

The Funding Game

A winning approach to financing your company



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10 Hot Places to Pitch *in and around London*

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Below is just a small selection of pitching groups I've found around London that offer a credible platform on which to pitch your business and to generate interest from potential investors, non-exec directors, board advisors or even a co-founder. Some are completely free and some charge a fee, but all of these groups have led to positive results for the many entrepreneurs who have attended my events or whom I have coached personally. If you come across any great places to pitch for free or at low cost, and would like to share them with other entrepreneurs, please let me know! Thanks. Paul.

1. London Business Angels

www.lbangels.co.uk

This is the best, oldest and most selective pitching group in London. Over the last three years nearly 40% of the companies selected to pitch to LBA's investors have secured funding. LBA accepts pitches from a wide range of sectors. The registration fee is £500 + VAT and companies present for 11 minutes plus a Q&A session. If companies are successful they also pay an additional 5% success fee.

2. Thames Valley Investment Network

www.tvin.co.uk

The Thames Valley Investment Network is a business angel network that focuses on innovative, early-stage technology companies with high growth potential. Investment meetings are held approximately every two months. At each meeting selected companies present their business proposals for 10 minutes each. The presentations are followed by networking. The cost to use this service, once successfully shortlisted, is £450 plus a success fee of 5%.

3. Surrey 100 Club

www.surrey100club.co.uk

The University of Surrey 100 Club is an established angel network through which many entrepreneurs have secured funding. With its close ties to the Surrey University, the 100 Club provides support and training to businesses raising finance, and does not charge any fees or take a share of any investment its companies achieve.

4. Enterprise 100 club

www.london.edu/facultyandresearch/subjectareas/strategyandentrepreneurship/enterprise100.html

Enterprise 100 was founded in 1999 and is part of the London Business School's angel investor network. It's one of the most credible networks in London. The group has a regular pitching day every couple of months. It is totally free and open to most sectors but, again, they are very selective as to who gets to pitch.

5. Investors and Entrepreneurs Connection in London

www.meetup.com/Investors-And-Entrepreneurs-Connection-In-London

Not the biggest network, but very active and great at delivering monthly. Informal pitching event to a panel of investors.

6. London Business Angels and Entrepreneurs

www.meetup.com/Start-up-Business-Angels-Entrepreneurs-groups/

I know this meet-up group fairly well having presented with them myself, delivering mini-workshops and sitting on an investor panel for training purposes. They organise a pitch event about every three months, with guest speakers giving talks on a range of topics.

7. Start-ups and Investors

<http://www.meetup.com/LondonStart/>

Good for finding co-founders and other business partners. This meet up group gets together every couple of months or so and gives entrepreneurs a chance to pitch their business for free.

8. London Entrepreneurs Network

www.meetup.com/LondonEntrepreneursNetwork

Free monthly pitching to the Dragons event is organised by this meet up group which has a few thousand members and is often well attended with a good mix of contacts for networking.

9. Developers and Entrepreneurs

www.meetup.com/Developers-Entrepreneurs

Not for the faint hearted as there is often a noisy crowd of 300-400 people watching speed pitches, but this group is very good for attracting attention to your project quickly from angels, partners, and developers.

10. Pitching for Management

www.pitching4management.com

A well established and successful pitching format where entrepreneurs get the opportunity to pitch for non-exec directors, advisory board members and co-founders. This can be an indirect way of attracting investment as well. There is a cost of £250 to pitch, but the audience is often very experienced and well-connected and that can be worth the price of pitching.

General Networking

In addition, here are my top three recommended networking groups that don't offer pitching opportunities but are just great for networking and finding the connections you need to get your business motoring:

www.meetup.com/londonstartups/

www.meetup.com/london-silicon-roundabout

www.meetup.com/minibar

I hope you find this useful. Please email me any feedback or other ideas for this list at:

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About Paul

Paul Grant is an experienced serial entrepreneur who founded and ran a catering business for corporate and retail markets for seven years and now assists many companies at early and growth stages. Paul is also a former director of *Capital Partners*, where he headed up the business angel division for three years. More recently, Paul founded *The Funding Game*, which offers a range of practical support and coaching services to help entrepreneurs fund and grow their businesses quickly and successfully.

Supporting entrepreneurs

Throughout his career Paul has been a passionate advocate for the small business owner. He has advised hundreds of companies on establishing and growing their businesses quickly, covering everything from raising capital, leading a team and recruitment to strategy, negotiation, and marketing.

Paul is a frequent speaker on the subject of business funding and growth at many public professional development events. He is based in London, England.



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