

**University of Liverpool Enterprise**

***Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneurship) Application Form***

*The University of Liverpool is looking to identify and support international Graduate Entrepreneurs, who can demonstrate that they have world class ideas and /or exceptional entrepreneurial skills.*

*This is a new UKBA route designed for graduates who plan to launch a new business in the UK. In order to apply for a Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur visa, you have to be endorsed by the University of Liverpool.  
  
If successful, you will be granted leave for one year in order to develop your business plan with tailored support from the university.*

*At the end of the first year, provided you are making good progress, you will be able to extend your visa for one further year. The intention is that after a maximum of two years on a Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur visa, you would be able to switch into the main Tier 1 - Entrepreneur Visa.*

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| **Personal Details**  Title ................ First Name ...................................... Surname ...................................................  D.O.B ......................................... Nationality ........................................  University Email .......................................................................................................................  Personal Email..........................................................................................................................  Tel Number ...................................................  University ID Number ................................. Passport Number ...................................  Qualification Level (e.g. MSc)…………………………………………………………………………  Course Title .....................................................................................................................................  Course End Date ................................................  Do you have any dependants with you in the UK OR do you intend to bring any dependants to the UK? If yes, how many? |

**Visa Details**

Type of Visa............................................................ Expiry Date........................................................

Have you ever held a Tier 1 post study Work Visa? Yes/No (Please circle as appropriate)

If yes, you will not be eligible for a TIER 1 Graduate Visa

**Business Details**

**Please describe your business idea (250 words max)**My business idea is to provide different types of student accommodation on short term and long term; and provide a social communication hub primarily for Chinese students who are going to study or are studying in Liverpool. It would be applied to the UK eventually.

For student accommodation long term rent, the website will provide flatmate finding and group booking.

For private house long term rent, the website will provide house & landlord service rating, English and Chinese housemate finding and house living survival guide specialised for Chinese students.

This website will provide more availability for short term lets, and different types of short term let such as homestay for Chinese students.

Social communication hub allows Chinese students to know friends who will study at the same university before they come to UK. It will be a communication hub for them help each other to better settle down in this country.

**What is different about your idea that will make it a success? (250 words max) USP**

For student accommodation long term let

Chinese students feel it would be better if they can live with at least 1 or 2 friends they get on well with before moving into a flat. The current system only allows them to book individually. Students feel isolated and the fear of unknown. Student accommodation would like students to book in a group. The higher number of people, the less each person is going to pay. There is no existing website allows students to find the right person to book in a group. This website will help student accommodation to have more students group bookings and help student them to find suitable flatmates and book in a group.

For private house long term let

Some Chinese students prefer to private house. They do not have access to book when they are in China. Even if they are in the UK, they feel difficult to find a suitable place. There is no system tells about the how well the house is or the landlord serviceThey They have to book bearing the risks. English students also have difficulties in finding roommates. They have to find and meet potential housemates, which is very time consuming. On the other side, landlords do not have a way to promote their good house and their service as there is no rating system. This website is going to provide an effective tool for private landlords to promote their service and facilitate students to have a smoother process in booking a private house.

For short term let

Demand for short term let among Chinese students is high. Usually, the peak demands are from June to September and from September to October every year. From June to September, student accommodation around university places are always limited. Substitutions like homestay, private house and student accommodation subletting are available. However, there is no effective way for them to reach Chinese students when they are in China. The other period is from September to October when students have to find short term to finish their master studies. No student accommodation can offer short term during this time. There is almost no landlord will offer one-month rent. Students have to live in hotel and pay £1500 monthly rent. There should be someone to help Chinese students find suitable short term in a reasonable price.

Social communication hub

Chinese students want to find people who have studied experience in the UK. The existing systems do not provide an effective way to find them. Once students register, they will automatically join the hub. They could have access to the students who studied at the same University previously. The hub aims to attract all Chinese students coming to study in the UK. This student database will attract more Chinese students to join and be a competitive advantage over potential competitors.

**How do you propose to develop this into a commercial proposition (250 words max)**

For student accommodation long term let

Group booking reduce the administration cost and advertising cost on student accommodations. The website will charge commission fee per tenant on student accommodation.

For private house long term let

All landlords of private houses the website provides to Chinese students have signed contract with us. Chinese students will be protected legally when they book private house through our website. They will receive Chinese translated documents that fully explained terms and conditions. The website will change legal contract drafting fee and administration fee.

For short term let

There is peak demand for some period during the year. The website will hold some places in advance with average price and rent them to students with above the average price during the peak period.

Other services

Some landlords are too busy to find tenants. Some tenants are too busy to find housemates or they want to rent for a better price. The website will be able to help them and charge service fee.

**What stage are you at with this idea at the moment? (250 words max)**

I am doing short term let from September to October. I use wechat to advertise rooms. I have 15 customers waiting me to find places for them. I have successfully provide two accommodations to clients. I have earned £100 on average from each deal. The number of customers is increasing and it is estimated I can earn over £1000 by the end of September.

