Xander

My AFK

Market Research
Report for Service
Expansion Possibilities

Xander Talent

AFKers

12/11/21

Executive Summary

This report aims to provide information on how my AFK can expand its employment support services for young people of determination in its current market. To do this, market research has been performed by Xander Talent associates. More specifically, in regard to the scope, this report considers partnerships to expand virtual coaching, work from home coaching, self-employment coaching and incubators. These four elements, along with an analysis of the market gap and desirable features in these coaching services make up the six deliverables of this report respectively.

Secondary data was used from various internet sources and primary data was collected where possible through possessed networks. Various social enterprises have been identified, with operations in and outside of London. These organisations vary notably in size, goals and their target audience. For deliverable one and two the following organisations have been identified as partners that my AFK can engage with to grow its services: Bright Future UK, KIDS, Exceptional Individuals, Mencap and Scope. These organisations were identified mostly because they themselves passionately emphasise the support of young individuals and children becoming adults, in one way or another. Contact information is presented for these organisations.

For self-employment coaching and incubators, not many organisations were identified that already pursue such a business model however organisations with potential interests in partnering to create these incubators for people of determination have been identified. These were selected based on the understanding that the organisations are heading, potential synergy for my AFK & their developed networks.

The market gap analysis has been constructed based on an understanding of accommodating for ethnical, gender & cultural diversity in the self-employed people of determination, the support in idea formation to become self-employed, homeshoring, inclusivity based on specific disabilities individuals face, and on helping these individuals gain further educational qualifications.

Recommendations based on the data collected, analysed and understood follow to suggest how my AFK can proceed to grow its services. This includes ideas like the creation of a network of individuals passionate about improving the lives of young people of determination through a monthly-meeting LinkedIn group.

Contents

1. Project Introduction

This project is the first phase of a 3-phase strategic programme that my AFK is running to explore areas for expansion of their employment (and related) services. This first phase focuses on London (Greater London Boroughs/inside the M25). Phase 2 will look at the rest of the UK and Phase 3 will look at what is happening in the rest of the world to see what organisations are undertaking internationally.

The project was executed by trainee associates from Xander Talent. (https://www.xandertalent.com/).

1.1 My AFK

my AFK (the operating name of Action For Kids Charitable Trust - https://www.my-afk.org/) is a UK national charity helping disabled children and young people to live independent and fulfilling lives.

They help in 3 main ways; providing specialist mobility equipment not available from the NHS to young people, running short break and school holiday activities (face-to-face and online) for 14-18 year-olds and helping disabled young people aged 14-25 to build aspirations and develop life and work skills so they can prepare for life after school and move into paid employment.

1.2 Xander Talent

Xander Talent (https://www.xandertalent.com/) is a talent company with a social purpose. Their mission is to work with organisations to create a workforce that is truly diverse and inclusive. Part of the initial training for new associates is the completion of a project for a social enterprise.

1.3 Business Need

The business need addressed by this project is to research and analyse the market for my AFK's employment related services to establish the best routes for expansion within London.

1.4 Scope

The scope of the research and analysis includes the opportunities of my AFK to expand its employment services including but not limited to virtual coaching, self-employment coaching, helping people of determination work from home and potential incubators.

1.5 Original Deliverables

The deliverables established at the start of the project were:

A Market Analysis and Recommendation Report consisting of the following:
- Analysis of expansion opportunities in:
    - virtual coaching
    - self-employment coaching
    - support services for working from home

- potential incubator opportunities
- Prioritisation of possibilities for:
  - Expansion directions
  - Potential partnerships
- Organisation contact details
- Potential market gap identification

1.6   Revised Deliverables

The original deliverables were refined during the project to:

- D1 - Organisations with virtual coaching for PoD employment
- D2 - Organisations supporting work from home for PoD employment
- D3 - Organisations supporting self-employment & incubators for PoD
- D4 - Potential market gaps
- D5 – Demographic Demand Analysis
- D6- Desirable features in virtual coaching, support for work from home and self-employment potential partners

2. Project Execution Process

2.1 Data Collection

We obtained data for this project from a range of sources including the following:

- Charity Commission Register,
- Reports from various governmental authorities and organisations,
- Transcripts from conferences and relevant video content on YouTube,
- Primary data collection,
- Websites and indexes on the internet.

The sources are described in further detail below.

1. Charity Commission Register

The charity commission register ([About the register of charities (charitycommission.gov.uk)](charitycommission.gov.uk)) allows for retrieving data on charities matching specific characteristics in exportable format. We made use of this to obtain a list of charities operating throughout the London area, with a focus on employment and education support for young people with disabilities. The resulting overall set of records has been attached as an appendix to this report.

It is to be noted that the number of charities is large and there are concerns with the accuracy and relevancy of charity activities. We have prioritized the charities by income as a means of filtration. The list may be of interest for further exploration of the relevant charity space and contacts for potential partnerships.

2. Reports from various governmental authorities and organisations

We used the following sources for various parts of analysis.

S. No.	Source	Analysis
1	Royal National Institute of the Blind - Sight Loss Tool, v4 2021	Demographic analysis by borough of visually and hearing-impaired population
2	Department for Education - Special Education Needs in England Report January 2020	Primary SEND needs for young people distributed by borough
3	Disability Dynamics Ltd – Outstanding success of programme for disabled entrepreneurs "Work for Yourself" Report	Success factors for incubator programmes targeted at Persons of Determination
4	Department for Work and Pensions – Understanding Self Employment for People with Disabilities and Health Conditions	Most important support factors required for PoD entering self-employment
5	The Association of Making self-employment work for disabled people – An agenda to make it happen	General market statistics and consequent market gaps

Sources 1 and 2 were primarily utilized to draw conclusions on the borough-wise demographics of Persons of Determination. We manually compiled data from Source 1 relating to various borough level reports into a single excel file, which has been attached in the appendix for reference. Source 3 was used to source insights into the factors promoting a successful incubation scheme for PoD.

3. Transcripts from conferences and relevant video content on YouTube

We utilized insights from the transcripts of the following conferences/YouTube videos as summarized in the table below.

S. No.	Source	Analysis
1	Radiate Conference Transcript – "Disabled People Doing It For Themselves – self-employment, home-shoring and running your own business"	Homeshoring model of employment
2	Exploring Self-Employment Opportunities for Persons with Developmental Disabilities - YouTube	Stepwise proven methodologies for self-employment with PoD
3	Why Self-Employment Is A Good Option for Disabled or Chronically Ill People | Lucy's Light - YouTube	Opinions received on the pros and cons of self-employment for the chronically ill
4	Becoming Self-Employed: My Journey [Video Series] | Lucy's Light - YouTube	Background into transitioning to self-employment as a chronically ill person
5	Successful Self-Employment & Entrepreneurship for People with Disabilities - YouTube	Detailed analysis on the features of an incubator and methods of financial and technical assistance
6	WHY I'D RATHER BE SELF-EMPLOYED | RoyJonesOnWheels - YouTube	Insight into common barriers to and motivations for self-employment among PoD
7	Is employment equality working for disabled people? - YouTube	Insight into common charity models of securing employment for PoD

4. Primary Data Collection

We collected primary data via an interview with a young Person of Determination. He is part of the organisation ChickenShed and pursues a university education. His important views on self-employment and virtual coaching for PoD are summarized in the appendix.

5. Websites and indexes on the internet

We collected several relevant URLs and charity indexes which were scraped for general direction and during our data collection. A list of relevant web links is available in the Appendix.

2.2 Data Analysis

Methods

- Deliverables D1, D2, D3– Manual web scraping for charities and organisations listing similar ethos to my AFK whilst offering virtual coaching services, work from home support or self-employment incubators. Data was compiled into an excel sheet containing important details such as contact numbers, addresses, income, organisation objectives, etc. As far as possible, the organisations listed are limited those operating within the M25 Region.
- Deliverable D4 – Potential market gaps were inferred primarily from the transcripts of conferences and relevant video content (Source 3 in Section 2.1). These were inferred based on being successful investment directions overseas or being recommended directions of effort by eminent studies in this field.
- Deliverable D5 – Demographic analysis was performed using a manually compiled excel file created from the RNIB Sight Loss Data Tool borough-wise reports, as well as an excel file produced by the Department of Education on SEND student age, gender, and primary need characteristics. The PowerBI data tool was used to produce a graphic dashboard of various relevant analytical metrics across the M25 boroughs. The detailed graphs have been attached in the Appendix for reference.
- Deliverable D6 – Desirable features in virtual coaching, support for work from home and self-employment services were found mainly through transcripts of conferences and relevant video content (Source 3 in Section 2.1). The features listed come from opinions of those with lived experience of disability and from the proven successful practices of organisations and individuals offering these services to PoD.

