Thrive
A social accelerator

Winners 2020
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Thriving at work

Thrive is our social accelerator helping ambitious social ventures to scale their business and their impact. Now in its third year, the programme combines six months of intensive, tailored support with access to a powerful network of people and organisations creating access to employment and an opportunity for up to £50,000 of investment. Working with funders UBS, Thirty Percy, City & Guilds and the disability charity Scope, together we are building a compelling growth story, finding investors, making strategic connections and supporting entrepreneurs along their journey.

The story so far...

Thrive builds on the learning from our Big Venture Challenge work, which supported 120 social ventures to collectively improve the lives of 1.24 million people in the UK and raise over £13m of investment to grow their businesses. The first two years of Thrive supported 36 fantastic ventures, 9 of whom went on to get investment from our Thrive Fund.

Thrive in Employment focuses on improving employment opportunities for those distant from the labour market. Statistics from January 2020 continued to show the steady drop in unemployment, which is a good news story for the UK.

However, with the unforeseen Covid-19 crisis, the resulting surge in unemployment rates will create further barriers to employment for jobseekers most distant to the labour market. Social ventures have innovative solutions to improve access to employment for marginalised groups, and we want to help them thrive so that everyone with the desire to work can gain appropriate, meaningful employment.

Thrive in Employment is being co-funded by four expert partners who all share UnLtd’s vision – that social ventures can offer effective solutions to improving employment opportunities for those with complex lives or additional support needs. UnLtd are grateful for the expertise and support from our partners, funding a total of 54 ventures on the programme so far.
Meet our new ventures

We are proud to present the 18 ventures onto the Thrive Access to Employment programme cohort for 2020. Inside this booklet, you will find short summaries of these incredible organisations. All of them have the potential and aspiration to scale up while fundamentally changing society for the better.

Thrive is run over six months, meaning we have less than 182 days to help these ventures raise investment and rapidly accelerate their growth; all whilst facing the ongoing challenges that our cohort are met with during the Covid-19 pandemic. We hope you are inspired by what you read in this booklet and we encourage you to follow the ventures on their journey and support the programme with any skills, contacts and investment you have to offer.

How can you get involved?

**Champion:** Help us spread the word about these fantastic ventures and work with them yourself

**Connect:** Bring the power of your network to bear

**Advise:** Share your experience to help these entrepreneurs as they scale up

**Collaborate:** Explore opportunities for working together or offering investment and funding
In response to their members wanting employment opportunities, Leep1 set up an accredited café called Café Leep.

Based 10 minutes from the city centre of Leeds, this is a community café with a social purpose providing training placements to adults with learning disabilities helping them gain catering qualifications all whilst serving delicious food to their local community.
In their journey of interrupted lives, unfinished studies and integration challenges, many of these individuals yearn to update their tech skills but lack learning opportunities. CodeYourFuture want to change this. They offer an eight-month full-stack JavaScript & soft skills training program that prepares clients for their first professional role. They are currently operating in London, Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham and Rome, with plans to expand to Colombia and South Africa.

CodeYourFuture supports refugees and other disadvantaged groups with dreams of becoming software developers and finding employment in the tech sector.
Diversity & Ability (D&A) is an award-winning disabled-led social enterprise which supports students, organisations and social justice projects to create inclusive cultures where diversity is valued, and people can thrive.

With 85% of their staff identifying as neurodiverse or disabled, D&A believe that peer-to-peer support, delivered by trainers with shared lived experiences, has the potential to make life-changing differences. Their support is tailored to each individual’s unique needs to ensure they’re genuinely empowered. D&A particularly highlight the importance of an authentic, intersectional approach to supporting disabled people.
Lily’s Social Kitchen are an independent, family-owned bistro and catering business based in the heart of Canterbury. Their mission is to use the power of food to bring people together.

Lily’s Social Kitchen promote the skills, abilities and employability of people distant from the job market. This includes people with autism and/or learning disabilities, and people who have been homeless, in prison or long-term unemployed. The enterprise also works to distribute food surplus working with Fareshare Kent, encouraging people to cook and reduce national food waste.
Media Savvy CIC provide sessions and courses focussing on Digital Arts, Media & ICT, or Health, Fitness, and Wellbeing to some of the most marginalised groups and individuals from their local communities.

Media Savvy’s core purpose is to promote education, employability skills, creativity and - in some cases - recovery and rehabilitation. They work primarily with individuals suffering with their mental health, ex-offenders, individuals with learning disabilities, and the long-term unemployed. They envision a society where each individual feels valued, with access to suitable education and the opportunities to realise their potential.

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OneLab, a full-service creative studio based in East London, empowers young people with special needs to find their voices through fashion entrepreneurship.

OneLab is closing the disability employment gap by offering a person-centred approach to training that offers breadth, depth and clear progressions to paid employment within the creative economy.

OBM OneLab CIC (OneLab) transforms the lives of young people with special needs and disabilities from low socio-economic backgrounds.
Page & Bloom is an alternative florist, selling handmade paper flowers for weddings, events and gifts.

Page & Bloom employ women who have experienced domestic abuse, providing income and helping them build skills for future careers.

