

The Venture Matrix Event Management Company



What are the aims of this project?

This project aims to support the Event Management Company within the already established Venture Matrix programme. This will be done by appointing a management team and sub-groups, recruiting additional "Employees" from across the student membership as well as supporting a number of events throughout the year.

The anticipated outcome of this is the development of a sustainable project owned by students that not only embeds skills through experiential learning but also progressively develops student autonomy (as Hallam Volunteering does).

What is the background / rationale?

The Venture Matrix is the result of extensive internal consultation (see the appended ADC paper for 24 Jan 2007). While helping colleagues make their curriculum more enterprising it transpired that what most tutors would welcome was a mechanism to offer appropriate and relevant work related learning opportunities. The programme was offered to all faculties in its pilot year. Expansion will only further grow the "gene pool" and the diversity of the experiences available. Having addressed the legal and logistical potential pitfalls in the pilot year the Venture Matrix is now ready to embrace external as well as internal clients.

What are the benefits to student learning?

Participation in the Venture Matrix addresses different learning styles, encourages problem solving approaches and reflection. Research has proven that applied experiential learning is more effective than traditional methods for skills development (Beard and Kogan 2006) and students' experience in the Venture Matrix in managing and taking responsibility for their own learning accords with research in constructive alignment (Biggs 1999). Courses experiencing problems in delivering work related learning to their students that have to date used theoretical case studies and guest speakers do not provide real WRL. The Venture Matrix provides opportunities for problem based, case based learning that students can claim ownership of and that can be easily embedded to any course and throughout the university.

Students have the control to organise events (recent trade fair and upcoming student led show case event). They can create something that adds value to their learning and to the University and is sustainable.

How will this project be evaluated?

On going strategic evaluation of the Venture Matrix involves independent review from key stake holders in the University in conjunction with a combination of the below measures:

- External interest and potential take up
- Activity demonstrated by the database, showing interactions on the website and exchange of "squids" from and between ventures within the Venture Matrix
- Student led activities e.g. not just the show case events but the associated activities to ensure publicity, promotion and evaluation of these events.
- Student feedback (within the modules as well as from the students own evaluation tools)
- Results of independent questionnaires for students and staff
- Results of student initiated questionnaires and solicited feedback

It is anticipated that there will be increased use of the EHGI assessment tool to evaluate individual student development that results from engagement with the Venture Matrix.

Project Leader

Simon Brown
Email: s.j.s.brown@shu.ac.uk
Telephone: 0114 225 3207