



The GBCC Black Business Collective Bulletin

Welcome to your fifth edition!

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

Our partners



In our recent news



West Midlands black-owned businesses make TV debut thanks to Lloyds initiative



Training provider urges industry to back 'I'm Included' inclusivity campaign

Non-member event

Find out what the Chamber can do for your business

Thursday 7th August 2025

12.30pm – 1.30pm

Online event



Are you a business owner or employee looking to grow your business?

Ever wondered what the Chamber can do for you?

Never even heard of the Chambers of Commerce?

Join us for our next online event, exclusively for non-members, to meet fellow business leaders and learn more about how the Chamber can support your business.

Whether you're a start-up founder, a seasoned entrepreneur, or someone exploring new business connections, this event explains how membership will give you access to the tools, insights and opportunities you need to grow.

Why attend?

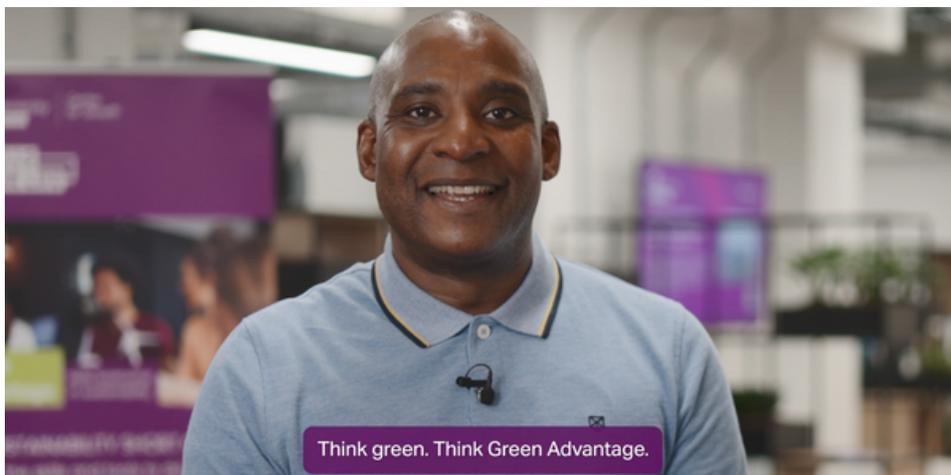
- Find out how the Chamber can support your business 🧑‍💻
- Meet our team and make new business contacts from the region 🤝

Membership with **Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce**, the region's biggest business network, isn't a perk - it's an investment in growth, support and success.

This event is open to those who are not yet members of the Chamber.

[Find out more](#)

Aston University's Green Advantage Programme



Green Advantage is back – and this time, it's open to business leaders across the UK.

The next cohort commences on **Wednesday 10th September**.

This **12-week course** will support you to create a roadmap for **sustainable business growth, boost investment potential** and **build valuable connections**.

Don't just take our word for it – hear from our inspiring alumni:

"So much has changed from this short course that it's flipped my whole concept, and the way I think about business" – Samantha Richards, Earth Beauty

"The course has really helped me to better understand sustainability from a different perspective" – Kingsley Johnson, Kinetic People Development

"The one-to-one coaching has been hugely beneficial and has helped me to design my roadmap for everything I do" – Kay Boyce, Fearless Female Education

[Find out more](#)

Birmingham & Solihull Export Support Programme (BASESP)



The **Birmingham and Solihull Export Support Programme (BASESP)** offers grants of up to **£6,000** (100% funded) to **small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)** in **Birmingham** and **Solihull**.

Eligible activities include (not limited to):

- Support for market research
- Intellectual property consultancy
- Translation services
- Participation in trade shows
- Social media and search engine optimisation (SEO)

Click below for more information and to apply.

[Find out more](#)

Global Business Innovation Programme: Agri-Tech – Saudi Arabia



Innovate UK is inviting **up to 15 innovative UK SMEs** (with fewer than 250 employees) to participate in a fully funded **Agri-Tech** mission to **Saudi Arabia**.

This opportunity is designed to help businesses explore and collaborate on agricultural innovations aligned with Saudi Arabia's **Vision 2030**, which focuses on food security, sustainable farming and technological advancement.

Click below to find out more and apply. The application deadline is **27th July 2025**.

[Find out more](#)

Beyond Borders: Why more UK founders should be exporting



Less than 10% of UK SMEs are exporting. That's not just a gap - it's a structural issue, especially for diaspora and diverse founders.

Brilliant businesses, built from scratch, can be stuck at the edge of international growth because they lack one thing - **infrastructure**.

If we want more SMEs to go global, then we need to start building systems, not just giving speeches.

In this blog, Chair of the GBCC Black Business Collective, **Alex Cole**, explores the challenges of exporting. He would love to hear from you about your experiences.

[Read the blog](#)

BEEP Export Bootcamp



Backed by a range of specialist collaborators including **HSBC, Wilson Sonsini, Barclays Eagle Labs, The Open University Business School** and powered by **TIN Ventures, #BEEP** (the Business Export Exchange Programme) is the UK's first certified global trade accelerator built by founders, for SME founders.

