

COMPANY OVERVIEW

Fold-Out Publishing Ltd

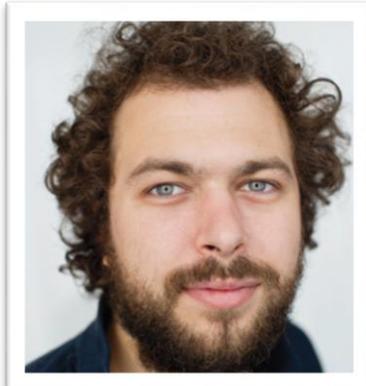
Founded by Daniel Silver

PhD Student in School of Social Science, Faculty of Humanities

Funding Received: £2,000 Ignition Award

£5,000 Innovation Optimiser

Three words to describe your journey so far... Unexpected, Developmental, Exciting!



Tell us a little bit about yourself, the Enterprise and your journey so far. I'm Daniel Silver and I have worked in the voluntary, community and public sectors for over ten years. This has involved supporting grass-roots organisations to connect with policy-making - at local, regional and national levels, with Community Network for Manchester, Salford Council, and Voluntary Sector North West. Following this, I set up the Social Action & Research Foundation (SARF: www.the-sarf.org.uk) in 2012, as a grass-roots based think-tank. I have been doing a PhD in applied social research for nearly three years. Through all my experience, I have seen how research is often communicating in an echo chamber of professional researchers, missing a huge gap and potential public contribution.

Fold-Out Publishing publishes academic and social research in more imaginative ways to allow access to non-academic audiences. We make academic evidence and ideas available for the public to act upon, to democratise research. This is done through a range of different approaches such as pamphlets, photography booklets, online storytelling and short stories. Part of the journey with UMIP is to experiment with different forms.

How was your idea conceived? I've been working in academic and policy fields for several years and realised that much of the work that's published is only read in an echo chamber. I wanted to change this. Fold-Out was conceived through discussions and support from the UMIP team.

What is your company mission? This project is driven by a strong social purpose: that the public has improved access to ideas and evidence to support social action, and encourage mutual education between academics and activists.

At what point, did you realise that the idea had commercial potential? After discussions and support from the UMIP team, I realised this had potential. However, it was cemented when I was commissioned twice to publish work in alternative formats. Through these initial pilots there has been positive feedback – for example one of the community organisations featured in a pamphlet, the United Estates of Wythenshawe, has distributed it to their members, saying

how it really captured the social issues many people experienced in a clear and visual way, and has also framed their future project development.



What approaches did you first employ to develop the idea? I tested out different ideas with a friend who is a graphic designer. We did it initially as it was something we are both passionate about, and enjoy doing. After this, we experimented

with a pamphlet to summarise a 200-page report I had written and it all went from there.

How did you get involved with the Innovation Optimiser? I was introduced by Dr Julian Skryme, Head of Social Responsibility for The University of Manchester. After this, I applied for the UMIP Ignition Funding to develop my idea. Initially I was going to develop this through a Social Enterprise I had established in 2012, the Social Action & Research Foundation, but I realised this was a unique and different venture and so since then received support through the Roadmap, culminating in establishing Fold-Out Publishing.

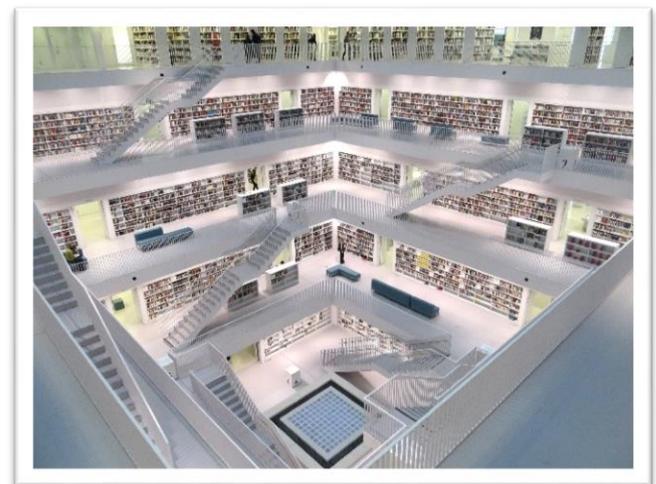


How did this engagement help you? The support has been invaluable in terms of really honing down the idea and developing it into a full business idea from a passion. The different levels of support, particularly from the UMIP team through discussions, drafting proposals etc. have really been useful. Also, the resources have enabled me to begin piloting various products, to experiment, reflect and develop. The funding has allowed me to work with collaborators to create new publications that will be ready to be shared early in 2018. This has also honed down the types of alternative publications that I want to focus on initially – pamphlets, photography books, and digital publishing. I hope to then test these out through discussions with community organisations, activists and the public to inform further development through feedback. I am also developing an archive of similar work to create an educational resource.

What have been your major milestones and achievements so far? I established the company with Companies House and I have worked with a partner to produce a short story from my PhD interviews. I'm also in the process of developing a logo and brand for the company. Best of all, I have a strategic plan for the next year.

How has being involved with Entrepreneurial activity benefitted you? It has made me think in a more streamlined way about what it is that I want to do and why. It has developed my skills in strategic business planning, and made me think more about how to experiment with ideas in the first year of the business and to adapt and improve through a process of reflection and learning.

What future support are you looking for to progress your business? The next steps are to complete my PhD in September 2017 and then use the findings to try out more pilot products including a photography book series, digital longform publishing, and pamphlets. I am also developing an archive and will look to do a workshop with a community group soon. It would be good to get support in terms of developing in publishing as it is a new area for me. I would use this to connect more directly with the academic side of things to see the specific ways in which Fold-Out could add to this and fill in gaps. The ideal scenario in 2 years is to have a library that is open to the public to come and learn about and discuss social issues and alternative approaches, as well as add to this through work with academics and communities to ensure an ever-evolving resource.



Would you encourage other staff, academics and research students to seek support for their ideas through the Innovation Optimiser? Most definitely, I already have.