The business idea has been recognised by some organisation. It has been selected as the representative business idea at University of Liverpool in HSBC 2016 grow your future competition. The head of Spark Up shown interests in this idea would like to support this idea if it is approved by University.

There are two IT technicians who would like to work alongside with me in this business. One is Eric Masaba, who has many years’ business experiences and just won Global Red Herring 2015. The other is Lan, who has business in both Liverpool and China. He shows interests in this idea and would like to introduce a technician to be a partnership with me.

**Have you run your own business before?** Yes/No   
If yes give details here.

I run a T-shirt business with other students during studying at University. I am good at selling T-shirt using personal networking. We used to sell T-shirts in a trade fair at university. Over 60% number of T-shirts were sold by me during that day.

I used to work as a personal assistant for CEO in a start-up firm named China Glory Horticulture Ltd based in Liverpool. I participated in business planning, sourcing materials, supplier selecting, dealing with government about the land buying and business funding. I have experience of starting up a real business in the UK.

I used to be a marketing consultant for Saffron & Lewis, a luxury baby furniture retailer start up, based in Liverpool. I analysed the business marketing strategy and conducted a good marketing plan for them.

**What legal structure is your business going to be and why? E.g. sole trader, Ltd, social enterprise**

At the beginning, the business is going to be in a form of sole trader. It is easier to set up as a small firm and I will have more control over the business. Sole trader will allow me to make decisions quickly and change service to meet the needs of the clients quickly. The business will consider to be limited as I developed.

**Business Idea – The process**

**Where do you want the business to be in a years time? (250 words max)**

Be the end of 2016, the business will help 25 students to find short term.

In 2017, the business will have 28 student accommodations in Liverpool available for Chinese and English students group booking online. It will have 10 private houses available for Chinese and English students to book. There will be a list of student accommodation and 10 homestays and private houses available for short term from June to September. The business will also help 50 students to find short term from September to October.

In 2018, the website will have 300 students registered. Student accommodation group booking service will expand to Manchester or other cities. Private house landlords have gained reviews and will attract more English and Chinese student booking through the website. The number of property will increase to 50. The number of homestays and private houses as supplement to student accommodation for short term from June to September will increase depends on the demand. For short term from September to October, over 100 students will be helped to find suitable one month let.

In 2019 onwards, the website will maintain the number of students and have more students registered on the website. More student accommodation and landlords will join the website from other cities.

There is possibility that the website will provide accommodation for Chinese tourists in the future.

**What resources do you need to get you started? (250 words max)**

I will need to make group booking agreement with student accommodations. I will need a list of reliable landlords. I will need legal support in terms of tenancy agreement. I will need IT supporters to make suitable website. I will need business insurance and business bank account. The business will use word of mouth at the beginning to generate number of students registering on the website. It might then use wechat (Chinese facebook) to promote the website and attract more students registering on the website.

**What are your key targets and milestones? (250 words max)**

September 2016 – generate cash from doing short term business

It is estimated that there will be £1000 profits earned from short term to facilitate the start of the business.

September 2017 – Chinese student can book long term and short term in Liverpool via the website. Turnover target for 2017 is £13,900. This will be broken down into 4 sections below:

For student accommodation:

Successfully let 45 rooms and learn 45\*£20=£900

For private house:

Successfully let 15 houses and learn 15\*£600=£9000

For short term from September to October

Successfully let 20 rooms and learn 20\*£100=£2000

For short term from June to September

Successfully let 20 rooms and learn 20\*£100=£2000

September 2018 – the website will have reviews about the landlords. The social communication hub has a database of students who studied in the previous year. Service will cover Manchester.

As it will operate in two cities the turnover target for 2018 is £13,900\*2=£27,800

**Market Research**

**Please detail any market research you have completed to date (250 words max)**

For student accommodation

I networked with my Chinese friends and acquaintances. Nearly 90% of them think to find 1 or 2 flatmates getting on well before booking would increase the happiness of living in the accommodation. They like the idea of finding English flatmates who they can get on well with as it is a good way to improve English speaking. They also think the platform is a good way to help them to form a group and reduce price.

For private house

I talked with landlords about the business ideas. They are very happy to offer the places as some find difficult to let student live in. They are happy with the landlords’ reviews as there is no such service in existing English website. Chinese friends or acquaintances are happy to have a more effective way to choose suitable private house and people they like to live with. I also have spoken with English friends, they like the idea of being able to have a more effective way to find housemates.

For short term let from September to October

I have used wechat to do short term advertisement, and I have had more than 15 students waiting me to find short term lets. The number is increasing.

