Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY | Centre for Business Innovations & Sustainable Solutions

Youth Green Innovation Lab
Day 2

Day 2: Create and Develop the Solution

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UK time	Vietnam time	Activity and participation
09:00–09:15	15:00–15:15	Live hybrid: Review of Day 1
09:15–10:00	15:15–16:00	Live hybrid: How to pitch to an investor
10:00–10:40	16:00–16:40	Live hybrid: Industry Talk
10:40–10:55	16:40–16:55	Break
10:55–11:25	16:55–17:25	Live group work: Evaluate ideas using impact, feasibility and sustainability
11:25–12:15	17:25–18:15	Live group work: Select the strongest solution and develop its value proposition
12:15–12:30	18:15–18:30	Live group work: Develop the business model
12:30–13:30	—	UK lunch / Vietnamese participants leave the live session
13:30–14:30	Flexible offline time	Create a prototype, storyboard or visual representation I
14:30–15:15	Flexible offline time	Create a prototype, storyboard or visual representation II
15:15–15:30	—	UK break
15:30–16:15	Flexible offline time	Prepare and rehearse the six-minute pitch
16:15–16:30	Before Day 3	Final peer review and improvement of the pitch

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How to Pitch to an Investor

A short, clear and persuasive explanation of why a problem matters, how your solution creates value and why your team is worth backing.

It is **not the complete business plan**.
It communicates the **problem, solution, market, evidence and business model**.
Its purpose is to build enough **interest and confidence for the next conversation**.

Problem: What important problem are you addressing?
Solution: How does your idea solve it?
Market: Who needs the solution, and who will pay?
Evidence: What shows that the idea could work?
Business model: How will the venture generate income and remain sustainable?
Team: Why is your team capable of delivering it?
The ask: What funding or support do you need?

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Think like an investor

Investors are not only evaluating whether the idea sounds interesting. They are assessing its **potential, credibility and risk**.
They want to know:

Is the problem real?
Is it important, urgent and supported by evidence?
Will customers care?
Does the solution meet a genuine need, and will someone pay for it?
Is the solution different?
Why is it better than existing alternatives?
Can the team deliver?
Does the team have the necessary skills, experience and commitment?
Can the business succeed?
Is the business model financially viable and capable of growing?
What impact will it create?
Are the environmental and social benefits clear and measurable?
Is the investment worthwhile?
How will the funding be used, and what progress will it achieve?

7 Steps to Heaven

problem → solution → market → evidence → business model → team → ask



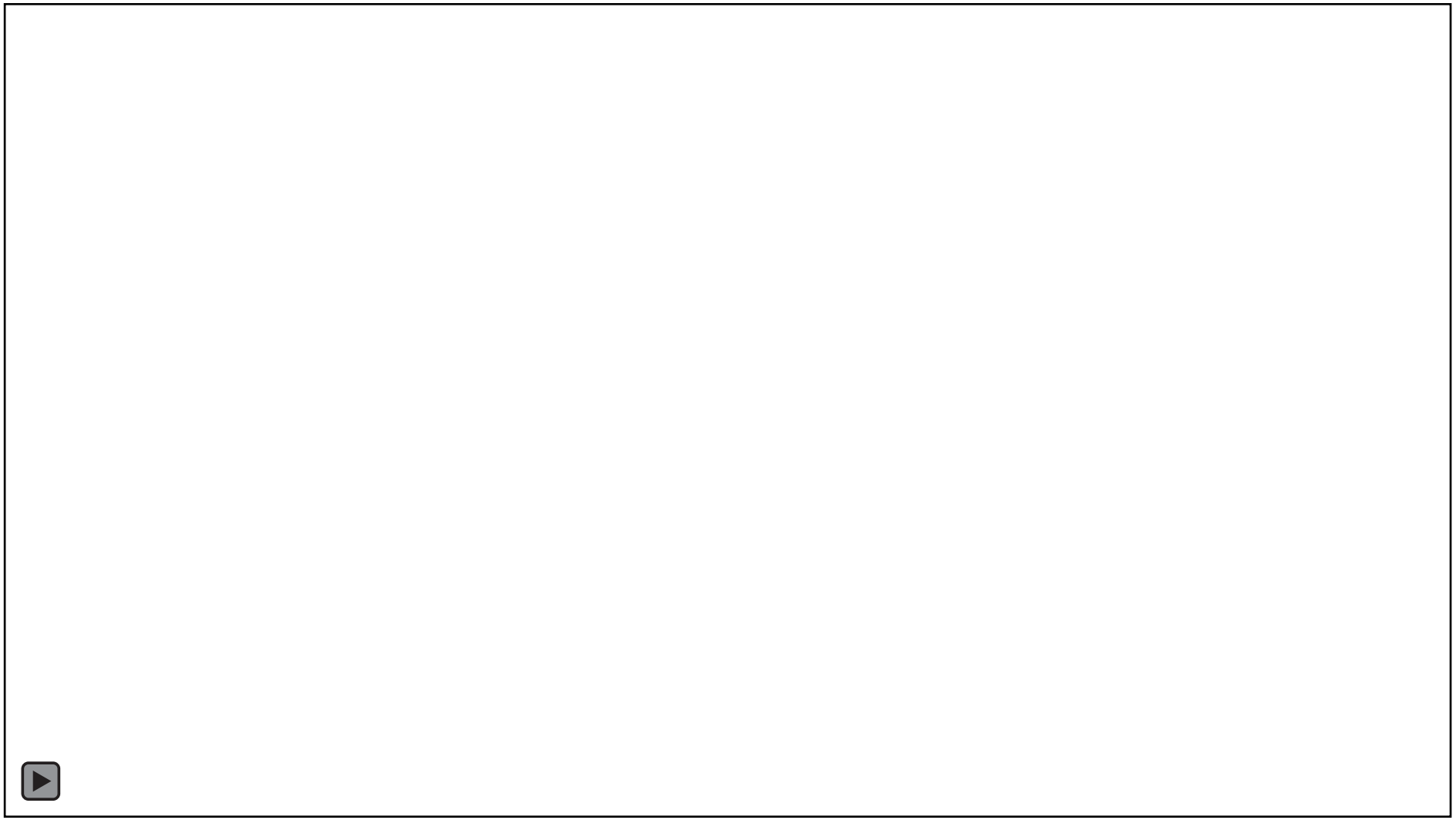
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7 Steps to Heaven

