

# southbank

LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE \_ SPRING 2017

**Think different**  
Why diversity makes  
good business sense

**The business of Brexit**  
What's next for London  
and for SMEs?

**Access all areas**  
Meet alumnus  
Tunji Akintokun

## Artist at work

How Xavier White is using  
art to explore new ways of  
thinking about healthcare



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South Bank  
University**

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Welcome to the spring edition of *South Bank*. In the light of the fantastic news that LSBU has been named Entrepreneurial University of the Year in The Times Higher Education Awards 2016 (page 27), we've decided to take enterprise and innovation as our theme for this issue.

Setting the scene is our very own School of Health and Social Care's Artist in Residence, Xavier White (page 8), who is working to explore the links between art and how care is delivered. In his own words, Xavier describes LSBU as his 'University of Understanding', where he hopes to enable others to become more resilient and compassionate.

Resilience features too in the story of Naomi Mwasambili, LSBU Entrepreneur in Residence (page 10), whose professional journey is a reminder of the power of sheer stamina in effecting change. It's a lesson that translates across professions and industries and, on page 11, alumnus Charlie Wagstaff reflects on the leadership skills that can help us not just survive but thrive in uncertain times.

In our 'big issue' feature, we focus on diversity, a powerful driver for change. With pressure growing on businesses across all sectors to challenge non-inclusive cultures and practices, we offer a range of insights into how we might go about transforming the status quo (page 12).

One area of constant change is of course Brexit. For this edition we take a look at policy and practice, asking our alumni and academic staff to share their thoughts on what might yet be to come (page 20).

With the future so uncertain, it's reassuring to know that individuals like Tunji Akintokun (page 23) are working tirelessly to help young people overcome adversity. His story is one of hard work and commitment, one that I guarantee will leave you in awe of his achievements.

Last but not least we showcase the entrepreneurial efforts of our first-year Film Practice students who are hosting the first LSBU Short Film Festival in May (page 30). I hope to see many of you there.

Huge thanks to all our contributors. Your time, feedback and thoughtfulness are very much appreciated.

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*South Bank* is the magazine for the partners, alumni and friends of London South Bank University, which is an amalgamation of several colleges and institutions. See the full list at [alumni.lsbu.ac.uk/history](http://alumni.lsbu.ac.uk/history)  
*South Bank* is published by the London South Bank University Alumni Office and Communication Office.

The opinions expressed in it are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the University. The next edition of *South Bank* will be published in autumn 2017.

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## THE BIG ISSUE

### Think different

12 \_ New research shows that having a diverse workforce isn't just 'the right thing to do': it's also a major driver of both innovation and growth. So what can businesses do to tackle the barriers that still stand in the way of inclusion, and seize the competitive advantage that diversity can bring?



## FRESH THINKING

08 \_ Xavier White, Artist in Residence at LSBU's School of Health and Social Care, is exploring how art can stimulate new ways of thinking about care



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

10 \_ LSBU Entrepreneur in Residence Naomi Mwasambili on her journey to business success with innovative healthcare agency, Chanua Health



## OPINION

11 \_ In these uncertain times, what does it take to be an effective leader? Alumnus Charlie Wagstaff of Criticaleye has some practical advice



## PERSPECTIVES

20 \_ With negotiations now under way, we asked LSBU academics and alumni to share their own views on how Brexit might affect businesses in the UK



## ALUMNI FOCUS

23 \_ Tunji Akintokun's story is a classic tale of triumph over adversity. Now he's working to ensure that as many young people as possible get their chance to shine



## ENTERPRISE

27 \_ LSBU's Research, Enterprise and Innovation team on the bold approach to supporting business that led to The Times Entrepreneurial University of the Year award



LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

### Inspired by Law

Inspired by Law celebrates individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to human rights, the rule of law and the promotion of social justice, as chosen by LSBU law students. This year's gallery features (clockwise from top left):

- Linda Weil-Curiel – for services to the promotion of women's rights
- Alistair Logan – for services to criminal justice and human rights
- Alice Nkom – for services to the advancement of LGBT rights in Africa
- Thurgood Marshall – for services to the advancement of civil rights
- Gareth Peirce – for services to criminal justice and human rights
- Albie Sachs – for services to the advancement of human rights.

Find out more at [www.lsbu.ac.uk/schools/law-and-social-sciences/subjects/law/inspired-by-law](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/schools/law-and-social-sciences/subjects/law/inspired-by-law)



UNIVERSITY NEWS

### LSBU signs Armed Forces Covenant

LSBU has signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant, committing us to ensuring the fair treatment of staff and students who either are serving or have served in the Armed Forces. In just six months, the initiative has gathered considerable support on campus, with 50 students and 15 members of staff involved. Now work is under way on our application for the next level of accreditation. 'The next step is Silver status,' says Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Ivey, who managed the project. 'Ultimately we hope to develop an exemplar partnership and go for Gold, becoming the Armed Forces' university partner of choice.'



THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND ARCHITECTURE

Distinguished international architect and LSBU alumnus David Adjaye OBE (BA Architecture, 1990) has been awarded a knighthood for services to architecture in the Queen's New Year Honours list 2017. 'I see this not as a personal celebration,' he says, 'but as a celebration of the vast potential – and responsibility – for architecture to effect positive social change, and that we as architects have to bring something positive to the world.'



ENGINEERING

### Upgrade for LSBU labs

A £3 million award from the Higher Education Funding Council for England will be used to improve lab facilities for degree apprenticeship study. 'This investment will help to strengthen LSBU's strong commitment to supporting science and engineering students, many of whom are studying for technical and professional qualifications and apprenticeships,' says Professor Patrick Bailey, Deputy Vice-Chancellor. 'This will help us to achieve our ambitious goal of ensuring that by 2020, 2000 students every year will be studying a professional or technical course at LSBU.'

BUSINESS

### LSBU named Accountancy College of the Year

LSBU has been named Accountancy College of the Year – Public Sector at the annual PQ Magazine Awards. Professor Mike Molan, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of the School of Business, and Anna Howard, Associate Professor in Enterprise Education, were also nominated for individual awards. 'I'm delighted that LSBU's Accounting and Finance Division has been recognised for its strength as a training provider,' says Professor Molan. 'I feel honoured that I was personally nominated for an award and I'm proud of LSBU's commitment and support in ensuring students have a first class learning and teaching experience.'

By 2020, the number of students studying professional or technical courses at LSBU each year will be

# 2000



ARTS AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

### Enable Gaming scoops TIGA Award

LSBU's Enable Gaming project has won a TIGA Award for Best Educational Initiative and Talent Development. The initiative, set up by Siobhán Thomas, Course Director for BA/BSc (Hons) Game Design and Development, in partnership with the charity Lifelites, brings computer gaming to disabled children in hospices (see *South Bank* autumn 2016). 'Receiving this award shows the immense value the industry is placing on the work we do at LSBU,' says Siobhán. 'We're at the forefront of tech advances, constantly pushing the boundaries of what games education is. It's rewarding to be able to say that the games we make truly change people's lives for the better.'



UNIVERSITY NEWS

**Boost for apprenticeships**

LSBU is to receive a £5 million grant from Southwark Council to help create the new Passmore Centre – a dedicated hub for apprenticeships, training and skills in the borough. The Centre, to be based in the disused Victorian Passmore Library, will support Southwark’s aim of creating 2000 apprenticeships by 2020 to help boost a strong local economy. A further £3 million has been pledged by the Higher Education Funding Council for England with an additional £4 million from LSBU. The Centre is set to open in 2018.

The Passmore Library is set to be transformed into a hub for skills and training



TENANT COMMUNITY

**Creative futures**

A new initiative from LSBU tenants MyKindaFuture and Dentsu Aegis Network, a global group specialising in media, digital and creative communications services, is encouraging young people from diverse backgrounds into the creative industries. Launched earlier this year, The Code delivers talks and skills workshops to 14 to 18 year-olds, giving them first-hand experience of advertising and digital

media. By 2020, the goal is to have donated 50,000 hours to schools, reached 15,000 young people and have at least 50% of new apprentices coming through the programme. ‘It’s great to see Dentsu Aegis taking a lead in breaking down barriers and bringing new recruits into the industry,’ says MyKindaFuture founder and MD William Akerman. ‘We’re excited to be working with them to take The Code out to schools.’ Find out more at [www.mykindafuture.com](http://www.mykindafuture.com) and [www.jointhecode.co.uk](http://www.jointhecode.co.uk)



ALUMNI NEWS

Tom Toumazis MBE (HND Business Studies, 1983) has been appointed Visiting Professor of Business and Creative Studies at LSBU. Founder investor and chairman of start-ups Fusebox Ltd, Tagsmart and TVbeat, and non-executive director at The LADbible, Tom is also chairman and founder of the ChildLine Board. Read the full profile in *South Bank* autumn 2016.



