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WANTED: up-and-coming London SMEs who are ready to grow their business and fancy £10,000 worth of free business advice

The [British Library](#)'s [Business & IP Centre](#) is looking for over 100 small or medium enterprises based in London who are ready to smash through to the next level of growth, to offer them a free helping hand in the form of a package of business advice and support worth £10,000. The programme, [Innovating for Growth](#), is a major three-year initiative funded by the European Regional Development Fund, and will be run from the British Library's base in St Pancras, London.

The programme offers 3 months of face-to-face customised support from business experts and professionals, combined with practical workshops on expanding a product range, entering new markets and more. Importantly, the advice will be tailored to each business' specific requirements, and so will be relevant and bespoke. So whether they're looking to launch a new product, develop a new service, or exploit international markets, [Innovating for Growth](#) will help businesses to develop strategy and ultimately turn their ambitions for growth into actions.

SMEs who want to [apply for Innovating for Growth](#) will need to have been trading in a London Borough for a minimum of one year and have proven sales. They will also need to have a clear vision for what they want to achieve from the programme. Successful applications so far include a [bespoke cake-making service](#), a [designer of exotic handcrafted jewellery](#), and a company who create interactive experiences including the digital graffiti wall [YrWall](#).

[Innovating for Growth](#) has already helped [Jargon PR](#), a fledgling public relations company who have been running for less than four years, to expand its business by four new staff members. Simon Corbett, Managing Director of Jargon, says "We started working with the Business & IP Centre on the [Innovating for Growth](#) scheme last autumn, and the experience has been incredibly positive. Having a series of personal meetings with genuine experts in business, finance and strategy from our industry has directly helped us increase fee income and expand the team. Having someone to help you work on, rather than in, the business has helped drive us to the next level."

- ENDS -

Notes To Editors

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A full set of criteria and guidelines for applying for [Innovating for Growth](#) can be found on the [Innovating for Growth website](#).

The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom and one of the world's greatest research libraries. It provides world class information services to the academic, business, research and scientific communities and offers unparalleled access to the world's largest and most comprehensive research collection. The Library's collection has developed over 250 years and exceeds 150 million separate items representing every age of written civilisation. It includes: books, journals, manuscripts, maps, stamps, music, patents, newspapers and sound recordings in all written and spoken languages. www.bl.uk and follow @britishlibrary

The British Library [Business & IP Centre](#), based at St Pancras in London, opened in March 2006 with the help of London Development Agency funding. Since then, it has welcomed over 300,000 people through the doors and has an excellent track record in supporting entrepreneurs and SMEs to start and grow businesses. The Centre provides free access to an unparalleled resource of business and intellectual property information (over £5 million worth), supplemented by one-to-one advice clinics, practical workshops and networking events, featuring role model entrepreneurs. A summary of the Centre's recent 'Seven Up' Census, which demonstrates how it has contributed towards London's economy, can be found here <http://www.bl.uk/bipc/sevenup>

The [Innovating for Growth](#) project is part financed by the London European Regional Development Fund Programme 2007 to 2013. The Department for Communities and Local Government is the managing authority for the European Regional Development Fund Programme, which is one of the funds established by the European Commission to help local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support local businesses and create jobs. For more information visit www.communities.gov.uk/erdf

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