

## Mediaworks Trust: Nest Studios



The Mediaworks Trust, a registered not-for-profit organisation and company limited by guarantee, is a community based scriptwriting and video production social enterprise based within the city of Derby.

Since 2003 the Trust has played an active role in the East Midlands delivering workshops, short films, screenings and festivals and over 20 projects to local youth and community groups. Made up of a variety of individuals from diverse backgrounds, the Trust's aims to offer social filmmaking, which holds both artistic and educational merit. It also offers guidance and support for those interested in the media and cultural industries and provides accredited media-based training.

At the beginning of 2010, the Trust received ERDF funded, under priority one of the programme, to develop a disused warehouse mill in a deprived area of the city into a modern studio workspace. These new facilities are aimed primarily at

the film, media and community arts sectors, with the aim of encouraging business start-ups and small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in these sectors to expand and develop innovative products and services.

The Trust worked with the University of Derby, its existing networks and service users, and freelancers to identify the gap in the market and demand for affordable studio space for creative industries to locate and grow.

Each of the 10 studio spaces include sub-metered heating and lighting, telephone, internet, wi-fi and multiple access points, Tenants will also have access to a communal spaces, including a kitchen, meeting room and accessible toilet and shower facilities. The leases on the studio spaces are flexible in order to meet the needs and the finances of the businesses occupying them.

The Nest Studios project will support entrepreneurs by providing:



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- Targeted awareness raising of various media based activities to stimulate and encourage enterprise and business development within the sector.
- Integrating entrepreneurship at all levels of the education system by creating effective links between businesses and education institutions.
- Providing the infrastructure to support economic renewal and improve access to specialist equipment.

In addition to providing low cost and affordable studio space to start-ups and SMEs, the studios will also provide individuals with access to:

- A workshop and events programme
- Student placement support
- Equipment loans and hire facilities
- Editing rooms and green rooms.

As part of the studio, the Mediaworks Trust also plan to develop a strong network of filmmakers, directors, writers, producers and other industry expertise.

During Autumn 2013 the Trust will embark on its studio marketing strategy and aims to get all 10 studio spaces occupied by a mixture of social enterprises, charities and creative SMEs.

An additional benefit of the renovation of the mill conversion has been to the residential area in which it is located. Since the Trust took over the brown field site in 2007 the area has seen a positive environmental impact including a reduction in fly tipping, graffiti and other anti social behaviour.

Due for completion in Spring 2014, the total project budget for the Nest Studios was £570,320, with an ERDF intervention rate of just under 40 percent and approximately £227,557 ERDF grant contribution. Match funding for the project

*“We’re enabling other organisations to become innovative and to have an edge about them that impacts on the community and their own products and services.”*

**Mab Akhter, Trust Director**

came from a building society, the Trust’s own income and the building itself.

Mediaworks Trust has a 30 year lease on the building, which is owned by one of its three directors, who took out a mortgage on the property. The directors’ share the risk on the project and the building will be utilised by The Nest Studios for the long-term future to continue support after ERDF funding has finished.

The advice Mab Akhter, Trust Director of the Mediaworks Trust, would give to other VCS organisations who are applying for or have already received ERDF funding is:

- Be realistic about the risk involved;
- Be prudent in your use of resources;
- Be up front and honest with your ERDF contract manager about any issues you encounter;
- Keep to the project timescales;
- Remember the legacy of your ERDF project, both in terms of auditing and delivery; and
- Don’t bite off more than you can chew and remember that preparation is key.

Mab stated that being a small organisation also had its benefits as they were able to control every aspects of the project management for the capital build project.

For further information on Mediaworks Trust visit [www.mediaworkstrust.com](http://www.mediaworkstrust.com) or email [mab@mediaworkstrust.com](mailto:mab@mediaworkstrust.com). For further information on The Nest Studios visit [www.theneststudios.co.uk](http://www.theneststudios.co.uk).