

Hello everyone, today we are here to talk about the importance of cross-organisation collaboration and we will be delving deep into the topic to help us understand some of the main importance's and impacts and why they are key to getting people more active.

So today I am joined with Patrick Colbeck programme manager of the Sport Tech Hub. So, I guess to start we can just get a little introduction of yourself Patrick and what you do at the Sport Tech Hub with your aims.

Amazing thanks Holly, as always, a pleasure to be working with the House of Sport activities. So, in terms of the Sport Tech Hub, we were set up in 2017 by London Sport with the remit to use technology to help them achieve their ambition to make London the most active city in the world. Our core purpose at the start was to have an innovation programme where we would work with start-ups to help accelerate their technology and link them with some of London Sports partners to create pilots and trials throughout the capital. In the last three years we have worked with 31 start-ups, and we believe they have interacted with roughly 130,000 Londoners to help them get people to be more active. Also, during this time our start-ups have raised 4.2 million pounds.

As Sport Tech Hubs stands now, we are more than just an innovation programme, we are now a fully-fledged business with an operating innovation and physical activity expertise and technical expertise all related to physical activity. We are the number one body related to physical activity and technology and how that can be used to get people active. So, if anyone wants to know more about that please reach out to myself or Alex Zurita who is our strategic leader at The Hub, but yeah thank you for having us Holly.

That's alright no worries, so I guess on those you highlighted some of the importance, what do you think that the collaborations do to amplify those importance's to reach more people in particular?

So, collaboration is key. Doesn't matter if you are early stage business or a scaling company you need to be forming partnerships and my favourite are value in kind ones where it's a win win or no lose no lose which is also another valid kind of collaboration. What these allow people to do is reach an audience, expand their contact list or expand their product offer. Really collaborations just means that you can reach more people you can evolve your product quicker and you can accelerate your growth, so they are integral to every single business. Without them it is so much harder to grow yourself and bounce off each other success and leverage each other networks to help you become a more viable company.

Yeah that's quite interesting so if you think about how you would kind of pair to organisation together so they can bounce off each other as you just said, how would you kind of go about that, in identifying the different organisations that are suitable to be able to make a collaboration that is going to work and to make an impact?

So that's interesting because I would say you can have two organisations who are very similar or very different and they can still be powerful in how they collaborate. One real recent example which I love is a product coming out called Longevity card who are a bit like Monzo but focus on health and wellbeing. What's really cool here is there working with loads of different start-ups from the sport tech and fit tech space or just anyone working in health fitness and if you've got their card you can have access to all their products at a discounted rate to help people stay active. So that's just an example of how FinTech could link with Sport Tech. We have also seen, as well, lots of companies who are competitors almost who are collaborating and joining forces. A really great example on LinkedIn of Burger King essentially collaborating with KFC and Pizza Hut and loads more other fast food joints. They were saying look we don't mind who you are going to right now, all of us need to

support each other and work together to keep our business going and thriving and that again just shows that competitors will sometimes look to each other to boost each other to leverage themselves and grow. Another kind of example like that outside of our remit is often you see these shops that are very similar especially restaurants bound together especially on the same street who are going out and about again showing how they can leverage each other's name and user case and who they are to strengthen each other propositions. So, it is interesting all of that and shows again why collaborations are important.

Yeah because I guess also things like cross sector working can also help to shine a light in generating new ideas and reach different audiences, have you ever considered cross sector organisation work or mainly within the same sector of work?

I'm glad you bring that up as well it is so important to switch sectors especially from technology where often we see the most innovative technology come out in one sector and it trickles down to the other. Block Chain was a great example of this and the most prolific at the moment would probably be artificial intelligence. How we saw that always start off on the computer end and working with things such as flights and Fintech and cyber security but what was amazing was seeing that trickle down more and more into sport tech and how that can be used to personalise care or offers or training techniques so it is really interesting to see how tech merges from one side to another. I think as well, it works for more than I guess, a product collaboration from an event standpoint its interesting as well. One of the best events and talks I ever heard of was when the Royal College of Music was paring up with Vancouver Canucks to talk about perform under pressure and it's the same topic same struggle with the athletes having to perform and the musicians having to perform on the live stage and it was just seeing those two different worlds bond over one similar problem or fear that they had an how they can share their insight to conquer their fears, so cross sector is key to expanding that understanding and learning about it and evolving your product and where better to look than outside of your traditional needs.

Yeah I guess it kind of helps you to think outside of the box and think of different streams that perhaps you may have not thought about before so I guess off that you know how you support and encourage collaborations to take place, do you have to be quite involved or are people quite open to the idea in general?

