

**Peer
Networks**

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**London
Business Hub**

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Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy



**Starts
Oct
2021**

About Peer Networks

Peer Networks is a government-funded, peer-to-peer networking programme for SME leaders that want to grow and develop their organisation.

Delivered locally by the [London Business Hub](#) in collaboration with [Thrive Training](#), we are bringing together two groups of people (cohorts) from SMEs in London to work collaboratively through common business issues. Through interactive action learning, we will enable participants to discuss their own challenges, gain and reflect on valuable feedback and implement practical solutions to overcome them.

From finance and HR to sales, marketing and more, our expert facilitators give business leaders the flexibility to create a trusted support network that works for them, helping them to build and strengthen their business and improve its overall performance.



Why are we doing this?

Businesses that seek external advice or undertake formal training are more likely to improve their overall performance.

However, many prefer to take advice from trusted sources, such as their peers, when presented with external challenges and opportunities.

Peer Networks is tailor-made to address this unmet demand for peer-to-peer support.



Benefits

Businesses that complete Peer Networks will:

- Overcome business challenges and recognise and act on new opportunities
- Build a trusted network of connections to support them now and in the future
- Improve their long-term personal and business performance

Thank you all so much for your input and assistance, both during today's meeting and in previous weeks - I can genuinely say that these sessions have exceeded my wildest expectations and your help and insight has supported me during a particularly tough time in my professional life.

Marco Olmi

Drury Tea and Coffee, attended Peer Networks in 2020/21

<https://www.drurycoffee.com/>

Target audience

The programme is open to any SME business that has:



Operated for at least one year



At least two employees



A turnover of at least £100,000



An aspiration to improve

Ideally, participants will also have:



The potential to scale up



The ability or potential to export

Delivery

Delivered through a series of high impact group sessions, with each cohort led by a trained facilitator.

Running from Oct 2021 to Jan 2022.

The programme includes:

- 7 fortnightly sessions over 14 weeks (mainly 2.5 hours per session)*
- Interactive action learning plus guest speakers
- Flexible topic selection (next slide)
- One-to-one support ($\geq 3 \frac{1}{2}$ hours)

*The first session is 3 hours to allow time for introductions and discuss the process; the remaining 6 sessions are 2 ½ hours each with a 15 min break and 5 min to complete the mandatory feedback forms.



Facilitators

Peer Networks will be run by two of the most experienced facilitators / business coaches in the UK:

- **Ewan Stickley** – Leadership expert and business coach; formerly of Walt Disney, Pret a Manger, and Pentland Group (Speedo, Lacoste and Berghaus). Ewan worked as training manager for Pret, helping the business grow from two to >100 restaurants in the UK. He has recently delivered leadership programmes for Airbus, Deloitte and the Open University and supported SMEs including the Artisan Olive Oil Company (www.artisanoliveoilcompany.co.uk) and Databac Group (<https://databac.com>).
- **Matthew Critchlow** – Managing Director at Thrive and Visiting Lecturer at the University of Westminster; formerly of Eli Lilly & Co. Matthew has built his own successful business and delivered coaching programmes for high profile clients such as Nationwide Building Society, Friends Life, The Home Office and a number of SMEs in the UK, including PAUL (www.paul-uk.com) and Odysea (www.odysea.com).

Ewan Stickley



Matthew Critchlow



Guest Speakers

During the Peer Networks programme you will hear from two guest speakers:

- **Yanto Barker** – Former professional racing cyclist and CEO/founder of Le Col sportswear company. Le Col is one of the most successful UK sportswear brands to be launched in the last 20 years. Yanto has overseen a hugely successful direct-to-consumer sales strategy via its own website, helping grow a business that's now valued at >£10 Million (<https://tinyurl.com/Forbes-interview-Yanto-Barker>)
- **Chris Samuel** – Marketing and business development expert with over twenty year's experience in the food and drink industry (<https://brandfrontiers.com/>). Chris has overseen the launch of several highly successful brands in the food market, including Green & Black's, Dorset Cereals and Quorn. Chris brings expertise in launching organic and natural food products in international markets.

Yanto Barker



Chris Samuel



Delivery

Depending on you, the audience, action learning topics could include:

- Finance
- HR
- Sales and Marketing
- Adjusting to social distancing
- Business Model Innovation
- Change Management
- Embedding formal management processes
- Adoption and implementation of digital technology
- Use of data to drive value in the business
- EU transition
- Net zero





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Definition of an SME

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are non-subsidary, independent firms which employ fewer than a given number of employees. This number varies across countries. The most frequent upper limit designating an SME is 250 employees, as in the European Union.
- Small firms are generally those with fewer than 50 employees, while micro-enterprises have at most 10, or in some cases 5, workers.
- Financial assets are also used to define SMEs. In the European Union, a new definition came into force on 1 January 2005 applying to all Community acts and funding programmes as well as in the field of State aid where SMEs can be granted higher intensity of national and regional aid than large companies.

The new definition provides for an increase in the financial ceilings: the turnover of medium-sized enterprises (50-249 employees) should not exceed EUR 50 million; that of small enterprises (10-49 employees) should not exceed EUR 10 million while that of micro firms (less than 10 employees) should not exceed EUR 2 million. Alternatively, balance sheets for medium, small and micro enterprises should not exceed EUR 43 million, EUR 10 million and EUR 2 million, respectively.

Source Publication:

- OECD, 2005, OECD SME and Entrepreneurship Outlook: 2005, OECD Paris, page 17.
- Created on Tuesday, December 4, 2001
- Last updated on Friday, December 2, 2005