Key Challenges and Resolution

Challenge 1: Inadvertently failing to highlight an important point raised in a video or transcript

Description: Due to the length of certain videos exceeding over an hour or more, and extraction of key points having been done manually, it is possible that certain points of interest to my AFK may have been inadvertently missed out in the deliverables.

Resolution:

- We have taken efforts to cross check the videos for any important points to my AFK and selectively filtered what we felt were of greatest interest
- Additionally, the links to the original sources and transcripts have been attached to allow for further investigation and cross checking.

Challenge 2: Accuracy of Demographic Analysis

Description: Data from the RNIB Sight Loss Data Tool Reports was manually scraped from document format to an excel file for easier processing via business intelligence tools. As this work was done manually there is scope for human errors/inaccurate values having been entered.

Resolution:

- The work of entering relevant values was distributed across the team to avoid errors due to fatigue
- All members checked their entered values for sanity across the relevant data columns and any outliers were carefully cross checked with the original reports.
- We used the PowerBI tool to avoid errors in the translation of tabular data to visual representations and insights.

Challenge 3: Restricting scope and relevancy of charities to those within the M25 Region

Description: Due to the difficulty of finding charities offering virtual coaching and self-employment incubation services to PoD, it was not entirely possible to limit the listed charities to those operating within the M25 region of London.

Resolution:

- We have listed relevant charities which may operate just outside the M25 or within other parts of England and the UK
- Certain relevant practices and opinions of organisations and individuals in the USA but operating in the same space as my AFK/offering self-employment incubation have been recorded. It is likely this data will be useful to the UK and London context as well.
- In cases where the scope of the organisation has crossed the M25, the information can also be used to benefit Phase 2 and Phase 3 of my AFK Expansion Possibilities Project.

2.3 Recommendations

- Recommended partner organisations were decided based on geographic proximity to the M25, similarity of ethos to my AFK, income, and experience of the organisation in delivering virtual coaching and/or self-employment incubator services.
- Market gap recommendations were made based on inference from video and report sources, backed by proven experiences and views of people with lived experience of disability.
- Recommendations were made for the demographic data based on the number of times boroughs featured in the top 5 of various selected metrics.
- Recommended features of virtual coaching and self-employment incubators were made based on proven and tested methods used successfully by other organisations in this space.

2.4 Report

- This report has been compiled to provide a high-level overview of the key findings for each deliverable as well as detail the execution process.
- It is intended to serve as a useful base on which further research for Phase 2 and 3 can be executed.

- An appendix of sources, datasets, links, and studies relevant to the report has been created for further reference and investigation.

3 Project Results

3.1 Deliverables

3.1.1 D1 – Organisations with virtual coaching for PoD employment

Many of the organisations supporting people of determination in employment account for virtual, or "online", coaching. Some of the emphasis on providing the coaching virtually has been created by the COVID-19 pandemic but some already accommodated for virtual methods beforehand. The following organisations, and in some cases programmes from organisations, have been identified as potential collaborators for my AFK to grow the virtual coaching for PoD employment services:

I. Bright Future UK.
   This charity focuses on supporting young people who had to step out of education for a longer period of time because of physical or mental health conditions. They work with a large array of conditions, and while majority of their services focus on return to education, they also provide mentoring where the young individuals affected speak to Bright Future UK's professionals about specific aspects they would like to work on and move forward with.

Contact: info@brightfuturesuk.com	02030518671
LinkedIn: James Farrell	James Farrell is a programme coordinator that might be a good reach out to discuss collaborative efforts between my AFK and Bright Future UK.

II. Working Well Trust.
   This charity helps people with mental health issues, Autism (ASD) and learning difficulties return to work. They support individuals through virtual coaching, by helping them to find employment over zoom/team meetings as well as in person. Working Well Trust have shown interest in working with my AFK and are also relevant for deliverables D2 and D3 (working from home and self-employment)

Contact: emily@wwtrust.co.uk	020 7729 7557 (Monday & Wednesday)
LinkedIn: Emily Hyland-Whitehead	Emily Hyland-Whitehead is the IPS Employment Service Manager for Working Well Trust.

III. Kids.org.uk.

KIDS is an organisation centred around providing a brighter future for children with disabilities. They are well established with operations and programmes in and outside of London ranging from discussion groups on relationships & sexuality to more practical skills related to transitioning to adulthood. The transition to adulthood programme fits in work placements, and how to get around to getting one. KIDS really tries to run events in person, London-based activities happen commonly in Wandsworth, however they have experience running various elements of their programmes online as an adaptation to social distancing.

Contact: katherine.shaw@kids.org.uk (National Ops Director)	0207 359 3635
LinkedIn: Katherine Shaw	Katherine Shaw works with the development of national strategy at KIDS.

IV. Exceptional Individuals.

An organisation which provides consulting, recruitment and employment specializing in support to employers and people with dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, and autism. They offer various venues of virtual support, one of these including one-to-one employment coaching with one of their job advisors with the option of being in person or online. The organisation also offers various pop-up online workshops to help people with various employment help. Following on from that, they also run a virtual 'Workability Academy' aimed towards adults ages 18+ with neurodiversities gain the confidence and skills necessary for employment.

Contact: admin@excep.co.uk	0208 133 6046
LinkedIn: Darlene Stenering	Darlene Stenering is a programme coordinator at Exceptional Individuals and thus she might be a very good contact for my AFK to develop on expanding EI's programmes with my AFK's involvement.

V. Mencap.

This charity offers a wide range of support for PoDs, this can range from helping young children and adults with education as well as offering many extra-curricular events. Along with that the charity offers support to PoDs which include but are not limited to social care, housing, health and employment. Mencap offers support to people throughout their employment process and to those with less experience, look for supported internships, apprenticeships, and traineeships for the individuals through the help of a job coach and their other services.

Contact: employment.support@mencap.org.uk corporate.fundraising@mencap.org.uk	07866 154732 Corporate partnerships team
LinkedIn: Eve Castelow	Eve Castelow is a community development lead at Mencap that my AFK can contact to expand on the services provided for young people of determination.

3.1.2   D2 – Organisations supporting work from home for PoD employment

Many of the organisations supporting people of determination in employment account for working from home (WfH). Throughout the process of collecting data and information the following organisations have been identified that could support, through a collaborative or advisory approach, my AFK in further development of the WfH coaching for PoD. D1 can also be referred to when looking for WfH support as the organisations listed offer support accounting for a variety of circumstances.

I.   Scope.

Scope believes that society does not have to be the way it is regarding how people of determination are perceived and what opportunities they have whether young or old. They are advocates for supporting young people of determination, are of notable size, and are driven by a desire for good. Furthermore, they also have very reputable employment services that really could connect synergies with my AFK given that both organisations care for children and supporting them later on to enter employment. Most relevant (given the scope of this report) employability virtual coaching that Scope offers includes:

     a.   Starting Line.

     A programme for London-based (amongst other cities/towns) entry-level people of determination ready to step into the world of work. The programme provides a specific training course consisting of 14 modules that supports the development of interview skills, comprehension of legal requirements and other practical skills. It provides group training and one-to-one sessions. It prioritises face-to-face work but with the transformational shift during the COVID-19 pandemic, a lot of opportunity has been created for this to really embrace as much virtual environments as needed.

     b.   Support to Work.

     This programme is specifically created for those that enjoy online & telephone communication. Through actions plans and weekly catch-ups, individual needs are specifically met to help the individual strive towards the type of employment and way of employment that suits them best. Actions plans commonly consist of 12 or 24 actions, or one single action over a longer period of time.

<div style="text-align: center;">c. Career Pathways.</div>

This is an excellent programme for individuals specifically between the age of 16 & 25 unsure which direction they should step in regards to getting a job or starting a career. Due to COVID-19, all sessions are run virtually, and this is a very helpful starting point.

Contact: partnerships@scope.org.uk	0207 619 7155
LinkedIn: Charlotte Hunter	Charlotte Hunter is an employment and partnership advisor at Scope that could be reached out to discuss partnership opportunities.

