

Taking more Mindful Steps into the World

Shortly after the birth of her daughter, Jeroo Doodhmal launched **Pip & Henry**, a sustainable and education-led footwear company for children.



The idea came to her after seeing the amount of waste that was being produced within the market: "I was shocked at just how wasteful and unsustainable products were, from toys to clothes to furniture and shoes," says Jeroo.

Pip & Henry's products are made with sustainable materials like Piñatex (a leather substitute made from the waste leaves of Pineapples), with a focus on encouraging children to take more mindful steps into the world by recognising the impact their footprint can have on the planet.

Getting a Foot in the Door with Investors

After launching a capsule collection in 2021 and getting feedback on the initial product, Jeroo quickly realised she needed to focus on raising funding: "I really needed a kickstart. It's quite daunting for a first-time founder who has never raised funds before to start that process and I was a little unsure of how to do that first introductory

"After finishing the programme I felt more confident."

conversation with a potential investor. Funding Accelerator helped me develop

all of the tools that were needed for me to really understand the funding process - it's just such a big area and I've never done it before so having that very solid advice was desperately needed."

Over the course of eight weeks Funding Accelerator helps business founders get all of the necessary paperwork in place and also introduces a variety of mentors with different fields of expertise to fill any knowledge gaps entrepreneurs might have - something Jeroo found very useful: "The mentors were really generous with their time, expertise and knowledge. I'm still in touch with a lot of them now. I spent a lot of time with the mentor who helped with my financial forecast and wholesale strategy, helping me identify which retailers I should reach out to and which documents I needed so there's been a lot of support both during and after the programme."

Although Jeroo had an idea of what she wanted to raise, she says Funding

Accelerator encouraged her to take a deeper dive into her business and boosted her confidence: "I had this target of achieving a certain amount in a year but there was no concrete plan behind exactly how I would

"It is well worth the investment of both money and time."

get that and what that would mean month by month including which kind of relationships I would need to build and with which kind of retailers. The programme helped me go deeper into every aspect of the business and has given me a really concrete plan."

After Sprint One of the programme, Jeroo had everything she needed to approach investors including a detailed pitch deck, financial forecast and valuation. She used the knowledge gained from Funding Accelerator to apply to Capital Pilot, the Startup Investability Rating Agency, and was eligible for a £50,000 investment from the Boost Fund (70% of founders who have been through Funding Accelerator have successfully applied for the Boost Fund). Jeroo says the initial funding will make a big difference to the company's future: "It means we have capital that can be deployed pretty quickly. We have to pay in advance for stock and it's quite a heavy cash flow dependent business so this has been really useful in putting plans into action."

"Hearing other people's stories was really helpful and as an entrepreneur you realise you're not out there alone."

The Next Step

Since finishing the course in April 2022, Jeroo has not only gained an initial cash injection into the business but is much more confident in her valuation and approaching investors and has even decided to change her initial funding target from £150,000 to £200,000: "I've had a sort of shy mentality to asking for money, but through conversations with Hatty, the mentors and other founders on the course I now fully understand that I am offering something of value. I had no funding raised before the programme, I've now raised £150,000 and I know the right investors are out there." And Jeroo's advice for anyone considering Funding Accelerator? "As a founder you are always weighing up if something is worth your time or money and I think the value you get from the programme is tremendous both in terms of helping you structure your mindset and getting ready from a practical standpoint for fundraising and in terms of connections and introductions. It's well worth the investment. "

"Speaking with the mentors was amazing - they are really generous with their time and their expertise and knowledge."



Funding Accelerator is an eight week programme designed to make it quicker and easier to raise equity investment

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