ENTERPRISE

**Practical support for small businesses**

LSBU’s new Business Solutions Centre is providing practical help for local entrepreneurs and SMEs. Based on the same model as the successful Legal Advice Clinic, the Centre uses student advisers, with back-up and support provided by academic staff from the School of Business. See page 27 for more.



HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

**A new approach to nursing care**

Health Education England has selected LSBU as one of 11 sites to deliver national test training programmes for the new nursing associate role. Nursing associates will work alongside existing nursing care support workers and fully qualified registered nurses to deliver hands-on care for patients. LSBU will work in partnership with Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust on a pilot programme specifically focused on children and young people. The first cohort of associates will complete their training and start work in early 2019.

ALUMNI NEWS

**Boost for #techmums**

#techmums, the charity led by technology evangelist and UK government adviser Dr Sue Black OBE (see *South Bank* autumn 2015), has announced it will collaborate with Capgemini UK and WPP agencies Cognifide and Addison Group to bring technology training to women across the UK. The companies will offer pro bono support to enable #techmums – which recently made its IT courses available online for the first time – to reach a wider audience. ‘Our aim is to have 1 million #techmums across the globe by 2020,’ says Sue. ‘We’re looking forward to working with our new partners to make that happen.’





## Artist at work

LSBU's new Artist in Residence Xavier White is drawing on his own experiences to explore how art can stimulate new ways of thinking about care

Artists often talk about how art saved their life, but for Xavier White it's very close to the truth. Following an accident in his late teens that left him with near-fatal head injuries, he turned to art as a way of regaining life skills and exploring his ideas about consciousness, creativity, who we are as individuals and how we relate to each other.

Now, as the first Artist in Residence at LSBU's School of Health and Social Care, his role includes organising trips for students – most recently to the Bethlem Museum of the Mind and Gallery – and running art-based workshops. 'Our latest project is the Patient Story Cube,' he says. 'It can be used to explore a person's practical, mental and physical needs, and identify what's needed to help them live well. I hope it might go on to be used by healthcare professionals.'

This has also been a prolific period for Xavier's own work. Following last summer's *My Human Campaign*, his new show *The Phosphenes of Qualia* features works in glass inspired by

**Xavier's new exhibition, *The Phosphenes of Qualia*, will run until 1 May 2017. Artworks are on display around the campus. Find out more at [xavierwhite.weebly.com](http://xavierwhite.weebly.com)**

the connections between the hard-wiring of the brain and our consciousness. 'The residency gives me routine, and a space to create,' says Xavier. 'It's interesting to see how that's helping to bring my ideas into focus. I see LSBU as my "University of Understanding", where I can address my own weaknesses and, I hope, help others to become more resilient and compassionate.' ●

### A healthy approach to business

The path to success rarely runs smoothly, as Naomi Mwasambili, LSBU Entrepreneur in Residence and Director of Chanua Health, has learned along the way

I didn't plan to become an entrepreneur; it just happened gradually. I did a psychology degree and worked in mental healthcare for a few years, then in 2010 I was asked to set up a service in south London, Improving Access to Psychological Therapies.

'At the time, a lot of organisations were closing down. But it made me realise that many people from certain ethnic and social groups weren't getting the help they needed, and that there was a gap for a service to improve access to culturally and socially appropriate mental healthcare. I knew that to make my idea work, I'd need a sound business model. So I signed up for a course at the School for Social Entrepreneurs. I finished in 2012, and almost immediately quit my day job so I could focus full time on my business.

'Within a month I'd crashed down to earth, with rent to pay and no way of monetising my ideas. Luckily, a community organisation I'd worked with before asked me to develop a course to help women into employment. From here, three colleagues and I set up a social enterprise developing services for the NHS and other organisations focusing on mental health.

'It was successful, but I was at risk of burning out and I was feeling trapped. My dream was to provide services tailored to individual needs, but commissioners only wanted service models they'd seen before. I needed to find a way of working that would bring in an income and allow us to innovate.



#### NAOMI'S POINTERS FOR ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS

**Be prepared to work at all aspects of the business – but know when to ask for help as well. I nearly burned out early on from trying to do absolutely everything myself.**

**Consider the social enterprise route. If your project will have a positive social impact there may be grants or other funding streams available to help get it off the ground.**

**Self-doubt is normal, especially for women, but don't listen to that voice that says you can't do it. Find a supportive community that can offer constructive criticism.**

**Stay as healthy as possible. Eat well, sleep enough and exercise regularly because you need to bring energy and focus every day.**

**Sometimes you just have to jump in and do it. It was naïve of me to leave my day job, but it certainly forced me into action!**

**As you progress, learn to trust your gut about what is right – and wrong – for your business. It's OK to say no sometimes.**

**Don't be afraid to collaborate and share ideas. The open and supportive culture is one of the most inspiring things about my work as Entrepreneur in Residence at LSBU. And finally, keep going!**

**"Be prepared to work at all aspects of the business – but know when to ask for help as well. I nearly burned out from trying to do it all myself"**

'That was what led me, along with my colleague Megan Charles, to set up Chanua, meaning "to blossom" in Swahili. We work on a range of projects with a particular focus on providing non-stigmatising access to mental health services, for example through our online booking platform MyGuvu and events such as Hacking Health. We also offer training and teaching (including lecturing at the University of Liverpool) and have just launched the young people's project Neuro Champions, supported by the Wellcome Trust.

'I became an Entrepreneur in Residence at LSBU after I ran a session here for occupational health students. It was fascinating: only one student had even considered setting up their own project; everyone else assumed they'd go straight into the NHS. By the end everyone had an idea for a social enterprise and one of these projects is now up and running, offering football coaching to young people with Down's Syndrome. It was great to see that shift in the students' mindset.

'The Entrepreneur in Residence role is really enjoyable. I continue to run my business with use of the facilities at LSBU and I get a fantastic opportunity to work with students and staff. I offer workshops, give one-to-one support and also help staff members with business ideas. I love seeing people empowered to follow their dreams.' ●

Learn more at [www.chanuahealth.com](http://www.chanuahealth.com) For the latest business and enterprise events at LSBU, go to [www.lsbu.ac.uk/business/expertise/entrepreneurship-innovation-institute](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/business/expertise/entrepreneurship-innovation-institute)

### Leading by example

In a fast-changing – and ever more uncertain – world, leaders must be prepared to adapt in order to survive, says Charlie Wagstaff (MSc Strategic HR Management, 1999)

If there's one lesson to be drawn from recent history, with its unpredictable politics (think Trump and Brexit), economic volatility, and the proliferation of social media giving a voice to the previously disenfranchised, it's this: forget established social and economic norms. Say goodbye to points of prior reference, accepted wisdom and familiar tropes. And instead, learn to embrace constant and seismic change. After all, if there's one thing we can confidently predict, it's that there will be plenty more uncertainty to come.

In this fluid landscape, it seems clear that we will only succeed as leaders if we are able to adapt – to rationalise what we see happening around us, and understand the ramifications for the way we do business. Forget the old top-down approach and focus instead on these three interconnected core leadership skills that I believe can help us tap into the potential of those around us and not only survive, but thrive.

#### Put your trust in long-term relationships

This applies to leadership at all levels. As custodians



**"The world is moving so fast that the man who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it"**  
**Elbert Hubbard, US writer and philosopher**

we need to deliver; but we also have to be clear about what we are expecting in return. Increasingly, customers accept that the quid pro quo for access to a steady supply of reliable, competitively priced goods or services is the provision of their personal data. For businesses, this means taking responsibility, and

making sure we use this data to develop products that better meet consumers' evolving needs. That's the basis for a long-term, sustainable relationship.

