

# BUSINESS READY

## UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK SCIENCE PARK

### 'Cool' creative studio expands with backing from Business Ready

IdealFactory has got designs on significant growth after it was given support by the Business Ready Programme. The company, which is based at the Bilton Industrial Estate, already employs four people but is set to expand after taking guidance from a mentor provided by the programme.



Pictured (left to right): Adam Duffy with  
Ian McFarlane-Toms

#### The Company

Adam Duffy, who grew up in Claverdon and lives in Rugby, has been working in the fashion industry for 15 years, including for a range of high street brands.

He launched his business, IdealFactory, in 2016 to offer designers and artists the opportunity to have their work turned into chic fashion or furniture products – from trainers to chairs.

"It's a unique design platform," he said. "Graphic designers and artists have the opportunity to create their own products and we can turn that into a reality. We want the designs to be high-end and the final product to be made to the highest quality to match."

#### The Challenge

Adam could see the potential for growth but because he was busy working so

hard in order to meet customer demand there wasn't time to map out the way the business could do that.

He needed support to be able to turn some of those ideas into reality and a 'critical friend' to be able to talk through his plans for growth.

The company also needed to devise a new marketing plan in order to ensure it was reaching the right potential customers.

Adam approached the CWLEP Growth Hub to see if there was assistance available and the team there directed him onto the Business Ready programme.

#### The solution

Adam was assigned a mentor, Paul Walker, from the programme, who got under the skin of the company before helping IdealFactory to focus on the areas of the business that could help it to grow.

He worked with Adam to develop a marketing plan but it was having a mentor to work through any general issues and to develop ideas that was extremely beneficial to the business.

"The support has been brilliant," Adam said. "We are a small business and, as the owner, you sometimes want to be able to bounce ideas off someone – having a mentor to be able to speak to who has experience in business was really helpful."

"You can get consumed by day-to-day matters but having Paul to talk things through sometimes made me realise I was onto a good idea and, at other times, I could see – once I'd chatted it through – that another idea might not work or we might not be ready to go down that route."

"We developed a marketing plan together and that will help us to reach the right audiences for our products and services."

Apply now [business-ready.co.uk](https://business-ready.co.uk) [@bus\\_ready](https://twitter.com/bus_ready)  
[businessready@uwsp.co.uk](mailto:businessready@uwsp.co.uk) 024 7632 3121

## The results

IdealFactory has already grown by 80 per cent on the back of the support from Business Ready and Adam has his eyes on further significant growth by adding more staff to the team and attracting more designers and artists to use the platform.

Adam said: "We're confident now that we have the right platform and the right offer to attract more designers and artists to create their own products using the platform which, in turn, will increasingly draw in more customers for those products.

"We also have software that can turn a design into a style of art. So you could upload a photo and, using machine learning, it could for example turn it into a Mona Lisa style design. It's merging art, design, technology and manufacturing and it's already interesting some major brands.

"I feel we are in the right place at the right time with Coventry being UK City of Culture – there are great synergies between what we do and the city having that title and we wouldn't be in this great position without the support we have had."

Ian McFarlane-Toms, a Business Growth Adviser at the University of Warwick Science Park, said: "Being the owner of a small business can be a lonely place, so having the support and guidance of a mentor can be extremely beneficial. Sometimes it can be to confirm that an idea you have is a good one, or to encourage them to look at it a different way.

"We are delighted that the support we have given to IdealFactory has helped to pave the way for the company to grow and create job opportunities."

## Business support for the next level

The Business Ready programme is managed by the business support team at the University of Warwick Science Park. The experienced Business Growth Advisers team have been delivering business growth and support services to technology based businesses for over 20 years.

In addition, the team are supported by a range of specialist mentors who have run their own businesses and have expertise and experience supporting, advising, coaching and mentoring other growth businesses.



### Access to skills & knowledge

Hands on help to connect companies to Universities and their resources as well as upskilling business owners.



### Access to markets

Assistance in identifying routes to market and developing market readiness.



### Access to finance


Assistance in identifying funding routes and developing investment readiness.




### Access to incubation


An incubation service for early stage/start-up companies.

Apply now

 [business-ready.co.uk](mailto:business-ready.co.uk)

 [@bus\\_ready](https://twitter.com/bus_ready)

 [businessready@uwsp.co.uk](mailto:businessready@uwsp.co.uk)

 024 7632 3121

This project is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund, forming part of the Coventry & Warwickshire Business Support Programme



**European Union**  
European Regional  
Development Fund