The social impact is two-fold - their flowers are made from salvaged paper and other materials, helping to reduce waste, carbon emissions and water use.

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**Page & Bloom**

**Senior Team**
Rosie Oglesby, Founder

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pageandbloom.com
People Matters provide different pathways from courses and coaching to supportive work experience so people can aim for paid work or volunteering.

They strive to break down barriers and social misconceptions and are committed to offering innovative and person-centred support to ensure each individual’s needs are met.

The People Matters Employment Service supports those with learning and other disabilities in the Leeds area to progress towards employment.
Second Shot Coffee are changing perceptions on homelessness by being a destination that serves some of London’s best coffee, along with a unique community atmosphere and amazing food that just so happens to be changing lives. They employ people who have been affected by homelessness, offering training and transitioning into permanent employment elsewhere. Second Shot Coffee support individual journeys by taking them from where they are, to where they deserve to be.

Second Shot Coffee is a specialty social enterprise coffee brand bringing people together by tackling homelessness, one espresso at a time.

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Tap Social Movement is a craft brewery and hospitality business creating training and employment opportunities for ex-offenders.

Tap Social Movement believe everyone benefits when no-one is excluded from the job market.

Their team, including currently serving and recently released prisoners, make criminally good beer which is sold both wholesale and direct to customers in their own community venues.

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TechPixies recognises that women require confidence to return to fulfilling and stimulating careers, to upskill, or to start a business. They believe education is one of the best ways to gain confidence and offer individuals choices for their future.

TechPixies’ online course offering includes key digital skills in areas such as Social Media, WordPress, and MailChimp.

**TechPixies is an award-winning online learning platform for women who want to return to work, change careers, or start a business.**
The Ability People is built upon the skills and drive of individuals who have overcome extraordinary challenges to achieve success in the worlds of sport, industry, community and education. The Ability People support positive change through advice and education, while their specialist recruitment teams source talent for companies and SMEs on a permanent and contract basis. They have a unique perspective on success and understand the true value of meaningful inclusion.

The Ability People is dedicated to empowering people with disabilities, helping companies enhance processes and adapt cultures to transform professional lives and build better brands.

The Ability People is dedicated to empowering people with disabilities, helping companies enhance processes and adapt cultures to transform professional lives and build better brands.

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The Articulate Hub works with young people who are most at risk, seeking asylum, or living in poverty in vulnerable communities. Through their creative industries access, participation and employability projects, The Articulate Hub improves the aspirations, attainment and well-being of young people of all backgrounds.

The Articulate Hub hold equality, diversity and inclusion at its core and co-design services that benefit Scotland's most vulnerable young people.

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The Intrapreneurs Club’s mission is to create high-performing and diverse tech teams. To tackle the issue of diversity in tech, they bring together groups of people to learn, achieve career goals, and connect to new opportunities.

The Intrapreneurs Club design tailored accelerator programmes to support professionals develop and learn from tech’s leading lights - those uniquely placed to help Intrapreneurs achieve their goals.

As a part of their development, Intrapreneurs share their learning to inspire and teach young people from underrepresented groups within tech as well.

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The New Leaf Initiative believes in giving people the chance to turn over a new leaf, and supports people with convictions into work through a pathway of person-centred support and mentoring; access to education and vocational training; a weekly drop-in; mindset courses; and the development of innovative employment pathways and solutions.

The New Leaf Initiative are Prison to Employment Specialists operating in the West Midlands.

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The Right Key Centre provides rehabilitation, recovery, training and employment through a range of micro-social enterprises. These include a Recovery Café, guitar-making, accommodation and music workshops, helping clients within areas such as addiction, mental health and the Criminal Justice System.

The Right Key Recovery Centre is based in Loughbrickland, Northern Ireland, with their programme using music to help aid recovery.
Ways into Work inspire and support the business community to realise a society where equal opportunities and life chances exist for everyone.

Their mission is ‘Changing Lives, One Job at a Time’. With over 20 years’ experience in the industry, they match the skills and talents of individuals with a disability or barrier to the business needs of local employers.

Ways into Work is a majority employee-owned, Community Interest Company delivering supported employment services in South East England.
Woodshed Workshop makes person-centred opportunities available to the unemployed, for alternative education, NEETs, veterans, older people and those with disabilities. They create quality furniture and products through the innovative use of reclaimed, recycled, and new ethically locally sourced wood.

Woodshed Workshop provides wood-working, DIY, employability skills and pastoral support to people facing disadvantages.

Gemma O’Brien, Project Development Worker

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Thank you

We would like to take this opportunity to share our gratitude for everybody involved with our Thrive work to date. Special thanks go to our ambitious entrepreneurs, forward-thinking funders and investors, fantastic partners, and the UnLtd team. Our support for game-changing social entrepreneurs creating pathways to employment would not be possible without you, and we are looking forward to furthering this work together the future.

unltd.org.uk/thrive #UnLtdThrive
Undiscovered strengths.
UnLtd potential.
Thrive is our social accelerator helping ambitious social ventures to scale their business and their impact. This programme – funded by Thirty Percy, UBS, City & Guilds and the disability charity Scope – combines six months of intensive personalised support with the opportunity to access up to £50,000 of investment and powerful sector connections.

#UnLtdThrive