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MarketFinance Business Booster Fund announces first winners of grants



MARKET FINANCE

LONDON, UK (ots) -

Over 500 businesses made virtual pitches for grants giving £5,000 to three UK small businesses. The Bshirt, Blakbear and The Economist Educational Foundation crowned winners

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Fintech business lender [MarketFinance](#) has today made three grants of £5,000 each to winners of the [MarketFinance Business](#)

[Booster Fund](#). Over 500 virtual pitches were received and 5 were shortlisted. These businesses were put to a social media vote before three winners were selected.

The three winning entries came from ethical breastfeeding clothing brand [The Bshirt](#), smart food labelling specialist [BlakBear](#) and independent children's literacy charity [The Economist Educational Foundation](#). Inner city young people's charity [XLP](#) and creative agency [Collaborative Creations](#) were the other two businesses to make the shortlist.

Anil Stocker, CEO of MarketFinance commented: "We launched this initiative as a small boost to help the successful businesses pivot, scale or grow in 2021. We want to support more of the UK's hardest working and most exciting SMEs. In addition to the grant, we will offer the time and skills of our expert staff to help their leadership teams. Whether they need tech, marketing, finance or communications support, we will provide the resources to help them get to where they want to go. The winners' applications were highly commended and we wish them all the very best for the year ahead."

On being the first beneficiaries of grants from the MarketFinance Booster Fund, the winners' comments:

Lisa Lessaware, co-founder of The Bshirt said: "This means so much to our business. This grant will be used to launch exciting new ethical products to help women breastfeed more comfortably and ultimately for longer."

Michael Kasimatis, co-founder at BlakBear said: "We're thrilled to receive this grant. It will help drive the technical and regulatory development. Initiatives like this truly help deliver research and innovation to the market. Thank you, MarketFinance".

Harriet Boland, Fundraising & Partnerships manager, at The Economist Educational Foundation said: "We are delighted to receive a grant from the MarketFinance business booster fund! This money will help us grow and reach thousands more young people and enable them to have inspiring discussions about current affairs in schools."

The Business Booster Fund was established in December 2020 and forms part of a commitment from MarketFinance to SMEs. The Fund makes grants of £5,000 available to UK small businesses, along with expert advice from MarketFinance's team. The fund has been designed to develop innovative entrepreneurs even further. MarketFinance looked for entrepreneurs that represent our community as a whole, and is keen to support companies that value diversity, inclusion and giving back.

Anil Stocker added: "We know that the winners, and all SMEs in general, face challenging times as we deal with both the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic challenges ahead. For that reason, it has been exciting to see a very wide range of innovative approaches from so many applicants to grow their businesses. It was difficult to narrow the awards down to a small number of outstanding winners and we look forward to supporting them with a variety of talent and resources at MarketFinance".

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About MarketFinance

MarketFinance is a business finance company with offices in London and Manchester. The online platform enables businesses to access a range of flexible finance [solutions](#) - quickly and easily. This smart technology is backed by help from real people so business owners can save time and focus on growing their business.

Since 2011, MarketFinance has advanced over £3 billion to companies across a range of sizes and sectors, providing working capital and finance for everything from paying staff and suppliers to launching new products or services and accelerating growth.

MarketFinance is backed by Barclays, Santander InnoVentures, European venture capital fund Northzone (invested in Klarna, iZettle and Trustpilot), and private equity group MCI Capital (also invested in iZettle, Azimo and Gett).

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Winners: Lisa Lessaware and Philippa Doyle at The Bshirt. Michael Kasimatis at Blakbear and Harriet Boland at The Economist Educational Foundation / Editorial use of this picture is free of charge. Please quote the source: "obs/News Direct"

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