Also critical is the ability to foresee where an organisation might be exposed in the future, and to take bold action to mitigate the risk. This might mean a loss of immediate revenue, which can be seen as counter-intuitive, but can lead to longer term benefits and, again, help to build more enduring relationships. By way of analogy, think about the food and drink industry: increasing levels of sugar may provide an easy way of achieving a better tasting product, but will certainly have adverse effects in the long term. Better to take the lead, own the issue, and reduce sugar content in your products now than wait for it to be enforced by law.

#### Create a consistent and compelling narrative

The ability to formulate and deliver a personal narrative that encompasses values that resonate, and succeeds in conveying the 'why' as well as the 'how', will be a vital asset in negotiating a path through times of relentless transformation. Stories fire our imagination and help open our minds to new possibilities.

On a personal level, sharing experiences and vulnerabilities in a way that is genuine and authentic can help manage the

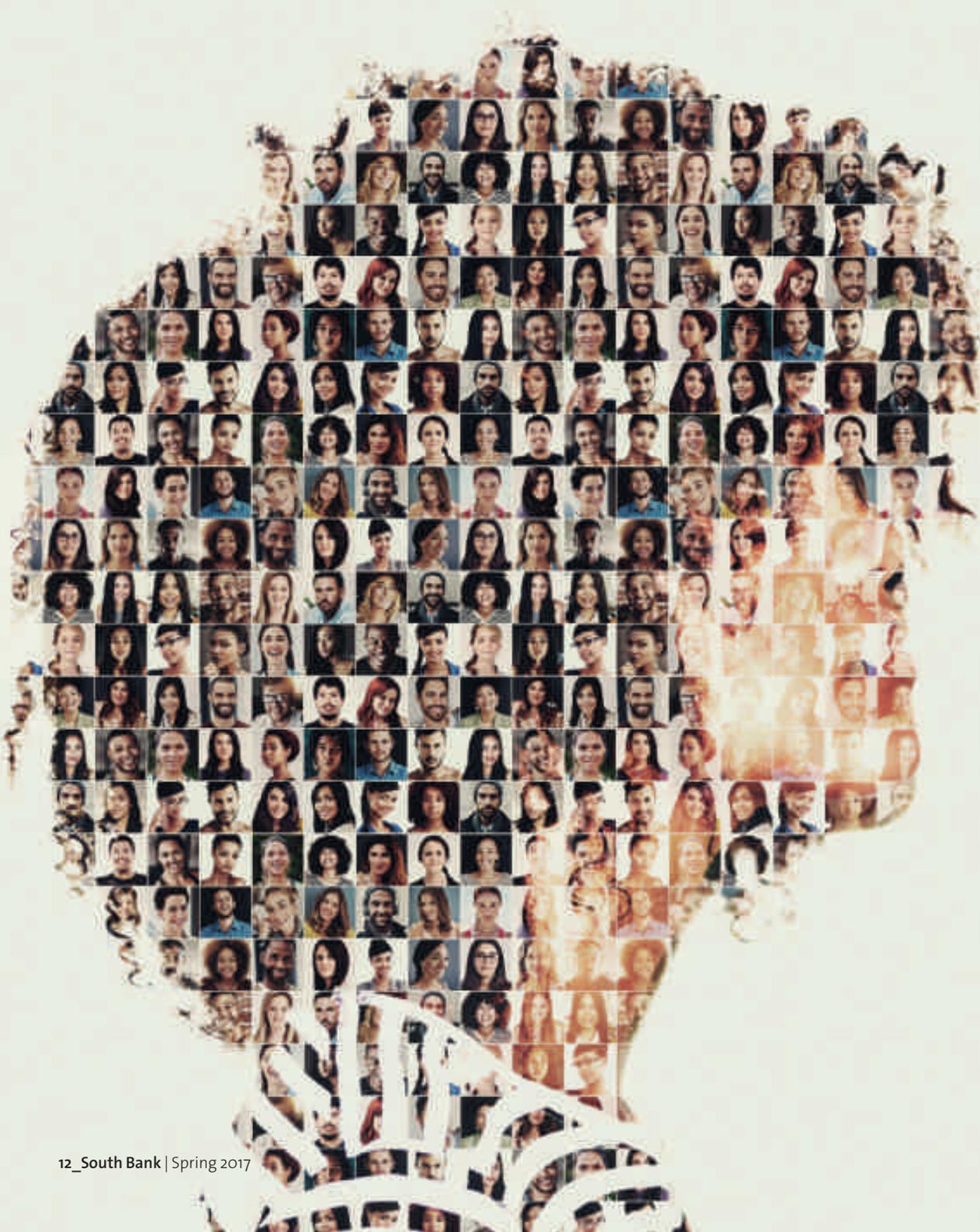
tension between authority and approachability and create a strong sense of community and shared purpose. Share both the credit for success and the responsibility for failure, and remember that actions speak louder than words.

#### Remember, you are your own customer

It's impossible to separate the development of the team, and the nurturing of potential talent, from the ongoing challenge of ensuring that you are meeting customers' needs. Remember, the colleagues who make up your organisation aren't just colleagues; they are – or they should be! – a diverse community of people, just like your customers.

It's a valuable resource, so use it. Ask them to give you feedback on your own products and services. Engage them as your own in-house focus group. This will deliver another benefit too, by helping you to keep it real, and understand not only what your customers need, but also how they feel. That's the key to making sure your interactions aren't B2C or B2B but H2H: Human to Human. ●

**Charlie Wagstaff is co-founder and managing director of Criticaleye, a peer-to-peer board community providing mentoring and experiential learning for business leaders as well as access to strategic thought leadership and exclusive content. Find out more at [criticaleye.com](http://criticaleye.com)**



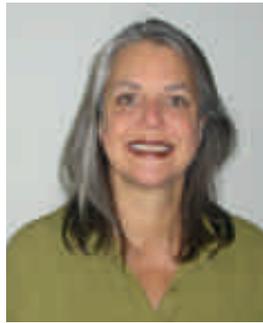
# THINK DIFFERENT

It's widely accepted that promoting diversity is the 'right thing to do'. But with new research showing that greater diversity is key to unlocking innovation and driving growth, businesses across all sectors need to tackle the barriers still standing in the way of inclusion. We talked to the LSBU alumni and staff working to make a difference, and to the engineering students looking forward to a more equal future

**T**he principle of equality is embedded in our culture and enshrined in our law. But evidence increasingly suggests that it makes sound business sense, too. In the 2015 report *Diversity Matters*, based on in-depth analysis of more than 350 companies, consultants McKinsey found that those in the top quartile for gender diversity were 15% more likely to deliver above-average financial performance, while for ethnic diversity the figure rose to 35%.

At the start of this year, a government-backed review led by Conservative peer Ruby McGregor-Smith – the first Asian woman to run a FTSE 250 company – estimated that giving black and minority ethnic (BAME) employees the same opportunities to progress as their white counterparts would boost the UK economy by 1.3%, or £24 billion per annum. And the Women in Work Commission values the impact of unleashing untapped female potential at a further £23 billion each year.

And it's not just about the bottom line. The *Harvard Business Review* surveyed more than 1800 professionals, looking at both



'When it comes to generating fresh insights and new ideas, diversity is a clear advantage,' says Professor Karin Moser

inherent diversity – traits such as gender and ethnicity – and acquired diversity, defined as traits gained from experience such as working abroad, or running projects targeted at specific groups. They found that the more diverse companies were 45% more likely to report having gained market share over the past year, and 70% more likely to have moved into a new market.

**Creative thinking**

It's not hard to imagine why. For one thing, having a diversity of backgrounds, perspectives and views among their own employees gives businesses a clear advantage when it comes to understanding the needs of their customer base, itself made up of diverse groups. And for another, creative thinking thrives on an element of conflict: discussion and debate are the springboard for invention, and all new ideas benefit from being tested, rather than simply accepted without question.

