revenue because of the Programme
- Jobs created
- Grant funding outcomes

**36** responses were received for each of the surveys, representing **72%** of the total participating organisations. Responses were then coded thematically and mapped against the desired outcomes of the Programme.

## 7. Recommendations

**Access should repeat The Ubele Enterprise Development Programme and scale it up to 100 organisations.**

The Programme is evidently effective at supporting organisations to launch new trading ideas or scale up existing ones. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive; over half (**56.8%**) of participating organisations have already experienced an increase in revenue, **89** jobs have been created, and several other positive outcomes have been experienced. There are no elements of the Programme which could not be scaled if they are adequately resourced.

These outcomes represent a great leap forward in terms of taking positive action in order to address the systemic barriers faced by Black and minoritised led businesses and communities. However, more action is needed and at a greater scale if meaningful change is to be achieved.

**Access should increase the grant funding element of the Enterprise Development Programme from up to £30,000 per organisation to up to £45,000 per organisation with more for the London based businesses.**

**30.56%** and **75%** of the participating organisations used the grant funding to create full-time and part-time roles, respectively. This is a success not only in expanding the capacity and expertise available to businesses but also in generating economic activity within the areas in which organisations operate. However, organisations also benefited from investing into other key areas such as building digital infrastructure, core costs, and accreditations. Given the current economic climate, £30,000 is too restrictive to facilitate all of these elements simultaneously and should be extended to encompass a more comprehensive package of support.

**The Ubele Initiative should conduct a further evaluation of outcomes from the Programme in 12 months using the same evaluation metrics.**

Within their survey responses, several organisations noted that, whilst they had not achieved key outcomes such as hiring staff, increasing revenue, or launching new services or products, they were continuing to work towards doing so. The diversity of organisations on the Programme and their associated objectives is such that they are moving at different paces and are therefore achieving results accordingly. To understand the impact of the Ubele Enterprise Development Programme, more data gathered over a longer time scale is needed.

**Participating organisations should establish a peer support network which extends beyond the lifespan of the Enterprise Development Programme.**

Participating organisations praised having access to expertise which would otherwise be costly and therefore inaccessible as part of the Programme. A nationwide network of organisations which can offer mutual support, collective problem-solving opportunities, and access to a shared pool of expertise would ensure that the Programme generates a sustainable impact beyond the success of any single participating organisation.

Should there be future iterations of the Programme, participants could join this network and increase the amount of collective expertise it holds. In addition, this could provide opportunities for organisations which have previously undergone the Programme to provide mentoring opportunities to new inductees, share best practices, develop a library of lessons learned, and remain connected to the valuable networks established throughout the Programme.

### **Executive/Coaching**

The later addition of coaching to the Programme has resulted in enormous success in terms the coaching experience of the coaches as well as the benefits that executive coaching delivers including goal setting, performance management, increased internal resources such as confidence levels and clarity which in turn supports well-being. It is recommended that coaching is a continued element of the Programme that is offered to participants early in the Programme.

## **8. Conclusion**

The report has evaluated the Ubele Enterprise Development Programme, which provided participating organisations with a range of up to £30,000, capacity building support through the provision of training workshops and action learning sets, and executive one-to-one coaching for leaders. Drawing upon all available feedback data, areas of strength and areas for improvement have been highlighted with recommendations made for the future.

Overall, The Ubele Initiative Enterprise Develop Programme at this stage in the Programme has already yielded success with many positive outcomes experienced by the participating organisations.

Organisations have been able to invest in expertise, capacity, digital infrastructure, and accreditations, all of which put them in a much more financially resilient and trading-ready position. More than half of participating organisations (**56.8%**) are already experiencing an increase in revenue, and a total of **89** jobs were created. Each of the Programme's elements were received positively, with organisations reporting that access to expertise, information and advice, network building opportunities, and grant funding all supported them in diverse ways.

There is significant scope for Access – The Foundation for Social Investment to build upon the success of the Enterprise Development Programme. The initiative is effective, scalable, and addresses long-standing systemic challenges in the entrepreneurial landscape. It is recommended that future iterations incorporate the recommendations made in this report to secure an even greater impact.

Social Investment Business has also developed the soon-to-be-published “The Showcase of Social Enterprises”. The purpose is to recognise and publicise the remarkable organisations that participated in the Enterprise Development Programme alongside their enterprises. They intend to use this showcase to reach out to potential customers in the charity sector, social investors, funders, and any other organisation that wishes to discover services and products that support social change.

The Showcase of Social Enterprises also intends to create a central location that fosters knowledge sharing and promotes connectivity between communities and organisations. The showcase is not an all-encompassing list of EDP organisations but rather a snapshot of those who opted to be included.

It is recommended that The Ubele Initiative CIC carries out a follow-up assessment of the Program's outcomes after a period of 12 months using the same evaluation criteria as before.

To improve future data collection and reporting, it would be beneficial to include an option for selecting business impact or purpose in addition to sector or industry. This will enable the collection of vital intersectional insights into which sectors are creating impact and where/how.

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