

## **Press Release**

**3 October 2016**

### **London Met's business incubator announce Launchpad's winning six ideas**

**The Launchpad programme allows London Met students and graduates to turn their business idea into a reality with the support of the Accelerator, London Met's business incubator.**

Launchpad has been running for five years and this year's six winning ideas have been released.

The 2016 winning cohort pitched ideas including an app for booking global venues for musicians; sports betting analytics software; bringing African-style smoothies to London; a social enterprise bakery; software for financial advisors; and app that helps you queue in busy venues.

"Uniquely for a university programme, Launchpad takes place in Accelerator - London Met's start-up incubator in Shoreditch, the heart of London's booming tech scene. Accelerator is home to 30 tech start-ups that last year raised £5.7m in investment and created 115 new jobs," said Toby Kress, Head of Accelerator.

"During the programme each graduate is paired with one of the founders from the start-ups based in Accelerator who act as mentor and advisor. Being able to tap into a community of entrepreneurs who can share their lessons and experience is incredibly valuable."

The group of students and graduates are put on an intensive 10 week programme in which they are equipped with the skills and knowledge to start a business, ranging from talking to customers, creating landing pages, branding, finances and pitching. Their ideas are presented to panel of judges with experience in the sector.

In order to win, the idea must demonstrate commercial potential. This year's judges were; Toby Kress, Head of Accelerator; Emma Thatcher, Creative Enterprise Manager at London Met; Simon Boot, Student and Graduate Enterprise Manager at London Met; as well as the founders of Zealify, Lucidica and Urban Things.

Toby Kress said: "Launchpad is built on the revolutionary lean-start-up approach fuelling the start-up booms in places like Silicon Valley, New York and Tech City in London. It pushes participants to turn the traditional approach to starting a business on its head. Gone are the business plans, the strategy sessions and the early focus on product.

"Instead participants are encouraged to focus on deeply understanding the problems their customers face by conducting up to 100 face to face interviews and rigorously

testing that their business idea really is a solution that customers are willing pay for. Most ideas change dramatically through the programme as the graduate participants learn more about what the market really needs.”

“This simple approach saves the young entrepreneurs time and money developing ideas that don’t solve real problems and, instead, sets them on the path to creating products and services that customers are knocking their doors down to get.”

## **Contact**

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## **About London Metropolitan University**

London Met has been providing education to people from all backgrounds since 1848, with the creation of the Metropolitan Evening Classes for Working Men.

Four faculties teach cutting-edge, relevant courses across the arts, sciences, business, law and humanities. Accelerator – London Met’s specialist business incubator – helps graduates get their enterprises up and running and was named among the Top Five ‘Most Active’ accelerators in Europe in 2015, highlighting its contribution to London’s booming start-up industry.

London Met is home to world-leading academics who regularly give expert comment to the media. The University scored well in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, being ranked 4th in the country for Area Studies and performing strongly in Education and Social Studies.

The University is strongly focused on employability. In 2016, London Met recorded its highest ever graduate employment score, with 93% of all 2014/15 graduates in work or further study six months after graduation.

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