



Gus Withers (second from top left) with Allison Curbishley (second from bottom left) and team.

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Graduate sets the pace in event delivery for sporting enterprise



A Northumberland-based enterprise specialising in sporting events has expanded its business activity following support from a graduate internship

programme by Northumbria University.

[Extra Mile Media + Events](#) was established in Hexham in 2010 by former international athletes and sport stars Steve Cram and Allison Curbishley. Through its wealth of experience in elite sport, media production, charitable fundraising, and corporate entertaining, the business creates unique and memorable events.

The Northumbria Enterprise and Business Support 2 ([NEBS2](#)) scheme from Northumbria University offers financial assistance and expert advice to SMEs thanks to funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). With funding support from this scheme, Extra Mile Media + Events was able to employ Northumbria graduate Gus Withers, for six months and pay his salary as an intern. With Gus on board, they were able to deliver for the first time *Forest Runner*, a series of events with Forestry England.

Gus had previously worked with Extra Mile Media + Events during his second year studying Sports Management, where he undertook a three-month placement and had worked as a casual employee before that. When the opportunity arose through NEBS2, Gus immediately came to mind as the perfect candidate to take forward the delivery of *Forest Runner*.

Commenting on his internship, Gus said: “I am really enjoying working with Extra Mile Media + Events and taking on more responsibility. Stepping into a brand-new role has been an exciting challenge. Leading a small team and learning the logistics of planning and overseeing events has given me a confidence boost entering the industry as a recent graduate.

“As a runner myself, I have loved being part of such big events and having an input on their delivery. The skills I have gained in this role is something I will take forward in my career.”

Allison Curbishley, Director at Extra Mile Media + Events, said: “We were presented with the opportunity to join the NEBS2 scheme during a really busy period. Covid restrictions were lifting, and we were full steam ahead planning upcoming events. Having taken on the *Forest Runner* series, we needed someone with the right skills to join us and oversee the delivery, and we trusted that Gus could take on the challenge.

“Not only has the scheme enabled us to run these events smoothly, but it has also made us more self-sufficient as a business, as we now have the capacity to investigate event opportunities ourselves.”

Available to businesses in Tyne and Wear and Northumberland, NEBS2 will run until June 23 to provide a package of services to enhance the competitiveness and growth of SMEs, and to support the creation of new graduate enterprises. Businesses who are looking at ways to recruit highly skilled interns, are encouraged to [apply via our website](#).

----- Ends -----

Notes to editor

European Regional Development Fund

The project is receiving up to £954k of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Department for Communities and Local Government is the Managing Authority for ERDF. Established by the European Union ERDF funds help local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>

Northern Powerhouse

The Northern Powerhouse is a key aspect of this Government’s approach to addressing the productivity gap in the North and ensuring a stronger, more sustainable economy for all parts of the UK. Alongside over €1.5 billion of European Regional Development Fund support for businesses and communities across the North, the government has awarded £3.4 billion in three rounds of Growth Deals across the Northern Powerhouse.

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