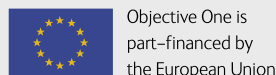


# Objective One case study knowledge economy



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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.

## Seasalt - Sarah Hawkey

As part of the drive to become even more ethical and environmentally sustainable, Cornwall-based clothing company Seasalt has taken on a Sustainability Manager.

Sarah Hawkey has been employed under Unlocking Cornish Potential - a Combined Universities in Cornwall project that has received Objective One investment and places graduates with businesses and provides support for up to one year.

Part of her job is to ensure Seasalt meets international environmental standards and competes for top environmental awards.

Sarah, who is originally from Bristol, graduated in Environmental Sustainability from the University of Glamorgan and then took an MSc in Environmental Conservation Management. She moved to Porthleven and carried out some freelance environmental research writing before taking the position with Seasalt.

Seasalt (formerly Wildlife) was set up by the Chadwick family and began in 1981 as one shop in Penzance. Eight other shops, employing more than 50, have since been opened - in Falmouth, Truro, St Ives, Fowey, Padstow, Totnes, St Mary's and Penryn. In 2005 Seasalt became the first clothing brand to have clothing certified to Soil Association standards. The shops sell a mixture of Seasalt and other brands including Oska, White Stuff, Keen and Camper. Seasalt clothes are also distributed nationally.



Seasalt has employed Sarah Hawkey as Sustainability Manager under the Unlocking Cornish Potential scheme

**Sarah said:** "A lot of environmental policies are already in place at Seasalt and part of my role is to formalise these, so I am carrying out an initial environmental review and compiling an environmental manual. The business is ahead in many ways such as recycling commercial waste and offering paper and jute bags rather than plastic, and we are currently appointing an environmental champion in each of our stores.

"We are applying for ISO 14001 - an internationally recognised standard of environmental sustainability in business - and the review is an integral part of that process. The starting point is acknowledging that our business activities have an effect on the wider environment, such as the carbon emissions produced from importing goods or staff travelling to work. Essentially, I am assessing Seasalt's significant environmental impacts. For instance, I am looking at how much electricity and gas is used in each store to identify where savings can be made and encouraging staff to take part in these tasks."

Once the environmental manual is completed, Sarah plans to schedule regular meetings with staff to discuss how Seasalt's carbon footprint can be reduced and the effects of any changes to environmental legislation on Seasalt's business activities.

Leigh Chadwick, said: "Seasalt is committed to being an environmentally and socially responsible business and Sarah's appointment as Sustainability Manager is a major step forward for us, particularly in helping us to reduce our environmental impact.

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The support provided by Unlocking Cornish Potential in helping us to recruit and develop Sarah has been invaluable.”

Ben Leonard, from Unlocking Cornish Potential, said: “We have worked with Seasalt a number of times before running projects on both clothing and graphic design. Whilst Seasalt has always had a strong environmental ethic it is great to now be able to support a project to formalise and develop their procedures. With a specialised mentor to support her and Project Management training under way we are sure that her project will be a great success.”

**The Unlocking Cornish Potential programme places graduates with small and medium sized businesses in Cornwall for up to 12 months. 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](http://www.unlockingcornishpotential.co.uk).**



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