It seems clear then, that to maintain their competitive edge, businesses really do need to 'think different'. But the UK is still a long way from having a workforce that truly

**'We're sharing success with tomorrow's leaders'**

Veronica Martin (MA Charity Marketing and Fundraising, 2010) is CEO of the Powerlist Foundation, which aims to raise the aspirations of young people from diverse backgrounds



**The Powerlist Foundation** was set up in 2010 by a group of business leaders who found themselves sharing a table at a dinner for the 100 most influential black people in Britain. They wanted to help the generations coming up behind them by doing more than mentoring on an individual basis and decided to focus their efforts on young people at university.

'The Foundation sets out to equip students with the skills, confidence and contacts they need to get on. These are bright, able young people, but the majority don't come from middle-class backgrounds and may see few people who look like them in their chosen field. We want to raise their aspirations, give them access to a peer network and, through our intensive Leadership Programme, enable them to turbo-charge their careers. Our motto is "Sharing success with tomorrow's leaders", and that pretty much sums it up.

'My own background is originally in advertising. I completed my masters at LSBU after changing direction and moving into the charity sector. I was working mainly with youth and medical charities so the Powerlist

Foundation felt like a perfect fit, especially as my twin sons were in sixth form at the time and I was thinking about the challenges they might face in the future.

'Diversity of all kinds matters, now more than ever. We are preparing our members for leadership positions: we want them to be able to walk into senior meetings in industry, medicine, government or the law and feel that they belong there. The findings of the recent McKinsey report *Diversity Matters* and the launch of Sir John Parker's report on the ethnic diversity of UK boards set out compelling reasons for today's leaders to make change happen.

'I'm very encouraged to see the issue of diversity moving up the agenda. FTSE 100 company leaders now openly discuss the need for a diverse workforce, and many are actively trying to recruit a broader range of people. We're also seeing a new impetus coming from young people themselves. Millennials are a powerful and thoughtful group who use technology in all sorts of new ways to communicate their ideas and promote change. I'm very optimistic about the future.'

reflects the diverse make-up of our society. While women now make up 46% of the workforce, they are still under-represented in senior roles and in certain sectors. Fewer than 20% of FTSE 250 board members are women and just 9% of the engineering workforce is female. It's a similar story in technology, where fewer than 25% of digital jobs are held by women. The figures for ethnicity are similarly eye-opening. People from BAME backgrounds make up 12% of the working age population, but just one in 15 people in a managerial role is BAME. In 2015, 62 of the FTSE 100 companies had all-white boards.

So, what's the problem? What is preventing companies from embracing something that brings such demonstrable and significant benefits? There is no simple answer. Inertia is certainly a factor: change is never easy, particularly in a large organisation where things may have been done a certain way for years and the culture is deeply ingrained.

Perception plays a part too. If certain groups believe that certain roles are 'not for them', they will tend not to apply, perpetuating the vicious circle: no applicants means no representation and no role models to look

**Sharing success**

Powerlist Foundation mentors are in senior leadership positions across a range of professions. If you are on your own leadership journey, you could become a Powerlist Buddy, working with Leadership Programme delegates in the summer. It's a great way to develop coaching and mentoring skills and could make a real difference to a young person. Find out more at [powerlistfoundation.org.uk/buddies-applications/](http://powerlistfoundation.org.uk/buddies-applications/) or if you know a young person who could benefit from the Leadership Programme, go to [powerlistfoundation.org.uk/leadership-programme/](http://powerlistfoundation.org.uk/leadership-programme/)

**Commitment to equality**  
LSBU is signalling our commitment to promoting equality by signing up to two high profile initiatives. Professor Karin Moser (pictured above) is leading the School of Business application for Athena SWAN status, while the University as a whole made its own submission in late 2016. This charter, set up by the Equality Challenge Unit, encourages organisations to promote gender equality. We are also applying for the Unit's Race Equality Charter Mark – a demonstration of our determination to tackle the barriers that stand in the way of BAME staff and students.

> up to. And in organisations where diversity initiatives have been launched, there may be a lack of buy-in at senior level, or simply a lack of awareness of the true potential impact of embracing diversity.

### Understanding complexity

For Karin Moser, Professor of Organisational Behaviour and Director of Research and Enterprise in the School of Business, the tendency to think of 'diversity' in broad-brush terms is another contributory factor. 'People often use the term diversity as a catch-all, but there are many different aspects to it,' she says. 'Gender and ethnicity may be the most obvious, but cultural background, professional background, sexual orientation and age all need to be considered when you are thinking about the barriers that could be standing in the way of your company having a truly diverse workforce.'

'Experience, too, is another area where differences can get in the way of clear communication and effective team working. This is something that is particularly interesting and relevant to us working in an academic environment. Experts, like any other group, have distinct needs – such as quiet places to work, or autonomy over how they structure their day. They may also need additional support to "translate" their high level knowledge into something that's accessible to non-experts. So, to further add to the complexity, these different aspects of diversity rarely operate in isolation: typically you will have two or more interacting with each other at any one time.'

Professor Moser's own work – she is a specialist in team work, knowledge-sharing and information management – has also highlighted another insight: that some tasks are actually better performed by more homogeneous teams. So it may be the case that even if businesses do have diverse workforces, they are not using them to maximum effect. 'High diversity brings higher potential for conflict,' she says. 'So diverse teams may take longer to complete routine tasks, where the ways of working – and the ultimate goal – are already defined. But when it comes to generating fresh insights and new ideas, diversity is a clear advantage.'

But in any discussion of diversity, one issue recurs: unconscious bias. No matter >



### 'You can't be what you can't see'

Business transformation executive Donna Herdsman (BA Business Studies, 1984) explains why she believes powerful role models are the key to increasing diversity in the corporate world

**I don't think you can overestimate the importance of authentic senior role models, especially women. They are such a tangible indication that it's possible to succeed. I remember in one of my previous roles sitting down with senior leaders to look at why we weren't attracting graduates from more diverse backgrounds. The feedback we were getting from students was that the colleagues we were sending to the recruitment fairs quite literally didn't look like them. Faced with that it's easy to think: this organisation doesn't support people like me, so I'll pursue my dream elsewhere.**

'That definitely resonates with me personally. There have been lots of times in my own career when I couldn't see anyone further up the ladder who looked like me. The way I dealt with it was by creating my own composite role model, by looking at the people around me and finding elements in each of them that I admired and wanted to emulate. I'd watch them, make sure I grabbed any opportunities to work with them and even ask them direct if they'd be interested in mentoring or coaching me. 'Now that I'm the one in the more senior position, I want to do what I can to help. It's not that I think I've made it, or that I know all the answers

– far from it! But I know that we all have our own story to tell, and that if you can help just one person pursue their dreams, then you should step up. I'm involved with a couple of mentoring schemes at the moment, one with a big City law firms and another with a charity in Hackney. There's nothing more rewarding than working with people and seeing them grow. I'm delighted to have been voted on to Audeliss's EMpower 100 list of BAME role models and leaders, too. Initiatives like this are a great way of showing the next generation that anything is possible.

'In my own working life, the lack of role models remains an ongoing challenge. There

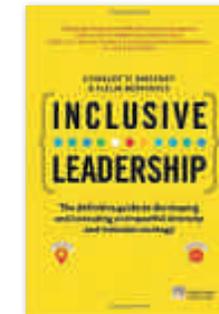
have been times when I've felt discriminated against because of my ethnic background and gender. Age is a factor too. Lots of organisations are doing great work to increase diversity among graduates and apprentices, but there's still a huge gap at middle and senior management level.

'It's great to see the debate about diversity gaining traction, backed up by hard evidence to show that it really does have an impact on the bottom line. It stands to reason that if you can create an environment where people are enabled to progress, and where they feel they can bring their whole self to work, you get more diversity of thought, more ideas and more innovation. You're better able to understand your customers, too. If everyone comes from the same background, they tend to think the same way, and that's no way to survive in a disruptive marketplace.'

**Donna Herdsman's career has included senior roles in public finance, as a partner in IBM's Global Business Services and as a Client Director at Hewlett Packard. Now, as a consultant, speaker, coach and mentor she is drawing on her experience in business change and transformation to help organisations create open environments where innovation can thrive. Find Donna on LinkedIn for more information.**

### Understanding bias

In this extract from their book, *Inclusive Leadership*, Fleur Bothwick OBE (MSc HR Strategic Management, 1995) and co-author Charlotte Sweeney explore the impact of unconscious bias



**What is unconscious bias?** Our brains are processing so much information at any one time that we need a system to work out what is and isn't important. Our brains are hard-wired to make these decisions based on past experience and current perceptions.

