

Entrepreneur hubs – now in your local library

The Minister for Public Finance and Digital Economy Kate Forbes launched a new network of business hubs yesterday. The hubs are located in public libraries and are intended to both inspire and support entrepreneurs.

This is the Scottish Coworking Network developed by the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLiC) using funding from The Scottish Government. It is hoped that local freelancers and start-ups will use the dedicated space to meet, work and perhaps collaborate.

It is already so popular in Edinburgh that the capacity of fixed desk memberships sold out within a few weeks.



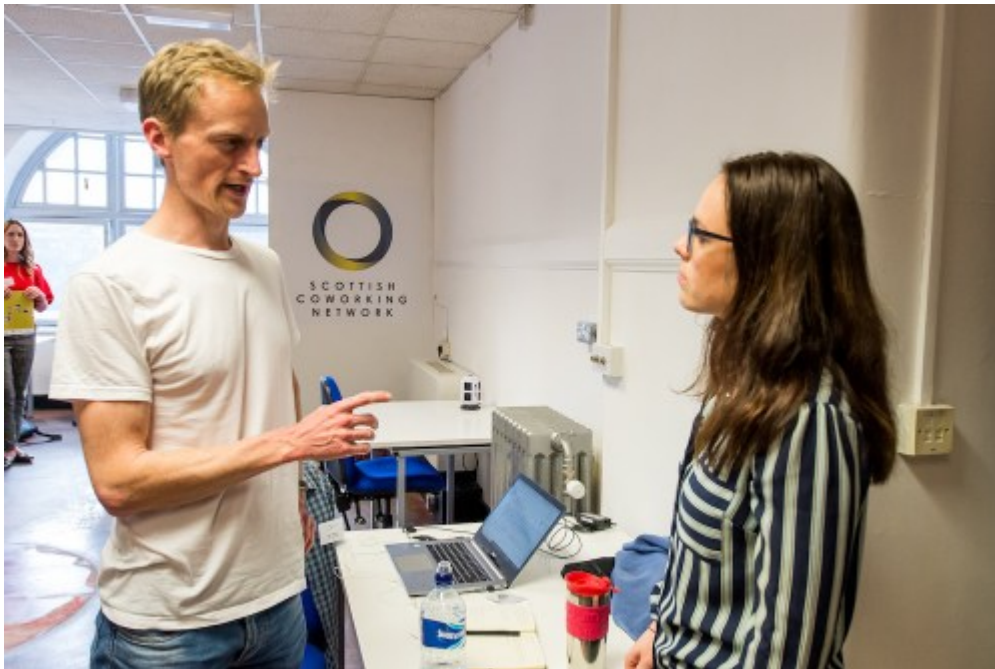
The Minister for Public Finance & Digital Economy Kate Forbes with Ian Ruthven, SLiC Chair, with the minister at the opening

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Public Finance Minister Kate Forbes said:“The Scottish Government is excited to support the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) in its dynamic new approach to co-working within the library environment.

“As well as nurturing innovation, co-working hubs provide an excellent opportunity to maximise the support available to ambitious entrepreneurs and businesses who wish to collaborate and share ideas.

“Libraries are at the forefront of changing the way the public accesses important services, and this is another great example of how they are serving the needs of modern communities.”



Small business owners chat with the minister at the opening
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The project sits at the heart of the national strategy for public libraries, ‘Ambition and Opportunity – a national strategy for public libraries in Scotland 2015-2020’, which reinforces the role which public libraries play in supporting employability, innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity. It is one of a number of innovative projects that demonstrate the transformation of the public library service in Scotland.

The hub at Edinburgh Central Library is one of the first to

open, alongside Dunfermline Carnegie Library, with another four set to open in Troon, Inverness and Dundee in the coming months. Each hub offers membership for fixed desks and hot desks, with access to meeting rooms, online resources, a programme of professional development events, and an online forum to support professional networking.



Scottish Coworking Network at Central Library PHOTO © Wullie Marr Photography

Pamela Tulloch, chief executive, SLIC said: “Scotland’s public libraries offer the perfect environment to support aspiring entrepreneurs. Libraries are located at the heart of communities, they are connected, and offer an abundance of information and resources. The new hubs will offer equal access to a support structure that will help people turn their passions and ideas into sustainable employment. They are ideal for small sole traders and those who may be currently running a small business from their kitchen or dining room table.

“We hope the presence of this resource in local libraries will encourage more people to consider self-employment by removing barriers, supporting innovation and providing practical tools and information. This project is further demonstration of the changing role of public libraries and how services are

transforming to ensure they meet the needs of modern communities.”



Small business owners chat with the minister at the opening
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