1. Define the problem	Identify the target users, the seriousness of the problem, supporting evidence and why action is needed now. Ask participants to avoid problems that are too broad.
2. Explain the solution	Use the formula: “For [target user], we provide [solution] that delivers [benefit] because [difference].” Participants write their one-sentence solution.
3. Identify the market	Distinguish between users, beneficiaries and paying customers. Identify the first realistic customer segment and explain how it can be reached.
4. Present evidence	Discuss useful evidence: user interviews, prototype tests, pilot results, early demand and partnerships. Emphasise that assumptions should be stated honestly.
5. Explain the business model	Cover the value created, who pays, revenue sources, major costs, required partners and how environmental or social impact will be measured.
6. Introduce the team	Explain why the team has the relevant skills, experience and commitment. Identify important capability gaps and how these will be addressed.
7. Make the investment ask	State how much support is required, how it will be used, the period covered and the milestone it will achieve. The ask may include funding, mentoring, expertise or pilot access.

Parcel Box — an anti-theft, secure parcel delivery box designed to accept multiple deliveries

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What the Team Did Well

Clear Problem Identification:
They opened with a highly relatable pain point: missing deliveries, stolen packages, or having to pick up items from neighbors.

Working Product Demonstration:
Their live demonstration was clear and effective. Showing how a courier places a package inside and how it drops securely into a locked bottom compartment gave the Dragons immediate context.

Product Variety:
They brought multiple versions to show scalability—a standalone unit, a built-in brick version, and an apartment model.

Strong Margins:
When asked by Tej Lalvani, Darren revealed a unit built for ~$70 USD (~£55) sells for £199, demonstrating a healthy profit margin per unit.

What Went Wrong

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Unmerged Entities & Mixed Financials (The Fatal Flaw):
They asked for investment in a single combined entity, but the merger hadn't actually happened yet.
When presenting sales and projections, they kept jumping between Darren's company figures (£21k turnover / 68 units) and Brian's separate past figures (~1,000 units globally). This led Deborah Meaden to call the pitch a complete "shambles".

Unfair / Illogical Equity Split:
Jenny Campbell pointed out that Darren held 79% of the business while Brian (the actual inventor with the proven sales track record) only held 20%. They failed to justify why the reseller had almost 4x the equity of the core inventor.

Unprepared Team Dynamics:
They had clearly not aligned their pitch or financial figures before walking through the doors. The Dragons noted that they expected the investors to do the basic math for them.

Poor Response to Product Criticisms:
When Peter Jones argued that the box looks like a "filing cabinet" sitting in a front garden, their solution was suggesting a "vinyl wrap", which failed to address the fundamental aesthetic and spatial concerns.

Team Breakdown After the Pitch:
The pitching errors completely broke team trust. Immediately after walking out empty-handed, inventor Brian Wilcox publicly distanced himself from Darren and Liam, stating he would not proceed with the merger.

How they should have structured this pitch instead?



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Create a Prototype, Storyboard or Visual Representation

1. Decide what you need to show
Choose the most important part of the idea:
how the solution works;
how users interact with it;
what the product or service looks like;
how it creates environmental or social value.

2. Choose an appropriate format
Prototype: A simple model of a product, service, website or app.
Storyboard: A sequence of pictures showing the user's experience.
Visual representation: A sketch, diagram, poster or service journey explaining the idea.

3. Show the user journey
Include four stages:
Before: What problem does the user experience?
Interaction: How does the user access or use the solution?
Result: What immediate benefit does the user receive?
Impact: What environmental, social or business value is created?

4. Build the simplest possible version
Use paper, sticky notes, recycled materials, presentation slides or a basic digital tool. Focus only on the features required to explain and test the idea.

5. Label important assumptions
Identify what the group is currently assuming, such as:
users will understand how to use it;
customers will pay for it;
the technology will work;
partners will participate;
the solution will reduce environmental harm.

6. Present and test it
Show the prototype to another group and ask:
What do you think this solution does?
Which part is clear or confusing?
Would the target users find it useful?
What should be improved?