We all allow unconscious bias to impact our decisions – it's just a fact of life. Unconsciously, we tend to like people who look like us, act like us

and come from similar backgrounds to ourselves. We all want to think that we are open-minded; however, our personal history heavily influences how we evaluate others. Of course, for survival, often our natural instincts keep us safe. However, when we let bias influence our decisions at work, we can end up missing real talent and/or great opportunities.

Examples include: not offering a high-profile project to a team member because it will involve some long days and your star performer is already struggling with childcare and her partner travelling (you may be right, and your decision may be made with the best of intentions, but it is for the individual to make the choice); requiring teams to be in the office because you are not convinced that they will be working hard if they are at home; or not wanting to employ someone with a disability because they may have a high level of sickness.

'Curing' unconscious bias is sometimes perceived as the silver bullet for progressing diversity and inclusion, which it clearly isn't. There is no 'cure' – but by raising people's awareness about the impact of bias, research shows that if this is front of mind when people are making decisions, the impact can be reduced, although this is something that has to be continually worked at.

Other ways to help people counterbalance their bias include encouraging them to pause and think before making a decision. Always review decisions for objectivity and stereotyping. And know the drivers of your decision – are you judging someone on style rather than on their outputs?

***Inclusive Leadership* by Fleur Bothwick and Charlotte Sweeney is published by Pearson. As EMEIA Director of Diversity and Inclusive Leadership at EY, Fleur is responsible for driving inclusion across 99 countries and more than 100,000 employees. She was awarded an OBE in 2013 for her contribution to diversity, inclusion and equality in the workplace.**

## Being bold for change

Urgent action is still needed to tackle the gender gap – and help to create a more equal society

According to the latest figures from the World Economic Forum, at current rates of progress the gender gap will not be closed until 2186. The *Global Gender Gap Report*, which analyses statistics on gender inequality from 144 countries across four key areas – health, education, economy and politics – found that while the gap in health outcomes and educational attainment is closing fast, progress on political empowerment is slow. And when it comes to economic participation, progress has actually gone

into reverse, with this year's figure the lowest since 2008. It's not surprising, then, that International Women's Day (IWD) has adopted #BeBoldForChange as its global theme for 2017. As the report's authors put it, '... if half of the world's talent is not integrated into the transformations under way, we will compromise innovation and risk a rise in inequality'. LSBU's own IWD event featured pitches, panels and workshops with female tech entrepreneurs and a careers session featuring,

among others, senior leaders from the House of Commons and the Armed Forces.

Appropriately, given the emphasis on looking to the future, students had their say too. Speakers such as Ciara Moore and Jeorgia Anderson, students at the South Bank Engineering University Technical College, gave powerful insights into their experiences and hopes for the future: extracts from their speeches are featured here. Currently, just 9% of engineers in the UK are female: so it is in students like these, and initiatives like the College – where over a third of the intake are girls – that hope lies of a more equal future.



## 'Women: we've done it before, and we can do it again'

For Jeorgia Anderson, history has a lot to teach us when it comes to valuing the contribution women can make in the workplace

As part of my GCSE history course, we studied World War 2. Women played a significant role in Britain's victory: thousands worked in factories building bombs, tanks and planes, and many became engineers. This was at a time when people thought women were incapable of such tasks but many went on to become experts, even though they'd had no formal education in the field.

'That created new opportunities for women to be accepted into traditionally male jobs. But there's still a long way to go. People still say "engineering is not a woman's job". I don't understand that. What makes any job – apart from giving birth! – specific to a gender? I'm only 17, but I've already learned that there's a big difference between stereotypes and facts. You can do anything you want, as long as you have pride, determination and resilience.'

'Today, technology is seen as the way forward and is advancing all the time. To keep up, our engineering sector must expand. Just like in World War 2, we need more qualified engineers, and that means more women. Furthermore, diversity brings wider perspectives and better decision-making. As the words of the song go, "It's a man's world, but it would be nothing without a woman or a girl". Women: we've done it before, and we can do it again.'



## 'What it really all boils down to is education'

Ciara Moore wants girls to have their eyes opened to opportunities in engineering from an early age

There have always been female engineers in the world, starting with Nora Stanton Blatch Barney who was the first woman to receive a

degree in civil engineering from Cornell University in 1905. But even though female engineers have been around for years, the ratio of men to women is still 77% to just 23%.

'As young females studying engineering we've been thinking about how we could get closer to a 50/50 split. We thought about advertising, getting inspirational speakers in, and trying to target different age groups. But really, what it all boils down to is education. Teaching girls from primary school age would allow them to grow up around the subject, and show them that it isn't all hard hats and construction – and it's not just for boys.'

'There's more to it than just engineering, though. When I was growing up, we were never educated about equality. My suggestion for how we could be bold for change is to have a gender swap day. I don't mean swapping clothes – I mean girls doing the things that boys normally do, like football or basketball while the boys learn gymnastics. That would be a great way of bringing down the barriers.'

how open-minded we may like to think we are, it is impossible to escape the fact that every decision and judgement we make is shaped by our own background, cultural environment and personal experiences. Alumna Fleur Bothwick OBE, EMEIA Director of Diversity and Inclusive Leadership for consultants EY and co-author of *Inclusive Leadership* (see page 17), likens unconscious bias to a sneeze: 'We know it's going to happen, we often can't stop it happening – but we can mitigate its impact'.

Increasingly, organisations are seeking to do just that by working with employees to raise awareness of unconscious bias and its impact. Senior Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager Laurence Gouldbourne helps to deliver LSBU's unconscious bias training programme. 'It's not about "fixing" biases,' he says. 'Rather, our aim is to make people realise that they have these biases, and recognise their effect.' The LSBU programme draws heavily on real-life examples, including from the University itself, to 'make it real'. 'We try to open up an honest discussion about the power of stereotypes,' says Laurence. 'There

## Engineering the future

South Bank Engineering University Technical College, which opened in September 2016, is a specialist engineering school for 14 to 19-year-olds. Combining high academic standards with a strong emphasis on practical learning, the school offers a unique environment – for example, all students wear business dress – with industry-standard technology and innovative partnerships with business. Key sponsors include LSBU, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Skanska, and Purico. Find out more at [www.southbank-utc.co.uk](http://www.southbank-utc.co.uk)

are no "rights" and "wrongs". It's about understanding how all these influences come together to shape our thinking and the way we view other people.'

## Fair opportunity

Adapting processes, too, can help limit the opportunity for unconscious bias to creep in at all. Vodafone is running a pilot to measure the impact of removing any reference to gender from applicants' CVs. And Fleur Bothwick's employer, EY, recently removed academic qualifications from the entry criteria for its graduate, undergraduate and school leaver schemes so that no one is prevented from applying because of their background, and every applicant has a fair opportunity to prove their abilities.

Karin Moser's research has highlighted some very practical ways businesses can avoid unconscious bias creeping in. 'It may sound trivial, but tiredness has a huge impact on the quality of our decision-making,' she says. 'Selection committees are less effective in choosing the best candidates just before lunch, and right at the very end of the day. People are often reluctant to accept



'Diversity is vital in terms of performance and productivity,' says Laurence Gouldbourne

that their judgement could be impaired, but it's a fact of life. It's the way we're wired – just as we're wired for unconscious bias.'

In a world that is both diverse and increasingly interconnected, the message is clear: to remain competitive, businesses must do more to attract, develop and retain employees from diverse backgrounds, and to help them realise their full potential. Otherwise, as the authors of *Diversity Matters* put it, 'The winners will pull further ahead and laggards fall further behind'. Laurence Gouldbourne agrees: 'Diversity is vital in terms of performance and productivity. We want to create an environment where people can be who they are, and not waste their energy pretending to be something they're not. If an organisation can't harness this, they'll be losing out.'

## Get in touch

Are you working to challenge the status quo, promote diversity and tackle the barriers to inclusion? If so, we'd love to hear from you. Drop us a line at [alumni@lsbu.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@lsbu.ac.uk) and we'll be in touch to find out more.

