



Nigel Coates, Director of the Business Clinic.

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Business Clinic hits key milestones

A business support programme has achieved a hat-trick of significant milestones as it extends its services across the region and beyond.

The Business Clinic at Northumbria University has now assisted more than 600 organisations with its free consultancy service, which has benefited multinationals, small-to-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), social enterprises, not-for-profit organisations and charities.

The economic and social value of this assistance has now topped the £3.3m

mark, while 2,400 Northumbria Business School students have worked on consultancy projects both at undergraduate and postgraduate level since the Business Clinic was launched in 2013.

These figures highlight the value of the Business Clinic's consultancy service to organisations in the North East of England as well as further afield in the UK and overseas. Students work at the Business Clinic within their final year of study, offering clients a full consultancy experience. The aim of each project is to undertake research and make recommendations that will benefit the organisation in the short and long term.

Nigel Coates, Director of the Business Clinic, said: "Our consultancy service benefits organisations across a wide range of sectors that are seeking advice on specific issues which may be preventing them from achieving their full potential. These could range from a lack of digital marketing know-how to problems in recruiting and retaining skilled staff. We undertake projects that help them overcome these pressing challenges."

"Our service has created genuine social or economic value for hundreds of organisations. It has enabled some companies to scale up revenues, others to increase their operational efficiency and some organisations to generate tangible societal benefits in their local communities. In many cases, these benefits have been felt several years after the initial report and recommendation stage."

One beneficiary of the service is Mindstars, a North Shields-based social enterprise that supports the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, together with their parents and guardians.

A group of Masters students from the Business Clinic worked with Mindstars to produce a subscription-based digital platform that provides a wealth of information on mental health. On the back of this, Mindstars will now be able to apply for funding that will enable it to launch the platform, which will enable it to expand its range of services and reach children on a national level. The charity estimates that the Business Clinic's assistance has saved it around a year's worth of work, from primary data analysis, secondary research, brand awareness and marketing strategies.

Rebecca Hetherington, co-founder and CEO of Mindstars, said: "This support has given us the proof of concept that we needed for the project and we

cannot thank the Masters students enough for this! We are currently expanding our services and would not have had time to get this work off the ground for a long time. Now that it's done, we will be seeking funding to further develop the idea and implement the platform."

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