

Objective One case study knowledge economy



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The projects in the Knowledge Economy investment cluster include those developing the Combined Universities and activities that support the development of much stronger links between Higher Education and business.

Developing the Combined Universities in Cornwall is considered so important to the development of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly it was the only project specifically outlined in the Single Programming Document contract. Prior to commencing the Objective One Programme in 2000, there was no such university opportunity in Cornwall.

University level provision in Cornwall and its links with business encourages graduates to start their own businesses, attracts new business and encourages innovation and knowledge transfer, thereby increasing the overall wealth of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Design Bureau

Graphic design student Claire Biddick has helped a Cornwall-based business increase its design-oriented turnover by almost 70 percent since starting work there.

The Design Bureau is part of the Quintdown Group, which has offices in Newquay, Truro and Camborne, and is now due to expand with an office move.

Claire, who lives in St Columb Major, graduated from Bath Spa University in Graphic Design in 2004. She was able to return to her home county to work because of Unlocking Cornish Potential (UCP), a scheme which places graduates with businesses.

Under the UCP scheme Claire began work for the Design Bureau in November 2004. The company specialises in high quality design, printing, and copying for local businesses. Clients include St Michaels Mount, the Royal Cornwall Museum, the Cornish Pig Company and artist Nanette Martin.

Claire was initially based in the company's Newquay branch undergoing relevant training before her move to Truro in February 2005. Since being in the Truro branch there has been up to a 70% increase in turnover for the design studio.

"Unlocking Cornish Potential has been of great benefit to me," said Claire. "I didn't think I would be able to get a job in Cornwall that I was qualified and



Graduate Claire Biddick, who joined the Design Bureau in November 2004 through the Unlocking Cornish Potential Scheme

paid well enough for. I was taken on as a designer but have since done a lot of other training, including asset management, customer services and communications."

This training has helped build Claire's self confidence and has gained her new skills which have enabled Claire to undertake new responsibilities by co-coordinating the Design and Print Studio at the Design Bureau.

The company is soon due to move the office to Lemon Street and is hoping to employ a second graduate in the near future.

John Jay, Managing Director, said: "We are delighted with how Unlocking Cornish Potential has helped The Quintdown Group; we have had two excellent people through the scheme, Claire Biddick now senior designer at our Truro branch, The Design Bureau and Ffinlo Kilner who has become the Managing Director of Quintdown Web. We're so impressed that we are now looking to take another candidate for Quintdown Marketing."

Louise Oldham, UCP Project Officer, said: "This is an excellent example of how UCP can help graduates to return to Cornwall to gain a good career. Supported by a mentor and linking Claire with training to develop her business skills I believe have strongly influenced the Design Bureau Truro branch's success."

The Unlocking Cornish Potential programme places graduates with small and medium sized businesses in Cornwall for up to 12 months.

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Investment in UCP through Objective One means that participating businesses receive 30% of the cost of taking on their graduate for the duration of the project. Graduates and their employers also receive support from an independent mentor, 70% of previous UCP graduates have been offered a permanent position with their host company at the end of the project. UCP was the first project launched by the Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC) initiative to offer direct business support and is managed by Cornwall College.

UCP has proved highly successful in ensuring graduate knowledge remains in the region and gets harnessed for the benefit of businesses. Two key priorities for the EU's Lisbon Agenda, which aims to achieve economic regeneration, are knowledge and innovation for growth and to create more and better jobs. UCP is an effective way of achieving these aims.

For more information about Unlocking Cornish Potential visit www.unlockingcornishpotential.co.uk.



Training undertaken since joining the Design Bureau has helped build Claire's self confidence and enabled her to undertake new responsibilities