

Regional Growth Fund Case Study



Not just playing, but making real jobs.

An unusual Brighton toy shop grows its business, creating 4.5 new jobs from a grant of £15,000.

About Whirligig:

Whirligig is a toy shop with a difference. Its toys are for making, doing, and creating. Most toy shops fail to give older children the kind of toys they need to develop and grow. Whirligig was created to fill that space.

From its Brighton shop, Whirligig sells practical, real toys that children use to create experiences of their own. They sell construction, origami, sewing and art toys, as well as family games: anything that will get minds and hands working.

Whirligig works hard to find toy suppliers that share its values. It has developed strong links with local Sussex companies and has helped many small suppliers grow with them. Everything is chosen for its ability to be engaging and memorable.

The Challenge:

Whirligig has been a success in Brighton, and it is now time for the company to expand. It wants to open a new shop in Chichester, build its e-commerce operation, and strengthen its brand to support further future growth.

Whirligig

The Solution:

The Business Growth Grant will help pay for the costs of opening the new shop, for new business infrastructure and for better marketing. Together, these things will provide a strong base for expansion, with retail and online growth planned.

Peter Allinson, Director, said: "Whirligig is an unusual toy shop! Our products are related to children having meaningful experiences that they will remember and take forward. We work with many very small and emerging suppliers, often from the local area, bringing a feeling of uniqueness to the shop and resulting in high customer impact. Our project is about extending our reach, creating jobs and developing an infrastructure that will allow us to plan for further growth. Making our 'first move away from home' means doing things differently, investing in high calibre people, advanced technology to manage stock control and distribution and establishing a strong brand image that will help us get to the next level".



Business Growth Grants are available to any business in the Coast to Capital area who are seeking to grow and create new jobs, but need additional finance. Grants are available from £5,000 to £250,000 and it is expected that the grant will form no more than 25% of the total costs of the growth plans. Further details of how to apply can be found at www.coast2capital.org.uk/helping-business-growth/regional-growth-fund or, alternatively contact Hayley Shepherd, Regional Growth Fund Programme Manager on 01403 333840 or rgf@coast2capital.org.uk