

Know Your Customers

Start-up Programme – Session 1





<https://bit.ly/startup-checkin>

You're Here!

Check in to each session.

Come to every session and earn your Start-Up Programme Certificate.



Time to find someone who...

Has a pet _____	Has a business idea that does not use AI _____	Lives in the same borough as you _____
Speaks more than one language _____	Has a brother and a sister _____	Commutes more than 45 minutes to campus _____
Doesn't like ice-cream _____	Was born in a different country _____	Plays a musical instrument _____

Your name: _____



You're Here!



Date	Support
Friday, 9 January	South Bank Ignite Round 1 Results Announced & Round 2 Application Open
Every Wednesday, 21 January 28 January 4 February 11 February 18 February 12:00-13:00	Start-Up Programme Session 1 - Know Your Customers Start-Up Programme Session 2 - Explore Your Market Start-Up Programme Session 3 - Test and Refine Your Idea Start-Up Programme Session 4 - Structure and Pitch Your Idea Start-Up Programme Session 5 - What's Next for South Bank Ignite
Tuesday, 31 March 13:00	South Bank Ignite Round 2 Application Deadline
Friday, 10 April	South Bank Ignite Round 2 Results Announced
Throughout April	South Bank Ignite Bootcamp & Ongoing Support
Friday, 15 May	South Bank Ignite Final Presentation and Asset Deadline <i>More details coming soon.</i>
Thursday, 21 May	South Bank Ignite Finals <i>More details coming soon.</i>
Thursday, 4 June	South Bank Ignite Festival & Award Ceremony <i>More details coming soon.</i>





Remember!

Bookmark this page:

<https://bit.ly/ignite-startup-cohort> is your central hub for information, support and resources throughout the programme.

Session recordings:

All sessions will be recorded (but not live-streamed). Recordings and slides will be shared shortly after each session, on the cohort page.

Stay connected:

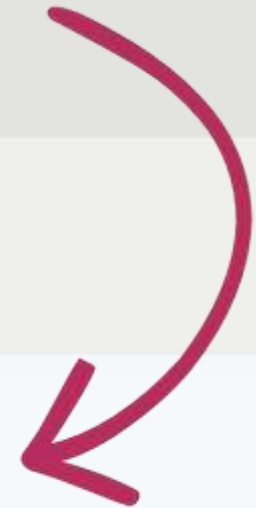
Join our dedicated [South Bank Ignite 25–26 WhatsApp group](#) to connect with fellow participants and receive updates.

Keep going!

74 ideas made it through Round 2:

What you do now makes the difference – make the most of the support available and make your idea stand out.

Thursday, 21 May	South Bank Ignite Finals Private pitching for judges Location: TBD <i>More details coming soon.</i>
Thursday, 4 June	South Bank Ignite Festival & Award Ceremony South Bank Ignite Finalists pitch their idea, showcase their progress, and receive prizes in a public event! Location: LSBU Hub <i>More details coming soon.</i>



Support and Resources

[Download the South Bank Ignite Round 2 Application Word Document](#) to help you prepare your answers before applying online.

[Review example responses](#) to the Round 2 Application as a guide (**NOT** a template) of how to respond.

Come to a [Drop-In Idea and Start-Up Support Session](#) to refine your Pitch Deck, review your Value Proposition, and get answers to all your burning questions. **No booking required!**



Know Your Customers



Know Your Customers

Why knowing your customers is important?

Knowing customers helps you:

- Design better products or services
- Avoid wasting time and money
- Communicate more clearly
- Stand out from competitors

Businesses don't fail because of bad ideas, they fail because:

- They solve problems nobody cares about
- They solve real problems for the wrong people
- They describe solutions instead of needs





Customers don't buy products and services.

They buy solutions to problems.

Find a real problem, then you can focus on solution.

→ Don't be a solution looking for a problem.

Know Your Customers

👉 How to find a specific problem, opportunity, or pain point?

A good problem:

- Exists before your business idea
- Is experienced by real people
- Has impact (emotional, financial, time, etc.)
- Can be clearly described in 1–2 sentences

What you (really) must look at:

- Frustrations (“I hate when...”)
- Workarounds (“I currently do this manually...”)
- Complaints (“It’s annoying that...”)
- Inefficiencies (“This takes too long / costs too much”)



Know Your Customers

Solution-focused vs Problem-focused

"There aren't enough healthy food options..." ❌

"Students feel overwhelmed and miss deadlines because they juggle work, study, and family responsibilities..." ✅

- **Who** is affected?
- **What** exactly is difficult?
- **Why** it matters?

What could the business idea be?
An affordable and healthy takeaway food box.

Know Your Customers

Exercise: From Frustration to Problem

Write down **3 frustrations** people you know experience weekly.

Pick **one** frustration and answer:

- Who experiences this?
- When does it happen?
- Why is it frustrating?

Write a short paragraph answering the questions above but no solutions please. ●



Know Your ❤️ Customers

What does “ideal customer” mean?

✅ A specific group or individual + with shared habits, challenges, and motivations. ✨

- ❌ Everyone
- ❌ People aged 18–65
- ❌ Students

Simple customer profile framework

- Describe who they are
- Include age group, life situation, role, job, etc

Habits

- How they spend time
- How they buy or decide

Challenges

- What makes life harder
- Barriers, constraints, pains

Motivations

- What they want to achieve
- What success looks like to them



Know Your ❤️ Customers

Exercise: Meet Your ❤️ Customer

Imagine **one real person** who experiences a specific problem.

Now **describe**:

- Name and age group
- Who they are
- Life situation, role, job
- A typical day
- Biggest challenge related to the problem
- What motivates them to change

Write a few short paragraphs describing your ideal customer.

Know Your Customers

Strong ideas start with **real problems**

Specific customers make ideas clearer and stronger

Avoid solutions when describing problems

Write like you're describing **a real person**, their life, their habits, their routines



What about Ignite?

You should be able now to **answer the following questions**:

Question 3: What specific problem, opportunity or pain point does your business aim to address?

💡 Tip: Focus on what the issue is, not how you plan to fix it.

Question 4: Who are your idea customers? What are their habits, challenges, or motivations?

💡 Tip: Pick a specific group or individual. Write as if you are describing a real person.



Next week

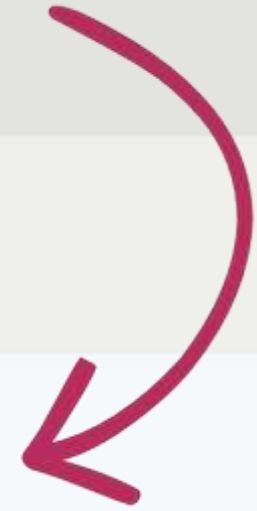
Wednesday, 28 January, 12-1pm

Start-Up Programme Session 2 - Explore Your Market

Location: To be confirmed (by email )



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Thank you!
Any questions?

