



## The GBCC Black Business Collective Bulletin

Welcome to your third edition!

In this quarterly bulletin, you will find opportunities, events and content all aimed at, and curated for, the black business community.

### Our partners



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**Join us at our next quarterly event!**

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February

5:30pm - 8:30pm

Venue to be confirmed

**FREE to attend**



In collaboration with the Chambers' **Future Faces** division, we will be hosting a panel of entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs to discuss their experiences and insights with host and Vice-Chair of the Black Business Collective committee, **Justice Williams MBE**.

**Building Young Entrepreneurial and Professional Success** aims to empower young professionals and entrepreneurs to take charge of their careers and build a thriving future.

[Find out more](#)

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**The Employment Rights Bill – the key changes to note**



On 10<sup>th</sup> October, as promised, the government published its **Employment Rights Bill** within the first 100 days of coming to power.

Described as "**the biggest upgrade to rights at work for a generation**" it has certainly generated lots of press interest, but many of the changes won't be coming in any time soon.

While the Bill itself is anticipated to receive Royal Assent in the summer of 2025, the majority of the reforms will not take effect until 2026 following extensive consultation.

The Bill contains 28 new rights, so this article focuses on the most significant.

[Read more](#)

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## In our recent news



**Lloyds celebrates West Midlands talent for 'Black in Business 2024'**



## Young apprentice joins Solihull Employment and Skills Board

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## 24 case studies in 2024

GBCC has collated inspiring success stories from their members throughout 2024. Here we highlight two from the Black Business Collective network.

### Fitniss Wellbeing in Care

[www.fitniss.co.uk](http://www.fitniss.co.uk)

<https://linkedin.com/in/matthew-inniss-b1b6205a>



**What specific challenges did your business face before joining, and how has our support helped you overcome them?**

Prior to joining the Chamber, we didn't have access to decision-makers but being a member of the Chamber gave us direct access to the decision-maker by putting us in the same room as great like-minded people.

**How has membership of the Chamber contributed to the growth or development of your business?**

We were opening up a new arm of the business - to bring wellbeing into the workplace. Through networking and being part of the 1813 Club's Private Dining

meal, we had the opportunity to work with Unity Trust Bank and Touchwood shopping centre.

**What measurable benefits have you seen as a result of becoming a member?**

The membership has helped to forge business connections, help us grow into new market spaces and also built my own personal brand.

**iMeta Training**

[www.imetatraining.co.uk](http://www.imetatraining.co.uk)

<https://linkedin.com/company/imeta-training/>



**What specific challenges did your business face before joining, and how has our support helped you overcome them?**

As a new business, we were eager to engage with local businesses, and the membership has enabled us to do this effectively. It has also been instrumental in helping us raise our profile within the community.

**How has membership of the Chamber contributed to the growth or development of your business?**

The membership has been invaluable in helping us develop our business and connect with other local businesses. A great example of this is the direct introductions facilitated by Jim, which led us to B13 AI. They have since joined our Advisory Board, a partnership that has been highly beneficial.

**What measurable benefits have you seen as a result of becoming a member?**

Membership has been instrumental in helping us forge valuable business connections and strengthen our brand presence locally. We've actively participated in most of the networking events, which has been a great opportunity for engagement and growth.

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# Exporting Starts Here

Support to help you grow your business globally



This initiative empowers small and medium-sized businesses across **Coventry, Solihull, Birmingham**, and the **Black Country** to thrive internationally.

## What the programme offers

- **1:1 Expert Guidance:** Tailored advice from export advisors to support you through market research, planning, and growth.
- **Workshops and training:** Essential skills for international success, including topics like: Staff upskilling for global expansion; ATA Carnet guidance; Customs; export documentation and international e-commerce; rules of origin, and free trade agreements.
- **Focus on high-growth sectors:** Aerospace, electric vehicle manufacturing, health and med-tech, logistics, professional services, and e-commerce.

[Find out more](#)

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**Business Growth West Midlands Supply Chain  
Transition**



The **Supply Chain Transition** programme is on a mission to empower ambitious SMEs in the West Midlands with a robust support package to tap into new supply chain prospects.