So there are two ways to kind of look at this from, the sport tech hub when we work with a business or when we tried to work with other organisations yeah it's very much trying to put yourself out there at the start and almost being willing to offer something for free, I think everyone goes too quickly into what's in it for me, what's the pure commercial angle when really it's about how if you want to have a real impact especially in the sector that we are working on you've got to have some low hanging fruit, being willing to support someone help out with their agenda and see how you can link and the leverage each other more and more. So, I think it is important at the start to be willing to collaborate and looking for it and you understand how this might benefit you maybe not right away but in a few years' time. So that's one kind of key point there that you should go in and say how should I offer something for free and how can we potentially work to get and being very open minded. The second area that I would look at when collaborating is who you can look for in terms of how they might be able to elevate your position, so it might be that you could start off free but you want to work with an organisation that has some way to promote you as you can promote them or work together from that standpoint. So almost finding someone that's your equal in that realm can mean that you can leverage each other's networks more effectively.

Yeah so, I guess you've kind of had many collaborations through working at Sport Tech Hub, and on that, can you highlight one that's been successful and how did you go about forming that one. Did you approach them did they approach you and how did you go through that whole process?

So, there's a few that we've had, part of what we do with the hub is specifically work with start-ups or businesses to try and help them collaborate and form partnerships. One of my favourite ones that we did last year was when we collaborated with Red January and helped them work with loads of different organisations all over London to expand the use of their campaign. So, I guess from how it came about, we were very much because Red was part of innovation programme, we were tasked with helping open our network to them. So, what we usually do is we put a call action to some of our partners, but we also strategically think about the best organisations that we can align them to expand their reach and goals. One of these that was great was we have red and London youth who for example really got behind the campaign and began to push it through all their social channels. What was fantastic about all our work with Red was that we ended up seeing I think it's 5.4% increase in the applications from London of the people participating in the campaign which directly showed how when we work with them and put them in front of our partners to form collaborative relationships, that these actually went forward and had some impact. What's great as well as Red moves into its second year they are looking for people to participate in Red 2021, so make sure you look at that, but what we did with her we see that loads of people we connected her with are still right now talking to her again about next year. Which is great as it shows a beneficial partnership from both ends, both ends can see the value and want to keep the conversation going.

So I guess if you start a partnership you perhaps get more out of it than what you bargained for whether that's for the actual event, campaign or project and whether that's contacts for the future and as you said ultimately great for the company, people you are trying to aim towards but also for your development of the organisation too. So, I guess that's quite a few of the importance's of collaborations. But looking at the things that may be a bit difficult how do you go about overcoming the challenges such as communication and different ideas, are there any barriers or difficulties that stand out to you?

Yeah, I think it's when you go into these collaborations its understanding where each of you stand at the start and what you're both looking to get out of it. It needs to be especially if it's a value in kind collaboration in needs to be crystal clear what that support will be and both willing to provide and when. Often I think I should highlight its communication which is key with this often we'll see partnerships taking place where one partner will just put out one tweet once and say yay we're collaborating and that doesn't really have any momentum it doesn't really showcase the true value of the work that you are doing together so really it's just understanding each other's needs and creating actionable goals at the start that you both want to achieve and promising and actually delivering work each of you have set out. Not all collaborations will work and sometimes you know one party will get more value than another and often this is the case but if your participating towards a wider goal sometimes it's worth it if it refers more opportunities in the long run and again it can be worth not winning as much first time because you might win together more the second time or create greater impact from that, so communication is kind of key and the bread and butter of whether it will work or fail.

Well that's great I think that's provided some insightful information that I hope will help inspire and open people eyes to perhaps forming some more partnerships and collaboration in the future. I guess they can also have a look at the Sport Tech Hub, is that right, to have a look at some of these partnerships that could be formed?

I think absolutely, so I think there are two ways that as the Sport Tech Hub we can help you form collaborations. The 1st way is if someone is a body and they are looking to see how one, technology can be used or two, they are looking to implement technology to help people to be active. Alex and I can work with you to help you understand the need and opportunity and what products might be able to fit for your organisation or project you are working on. The second way is on the almost supply side, so if the tech solution is already out there we are always looking to find more of you and work with you to make sure we are putting the best technology in front of our partners because we know that tech is absolutely critical to helping people stay and remain active especially now during these times where being active at home is more necessary than ever before.

Yeah well thank you so much I really appreciate you helping in this Themed Briefing and hopefully that's been helpful for other people. That's brilliant thank you so much.

Thanks Holly