3.1.3 D3 – Organisations supporting self-employment & incubators for PoD

The research shows that people of determination are well represented in self-employment and so it is interesting to see who my AFK could work with to expand the help and support available to guide people of determination into self-employment.

One high profile route to venture into self-employment/entrepreneurship is through a business incubator. An incubator is an organisation or place that aids the development of new business ventures, mainly by providing low-cost commercial space, management assistance, or shared services. There is only one organisation in London who has operated a physical incubator targeted at people of determination, although there are many aimed at the general public.

The other organisations listed here are both commercial operations and third sector organisations working with people of determination to help them into self-employment, including through virtual incubator approaches.

Partnership with other organisations

My AFK could partner with other charities that would be interested in the project. This approach has several advantages. First, sharing the costs. Second, bring together organisations with a common purpose that could share information and skills.

Creating a new incubator with other charities

This approach represents a challenge has it will require to convince potential partners to go ahead with the project and share their resources. Moreover, the project my AFK will have less impact on the direction of the project as different organisations will have different goals and interests.

Conflict might arise on several different subject:

- Funding,
- Purpose,
- Openness.

Many organisations might want to partner with my AFK and create an incubator.

I. East London Inclusive Enterprise Zone.

ELIEZ (as the only physical incubator in London who specifically worked with and for disabled entrepreneurs – based at the Plexal co-working space) will be a useful organisation for my AFK to contact to discover the details of setting up and running a physical incubator space aimed at people of determination. It should also be useful from a networking point of view. It's important to note that, the ELIEZ initiative has been wound down, the information and contacts from the exercise should still be useful.

ELIEZ is an accessible, specially designed, community for entrepreneurs, business leaders and design thinkers who are disabled or whose work focuses on disabled people. From September 2020- March 2021, we have helped 30 entrepreneurs accelerate the development of products and services that address unmet needs, from idea stage through to global deployment. We have done this through our programmes, delivered by several partners and collaborators, by co-producing workshops and content with Plexal, Barclays Eagle Labs, Loughborough University London, London College of Fashion, Bravand and ICAEW.

Contact: eliez@ucl.ac.uk enterprise@ucl.ac.uk k.walsh@ucl.ac.uk	020 3108 8047
	Dr Kathryn Walsh is UCL Executive Director, Innovation and Enterprise

II. UnLtd - The Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs

UnLtd will be a useful contact for my AFK networking (UnLtd has a large network of charities relevant to my AFK that it helps to fund and so would be ideal to work with)

UnLtd's mission is to support and fund social entrepreneurs that aim to have a real positive impact on society. Partnering with this organisation would allow my AFK to benefit from their experience, share my AFk values of inclusiveness and integrate UnLtd goal of creating lasting impact through social enterprise.

Contact: UnLtd - Contact us	020 7566 1100
LinkedIn: Nick Scott	Head of partnership at UnLtd

III. Hatch Enterprise

Hatch enterprise has a similar purpose has UnLtd and emphasize the need to help underrepresented entrepreneurs succeed. This organisation puts forward that more than 250 social enterprises have gone through their programmes. They would be a great partner thanks to their success record and focus on inclusivity in the entrepreneur world.

Contact: hello@hatchenterprise.org	020 7993 0074
LinkedIn: Rebekah Capon	Director of funding and partnership at Hatch Enterprise UK

IV. Universal Inclusion

Universal inclusion is an organisation founded by Jacqueline Winstanley an expert in accessibility and inclusion. Through the inclusive entrepreneur network, the organisation aims to make entrepreneurship accessible to all. They organise conference hosted by successful entrepreneur including disabled entrepreneur that talk about their journey. This organisation would be a good partner because they already share the same values as my AFK, and they have a network or experienced entrepreneur that would be able to help.

Contact: universal.inclusion@icloud.com	+44 (0) 749 603 5028
LinkedIn: Jacqueline Winstanley	The Founder and CEO of the organisation

Partnering with an incubator

Several incubators already provide services that my AFK would like to offer to people of determination. There are different categories of incubators.

First, incubator that provides an environment but do not explicitly mention people with disabilities in their mission statement.

Second, the project and incubator that are open to people with disability. In the London area there are several organisations providing a structure dedicated to companies created by POD. The advantage of this option is that my AFK clients would be able to benefit from the services provided by an incubator sooner. Also, the impact of such a partnership would allow my AFK to rely on structure with experience. Moreover, it would allow my AFK to focus on other its core business while expanding in a structured and controlled environment. Finally, my AFK would be able to learn from the incubator it would partner with.

V. Hubble

Hubble is useful for listing conventional incubators in London.
https://hubblehq.com/blog/the-official-list-of-londons-business-accelerators-and-incubators

Contact: advisors@hubblehq.com	+ 020 3608 0215
website: https://hubblehq.com	

Online incubator IPSE

The last option would be to create an incubator that operates fully online. This option would be very similar to self-employment services provided by my AFK. A good example of online incubator is IPSE's incubator.

VI. IPSE

IPSE provides online incubation services for the general public to set up their own businesses – as well as general services helping self-employed people.
IPSE could be useful to partner within terms of designing specific tools and processes for people of determination to set up their own businesses. IPSE already has material targeted at people of determination and so should be receptive to working with my AFK. They also cover all of the UK.

IPSE is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to help all self-employed including people of determination. They offer a 12-month incubator program during which you have access to a range of services dedicated to help you start your business. Such as contract, cashflow and invoice templates, help with business plan, tax and legal helpline, advice on pension and mortgage. Moreover, IPSE partner with banks and accountancy and will recommend you to them. They also organise seminar hosted by successful entrepreneurs.

Contact: Contact form IPSE	+44 (0)20 8897 9970
LinkedIn: Victoria Rodwell	She is the head of partnership at IPSE.

This option has two main advantages. First, the reach. Having an online incubator would allow my AFK to reach people living all around England and integrate volunteer from everywhere around the world. Second, the cost. My AFK could build an online incubator by using already available software's such as Microsoft teams, Zoom, etc.

However, an online incubator might not be adapted for people with disability and adjustment would need to be made. Also, my AFK might choose to partner with IPSE to learn from their experience and help their incubator become more inclusive and accessible.

Creation of my AFK owned physical incubator

We believe that this option should not be prioritized. Creating a physical incubator would require high initial capital and costs. One primary concern is the focus of services on a single location. My AFK will have to either use to host the different businesses in their own office or acquire a new site. The purchase or rent of a new office would negatively affect my AFK's finances.

Moreover, my AFK has many experienced professionals that help people of determination in their job search. However, the creation of an incubator would require new skills that my AFK might not possess. For example, the entrepreneur would need administrative, accounting, and legal help. This help cannot be provided by inexperienced staff. Therefore, my AFK will have two options. Either find professionals willing to volunteer their time and experience to join my AFK incubator. Or hire permanent staff, which further increase the costs that my AFK would have to support.

For all the reasons cited above, we believe that creating an incubator is the least optimal option.

3.1.4   D4 – Potential market gaps

I.   An incubation scheme which accommodates ethnical, gender and cultural diversity in the self-employed Persons of Determination

- The report by the Association of Independent Professionals and Self Employed (IPSE) 2020 shows that there is a gender split of 39% women and 61% men in self-employment as People of Determination in the UK.
- Furthermore, a point was raised during the 2020 seminar of the Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation centre that many of their disabled entrepreneurs were predominantly of similar age, gender, and ethnic background (older, white male).
- Although this may have been specific to the U.S.A. context, efforts to improve the diversity of self-employed PoD in the U.K. could also prove to be an interesting direction for my AFK to explore.
- Specifically, my AFK could venture into ways to make their courses accessible and encouraging for PoD of various underrepresented backgrounds to start their own enterprise.
- An example might be a separate incubator service exclusively targeted for female PoD entrepreneurs or for PoD from deprived backgrounds.

II.   Incubation scheme which works to help the disabled entrepreneur from idea formation to deployment – and involves the PoD in socially meaningful activities that benefit the community.