# THE BUSINESS OF BREXIT

Article 50 has been triggered and negotiations are under way, but we are still a long way from knowing what the UK's decision to leave the EU will mean in practice. We look at the possible impact on London, Europe's financial capital, while alumni entrepreneurs explain how the uncertainty is affecting their businesses

Unlike much of the rest of England, a significant majority of Londoners did not vote for Brexit in the June 2016 referendum. Reflecting the capital's close economic and cultural ties to Europe, 59.9% voted Remain, with the proportion reaching as high as 70% in some areas. When it became clear that the country had voted to leave, London mayor Sadiq Khan described the prospect of a 'hard Brexit' as 'economic self-sabotage'.

London is the EU's financial capital and the most economically important part of Britain. As Peter Luke, Associate Professor in the School of Business, notes, 'The City and the financial services sector in general may have had a bad press in recent years, but it is still enormously important to the UK economy.'

Stephen Barber, Associate Professor in Public Policy within the School, concurs. 'The financial services industry based around the City is a hugely significant driver for London's economic success. And while London is home to the biggest international

**“Many SMEs rely on the economic buoyancy of the financial sector, leaving them exposed to the uncertainty of the Brexit environment”**

banks, there is also a huge economy of SMEs. A large number directly or indirectly serve the banking industry and many rely on the economic buoyancy of the financial sector, leaving them exposed to the uncertainty of the Brexit environment.'

For the capital's SMEs, there are two key questions. First, what will happen to the financial services sector in London? And second, will the UK still be able to operate as part of the European single market, the world's largest free trade bloc?

'One very important issue is the City's access to the European financial services market,' explains Peter Luke. 'If "passporting rights" are lost, jobs could be relocated to Dublin, Paris or Frankfurt. Of course the City and financial services would survive, but the period of adjustment could be a long one.' For Stephen Barber, the risk is of 'an economic knock-on effect that could extend far beyond financial services and affect the huge economy that has grown up around them.'



Prime Minister Theresa May has suggested that she will take the UK outside the single market and possibly also the Customs Union. As Peter Luke observes, 'the key issue is free movement of people, which both sides see as a line in the sand. For small businesses, the prospect of tariffs being imposed on your product or service if your main market is Europe must be cause for concern. SMEs have a lot riding on the outcome of the Brexit negotiations. Given recent developments in the US, perhaps SMEs should hedge their bets and look across the Atlantic instead.'

## Thinking long term

The timescale for negotiations remains unclear. From the point at which the UK government invoked Article 50 on 29 March, there are two years to negotiate a withdrawal from the EU. Stephen Barber believes 'it could easily take two years just to unravel existing commitments and sort out the admin. Only then can we begin to

investigate what the future "deal" will look like.' Peter Luke suggests it could take up to 10 years to secure a trade deal with the EU: it took the EU and Canada eight years to reach an agreement and get it ratified.

Once outside the Customs Union, the UK would in theory be free to establish new free trade agreements with other countries. Peter Luke suggests that the UK may use the interim to prepare the ground for trade treaties with countries such as India and Australia. 'The new normal is going to be a patchwork of bilateral agreements between the UK and disparate states around the world. With each new agreement confidence will grow. After a few years we should see the economy rebalance away from the EU.'

The pound fell in value after the UK voted for Brexit. This has been good news for exporters, and growth overall has remained steady. Peter Luke describes himself as being 'pleasantly surprised that, so far, consumer spending and investment in industry have

## BREXIT BASICS

The UK Brexit referendum – held on 23 June 2016. Leave won by 52% to Remain's 48%. Turnout was 71.8%, with more than 30 million people voting.

The European Union (EU) – 28 countries acting as a single market with free trade and shared regulation that allows goods, services, capital and people to move freely. The EU has its own currency (the euro, used by 19 states), its own parliament and can set rules on the environment, transport, consumer rights, etc.

Article 50 – a legal process by which a member state can leave the EU. It has never been used before and is not detailed, although the process of leaving is likely to be complicated and any deal must be approved or ratified by member states.

**Customs Union – a group of 29 countries (the EU + Turkey) that circulates goods without duties and has a uniform system for handling imports.**

**Passporting – the right of a company based in one country in the European Economic Area to sell goods and services throughout the bloc.**

**European Economic Area – the EU states + Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.**

**MICHAEL MARCIANO (MSc Real Estate, 2011), founder and CEO of Shared Property Data**

My business is a start-up. We developed a crowd-sourced data-sharing platform for the property market and sell our software to commercial property agencies, mostly in London. Before the referendum, I felt quite relaxed. I didn't think Brexit would happen, and nor did most of the professionals I talk to.

'The result of the referendum was a shock on two fronts. First, there was the risk that investment in our business might dry up. And second, if the property market took a hit it would affect the agencies' ability to buy our software.'

'So far, the effects have been manageable. We are still getting the investment we rely on as a start-up, but I have noticed that the high net worth individuals we look to are investing more cautiously.'

'In terms of property agencies buying our software, there's been little change. Property is

a cyclical market and there was a sense that things were peaking just before the referendum. Perhaps it brought things forward slightly, but so far I've noticed no crazy fall-off in the commercial property business in London.

'It's going to take time to negotiate our exit from the EU, and while that happens life goes on, people are still working and buildings continue to be let and sold. The terms of these deals don't affect my business, only the number of transactions, which has shown little change.'

'It's hard to know how to prepare, other than by minimising exposure to risk. For us this means staying lean and not over-relying on external bankers. Being a start-up makes us slightly immune because our lifecycle is short: we'll either go bust or make it within the next two years. And who knows where things will be with Brexit by then?'

held up'. Nevertheless, Stephen Barber detects what he calls 'worrying signs. Inflation is creeping up and it will be hard for earnings to keep pace. February's inflation figure of 2.3% has now closed the gap with earnings growth, meaning that on average real terms pay rises are static. Indeed, real household disposable income has fallen, while savings rates are at their lowest since the financial crisis.' What is needed now is clarity from government regarding the direction of travel so that businesses can start to prepare accordingly. ●

**Concerned about the impact of Brexit? Find out more about upcoming events run by LSBU's Research, Enterprise and Innovation team at [www.lsbu.ac.uk/business](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/business) or drop into the Business Solutions Centre between 2pm and 5pm on Mondays and Thursdays at the Clarence Centre for Enterprise and Innovation.**



**MIKE CAMILLERI (MSc Building Surveying, 2006), entrepreneur and property investor**

I've been investing in residential property development for 20 years. While I don't do business directly with continental Europe, Europe has long been and continues to be a source of qualified professional labour for the building trades.

'I was a committed Remainer and did some campaigning locally because I felt the bigger political issues about the role of a unified Europe were being ignored. I was shocked to find that around half of my associates, including some prominent business people, voted to leave Europe because they felt the EU was a financial drain.'

'For years I focused on high value residential properties in south west London – homes for bankers and lawyers. That market has dropped off. I feel it was overheating anyway, but the question mark left by Brexit seems to have speeded things up. The agents I talk to have noticed a drop in prices and Foxtons have posted an update showing a slowdown in London residential property sales.'

'Fortunately I shifted focus to lower value residential units outside London. It's impossible to say what will happen in the future, but I won't be looking to invest in London property for the moment. There hasn't yet been the slump that many feared, but the uncertainty is still there and the question remains, how can we continue to trade freely if we won't accept free movement of labour? I hope it can be resolved without lasting acrimony, for my children's sake.'

**"It's hard to know how to prepare for Brexit, other than by minimising our exposure to risk. That means staying lean – and not relying on banks"**



## Access all areas

From living in a hostel in east London to carrying the Olympic torch in Rio, Tunji Akintokun's (MSc Information Systems Engineering, 1993) story is a case study in overcoming adversity. Now he's focusing his considerable energies on helping other young people to do the same



**T**

here are some people whose energy and warmth light up a room – and Tunji Akintokun is one of them. On the day of our interview he arrives on campus buzzing with enthusiasm after a session at the London members’ club he sometimes uses as an alternative office. ‘I’ve just had coffee with someone I met through a workshop for women returners run by TechUK and everywoman,’ he says.

