



SMEs and Social Value: Strategic Advantage

Be the Business



Leveraging Social Value for competitive advantage

Social value is increasingly a key differentiator in both public and private sector competitions, while organisations are also under growing internal pressure to meet ESG (environmental, social and governance) targets, evidence measurable outcomes, and demonstrate how they are genuinely contributing to economic growth and community impact. The new Procurement Act emphasises structuring, engaging, and contracting with diverse and resilient SME supply chains.

This presents a significant opportunity for your organisation to develop a distinct and compelling social value offer.

Be the Business, as the UK's leading expert in SME productivity, possesses deep expertise in building SME capabilities. We understand what it takes to unlock the potential of small businesses, offering you a low-friction, low-risk route to SME engagement, to help you achieve impact and meet your social value targets.

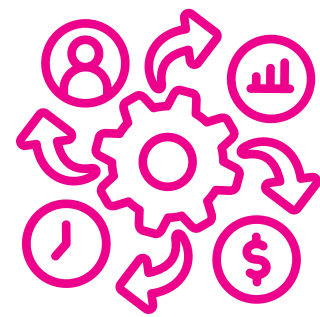
Want to work with us? We run standalone programmes, include initiatives in bids and tenders, and provide consultancy services to drive your SME and supply chain impact.

This partnership creates a scalable, evidence-based proposition to increase bid scores, improve outcomes, and contribute to government growth targets.



Be the Business: Impact and ROI

As a charity established to deliver large-scale government programmes on SMEs and supply chain productivity, we understand better than anyone else what it takes to deliver social value and meaningful impact – giving us a uniquely credible position to provide you with a low-friction, low-risk route to SME engagement, that helps you deliver on your social value and ESG targets.



Quantifiable Impact

Across 2,600 firms, £915M productivity uplift, **£2.1B additional sales**, and 15,000 new jobs created*



Exceptional ROI

For every **£1 invested**, **£24 of impact** has been generated, proving strong return on investment.



Structured Measurement Approach

Tracks leadership practices, technology adoption, and business performance for credible and auditable outcomes.

**2017-2027 - realised and expected impact, as independently evaluated by SQW.*

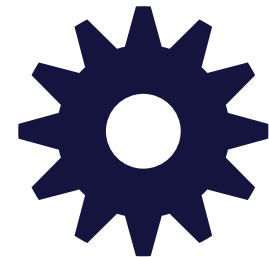


The heartbeat of our communities and economy: SMEs



Employment Powerhouse

SMEs make up 99.9% of UK business and employ two-thirds of the working population, making them crucial for job creation.



Economic Engine

They generate half of the private sector income, driving economic growth.



Community Anchors

SMEs provide essential jobs, services, and contribute to local identity.



Community Impact

Increased productivity leads to investment, growth, and stable employment, benefiting local businesses, jobs, supply chains, and economic activity.

Championing SME participation and productivity is a direct pathway to delivering significant social value for your organisation.



Our impact model: multi-dimensional framework

We have developed a unique multi-dimensional framework with social value experts, which is tailored and applied to all our delivery and programmes of activity. This helps you demonstrate clearly the quantifiable impact of our work together, tailored to your KPIs and needs. Below is an example of how the framework could be applied.