This strand of the programme targets dynamic sectors in **Health and Med Tech**, **Manufacture of Future Housing** and **Smart Energy Systems**, and is designed to propel businesses towards securing new supply chain orders in these sectors.

[Find out more](#)

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## Innovate UK competitions



**Collaborative R&D: Creative Catalyst**

UK registered businesses can apply for a share of up to **£2 million** for projects that develop new innovative products and tools for the UK creative industry. This funding is part of Innovate UK's **Creative Catalyst**.

Your project must have a grant funding request between **£150,000** and **£200,000**.

The competition closes on **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 11:00am**

[Find out more](#)

## **AI solutions to develop AI competencies in key sectors**

UK registered organisations can apply for a share of up to **£2 million** for **Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions** to support AI upskilling in BridgeAI key sectors. This funding is from Innovate UK.

Your project must have a grant funding request between **£50,000** and **£100,000**.

The competition closes on **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 11:00am**

[Find out more](#)

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## **Business Growth West Midlands Upcoming events**

### **Writing website content to rank well in Google**

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January**

10:00am - 11:30am

Online



This event is for business owners in the West Midlands aiming to enhance their understanding of how to rank well on Google. Topics covered include:

- Understanding your audience
- Keyword research tools
- Content planning strategies
- Natural Language Processing (NLP)
- Creating quality content for search engines

[Find out more](#)

## **Investment readiness: Financial planning and forecasting**

**29<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> January**

West Midlands House

Gipsy Lane Willenhall WV13 2HA



This two-day event is designed to enable you to identify the best source of finance for your business' needs and prepare for an application.

[Find out more](#)

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**Walsall Digital Digital Skills Hub**

## **Community Innovation Hub event**

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March**

4:00pm - 6:30pm

Digital Skills Hub

George Street, Walsall, WS1 1RS



Join us for an event hosted by the **Open University** to find out how you can benefit from bespoke business support to develop new skills and capacity in **Digital Transformation, Environmental Social and Governance (ESG), and Investment Readiness.**

Funding through the **Open Societal Challenges (OSC)** platform at The Open University will support an ambitious project called **Prototyping Community Innovation Hubs.**

The project is set to address significant barriers faced by ethnic minority businesses (EMBs), particularly Black and Asian collectives, in Milton Keynes and beyond.

The initiative aims to empower these communities by providing vital support to foster creativity, entrepreneurship, and inclusive innovation through a prototype Community Innovation Hub.

[Find out more](#)

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## **Caribbean Creative Convention**

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February**

10.30am - 3:00pm

Legacy Centre of Excellence

144 Potters Ln, Birmingham, B6 4UU

**West Midlands Ownership Hub** (a partnership between WMCA, Co-operatives UK and the Employee Ownership Association) is hosting a **Creative Caribbean Convention** to encourage thinking about co-operatives as a business model amongst creatives of Caribbean heritage.

Hosted by **Nikki Tapper** with a keynote talk by **Dr Gregory John Roberts**, this free event is for freelancers, entrepreneurs and business owners of Caribbean and African heritage.



**Nikki Tapper**

Host



**Dr Gregory John Roberts**

Keynote speaker

It's for creatives - designers, architects, writers, podcasters, musicians, coders, jewellery-makers, photographers, singers, T-shirt printers and many more. Come along to enjoy music, food, entertainment and to learn about:

- Empowerment through collective ownership
- Opportunities for growth via cooperative structures
- Collaborating for resilience in business
- Accessing free support for realising your creative dreams
- Stories of real-life co-operatives

[Find out more](#)

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# GBCC Awards 2025

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February

The ICC, Birmingham



The **GBCC Awards** celebrate the very best of business in Greater Birmingham and recognises the achievements of those who have demonstrated excellence in their field.

The region's "**biggest celebration of all things business**" returns in 2025 with **11 award categories** available for businesses to apply for (maximum of 2 per organisation).

Tickets are available to purchase and there are also opportunities to **sponsor the event**.

Use the button below to get tickets or to view sponsorship opportunities.

[Find out more](#)

[Contact us](#)

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