- Incubation schemes for disabled entrepreneurs presently require them to pitch their own idea and receive potential financial and technical assistance for the same
- There is a gap for services which help PoD develop an entrepreneurial idea tailored to their skills and market requirements, then help them implement the idea with financial and technical assistance.
- The success of tailoring an entrepreneurial idea to the PoD's unique abilities and interests was observed by family businesses in the USA like "Anthony at your Service" (a courier service), "Alex's Assistance" – a shopping service, and a dog walking service – all run by persons of determination.
- Such a scheme could broaden the scope of self-employment to entrepreneurship for many PoD, whilst being useful for driving innovative social solutions as well.
- For example, a young person named Toop (aged 23) with autism and OCD has been successfully running a company called "JT Firestarters" since 2015.
- The company uses waste materials such as egg cartons, shredded paper, dried lint and candle wax to make firestarters.
- Toop found great personal growth and ability to focus from creating the product, while making use of community support to obtain the raw waste materials involved in its creation.
- A service which similarly creates ideas that benefit the community/environment whilst also providing meaningful work for the PoD would be an ideal theme for a new incubator.

III. Development of homeshoring model of employment for Persons of Determination

- The proceedings of the Radiate Conference 2012 saw a guest speaker describe his homeshoring business which started in Australia
- The business allowed PoD to work from home as part of IT/Customer support with flexible working hours and lower hours of work a day
- The model involved employing large numbers of PoD for flexible hours, thus using the power of numbers to rotationally handle demand whilst giving employees flexibility
- The model also featured virtual working with the use of technology to stay connected even in a pre-COVID era
- The entire support service was then sold to large clients (e.g. Lloyds, Apple) who used it to support their business.
- My AFK could potentially consider championing another similar homeshoring opportunity in the UK for PoD in fields such as:
    o IT/Customer support
    o Telemarketing
    o Data entry/clerical tasks
    o Consulting

IV. An all-inclusive incubator service which provides the most required support for self-employed PoD (UK Department of Work and Pensions Report, 2019):
    a) Peer mentoring by people with lived experience of disability
    b) Central source of information and guidance relevant to disabled people in self employment
    c) Service to provide flexible and ad hoc assistance with physical access and travel

d) Financial aid via interest free loans or preferential rates of borrowing

- The idea of peer mentoring is relatively unexplored though it is a highly requested form of support for self-employed PoD
- My AFK could also involve in creating or supporting the creation of a central information source for disabled people in self employment
- Financial guidance could be provided by assigning business specialists to work with the individuals
- Arranging for transportation services, virtual advisory or facilitating a specialist to work with the PoD from their own home environment could also be a point of exploration.

V. Scheme to improve the educational qualifications of PoD

- The report by the Association of Independent Professionals and Self Employed (IPSE) 2020 shows that over a quarter (27%) of the disabled self-employed are qualified to degree level or equivalent; and over a fifth (21%) are qualified to A level or equivalent.
- A further eight per cent have received a postgraduate qualification.
- One in ten (11%) disabled self-employed people have no formal education which is almost twice as high as the proportion of disabled employees with no qualifications (6%).
- The Social Market Foundation found that training and qualifications were especially important for low-paid self-employed people, as they allowed them to break through the trap of low pay.
- According to a recent Involvement and Participation Association (IPA) report, commissioned by IPSE, the relatively low level of formal training undertaken by the UK's self-employed is likely to be because training is expensive and means losing valuable work hours
- Around a third of the self-employed people (31%) said they did not want to spend time training when they could be earning instead, while 28 per cent said they did not have the time and 27 per cent said training cost too much.
- The disabled self-employed are doubly disadvantaged because they face not only low pay, but also not being able to afford to pay for routes out of low pay, such as training and qualifications.
- A scheme by my AFK to improve the rate of formal qualifications among PoD would be immensely useful in improving their income levels.

3.1.5 D5 – Demographic Analysis

This section covers a demographic analysis of the London area (within M25) on several metrics relating to PoD and SEND student populations. Boroughs are prioritized by these metrics, which indicate how much stake the borough holds in terms of PoD population and its need for the services of my AFK.

Vision and Hearing Impairments - Borough based Insights

The full set of graphs based on which top 5 boroughs have been extracted can be found here.

<u>Population</u>

Top 5 most populated boroughs were:

1. Barnet
2. Croydon
3. Newham
4. Ealing
5. Enfield

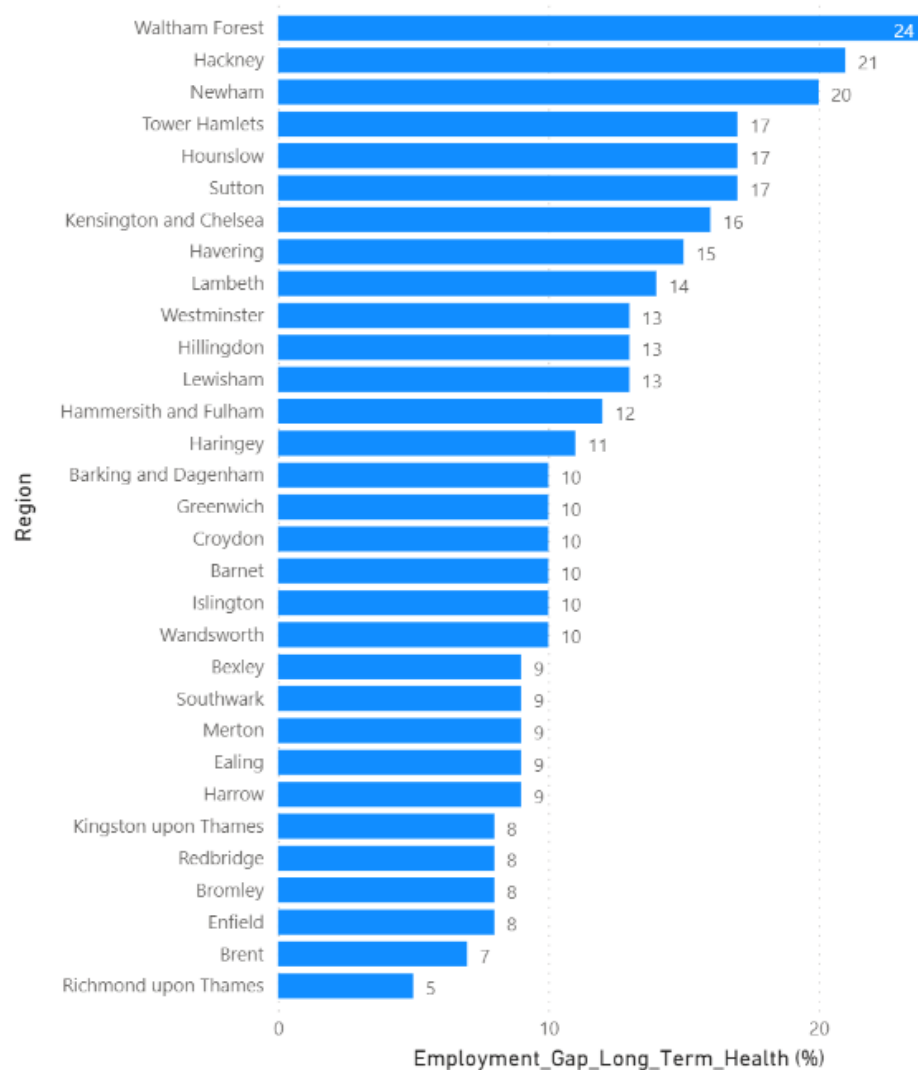Top 5 boroughs in terms of population of 18-29 year olds:

1. Tower Hamlets
2. Newham
3. Lambeth
4. Wandsworth
5. Islington

Top 5 boroughs in terms of population who have reported disability or chronic illness (PoD):

1. Croydon
2. Barnet
3. Enfield
4. Bromley
5. Newham

Employment Gap

Employment_Gap_Long_Term_Health (%) by Region

Figure 1: Employment gap between general population and those with long term health conditions by borough

Boroughs with the highest employment gap (%) between general population and people with long term health conditions are:

1. Waltham Forest
2. Hackney
3. Newham
4. Tower Hamlets
5. Hounslow

Vision Statistics

Vision_plus_Mental_Health, Vision_plus_Physical and Learning_Disability_And_Vision_Impairment by Region