‘She was finding it hard getting back into work after having children, so I introduced her to one of my colleagues at Cisco, who gave her some great advice. Today she told me that she’s just received a job offer. I’m so happy for her. I also had a chat with Foluke Akinlose MBE, who founded the PRECIOUS Awards for Women – Cisco is one of the sponsors – and with Margaret Casely-Hayford, who chairs the charity ActionAid, about a charitable art project for Black History Month in October.’

It’s a brief but telling insight into his modus operandi. There are no frills, and no formality.

In Tunji’s world, it’s all about connections: finding people who share his desire to bring down the barriers to equality of opportunity, and galvanising them into action.

His is a network that’s growing all the time. Tunji’s involvement with everywoman – he’s a judge at their annual technology awards – is only the start of a long list of extra-curricular commitments that includes sitting on the Business Leader Council and mentoring for Teach First, working as an ambassador for national education and careers provider STEM Learning and judging the Black British Business Awards. He is also patron of the autism charity CASPA and a Vibrant Economy Commissioner at accounting firm Grant Thornton.

Then of course there is his first highly successful social enterprise Your Future, Your Ambition, which between 2012 and 2016 engaged over 3000 young people in inspiring events and activities designed to help them pursue their STEM-related career ambitions, and provided mentoring for 600. All this

on top of a demanding day job as Cisco’s Director of Mid-Market Customers and Partner Organisations in Africa.

So what is it that drives him? ‘My belief in the power of education to transform lives is based directly on my own experiences,’ he says. ‘I’m proof positive that it doesn’t matter where you come from. Given plenty of determination and a bit of support at the right times, you can get to wherever you want to be.’

#### Turning point

Tunji’s own childhood and early years were characterised by turbulence and upheaval. His parents – both well educated, determined people – arrived in the UK from Nigeria. When Tunji was born he was very soon fostered out to an Irish family in Essex. ‘It seems shocking now,’ he says. ‘But it wasn’t that unusual in the 60s.’

Sadly, Tunji’s father, who had sickle cell anaemia, died when he was just two. He stayed with his foster parents until he was eight, when his mother remarried, but tragedy struck again when she died just three years later. Tunji’s relationship with his stepfather was a difficult one, and at 13 he found himself homeless when his stepfather returned from Nigeria and sold the family home. He sought refuge in a hostel in Forest Gate, where he stayed until he finished his O-levels.

Through all this, school represented the security and stability that was so lacking in his domestic life. While the school itself – a comprehensive in Canning Town, in London’s Docklands – did little to raise its pupils’ aspirations, it did provide Tunji with a life-changing experience. ‘One day IBM came in,’ he recalls. ‘The engineer had this massive computer and basically said, “This is the future”. I was fascinated. I remember going to him afterwards and asking, “Right, what do I need to do if I want to work with these things?” That was it. I ditched all the languages and arts subjects, and focused 100% on sciences and maths.’

It’s an experience that has stayed with him. ‘Pretty much everything I do is about trying to bring down barriers,’ he says. ‘It’s about helping people see what’s possible, and getting them excited about what they can achieve. I was fortunate to have people

**“I’m proof positive that it doesn’t matter where you come from. Given plenty of determination and a bit of support, you can get to wherever you want to be”**

that saw the potential in me and gave me a helping hand. My story could easily have turned out differently – which is why I do what I’m doing now.’

The idea for Your Future, Your Ambition, for example, was born out of the recognition that the digital gap was growing. ‘There was already a shortage of talent in the industry, and the numbers studying STEM subjects were falling too. As a result, the UK was moving down the innovation league table. I wanted to do something about that – and recreate that “Aha!” moment that I had for as many children and young people as possible.’

#### Opening up opportunities

The opportunity he’d been looking for came in 2012. Cisco, an official supporter of the London 2012 Olympics, had installed a state-of-the-art structure, Cisco House, high above the Westfield shopping centre in Stratford. ‘I went to a meeting of The Network of Networks – it’s where the multicultural networks of some of the biggest UK companies come together – and told them, “I want to get loads of kids into Cisco House to see all this cutting-edge technology, and open their eyes to some of the opportunities that are out there”. I managed to secure support from 15 companies, and three months later we were able to host our first event, for 400 kids.’

Since then, the initiative has snowballed. Now, an annual marketplace event is held at

**‘Pretty much everything I do is about trying to bring down barriers,’ says Tunji**



the Emirates Stadium, with around 25 blue chip companies from Accenture to Barclays to National Grid. 'It's very hands-on,' says Tunji. 'We've had scientists from Procter & Gamble showing the kids how toothpaste is made, and engineers from BT demonstrating how to lay a fibre optic cable. It's about providing positive role models, too. Meeting a black female nuclear physicist is a really powerful thing.'

Unsurprisingly, Tunji is also active in pushing the diversity agenda within Cisco. He's quick to credit his employer for their willingness to support him – and to face uncomfortable truths head on. 'I remember when we were first setting up the Black Employee Network. Some people wondered why we needed it. So we got a facilitator in to do some reverse mentoring, which really opened people's eyes to the issue of unconscious bias and paved the way for the network to be launched.'

It's an example that goes a long way to explaining why someone as dynamic as Tunji has spent 18 years of his career

**“My unofficial motto is, ‘Disrupt yourself before someone disrupts you’. It’s important to keep moving, or you won’t keep growing as a leader”**



vs perspiration, and it's something I draw on every day.

**What's your office like?**

I work across six Cisco locations in Africa – so usually it's just wherever I can find a desk! But my office at home in London is full of African contemporary art and sports memorabilia that I find very inspiring. Also, most of the time I work standing up. I find I feel less restricted and more energised that way.

**How do you know when it's time to move on?**

I have a three-year rule. The first year you're in a role, you're working out how to do it. The second year, you start to become competent. And in the third year you can start to get a bit complacent if you're not careful. Once I start to feel like I'm mastering a role, then I know it's time for a change.

with the same employer. 'Cisco is very open, and very willing to examine itself,' he says. 'And every time I've considered taking on a new challenge outside the organisation, Cisco has responded. I've had some amazing opportunities here. My unofficial motto is, "Disrupt yourself before someone disrupts you". It's important to keep moving, or you won't keep growing as a leader.'

**Good business sense**

'I think some people wondered why I wanted to take on my current role in Africa.

It's true that many countries still face major economic and socio-political challenges, but the opportunities digitalisation can bring to a continent that's now connected to the rest of the world by undersea fibre cable and where half the population is under 35 are enormous. There are some amazing transformational infrastructure projects going on too. I want to be part of all that.'

Looking ahead, there's plenty still to aim for. 'It's great that companies are starting to take diversity more seriously,' he says. 'They know now that it's not just nice to do – it makes good business sense. Cisco is doing well: I think we're the first and so far the only IT company to hold the National Equality Standard. But there's still a long way to go.' Outside work, Tunji plans to launch a new globally backed STEM initiative later this year, building on the work of Your Future, Your Ambition. 'The system still isn't fair,' he says. 'I was fortunate, but there are still a lot of bright kids that don't make it through. When we talk about creating more diversity at these top levels of the corporate world – well, that's where it all begins.'

**Getting into STEM**

**If you're inspired by Tunji's commitment to increasing the number of young people studying STEM subjects and their access to opportunity, let us know. The University works with local schools, including our own South Bank University Academy of Engineering and South Bank Engineering University Technical College (see page 18), to help inspire young people to study STEM and build local networks of support. Email us at alumni@lsbu.ac.uk to find out more.**

**QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS**

**What's been your proudest moment so far?**

There have been so many! I was really honoured to win a National Diversity Award for my work in diversity, mentoring and STEM. And I'm really proud of what we've achieved with Your Future, Your Ambition. But it's hard to beat being chosen as a torchbearer at the 2016 Rio Olympics. That's a truly once in a lifetime experience.

