

THYME Project

Teesside, Hull and York - Mobilising Bioeconomy Knowledge Exchange

Inspiring entrepreneurship in the bioeconomy

Using interactive workshops and inspiring mentors from regional businesses, the THYME project has been firing up the entrepreneurial ambitions and developing the start-up business skills of university staff and students from across the THYME region.



“ Well designed and insightful, the workshops provided a first-person overview of what is required to start a business as well as the ability to engage with and ask questions to successful entrepreneurs. ”

Chun Keat Yew, Technology Research Manager, University of Hull.

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A comprehensive programme of workshops

Industries in the bioeconomy consistently report a lack of entrepreneurial awareness and skills as a barrier to growth in the bioeconomy. THYME has been addressing this with a series of workshops covering all aspects of the entrepreneurship journey: how to recognise and capitalise on entrepreneurial opportunities; the key tools and steps to building a successful start-up; and the critical business issues that impact commercial organisations in the bioeconomy. The workshops delivered training in key entrepreneurial skills, such as communications, understanding financing, human resources, business scale-up and business problem solving. They were designed and delivered in collaboration with skills training provider Skillfluence. Their popularity was such that several participants attended more than one.

An inspiring range of speakers and mentors

At the workshops, key insights and advice were provided by almost 40 bioeconomy experts and thought leaders from both business and academia, who could share their wide-ranging experience of entrepreneurship and research commercialisation. Examples include:

- Providing an overview of the bioeconomy and advice on fostering research / academia interactions: Professor Ian Graham, Director of BioYork at the University of York and Professor Daniel Parsons, Director, Energy and Environment Institute at the University of Hull.
- Representatives from important regional industry players: Christine Parry, Head of Development and Innovation at AB Agri, Rob Johnson, Science Manager at Quorn Foods.
- Sharing the high and lows of their own entrepreneurship journeys: Dr Monika Tomecka from UFraction8 and Dr Tom Simmons from Stem Sugar.
- Mentors, providing tailored business advice at one-to-one meetings with participants included: Steve Dougan and Louis Lamontagne from Teesside Launchpad and Tina Crombie from TCR UK Solutions.

Pitching to the experts

Each workshop ended in a live pitch to a panel of experts which provided an opportunity for the participants to put into practice what they had learned on developing and communicating a compelling and business case.

Emphasis on networking

The workshops attracted potential entrepreneurs from all career stages (post-graduates and staff), from a range of academic disciplines (including Social Science, Engineering and the Natural Sciences) and from all three THYME region universities (Hull, York, Teesside). Participants were encouraged to use this opportunity to broaden their networks and to work together on group exercises. Many of the participants discovered knowledge and expertise amongst fellow participants that complimented their own, creating partnerships that would form the basis of consortia applying for THYME Proof of Concept grants.

Key facts

5 entrepreneurship workshops held

75 hours of content delivered

Total of 62 delegates trained

39 speakers and mentors



For more information
please visit:
www.thyme.biovale.org