● Vision_plus_Mental_Health ● Vision_plus_Physical ● Learning_Disability_And_Vision_Impairment
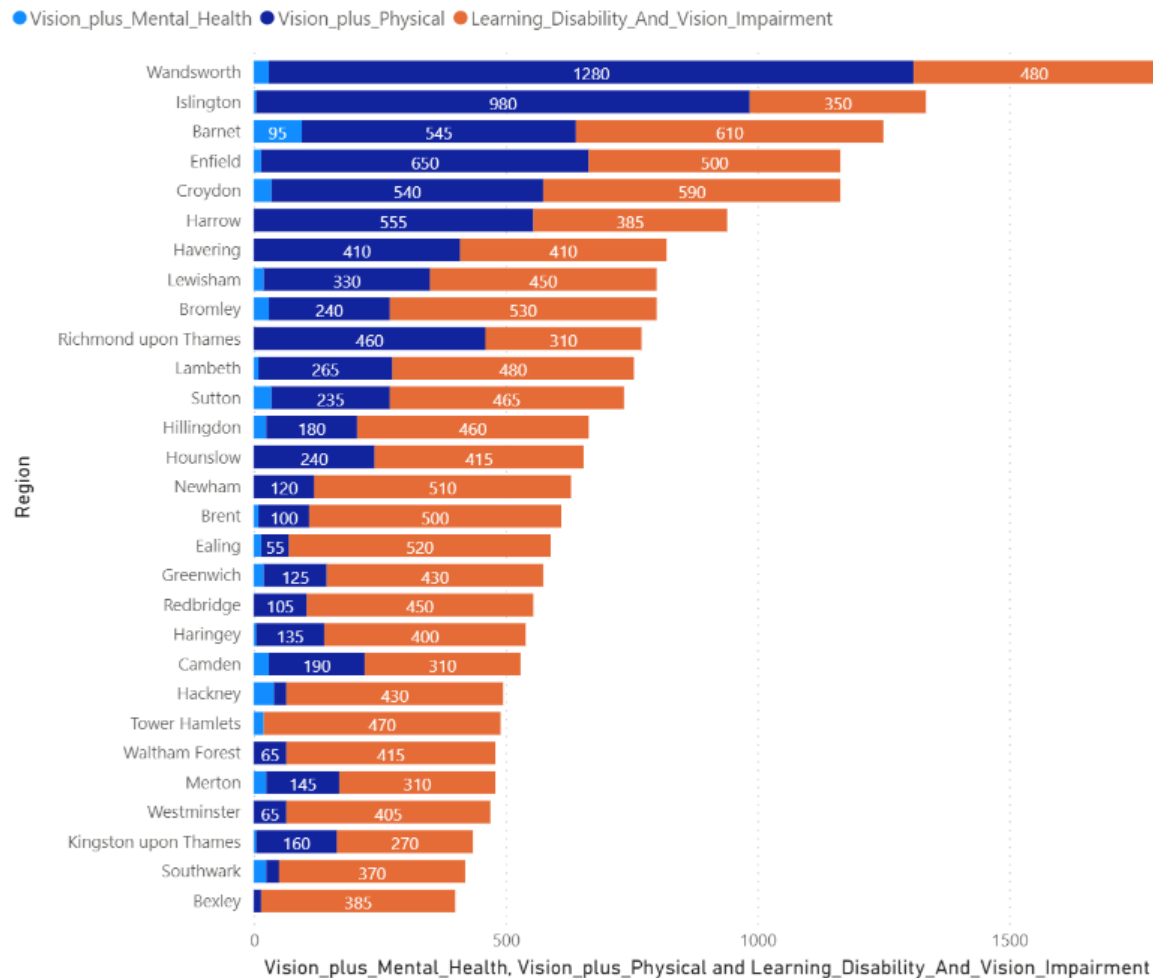
Figure 2: Vision-coupled disabilities by borough

The boroughs present in the top 5 highest population with some degree of sight loss, top 5 cost of sight loss and top 5 estimated sight loss population by 2030 are:

1. Barnet
2. Bromley
3. Croydon
4. Enfield
5. Ealing
6. Havering

The boroughs in top 5 population with vision impairments accompanied with either mental health, physical health or learning disabilities are:

1. Wandsworth
2. Islington

3. Barnet
4. Enfield
5. Croydon

Hearing and Dual Sensory Loss Statistics

Boroughs in the top 5 population with hearing impairments and top 5 with dual sensory loss (vision and hearing) include:

1. Barnet
2. Bromley
3. Croydon
4. Enfield
5. Havering
6. Ealing

Population in the top 10% most deprived areas of England

Boroughs with the top 5 highest population in the top 10% most deprived areas in England are:

1. Hackney
2. Haringey
3. Brent
4. Enfield
5. Kensington and Chelsea

Recommendation

The above factors were considered relevant to identifying the top boroughs for campaigning/advertising hybrid coaching services, self-employment services, or to provide work from home support. The specific type of disabilities focussed here are visual, hearing, and dual sensory loss.

We prioritized the boroughs by the number of times they were present in the top 5 for above considerations, i.e.:

- Highest magnitude of general population, population aged 18-29 and population with long term health conditions/disabilities
- Highest percentage employment gap between general population and population with long term health conditions or disabilities
- Highest population with sight loss, highest cost of sight loss, estimated population with sight loss in 2030 and population with other disabilities accompanying sight loss
- Highest population with hearing and dual sensory losses
- Highest population present in the top 10% of most deprived areas in England

Altogether, the boroughs to target in descending order of priority are as follows:

1. Enfield - 6
2. Barnet - 5
3. Croydon - 5
4. Newham - 3
5. Bromley - 3
6. Ealing - 2
7. Tower Hamlets - 2
8. Wandsworth - 2
9. Islington - 2
10. Hackney - 2
11. Havering - 2
12. Lambeth -1
13. Waltham Forest -1
14. Hounslow- 1
15. Haringey- 1
16. Brent- 1
17. Kensington and Chelsea -1

Learning Disabilities – Borough based insights

Data shows that across the years 2015-2020, the primary SEND needs of pupils aged 14-19+ are in the following order of priority (by population with the difficulty) (Department of Education, England 2020):

1. Social, Emotional and Mental Health
2. Specific Learning Disability
3. Moderate Learning Difficulty
4. Speech, Language and Communication needs
5. Autistic Spectrum Disorder

The top 5 boroughs in terms of number pupils aged 14+ with these five SEND needs are:

1. Croydon
2. Wandsworth
3. Redbridge
4. Enfield
5. Bromley

The full set of graphs based on which top 5 boroughs have been extracted can be found here.

Individual primary SEND needs can be broken down in the following.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Students with these needs would be more likely to suffer mental health issues from prolonged isolation, but they could benefit from the flexibility of virtual learning services. A hybrid remote

and on-site coaching service would be ideal for students with these needs. The top 5 boroughs in terms of population of students with these needs are:

1. Croydon
2. Wandsworth
3. Newham
4. Tower Hamlets
5. Hounslow

Specific Learning Difficulty

This is a term for students who face difficulties in a specific aspect of learning e.g., dyslexia, ADHD, dyscalculia, etc. Having on site coaching, or a tutor sent to the home, has generally been found preferable and accessible compared to virtual coaching for such SEND students. The top 5 boroughs in terms of population of students with specific difficulty/disability are:

1. Croydon
2. Bromley
3. Southwark
4. Haringey
5. Bexley

Moderate Learning Difficulty

Students with moderate learning difficulty would be most capable of benefitting from virtual coaching services, although occasional on-site coaching would also be preferable. The top 5 boroughs in terms of population of students with these needs are:

1. Redbridge
2. Waltham Forest
3. Ealing
4. Hackney
5. Enfield

Speech, Language, Communication needs

Students with these needs would be least able to benefit from virtual coaching services (ALLFIE 2020). This is due to the difficulties in communication to such students via virtual platforms, need for constant monitoring, scope for misinterpretation of words.

