



Fluval Innovations

Name:	Simon Phelps	Age:	25
Business:	Fluval Innovations Ltd	Product:	FLOODSTOP
Website:	www.fluval-innovations.co.uk	University:	Bournemouth University
Degree:	BSc (Hons) Computer Aided Product Design	Graduated:	2005

Simon's entrepreneurial flair earned him his place on the very first NCGE Flying Start Global Entrepreneurs Programme in 2006-2007 (known then as the NCGE-Kauffman Entrepreneurship Fellows scheme). This international Flying Start programme gave him the knowledge, skills and confidence to improve and scale-up a business commercialising his innovative FLOODSTOP product.

The Business

Simon founded Fluval Innovations Ltd in 2006 to develop a modular flood barrier system called FLOODSTOP. The company was formed initially to carry out a nine-month feasibility study into his patented FLOODSTOP product. This work was partially funded by the UK Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) (now BERR) through a 'Smart Grant' worth £22,000.

Cheaper and far more effective than sandbags, FLOODSTOP is lightweight, easy for one person to assemble and deploy, repeatable and reusable, and highly recyclable. It protects households or other premises from flood damage in a number of scenarios, and it is multifunctional – it can also be used as a road traffic delineator, saving local authorities and householders money.

How NCGE has helped

As a result of the Fellows Programme Simon has developed significant business contacts, in-depth knowledge of his sector and a broad range of essential business skills such as marketing and finance know-how. From participating in the scheme his has been able to pitch his business to several business leaders and work on the commercialisation of his product.

At a glance...

Started Trading:	2007
Investment:	£90,000
Turnover 2008-2009:	£36,000

"The time with my US mentors during my internship has been invaluable, they have provided me with amazing insight and advice which really helped me make headway with the progress of the business."

Business Growth

In 2008 year the Environment Agency (Southern Region) procured 180 metres of FLOODSTOP barriers and carried out successful 'in-house' tests. Scottish Borders has also bought the system. In addition, the recent use of a FLOODSTOP system by one domestic household in a flood situation has already demonstrated its effectiveness. In Kent in February 2009, the Environment Agency in Kent deployed 175 metres in anticipation of a higher than average spring tide, providing protection for 31 homes. Simon has sold barriers to Hampshire Highways, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, and Worthing Borough Council. The company intends to secure further contracts with Local Government authorities.

About the FlyingStart Programme

This 12-month business start-up programme for new entrepreneurs is delivered by the NCGE and supported by the UK Government's Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS). An intensive three-day residential training course is followed by 12 months' specialist mentoring and support. The aim is to have 66% of all graduates trading within one year. FlyingStart ensures all new graduate businesses have a ready-made national and regional network, a dedicated mentor, appreciate the 'know-hows and know-whos' of practical business, and understand how to make money.