

**CASE STUDY -
CONTINUOUS
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECTS LTD**



About Co-Innovate Journeys

Jointly funded by Brunel University London and the European Regional Development Fund, **Co-Innovate Journeys** is a business innovation programme providing London-based SME's with a support ecosystem that opens up the Brunel University London's knowledge, expertise and networks to help them develop, scale and operate companies. We provide 'front-end' support to guide entrepreneurs, helping them to create new innovative products and services.

About the company

Continuous Improvement Projects Ltd (CIP) is a business solutions enterprise located in London, specialising in enhancing customer experiences; driving organisational change and achieving efficiencies and improved profitability through the application of Lean Six Sigma principles. The company was established in 2012 as an alternative to overly generic, high cost approaches to solving business challenges. They are a small business providing services to public and private sector clients across the UK including large FTSE listed businesses, leading academic institutions, and Central Government including Ministry of Justice and various NHS Trusts. Continuous Improvement Projects also work with clients with an international presence. Their mission is to promote positive workplace behaviours and improve process efficiency to enable sustainable business growth and make a demonstrable impact to the organisations they work with.

About the project

In July 2020, Continuous Improvement Projects Ltd through a Co-Innovate Journeys collaborative project launched a survey bringing together academic expertise from Brunel University London and Middlesex University. The aim was to better understand the impacts of COVID-19 on businesses, areas of concern and how organisations are dealing with them. This market research, supported by academic research, is intended to support businesses and the Government in tapering their approach to achieve sustainable economic recovery.

A total of 16 different industries participated in this research project and the findings of this research provide an evidence-based perspective on how businesses are responding to the pandemic and planning for the post-COVID era.



in collaboration with



Brunel
University
London



Middlesex
University

co-innovate
JOURNEYS

GREATER
LONDON
AUTHORITY



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

Background of contributors

Dr Monomita Nandy - Brunel University London

Reader in Accounting and Finance; Director of Internationalisation & Exchange coordinator - Brunel Business School, Brunel University London, UK. I conduct research with local and international business on emerging issues in finance and accounting. I apply interdisciplinary approach in sustainable development models.



Dr Suman Lodh - Middlesex University

Senior lecturer in Finance and Research Lead at the Middlesex University Business School. I work in the area of Corporate Finance, Banking and SME finance at the local and international level. My expertise includes machine learning and big data analysis using statistical software such as Stata, R and Python which complement my research in the above-mentioned fields.



Ms Gurnam Selvarajah - Brunel University London

Innovation Director for Co-Innovate Journeys at Brunel University. Co-Innovate Journeys is a fully funded GLA/ERDF programme match funded by Brunel University London. The aim of the programme is to support SME businesses across London with business workshops, collaborative industry led research projects, support in launching new products and services to market and the creation of new jobs.



Project findings and future strategy

The findings of this survey emphasise the need for immediate efforts to be focused on people and operations. There is confidence amongst business stakeholders that they will grow within the next 2 years. However in order to achieve this, transformational changes will be required to operations, delivery of services and products, and technological infrastructure in order to manage and optimise their workforce to generate greater value.

The Evidence document outlines recommendations on potential support packages and areas of focus for the Government to consider, based on recent survey data, lessons learnt from the past, professional experience and respected academic models.

This research is intended to support businesses and the Government in tapering their approach, and will be used by the team of specialists at Continuous Improvement Projects (CIP) to reflect on their own strategy and target operating model so that they can adapt an approach to better support the future needs of businesses.

New ways of working to consider

The research findings suggest that Covid-19 has forced us to adopt new ways of working considering the changes that will be required across different aspects of businesses.

The study also highlights that acceleration in using digital solutions will be a significant area of focus for several business sectors moving forward. Although some industry respondents have suggested that it will be worthwhile using a hybrid model as transitioning to a fully virtual delivery is implausible. The majority of industry respondents will be placing a focus on customer experience with some indicating that they will be looking at ways to reinstate face-to-face interactions. Furthermore, some businesses see this pandemic as an opportunity to invest a significant amount of money in upgrading their IT infrastructure.

When looking at the employee experience and reimagination, the majority of respondents feel that it's imperative to focus on safety measures, including social distancing, increased cleaning frequencies, better risk management and the implementation of better precautionary measures to withstand future crises.

Other aspects present within the responses are staff training and multi-skilling with only 1% advocating that they will concentrate on working from home.

Driving cost savings whilst maintaining and improving service levels is an inevitable requirement across every industry in the months and years ahead. Efficiency and productivity have been explicitly mentioned in the study as being key priorities for most businesses in the coming months. The research suggests that the application of lean principles to drive efficiency, improved profitability and maintain optimal quality is a key enabler to maximising economic recovery. Digitalisation as the solution to sustainability have been mentioned by many respondents in the study.

Why get involved with Co-Innovate Journeys?

- Programme stimulates SME growth and employment by providing innovation support to London-based SME's in all sectors, all sizes
- We support the creation of new products, processes and services
- Provide access to Brunel University's world class research, academics, knowledge assets, student talent and specialised facilities

Do you qualify?

- You should be an SME or a sole trader trading 18 months or more and registered with Companies
- House or HMRC (for sole traders)
- You need to be a business based in London

Get in touch with our Innovation Directors:

Rob Holdway
robert.holdway@brunel.ac.uk

Gurnam Selvarajah
Gurnam.Selvarajah@brunel.ac.uk

Naima Omasta-Milson
Naima.Omasta-
Milsom@brunel.ac.uk