The top 5 boroughs in terms of population with students with speech, language and communication needs are:

1. Tower Hamlets
2. Wandsworth
3. Southwark
4. Croydon
5. Hillingdon

Autistic Spectrum Disorder

Students on the autistic spectrum were found to be mentally affected by social isolation and less likely to stay focussed on task during virtual coaching (ALLFIE Report 2020). On site coaching would be ideal for such students. The top 5 boroughs in terms of population of students with these needs are:

1. Croydon
2. Lewisham
3. Wandsworth
4. Bexley
5. Barnet

The updated list of priority boroughs considering visual and hearing sensory impairment along with SEND population aged 14+ with the top 5 primary needs are as follows:

1. Croydon- 9
2. Enfield - 7
3. Barnet- 6
4. Wandsworth- 5
5. Newham-4
6. Tower Hamlets-4
7. Bromley-4
8. Ealing-3
9. Hackney-3
10. Hounslow-2
11. Islington -2
12. Southwark - 2
13. Waltham Forest - 2
14. Bexley -2
15. Haringey-2
16. Brent-1
17. Hillingdon-1
18. Havering-1
19. Kensington and Chelsea-1
20. Lambeth-1
21. Lewisham-1
22. Redbridge-1

3.1.6 D6 – Desirable features in virtual coaching, support for work from home and self-employment, willingness to partner

Desirable Features in Virtual Coaching

Background

- Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE) is the only national organisation led by disabled people working to promote the rights of disabled students to be included in mainstream education
- They undertook a research study to review the impact of virtual learning on SEND students because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings of Study

- Many online platform providers failed to provide accessibility features into their virtual lessons
- Ownership and expenditure of IT infrastructure has been an issue, especially for those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds
- Accessibility features include British Sign Language translations and captioning, which many videos lacked
- Disabled university students were unable to continue their courses online due to inaccessibility of the curriculum
- Many disabled students expressed their preference of support on site rather than remotely
- Remote therapy has been less effective compared to in person support
- Parents of SEND students have had to monitor their children continuously to keep them on task during virtual lessons, which would not happen in physical classes.
- Mental health of students, especially those on the autistic spectrum, has severely degraded due to social isolation.

Inferences on Virtual Coaching for SEND Students

- Virtual classes would have to incorporate accessibility features, including:
  - British Sign Language translations and captioning
  - Slides and handouts created in formats accessible to visually impaired students
- Given that social and emotional health is among the primary concerns for students aged 14+ with SEND, a strong level of peer and instructor interaction would have to be present to avoid social isolation
- For example, the ALLFIE Report mentions the case of a satisfied parent who was given interactive activities to enable her SEND child to learn, keeping them on task.
- The virtual classes should also have ways of monitoring the student's attention to the lesson (e.g., regular polls, camera monitoring, verbal/visual communication) in order to reduce the pressure on parents to keep the child focussed

- As ownership of relevant IT infrastructure has been an issue for PoD from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, it would be ideal to set up small technology hubs or provide necessary equipment on a rental basis to enable the virtual coaching.

Desirable Features in a Self-Employment Incubator

We have described important features and processes in models of self-employment incubators for PoD which have achieved successful outcomes. These are intended to serve as guidelines for the best practices of a potential self-employment incubator set up by my AFK.

Insights from Disability Dynamics Limited (Derbyshire, UK)

Background

- Name of Scheme: "Work for Yourself"
- Charity: Disability Dynamics Ltd
- Funding for Programme: East Midlands Development Agency, Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership
- Programme Description: Programme to help the disabled of Derbyshire start their own business, which was immensely successful and achieved all targets ahead of schedule and within budget.

Program Outcomes

- Program supported 100 clients
- Clients created 20 trading businesses, with a further 12 under development
- Other clients moved into work/vocational training
- 42 individuals achieved positive employment/self-employment outcomes, 12 are progressing, and other clients moved onto alternative support

Lessons Learned

- Several disabled people are interested in starting their own businesses but lack a mainstream provision
- Key requirements for disabled entrepreneurs – intensive support over long periods, because external factors and health issues can delay progress
- The businesses set up may either be modest or highly motivated with potential for growth
- The participation of disabled people in an incubator programme can result in positive employment outcomes other than starting a new business

Success Factors for Programme:

- Substantive offer – Personalized and intensive support for each client before the start and post-trading to help launch the business. As opposed to just training/workshops on entrepreneurship.

- Choice of disabled participants – The programme was targeted at disabled clients who were interested in work but did not receive other mainstream business information
- Putting the needs of disabled people first – The whole project was designed and delivered with accessibility in mind. Individual needs were identified from the start and accommodated.
- Disabled people have valuable experience – Most have work experience to draw upon, so the main goal of the programme is to give self-confidence and business understanding to turn ideas to reality.
- Not pre-judging the ideas/capabilities of the entrepreneurs
- Not applying time limits on success

Programme Benefits

- Help with obtaining business grants and loans
- Assistance in securing low-cost computer equipment
- Producing free business cards for the clients
- Creating press releases on business launch
- Contribution to travel costs for attending one-to-many training

Source: [Disability Dynamics Limited Report](#)

Insights from Radiate Conference (UK)

Background:

- Conference held in 2012 which surveyed the views of prominent disabled entrepreneurs on self-employment

Insights from the conference:

- Self-employment may be more useful to people in their mid or late stages of career
- Mentoring is a vital support mechanism needed for self-employment
- Visually impaired owner of a contract catering company expressed his view that his disability did not affect his day-to-day work, and any barriers it caused were seen as a problem to creatively solve at work.
- One CEO built a homeshoring model which enabled disabled people to work from home in customer services technical support
- Homeshoring was found to attract a diverse range of technical support talent, tapping into people in their 40s and 50s with different work ethics and styles
- The work could be subdivided among 25,000 agents, allowing individual workers small work shifts of half hour duration.
- Disabled people could come and go and do shifts after a break, allowing flexibility to cover spikes in demand for tech support.

- The idea of homeshoring is to integrate various small and dispersed agents (disabled), into a single service, and sell this service to big chip companies (Lloyds, Apple, etc) who want flexibility, volume, and diversity of agents to support their business.
- Another viewpoint was that there is a core misunderstanding of the skills, communication and organisational services brought by People of Determination, and that the mainstream workforce needs their talent
- Pushing People of Determination into work from home may cause feelings of isolation and reduce the sense of social participation in the workforce; a hybrid model of work may help to balance this.
- Specific challenges disabled entrepreneurs can encounter – Networking is a core issue, water cooler chatter and informal communication is more difficult for those with sensory, visual and hearing impairments.
- Support most beneficial to PoD –
  - Assistance in securing self-insurance and personal injury insurance
  - Financial, physical, and emotional support systems to aid the transition from traditional jobs/unemployment to self-employment.

Source: [Radiate Conference Transcript](#)

Insights from Small Businesses run by PoD (USA)

Background

- A YouTube video which depicts the success stories of adults with disabilities running small enterprises in the USA

Insights

- Major challenge is that people recognize that adults with disabilities have value but don't know how to sell that to an employer
- Starting a business means that the disabled person and their family has control over the value offered by disabled person to society.
- Business models can be effectively created by matching what the disabled person is good at with a market gap and thus identifying an opportunity

Success Stories

- An example is Anthony at your Service which employs adults with autism and other intellectual disabilities to perform pickups, deliveries and run errands in the Edmonton area of the USA
- The family realized Anthony liked listening to music, seeing the world, helping and carrying items for people – and matched this to the market need for deliveries.
- It began as a business for one autistic individual and expanded to employing others with similar disabilities.
- Second example is "Alex's Assistance", which is a local shopping business. Alex will purchase items for you – he is especially talented at finding the right cards for the right person.

- Devon loved animals and independence – she worked at a groomer's but felt frustrated with the amount of janitorial work rather than animal interactions
- She opened her own dog walking business, which had a Facebook page and promotional video created. The business spread from there.

Lessons Learned

The success stories all followed a common, reproducible sequence of steps to success. The following steps are recommended when developing a business for a person with disabilities:

- Step 1: Find out what activity the individual will be able to do on a sustainable basis, finds enjoyment and can stay involved in
- Step 2: Figure out the market – customers want to support the cause but also want a service done properly
- Step 3: Ensure legal compliance with having a business license, commercial insurance, WCB, etc.

Source: [Exploring Self-Employment Opportunities for Persons with Developmental Disabilities - YouTube](#)

Insights from the Iowa Centre for Vocational Rehabilitation (USA)

The following is an explanation of the features offered by the Iowa Centre for Vocational Rehabilitation in their scheme for enabling self-employment in PoD. The features of their financial and technical assistance, as well as scheme for transitioning out of incubator support could be

adapted into any potential incubator started by my AFK. It has a proven history of success on several case studies of PoD in the USA.