For short term let from June to September

Chinese students coming to UK during this time usually come to study English. As study is not as stressful as during term time, some Chinese students prefer to live in apartment or homestays where they can have more opportunity to practice English and learn English culture. 90% students I have spoken to would like this as an alternative to student accommodation short term.

Social communication hub

Nearly all Chinese students I have spoken to have found difficulty to find people who studied at the same University. They would like to use the platform to find friends or finding a better way to settle down in this country.

**Who are your direct and indirect competitors? (250 words max)**

For student accommodation

Direct competitors are 6apt.com and stuliving.com which provide student accommodation in the UK and the world for Chinese students. None of them are based in the UK. Their after service isn’t good. Students complains their response is quite slow if they need some changes about their accommodation when they arrive UK. At the same time, they do not offer student flatmate finding nor group booking service.

For private house

There is currently one company named uhouzz.com based in China offering UK private house. They provide a list of private house however they don’t have full control on the landlords. They won’t be able to ensure the safety issues or any after sale service as they are not based in the UK.

For short term from September to October

The is no business service in this market. Indirect competitors are Airbnb, rightmove and spareroom. Airbnb is mainly for one day holiday rent. For one month rent they charge over £110 service fee, which is not an ideal website for searching one month rent. Also, not all landlords in Airbnb willing to offer a month rent. You need to message and ask many landlords; it is very time consuming. Very few places offer one-month rent in right move and spareroom. The information in rightmove and spareroom is not very clear and trustable. It is not a safe place for Chinese student to rent.

For short term from June to September

Direct competitors are 6apt.com and stuliving.com which offer short term student accommodation. However, they offer limited short term. As they base in China, their information updated by the student accommodation is slow. Students find their response is very slow when they enquire short term.

For Social communication hub

There is no business providing this service.

For Tourism

The number of Chinese tourists coming to UK is increasing. There isn’t a website providing British style or western style apartment for Chinese tourists or business travellers.

**Define your target market and why? What is the scale of the audience, is it impulse purchase, luxury etc? (250 words max)**

Target market will be Chinese student coming to study in the UK and English students who has interests in Chinese culture and won’t mind to live with Chinese. They are my target market ecause I have been a student in the UK and understand the need of them.

At the beginning, the scale of the audience would be over 1000 Chinese students in Liverpool. Ideally, the audience would be all students studying in the UK which is over 80,000.

It is a standard product. Students like to have a budget for student accommodation.

**How are you going to price your product or service? And why? (250 words max)**

 For student accommodation long term

I haven’t got the exact price but I will ask £20 per room as a commission fee for one-year rent. I will need to confirm the price with several student accommodations.

For private house long term

This website will charge legal contract fee £100 per tenants and £100 on landlords. This will be the same as local estate agents.

For short term lets from September to October

Money will be made from the difference between the normal monthly rental price and the peak monthly rental price. Price will be £100-£200 per person per month during that time. The price setting will be lower than the hotel price however will higher than the student accommodation monthly price. This is due to high demand and short supply.

For short term lets from June to September

For student subletting, service fee will be charged as the website will help student subletting to quickly find tenants and give students fair price based upon the market than they sell by themselves. The price will be lower than the student accommodation short term price. It will fluctuate around £70-£90 per week per person based on the demand.

**Personal Statement**

Please use this section to convince us of your suitability for the scheme **(250 words max)**

I have good understanding about the need of Chinese students in renting. I understand the renting market in the UK as I have personal experience in this. Also, I have a good source of landlord supply as I am a member in the Liverpool Chinese British Association. I have social connection that allows me to find good sources of Chinese private house suppliers.

I have good commercial awareness and business knowledge as I studied International Business for my bachelor degree at University of Liverpool. I also have practical business experience in the UK.

I am active and I am good at social networking. Because of that, I am able to find opportunity before other people. I know my business advisor Yan at women’s organisation from a social networking. She is impressed when I found her as few students know her at this early stage.

I have entrepreneur spirits. I have always worked for myself. I like to find business opportunities and set up own business. I would like to take on staffs and creat jobs and business for local people.

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| *\* Please note that successful applicants will also need to meet the requirement of the UKBA application process , which can be found at:* [*http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/working/tier1/graduate-entrepreneur*](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/working/tier1/graduate-entrepreneur) |

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| By signing this form I give consent to The University of Liverpool to provide UKBA with my personal details if I am successful in my application for endorsement of the Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur visa. If the visa is granted, I undertake to spend the majority of my working time on the development of the business venture. I also consent to this information being kept on file for audit purposes and I agree to the terms and conditions of sponsorship under the Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme\*.  **Signature** .............................................................. **Date** ...............................................  *\*All business information provided will be treated as confidential and will not appear in the public domain.* |

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| **University Use Only** | Yes/No |
| Has email been received from IST team to confirm applicant’s eligibility? |  |
| Has a Business Support Package been agreed by the applicants school |  |
| If “no” to above business support package has applicant confirmed they will fund. |  |