Watch the explainer video [here](#) 🎥

For 'export curious' founders, our next Bootcamp starts on **Wednesday 17th September**.

[Find out more](#)

Black Entrepreneurs' Awards

Supporting Black Heritage entrepreneurs in the UK

The **Black Entrepreneurs' Award (BEA)** is a programme which celebrates **Black Heritage entrepreneurs** in the UK and provides a platform to market their businesses to a wider audience.

Each year there are four winners who receive a cash prize of **£25,000** each, and all of the finalists are enrolled onto a bespoke **12-month business acceleration programme**, designed to support Black Heritage entrepreneurs and accelerate the growth of their start-ups.

Created in 2018, BEA has supported **48 black heritage founders** to accelerate the growth of their business. Some of our previous finalists have gone on to raise over £3m; expand their business overseas; be listed on the Forbes 30 under 30; and receive MBEs for their services in making venture capital more inclusive.

Applications are open until midnight on **Friday 25th July 2025**.

[Find out more](#)

MSDUK can help you make valuable connections

Are you an ethnic minority business owner looking to grow and connect with global brands?

Are you an early-stage business founder looking for a community to help you flourish?

MSDUK can help you make these valuable connections. Their meet the buyer and community events, skills development programmes, access to mentors and peers, and globally recognised certification as an ethnic minority-owned business will help you open doors and put you in front of decision makers.

[Find out more](#)

EY Empowerment for Black British Entrepreneurs (EYEBBE)
Application form - Winter 2025 cohort



EY Empowerment for Black British Entrepreneurs (EYEBBE)

...e better the question. The better the answer. The better the world works.

...his three-month programme begins on November 2025 and through this opportunity you will have access to:

- Learning sessions:** including an introduction to the EY 7 Drivers of Growth framework, and upskilling sessions that explore how to effectively scale your business.
- Networking:** opportunities to connect and collaborate.
- Mentorship:** a two-month programme (beginning December 2025) with EY Professionals as mentors.
- Other tools and resources:** designed to support entrepreneurs as they look to scale.

Open to **20** individuals.



Scan the QR code to apply by Sunday, 28 September 2025

Criteria for applying:
 You must be running a growing SME business that has been trading at least 12 months and turning over between £50,000 and £750,000 in annual income/revenue.
 The business must have clear intent to become financially sustainable within five years and ability to demonstrate clear financial strategies/targets and existing/future revenue streams.

Apply now

Is your business ready to harness the power of AI? 🚀

AI is no longer a future concept - it's transforming businesses right now.

- 84% of CEOs believe AI improves employee efficiency (PwC, 2024) ✓
- 64% of businesses expect AI to boost productivity (KPMG UK) ✓

But the real question is: **how prepared is your organisation to adopt and implement AI successfully?**

Business Growth West Midlands is partnering with **Code Institute** on an exciting initiative to help businesses across the region assess and accelerate their AI journey - and it's completely **FREE** to take part.

What's involved? 🗺️

- An AI maturity assessment survey 🗑️
- Two expert-led workshops exploring six key pillars: **Strategy | Value | People | Technology | Governance | Data** 🗑️
- Identify skills gaps and unlock insights to guide your AI transformation 🗑️
- Help shape a regional AI skills strategy and future funding opportunities 🗑️

Whether you're just starting out or looking to scale your use of AI, this project will give you the tools and insights you need to move forward with confidence 🎯

[Find out more](#)

Black Talent Awards 2025 finalists announced

Celebrating UK black excellence and 'impact'

The Evenfields **Black Talent Awards (BTA)** has officially announced the shortlist of finalists for its upcoming 2025 awards ceremony, shining a spotlight on outstanding Black professionals across the UK.

A total of **16 award categories**, spanning industries from finance and STEM to education, media and entrepreneurship, will honour black talent at all levels, from rising stars to senior leaders.



The winners will be unveiled at a gala black-tie event on **26th September** at the **ICC Birmingham**, aligning with this year's theme of **'Impact'** in celebrating those driving real change in their fields and communities.

For more information on the Black Talent Awards, visit www.blacktalentawards.co.uk.

[Read the full story](#)

From struggling to scaling: The realities of business growth in the UK

Starting a business can feel exhilarating, but also relentless. The data backs up how hard this journey can be.

In the UK, around **20% of businesses fail in their first year** and **60% don't survive beyond year three**. The most vulnerable sectors? Retail and hospitality - highly competitive with tight margins. On the flip side, industries like tech, health, and professional services are showing resilience, largely driven by digital transformation and demographic shifts.

Yet the real story is this: **very few businesses make it to scale**, and fewer still to the point of exit.

According to the British Business Bank, **fewer than 5%** of UK businesses ever reach significant, sustained growth. Why? Because it's not just about working hard - it's about working smart, with governance, structure and vision.

In this blog, **Karl George MBE, CEO of The Governance Forum**, explains the **S.T.A.G.E.S.** framework - a simple, memorable way to help business owners and leaders assess where they are and what they need to do next.

[Read the blog](#)

Get the email updates that matter to you