Overall Incubation Process

- To identify what the PoD can do for self-employment, a Business Development Specialist first sees what vocational employment skills this person possesses, looks at what other assistance is needed and how ongoing support can be provided by the local community.
- The specialist then helps the disabled person explore the market to see if an audience exists for what they want to sell.
- A dedicated counsellor is made to stay involved for resolving issues such as:
  - o Job readiness issues,
  - o New assistive technology needed to adapt to the work,
  - o New accommodations that were not predicted,
  - o Special training required,
  - o Transportation/Housing issue.
- The specialist determines and tests the feasibility and determines whether the business will work and how much would have to be earned to cover costs.
- They put together a plan to cover the costs, resulting in a business that may be small or have potential to become big.
- Some businesses net a lot of cash; others are small but expected to grow with time.
- Businesses will be evaluated to check whether additional support is required, and the methods of supplying the additional support.
- Funding will be analysed and how it can be factored into the business plan is considered; people within the business are hired to take care of such processes.
- Outside resources such as small business development centres, workforce development centres and area high schools/community colleges are involved to support the new business.
- The centre operates by looking at the skills that disabled people have, and their optimum vocational goals.
- With assistance and as a team a plan is created such that the person has a natural support framework, and the community supports beyond the capacity of the organisation.
- Counsellors, job coaches and business specialists are involved in planning phase for building the organisation.

Financial Assistance

- Financial assistance relates to money used to purchase tools and equipment products or services, to open doors of business and maintain it as outlined in job candidate business plan.
- Financial assistance is only authorized if the business has needs for funds to be successful and they can demonstrate a dollar-for-dollar match for funds requested.
- Guidance on business assets considered a match:

- o A list of items, date of purchase, amount paid and estimate of fair market value,
- o Total fees for certifications, business training paid by job candidate as long as they were able to enhance the candidate's ability to conduct business,
- o Documentation would include list of trainings, type of training, vendor date, amount paid,
- o Start up cash and savings or checking account cash from loan source, cash grants count as a match.
- Financial assistance funds would be awarded up to $10k (or equivalent amount in a UK context) based on approved business plans and dollar for dollar (pound for pound) match on funding needed.
- Amount recommended by business development specialist and approved by counsellor; supervisor would be provided as part of operation.

Technical Assistance

- The business development specialist may suggest counselling in marketing or business needs that require certification and licensure to perform.
- Job candidate can request recommendations for qualified professionals or recommend a provider.
- Approved professionals are the responsibility of the job candidate and approved by business development specialist and counsellor so award can be up to $10k (or equivalent amount in a UK context) based on business needs.
- Examples of technical assistance:
  - o Website graphic design,
  - o Attorney/Legal help,
  - o Accounting services.

Progress and Transition out of Incubator Support

- Candidates report on financial disclosure of making sure they are earning money; if they are losing money or not having enough cash flow.
- Discussions are held on team meetings, communication ensues and they are assured support on moving forward.
- Monthly reports focus on a future date for stabilization so that candidates are moved towards a successful closure date .
- For some it could be 6 months, others 18 months – plan is made on individual basis.
- Ongoing support is offered even after the target dates, the incubator is with the person from start to whenever – even after two years with the case being closed, if support is needed, they are there to provide help.
- A final report is given to a business candidate and explained to show them the community resources they possess so that when a candidate is closed successfully they know of their ongoing supports.
- Business development specialist continues to communicate with the candidate indefinitely – some communicate on weekly basis till they feel comfortable.

- Some transitioned out gradually, going from daily, to weekly, to monthly, two-monthly, quarterly, bi-annually, and annually reporting to the specialist.
- Counsellor discusses each case closed with the centre.
- The frequency of reporting when closing the case may sometimes become higher when the business is encountering an issue/needs temporary help/change; other times it may be lower.

Sources: Transcript, YouTube Video, Interview

	Self-Employment Coaching
Needs	- Mainstream Provision - Long term intensive support due to health conditions - Intensive support for each client from the start and during the launch of the business rather than general training/ workshops on entrepreneurship. Supporters include: - A dedicated counsellor who helps to resolve issues such as - Job readiness issues - New assistive technology needed to adapt to work - New accommodations that were not predicted - Transportation/ housing issues - A business development specialist who - Supports in exploring the market, to see if there is a market gap for the desired service/ products - Determines and tests the feasibility of the business - Determines the amount needed to breakeven and begin making a profit and creates a plan to cover these costs and during this will identify whether it will be a small business or has to potential to grow exponentially and be big - Analyse whether additional support is required and if so, how this will be provided - Peer mentor by other self-employed people of determination - Someone to analyse the funding required and how it can be factored into the business plan - Outside resources that support new businesses such as small business development centres, workforce development centres and community high schools/colleges, gaining community support is important for the success of the business - Personalized support that meets individuals needs throughout the entire process, that ensures the support is accessible for each user - Provide business understanding to turn their ideas into a tangible business - Financial support for both accessing the support and their potential business - Mentoring is an essential aspect of self-employment training

	• Emotional support to aid the transition into self-employment • Sensory, visual and hearing impairments – Need extra support with networking & Informal conversation • Benefits Planning • Assistive Aids • Financial Literacy Training • Devices or prosthetics • Regular contact with job coach/ employment specialist to support with POD's goals • Support in finding connections for self-employment
Benefits	• Self-employment means that people of determination can tailor their business to their impairments • Business models can be effectively created by matching what the disabled person is good at with a market gap and thus identifying an opportunity • Get to make use of your existing skills – social media, digital marketing, social media strategizing, website management systems, databases, etc. • Can do self-employment from anywhere, location and movement are not a barrier
Concerns	• Pushing People of Determination into work from home may cause feelings of isolation and reduce their sense of social participation in the workforce; a hybrid model of work may help to balance this • Not guaranteed income • Health can get in the way of work – no sick/holiday pay • Life work separation is hard but needs discipline to separate it. It's easy to work 24/7 rather than taking time off for yourself even with deadlines. • Can do self-employment from anywhere, location and movement does not have to be a barrier

Sources: [Transcript](#), [YouTube Video,](#) Interview

	Virtual Coaching
Needs	• Accessible features that allow all people of determination to receive the same quality of coaching • Ownership of IT services, big issue for those in low socioeconomic areas • Ensuring an individual is there to help monitor that people of determination remain engaged during the lessons e.g., parents • Regular contact with job coach/ employment specialist to support with POD's goals

	• Real-world scenarios that create realistic interactions which allow Pod's to practise practical skills and build confidence before attempting them in real life e.g., use of equipment or interviews • Coaching for non-verbal communication as well when possible • Give an introduction to ease POD within employment • Connections to jobs that are willing to accommodate	
Benefits	• Allows for the creation of virtual environments • Study shows that people with neurodevelopmental disorders can apply vocational skills learnt from virtual coaching to real world settings • Can adjust teaching to suit multiple learning styles, needs and ability • Can help improve social and life skills of people with neurodevelopmental disorders • Virtual training has the potential to offer similar outcomes as real-world training • People with neurodevelopmental disorders tend to have difficulty applying learned behaviours in new tasks or contexts, such as in spontaneous situations. Thus, it is unclear how well the skills learned in virtual environments can be applied to real-world settings & training in virtual environment led to significant improvement from pre-training to post-training in real world settings. • Role play performance improved after virtual coaching for those with neurodevelopmental disorders	
Concerns	• Social isolation, not able to practise interaction they may need in a physical working environment • Some POD may find it harder to focus and remain engaged on what is being taught virtually than if it was done face-face	

Sources: Frontiers; European Conference on Disability, Interview

	Working from home support services

Needs	• Regular contact with job coach/ employment specialist to support with POD's goals
	• Support worker should
	    ○ Clarify every detail of the work
	    ○ Help ensure that the employers are flexible and are willing to support them by adapting
	    ○ Ensure POD understand what is expected for them for the job
	    ○ Offer step by step support
	    ○ Let PODs know as soon as possible if there are any changes, as last-minute information can be very stressful for some POD.

Benefits	• Useful for PoD with mobility impairments who find virtual interactions challenging
	• Eliminates social isolation whilst also not requiring additional infrastructure
Concerns	• Cost of arranging for individual attention towards PoD
	• Scalability of the services given the limited number of volunteers

Sources: Interview

3.2 Reasons for Incomplete Deliverables

No deliverables were incomplete. The original deliverable focused on physical incubator partnership possibilities was merged into the self-employment deliverable when only one physical incubator targeted at people of determination was found in London. On the other hand, there are a number of virtual incubator/self-employment possibilities available.

3.3 Additional Deliverables

Included in this section is an overview of the general market, as reported by a parliamentary report in 2021. This was not an explicit deliverable, but is very useful in setting the scene for the overall requirements.

