

PRESS RELEASE

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STARTUP BRITAIN BUS TO VISIT RECORD 30 TOWNS IN SUMMER STARTUP TOUR

National enterprise campaign StartUp Britain, run by the Centre for Entrepreneurs, is hitting the road again this summer to provide inspiration and support to thousands of aspiring entrepreneurs.

Now in its fifth year the StartUp Britain bus tour, powered by NatWest, will visit a record 30 towns and cities in the space of six weeks.

The StartUp Tour is part of an ongoing partnership between StartUp Britain and NatWest that takes a beautiful 1966 Routemaster bus, owned by the bank, across the country to promote entrepreneurship. Parking in high-footfall town squares and offering free, impartial advice, the bus tour celebrates entrepreneurial communities across Britain and inspires individuals to turn their business ideas into action.

The StartUp Tour will have a distinctly local flavour this year, with energetic entrepreneurs recruited in each town to get on board and give advice. They will be joined by local 'experts' including accountants, lawyers and professional business advisers. Also on-board will be representatives of national partners including the Intellectual Property Office, the National Enterprise Network and the British Library Business & IP Centre Network.

Centre for Entrepreneurs and StartUp Britain director, Matt Smith said: *"Interest in entrepreneurship is higher than ever and the only thing holding many people back from trying out a business idea is some encouragement and support.*

By connecting aspiring entrepreneurs with those a few steps ahead of them, as well as supportive local organisations, we want to give people the confidence to turn their ideas into reality".

Julie Baker, head of enterprise at NatWest, said: *"Our mobile business bus is a great way to get into local communities and support aspiring business owners. By collaborating with StartUp Britain and local experts, we hope to provide a broader range of support to help more entrepreneurs realise their business ambitions than ever before".*

While visiting each location, the Centre for Entrepreneurs team will also be hosting roundtables on-board with business and community leaders to discuss the health of the local entrepreneurship ecosystem and what more can be done to boost entrepreneurship locally.

The StartUp Tour is set to visit 30 locations across England, Wales and Scotland, starting in London on 13th June and returning on 29th July. The bus will be parking in a range of prominent positions including Victoria Square in Birmingham, Queen Street in Cardiff and Piccadilly Gardens in Manchester. It will also be visiting Liverpool ONE, Glasgow's Buchanan Street, Salisbury, Perth, Sunderland and Norwich, among many others.

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Notes to the editor

Tour schedule

- 13th June Old Spitalfields Market London
- 14th June Ship Street Brighton
- 15th June *To be announced* Official launch
- 16th June High Street Chelmsford
- 17th June The Forum Norwich
- 20th June Market Square Carlisle
- 21st June Buchanan Street Glasgow
- 22nd June *To be announced* Edinburgh
- 23rd June King Edward Street Perth
- 24th June St Nicholas Street Aberdeen
- 27th June Monument Newcastle
- 28th June Bridge's Shopping Centre Sunderland
- 29th June Briggate Leeds
- 30th June Barker's Pool Sheffield
- 1st July Liverpool ONE Liverpool
- 4th July Rose Lane Canterbury
- 11th July Market Square Lancaster
- 12th July Piccadilly Gardens Manchester
- 13th July *To be announced* Nottingham
- 14th July High Street Cheltenham
- 15th July Queen Street Cardiff
- 18th July Lemon Quay Truro
- 19th July Princesshay Exeter
- 20th July The Square Bournemouth
- 21st July Market Square Salisbury
- 22nd July *To be announced* Somerset
- 25th July Victoria Square Birmingham

- 26th July Jubilee Square Leicester
- 27th July *To be announced* South East Midlands
- 28th July Broad Street Reading
- 29th July *To be announced* London - Grand Finale

About StartUp Britain

StartUp Britain is a national campaign by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs, harnessing the expertise and passion of Britain’s leading businesspeople to unleash entrepreneurship across the UK. The campaign is run by the Centre for Entrepreneurs think tank and powered by NatWest.

Founded by eight entrepreneurs and launched in 2011 by the Prime Minister, StartUp Britain is completely private sector funded. It was launched in response to the government’s call for an ‘enterprise led’ recovery.

Over the campaign’s duration, Startup Britain has pioneered a range of innovative initiatives to boost public awareness of entrepreneurship and support the growth of early-stage entrepreneurs. Since the campaign launched, startup rates have increased from 440,600 in 2011 to a record-breaking 608,110 in 2015. Notable initiatives from StartUp Britain include four bus tours of Britain, engaging over 17,500 aspiring entrepreneurs in 60 towns and cities; popup shops; and PitchUp schemes through which entrepreneurs pitched their products to Britain's largest high street stores.