



(L to R): Kelly Maxwell, Caroline Theobald CBE, Phil Robinson-Artley, Nick Downing, Elaine Stroud and Reshma Begum at the Baltic.

Jun 30, 2022 12:35 BST

Podcast aimed at supporting SMEs celebrates one-year anniversary at the Baltic

Northumbria University brought together key influencers within North East business, to celebrate the one-year anniversary of its 'Why Small Business Matters' podcast, by filming a real time episode at the Baltic.

Sitting on the panel and in front of a live audience were participants from Northumbria's Help to Grow Management programme, Nick Downing, Phil

Robinson-Artley and Kelly Maxwell, who posed questions to leading figures from SME growth partners, Elaine Stroud, CEO, Entrepreneurs Forum and Reshma Begum, Federation of Small Business (FSB) development manager for the North East of England.

The podcast, which is available now and can be watched online or via a podcast app on a smartphone, was chaired by Caroline Theobald CBE, chair of the advisory board to Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University and director, North East Initiative on Business Ethics (NIBE).

The panel discussed a wide range of topics, including the cost of doing business in a post-Covid era, why networks and peer support are the cornerstone of sustainable business growth and how the Help to Grow Management programme has helped bolster their respective businesses. Kelly Maxwell, Founder of Kelly's Heroes Private Tuition, which offers one-to-one and small group tuition covering Maths and English, also revealed that it played a key part in her being nominated for FSB's Small Business of the Year and recently winning its Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards (North East).

The 'Why Small Business Matters podcast', which provides a platform for successful small business leaders to tell their stories, offer advice and discuss what it means to be a thriving SME in today's business landscape, was established by Newcastle Business School's Help to Grow Management delivery team, in 2021. A government-funded, 12-week management course, it provides critical skills and networks to help small business leaders innovate and thrive in a post-Covid era.

Delivered by leading small business and enterprise experts at Northumbria University, with the support of leading figures from industry and experienced entrepreneurs, the programme supports owners and senior managers of small and medium sized businesses to boost their business performance, resilience and long-term growth. The programme, designed to be completed alongside full-time work, is 90% funded and requires a one-time payment of £750.

Caroline Theobald, said: "SMEs are the backbone of the UK's economy making up 99% of the business population, contributing a combined turnover of £1.6 trillion to the economy and accounting for three fifths of private sector employment.

"When we talk about levelling up, small business plays a significant part in

achieving this. Given the North East has the lowest number of private businesses in the UK, we must support and protect the ones we do have and create an environment in which both established and start-ups can flourish.

“The anniversary episode of the ‘Why Small Business Matters’ highlights the importance of support, networks and mentorship and this is exactly what the Help to Grow Management programme offers.”

Kelly Maxwell, said: “For Kelly’s Heroes Private Tuition, the programme has been revolutionary and correlates directly with the growth of the business.

“When we went in to the pandemic, it was just myself but now I have a team of 12 and this is without a doubt thanks to the programme. Having access to a knowledge-packed course designed by people who have been there and done it and the mentorship of an experienced entrepreneur combined with support of fellow business people, meant I truly could stop and put my business development hat on and the results speak for themselves.

“I encourage everyone to listen to the podcast and they will see for themselves that the question to ask isn’t ‘why should I do the course?’ but ‘why wouldn’t I do it?’”

The podcast can be viewed
at <https://open.spotify.com/episode/6ZqxDX0NbNDkX1SDnJDbKA>

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Picture Caption (L to R): Kelly Maxwell, Founder of Kelly’s Heroes Private Tuition, Caroline Theobald CBE, chair of the advisory board to Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University, Phil Robinson-Artley, Operations Manager at Armstrong Direct, Nick Downing, Transformation Director at NPH Healthcare Group, Elaine Stroud, CEO, Entrepreneurs Forum and Reshma Begum, Federation of Small Business (FSB) Development Manager for the North East of England.

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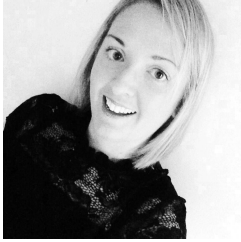


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