3.3.1 General Market Statistics

3.3.1.1 Employment Statistics

Statistical evidence presented in a House of Commons Library documentation (https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7540/CBP-7540.pdf) reveals key figures that initially support the market opportunity for expanding various services in helping people of determination become employed.[1]

3.3.1.2 Economic Inactivity

Most recent figures displaying employment inactivity for both people of determination and the general employable public reveal that 42.9% of people of determination were economically inactive. For the general public the economic inactivity was 14.9%. This equates to 3.6 million people of determination, with an increase of 226,000 people from the previous year.

3.3.1.3 COVID-19 Pandemic Time

Statistically disabled people have experienced the employment instability during the global pandemic more than the general public. This is the case with the unemployment rate, disability employment gap, and the rate of disabled people being made redundant in comparison to non-disabled individuals. More specifically, people of determination were made redundant at a rate of 21.1 per thousand people in comparison to 13 per thousand for non-disabled individuals.

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[1] In this report, services that support employment refer to both self-employment as well as contractual employment for an employer.

3.3.1.4 Gender & Age

Employment rate by gender reveals that 46.9% of disabled women and 48.7% of disabled men are unemployed. This creates a 24.7% and a 33% disability employment gap by gender respectively.

Looking at disabled unemployment rates for specific age brackets, **individuals between the age of 16-24 are unemployed at a rate of 37%,** 60% for age 25-49 and 46% for 50-64. The gaps between these age brackets between disabled and non-disabled people is 19%, 29% and 34% respectively.

3.3.1.5 Education

Statistical analysis looking at the employment gap between to what level an individual is educated also reveals a trend that the higher the educational level achieved, the lower the gap between disabled and non-disabled people. 73% of disabled individuals with qualifications at or equivalent to degree level are employed compared to 88% for non-disabled individuals. This gap of 15% is the smallest, in comparison to the 41% gap that exists between disabled and non-disabled people who do not hold any qualifications.

3.3.2 Government Support

The governmental has several programmes, activities and legal requirements running that support the employment of people of determination many with specific goals and timelines. Some of these programmes are listed below.

3.3.2.1 Improving lives: the future of work, health and disability

A ten-year plan was initiated in 2017 that aims to place a million more people of determination in employment by 2027. Several initiatives connected to this plan, including an additional £330 million to support people of determination in finding work have been released. As of July 2021, there is a National Disability Strategy taken by the UK government with steps and processes for improving the lives of people of determination that likely will affect how disability is approached in the foreseeable future.

3.3.2.2 Access to Work

Access to Work was launched to help individuals with physical or mental health conditions get employed or remain in employment during times of hardship. There are different elements part of the programme that include grants for practical support with specific jobs, advice about how to manage mental health situations and continue working and money to pay for communication support at job interviews. More specifically it could fund BSL interpreters, taxi fares, a support worker or vehicle adaptations to help one travel to work.

3.3.2.3 Disability Confidence

Disability Confidence is a support programme that aims to help organisations attract, recruit and retain disabled workers. Each employer can hold one of three titles as part of this programme that assess how Disability Confident they are. The programme has previously received criticism for not actually helping people with disabilities get jobs but surveys taken have assessed that not to be the case.

3.3.2.4 Work and Health Programme
This is another programme launched to help job seekers find and keep a job. Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to join, and it is aimed at both individuals seeking self-employment and those looking for contractual employment. The programme will support the employment of 275,000 people within 5 years where 220,000 of those will be people of determination.

3.3.2.5 Jobcentre Plus Support for Schools
Created to provide tailored and quality career advice, this programme supports those that are between the ages of 12 & 18 and are disadvantaged in the labour market because of a disability. This has been done as another element to what supported internships have been doing since 2013 where they started to provide methods of guiding disabled young people into employment.

3.3.2.6 Equality Act 2010
Both indirect & direct discrimination based on disability is prohibited by the Equality Act of 2010 in both employment and the recruitment process. This includes a variety of approaches to structuring of employment that is illegal however with some cases, where it can be proven that the structuring is created in order to achieve a legitimate aim, it is legal. This act also brings the concept of reasonable adjustments meaning that employers are required to adjust circumstantially where possible to accommodate for the employment of disabled people.

4 Conclusions and Next Steps
4.1 Conclusions and Project Take-aways.
- As part of Phase 1 of the my AFK expansion plan, we have produced the following deliverables (restricting the scope to within the M25 where possible):
    - D1 - Organisations with virtual coaching for PoD employment
    - D2 - Organisations supporting work from home for PoD employment
    - D3 - Organisations supporting self-employment & incubators for PoD
    - D4 - Potential market gaps
    - D5 – Demographic Demand Analysis
    - D6-Desirable features in virtual coaching, support for work from home and self-employment potential partners
- We collected data from a variety of relevant and up to date sources, including the charity commission register, organisational reports, YouTube and conference transcripts as well as primary surveys to support our analysis.
- It was found that setting up a partnership incubation scheme with other organisations would be a more affordable option than running a full incubator scheme offering financial support to PoD
- Successful models of self-employment and incubation for PoD were described to provide some guidelines for my AFK when starting a similar venture.
- We have also supported our report with a borough-wise analysis of population and other factors which affect young PoD. This may assist my AFK by providing insight into the key areas within London to target their services.

4.2 Suggested Next Steps

There are various next steps that my AFK can take to respond to partnership opportunities and understandings of the market presented in this report. One next step would be to connect with the mentioned organisations to discuss how collaborative progress can be made to improve the employability of young people of determination. Upon the creation of individual relationships with these organisations, a LinkedIn group can be created with a name such as "Disability but not Disabled" that meets once a month, with open invitations to all interested, where individuals and representatives from the organisations meet to discuss to how various services can be created or improved to improve the lives of young people of determination. It can start with the idea of employability, and grow, or specialise on this idea only. These monthly catch ups and brainstorming sessions are likely to ignite momentum and spark partnerships to really show progress.

The organisations listed in the deliverables section of the report are the organisations judged to be most useful to my AFK to explore partnership possibilities, based on the criteria provided. There are many more potentially useful organisations (who should not be discounted) listed in the resources in the appendices.

Finally, there are two suggested next steps for the expansions of virtual coaching. Firstly, to ensure the accessibility of the learning devices used for virtual coaching, pilot studies could be carried out with different individuals representing types of disabilities to evaluate what is needed to ensure the learning is accessible. This Classification Framework Study includes possible classification to consider when creating a learning technology for POD's. Additionally, using virtual coaching as an opportunity to create virtual reality environments where individuals can practice their skills and build their confidence. This would provide a very useful tool to prepare POD for real life work settings.

5 Appendices

5.1 Source Repository

We have compiled an easily accessible repository containing all the collected and extracted data. This can be found at the following URL: sumikanth/Sources_Appendix (github.com)

5.2 Datasets References

1. Royal National Institute of the Blind - Sight Loss Tool, v4.3.1 2021 (Sight Loss Data Tool Version 4.3.1 (ZIP, 31MB))

2. Department for Education - Special Education Needs in England Report January 2020 (https://content.explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/api/releases/521fba4e-dfb7-4e1e-9ca7-d0c7b9880732/files)

5.3 Reports References

1. Disability Dynamics Ltd – Outstanding success of programme for disabled entrepreneurs "Work for Yourself" Report (081003 - Final Outstanding success with images.doc (live.com))
2. Department for Work and Pensions – Understanding Self Employment for People with Disabilities and Health Conditions, 2020 (Understanding self-employment for people with disabilities and health conditions (publishing.service.gov.uk))
3. The Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed - "Making self-employment work for disabled people – An agenda to make it happen" 2019 (45b9457f-6244-43e5-b5000f2ca9fd1a69.pdf (ipse.co.uk))
4. Supported Self Employment Academy (SSEA) Croydon 2008 (Microsoft PowerPoint - B4 Self employment (base-uk.org))
5. House of Commons Library - "Disabled People in Employment" 2021- (Disabled people in employment (parliament.uk))
6. ALLFIE Survey Report – Coronavirus Impact on Disabled People's Education 2020 - (ALLFIE Survey Report: Coronavirus Impact on Disabled People's Education - Allfie)

5.4 Interview, Survey and Opinion Data

1. Video and Transcript Data - Sources_Appendix/D4&D6/Self_Employment at main · sumikanth/Sources_Appendix (github.com)
2. Interview Transcript - Sources_Appendix/Interview_Transcript_1.odt at main · sumikanth/Sources_Appendix (github.com)