**What's the most useful thing you've learned recently?**

In 2013 I was lucky enough to spend time at Stanford University, studying design thinking. The idea is that you can learn to be innovative by taking risks and rethinking and remodelling until you come up with something that works, rather than sitting around waiting for a brilliant idea. Basically it comes down to the old cliché about inspiration

# Focus on enterprise

LSBU's Research, Enterprise and Innovation team share the bold approach to supporting businesses that helped them scoop The Times Higher Education Entrepreneurial University of the Year award





### 'Developing approaches that work for real businesses has opened my eyes'

The Business Solutions Centre provides free advice for local businesses, strengthening links with the community and providing student advisers with invaluable real-world experience. Martina Eco (MSc Marketing, 2017) has been working at the Centre since it opened in 2016

Working here is definitely the thing I'll miss most when I graduate. I've been involved with the Centre since before it launched. I was looking for ways to get the most out of my university experience and to apply my classroom learning to real-world situations when I saw a posting about the Centre. I began training as an adviser in 2015. Our training covered pretty much every aspect of

business. We worked in teams to respond to case studies and develop solutions to live briefs. We worked on our interview and communication skills, business writing and reporting, and health and safety. Finally we drew up the processes for how the Centre would be run. It was quite student-led, although we have a great deal of academic support behind us.

'Developing approaches that work for businesses in the real world has really opened

my eyes. The solutions that small businesses need often take more creativity than the standard textbook approach, because budgets are so tight. I own and run a translation and interpreting company (www.3p-translation.com), and this has helped me look more analytically at what I do with my own business.

'I worked on one project that was particularly demanding – developing a marketing and branding strategy for a small local business. I learned so

much from working on it, and I'm proud to say that it subsequently became a kind of model for the way we approach and produce our reports.

'This kind of consultancy work is extremely satisfying. It's made me think that in future I'd like to build in a consultancy or coaching element to my translation business, so that I can help others starting out in the same field. It's definitely clarified my future plans.'

### 'Having the Collective on my CV has definitely opened doors for me'

Sometimes the simplest ideas are the most radical. Why not set up a professional photography agency run and staffed entirely by students? LSBU did this in 2014 and Lisa Drew (BA Photography, 2016) was there from the start

The original idea for an agency came from Senior Lecturer Daniel Alexander, then a couple of my peers and I successfully collaborated to turn the vision into reality. I became one of the South Bank Collective's first student directors. We did everything, from registering with Companies House to opening a bank account to developing a strategy and putting together a website.



'The idea was to help student photographers get started in a very competitive profession. Some start out as photographers' assistants; others want to work as producers. But everyone gets valuable experience. They can build up their portfolio, gain experience of working with paying clients, and learn vital business skills, such as keeping their own accounts.

'A lot of commissions come from LSBU. The University needs images for websites, prospectuses and events, and it makes sense to employ student photographers. The Collective is a community interest company – the photographers and staff are paid as they would be in any agency, and the profits reinvested in the student body.

'The Collective also works for charities and, increasingly,

with external businesses. Last year we worked on a commission for FASSI, an Italian crane company, who flew nine photographers out to Italy to photograph their 2017 calendar. These images were also recently exhibited at the Borough Road Gallery.

'The feedback from clients is extraordinary – they might expect students but they get professionals! We've now opened the agency to include film and drama students, who provide acting and video-based services in a similar way.

'I've now handed on the director role to two students and am studying for an MA in Arts and Cultural Management at King's College London. Having the Collective on my CV has definitely opened doors for me and the experience has helped orientate me in my career.'

The number of business start-ups in the UK reached a record high in 2016: an astonishing 80 new companies were set up every hour, making the UK the most entrepreneurial country in Europe.\* It's a trend that shows no sign of going away, which is why LSBU is so committed to supporting enterprise among students, alumni, staff and the wider community: a commitment that recently earned us the title of Entrepreneurial University of the Year in The Times Higher Education Awards.

Working closely with business and equipping students for the real world has always been an essential part of our remit. But it's in the past 18 months or so that our efforts to support fledgling businesses have really come together, creating what Director of Research, Enterprise and Innovation Gurpreet Jagpal calls an 'ecosystem centred on research, enterprise and innovation'.



'There's a real entrepreneurial spirit among the staff too,' says Linsey Cole

The key elements include a Director of Research and Enterprise in each of the University's seven Schools, working alongside a School Enterprise Champion whose remit is to embed enterprise into the curriculum. The Student Enterprise team runs start-up schemes and accelerator programmes, talks, workshops and competitions, and operates out of the Clarence Centre, itself a hub for enterprise activities and home to a wide range of start-ups and local businesses. Then there are the Entrepreneurs in Residence (among them Naomi Mwasambili, see page 10), who provide advice and one-to-one mentoring, and Student Ambassadors, who work to promote enterprise activities to their peers.

It's an impressive range of activities – but, believes Linsey Cole, who heads up student enterprise activities, what makes the team's approach so uniquely effective is not what they do, but how they do it. 'There's a real

entrepreneurial spirit among the staff too,' she says. 'The attitude is very much, if you've got a good idea, then run with it. We're very free and creative in the way we work.'

### Bright ideas

Recent bright ideas currently proving their worth include the South Bank Collective. This student-run agency gives fledgling photographers the chance to develop their technical and client-facing skills by taking on real-life commissions, for which they are paid a realistic fee. Similarly, the Business Solutions Centre gives business students an opportunity to gain real-world experience by providing advice to local businesses, backed up by support from academic staff. See above for more on both these projects.

Then too there is the fact that all seven Schools are fully engaged with the enterprise agenda. 'In some universities, enterprise activities are focused on the business



'We've created an ecosystem centred on research, enterprise and innovation,' says Gurpreet Jagpal

department or faculty,' Linsey explains. 'Here, that's not the case. We recognise that good ideas can come from anywhere, and that working together helps to generate new ideas. We're interested in knocking down barriers, not putting them up. The spirit of enterprise really does run deep at LSBU. It's about more than start-ups: it's a way of doing and a way of being.' ●

### Got a business idea?

Our Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme is open to anyone who's graduated within the last five years and who has a business idea that's been validated or is in the early stages of running a business or social enterprise. The next round of applications opens in summer 2017. Find out more at [www.lsbu.ac.uk/student-life/student-enterprise](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/student-life/student-enterprise)

\*Start Up Britain. Global Entrepreneurship Index

London South Bank University

# Short Film Festival

LSBU's first ever film festival aims to shine a spotlight on fresh creative talent

**Run by students for students**, LSBU's Short Film Festival is designed to provide a showcase for creative talent from across the University. The team behind the event – all first year students on our BA (Hons) Film Practice course – is inviting students from all disciplines to submit their own short films of up to 20 minutes in length. 'Our aim was to get more students involved in film-making, and unleash the creativity we know is out there,' says co-director Ben Effemey. 'We've already had some great submissions, and have learned so much from putting the festival together. Now we're looking forward to seeing it grow.' ●



## MEET THE TEAM BEHIND THE SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

### FESTIVAL FACTS

The LSBU Short Film Festival will be held at the Elephant Studios cinema in our London Road Building on Friday 19 May from 15.30 to 20.30. The event will include a showcase and prizes for the best student films. For more information, or to book tickets for the festival, go to [www.lsbff.co.uk](http://www.lsbff.co.uk)



**Lauren Jiggins**  
Lauren runs her own successful film journalism company, Inside Cinema, and hopes to become a producer (she loves the paperwork!)  
[lauren@lsbff.co.uk](mailto:lauren@lsbff.co.uk)



**Ethan McDowell**  
Ethan runs his own film production company (Pickle & Co.) and currently has two documentaries – including one focusing on the conflict in Northern Ireland – and a social video on the slate  
[ethan@lsbff.co.uk](mailto:ethan@lsbff.co.uk)



**Ben Effemey**  
Aspiring producer and director, Ben enjoys editing, and working on Live TV projects with his company, BourneCreative  
[ben@lsbff.co.uk](mailto:ben@lsbff.co.uk)



2004



2017

## Then and now

**FIND OUT MORE**  
Find out more about the Clarence Centre and how it could support your business at [www.lsbu.ac.uk/business/office-space/clarence-centre](http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/business/office-space/clarence-centre)

Of all the recent changes on campus, the transformation of 113-119 Borough Road and 123-132 London Road, known as the Terraces, is among the most dramatic. The buildings were bought by the University in 1997 and gained Grade II listed status in 2000. Work began in 2011, and the Clarence Centre for Enterprise and Innovation opened in autumn 2013. Now home to 18 tenant businesses and to LSBU's Research, Enterprise and Innovation team (see page 27), the Centre has helped 13,000 students and graduates to take their business ideas to the next level, showing our commitment to enterprise in action. ●



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