

Angela Murray



Activities

- Won the Birmingham University “BULB” business plan competition
- Won the West Midlands Regional “BIZCOM” business plan competition
- Commissioned a logo and brand identity from a previous SPEED participant (Hybrid Dialect)
- Launched “Roads to Riches” at RWM 08 – one of Europe’s largest recycling trade exhibitions
- In discussion with Alta Innovations regarding patenting our technology
- Showcased our research on BBC Midlands Today, regional radio shows, several trade journals and the Sky News website
- Have been awarded a place on the Medici Business Training programme for 2008/9

Future

Ideally I will be CEO of “Roads to Riches” and will be recycling PGMs all over Britain!!

We are currently in discussion with several local councils who wish to help develop our technology.

Even if this idea doesn’t eventually make it I’m sure the business training provided at Birmingham will be put to good use in other ventures. Many of the skills taught are cross-disciplinary and transferrable and so will be of benefit regardless of business sector.

Roads to Riches

“Roads to Riches” aims to develop mobile technology for the recovery of platinum, palladium and rhodium (PGMs) from road dust, which is a global commodity.

PGMs, are lost from vehicle catalytic converters as people drive around. Much of this ends up in road dust, which is collected but not currently recycled, often ending up in landfill sites. PGMs are valuable and increasingly scarce, trading for up to £80 per gram.

Thus collecting road dust and recycling the PGMs not only generates revenue, but more importantly conserves a finite, non-renewable valuable natural resource.



The Student Placements for Entrepreneurs in Education (SPEED) programme

The training provided has been fantastic – in particular the Media training has proved particularly useful to me as our research has recently appeared in newspapers, trade journals and even on TV.

Having access to a dedicated budget has also allowed me to move the business forward while completing my studies.

I won a place on the SPEED programme in May 2008 – by September we had launched our company at an international trade fair, had lots of media interest and are now in discussions with funding bodies, local councils and equipment manufacturers. I never thought this would have been possible in less than six months.

If you have an idea that you think is worthwhile then stick with it! When I first started pitching this idea during my PhD it got very mixed responses (not all of them positive or complimentary!). However two years down the line it has won two business competitions and is beginning to attract interest from companies interested in the technology. If I had taken some of those early comments to heart we would never have got to this point.

“This research from Birmingham University opens up a whole new area in recycling and waste management. Some of our most precious metals like platinum could now be extracted from something we previously thought had no value and was sent to landfill. This offers local authorities a previously unforeseen revenue stream that turns waste into a resource and could help to keep the cost of waste management and recycling lower.”

Paul Sanderson, editor of Materials Recycling Week