Theme (PPN 06/20)	Strategic Outcome (Medium-Long Term)	Financial Proxy (National TOMs)	Well-being Value (HACT)	Thrive/MeasureUp Metric
Tackling Economic Inequality	Regional GVA Growth: SMEs scale, increasing tax revenue and regional productivity.	NT14: £ Efficiency savings for SMEs.	Financial Resilience: Reduced business owner stress (£1,593).	% Increase in SME turnover directly linked to programme innovation.
Equal Opportunity	Diversity in Tech Leadership: Women-led and NEET-focused cohorts bridge the digital skills gap. Systemic Equity: Increased representation of underrepresented founders in high-growth sectors.	NT11: £ Spend with local/diverse supply chains. NT57: % of diverse-led SMEs supported who secured follow-on funding.	Confidence: Self-efficacy boost from mentoring (£13,080).	Demographic breakdown of Grant recipients vs. industry averages.
Resilience & Skills	Future-Proofed Workforce: Employees gain AI/Cloud skills, reducing long-term redundancy risk.	NT70: No. of SMEs moving up the digital maturity scale.	Digital Inclusion: Regular use of internet/tools (£2,347).	No. of digital certifications or badges earned by SME staff.
Employment & Growth	Job Creation: High-value roles created through tech-led business expansion.	NT1: No. of local FTE jobs created (Proxy: ~£32k+).	Job Security: Feeling secure in a growing company (£1,126).	Ratio of £ Grant Spend to new local jobs created.
Innovation & Resilience	Supply Chain Resilience: A network of "Innovation Champions" who can withstand economic shocks.	NT70: No. of SMEs supported to move up the digital maturity scale.	IES-BS3: Total number of hours of expert business advice/mentoring provided to SMEs.	Distance Travelled: % average increase in operational productivity or "Innovation Readiness Score" from baseline to 12 months post-programme.
Local Support	Regional Investment: Grant funding localised in "Cold Spots" (e.g., Fife, Bolton, Jarrow). Cluster Development: Creation of regional innovation hubs centered around your areas of activity.	NT11: £ spent in the local supply chain via supported SMEs.	IES-EC4: Total £ value of grants/funding provided to SMEs located in deprived areas (IMD Deciles 1-3).	Economic Multiplier (LM3): The £ value of secondary spend generated in the local economy by the SME after receiving the grant (Additionality).



Our suite of programmes and offers

Click the tiles to find out more



Social Value Consultancy

Putting in place the structure for an SME-centric social value strategy



Bridging the Gap: skills programme

Employment pathways for young people, apprentices and NEETs in SMEs



The Productivity Programme

SME leadership and management development through provision of a non-exec board and mentoring



Growth Accelerators

Innovating and growing your SME supply chain through a wrap-around accelerator programme



'Beyond the Hype' AI Workshops

SME AI adoption workshops for immediate behaviour change for growth and productivity





Social Value Consultancy

We help you write the social value strategy before the Invitation to Tender arrives



Social Value consultancy

This social value consultancy model is deployable across various contract contexts, particularly with public sector clients, major infrastructure programmes, and large supply chains.

- It generates measurable outcomes for social value reporting and enhances client supply chain performance and resilience.
- This creates a compelling proposition for procurement scoring and aligns with clients' commercial objectives.

Your social value proposition:

1. Provides a strong differentiator in bids by linking social value to measurable economic outcomes.
2. Enhances client relevance by strengthening local economies and supply chains, providing evidence-based and auditable outcomes.
3. Minimises implementation friction by leveraging expertise and derisking SME engagement through a comprehensive productivity framework.

The model is scalable across geographies, sectors, and supply chains, maintaining a consistent logic: build SME capacity, drive adoption, generate measurable economic benefits, develop equality of opportunity.

Using our proven model, we structure our work with you over 3 key areas:

01

Put in place the structure for an SME-centric social value strategy combining data and advisory services to engage SMEs by sector +/-geography +/-demographics.

02

Operate targeted and high-level SME impact programmes that drive productivity and growth, improve resilience, assures delivery, and provide equality of opportunity.

03

Translate this into your social value offer to maximise bid scores, create measurable outcomes, and demonstrate significant economic impact.



Workforce pathways into SMEs - for young people and apprentices

We give you guaranteed minimum employment outcomes, independently measured against TOMs NT1 and NT4



Workforce pathways into SMEs for young people

Unlocking youth talent whilst transforming SMEs into youth-ready employers

The Challenge: Fragmented pathways for employing young people, SME demand-side readiness



Youth Facing Unclear Routes

Youth face unclear pathways to meaningful work, extending beyond just skills gaps. Significant untapped potential exists.



SMEs Lack Capacity for Inclusion

SMEs often lack the capacity, tools, and confidence for inclusive recruitment, frequently displaying risk aversion.



Missed Gains and Inequality

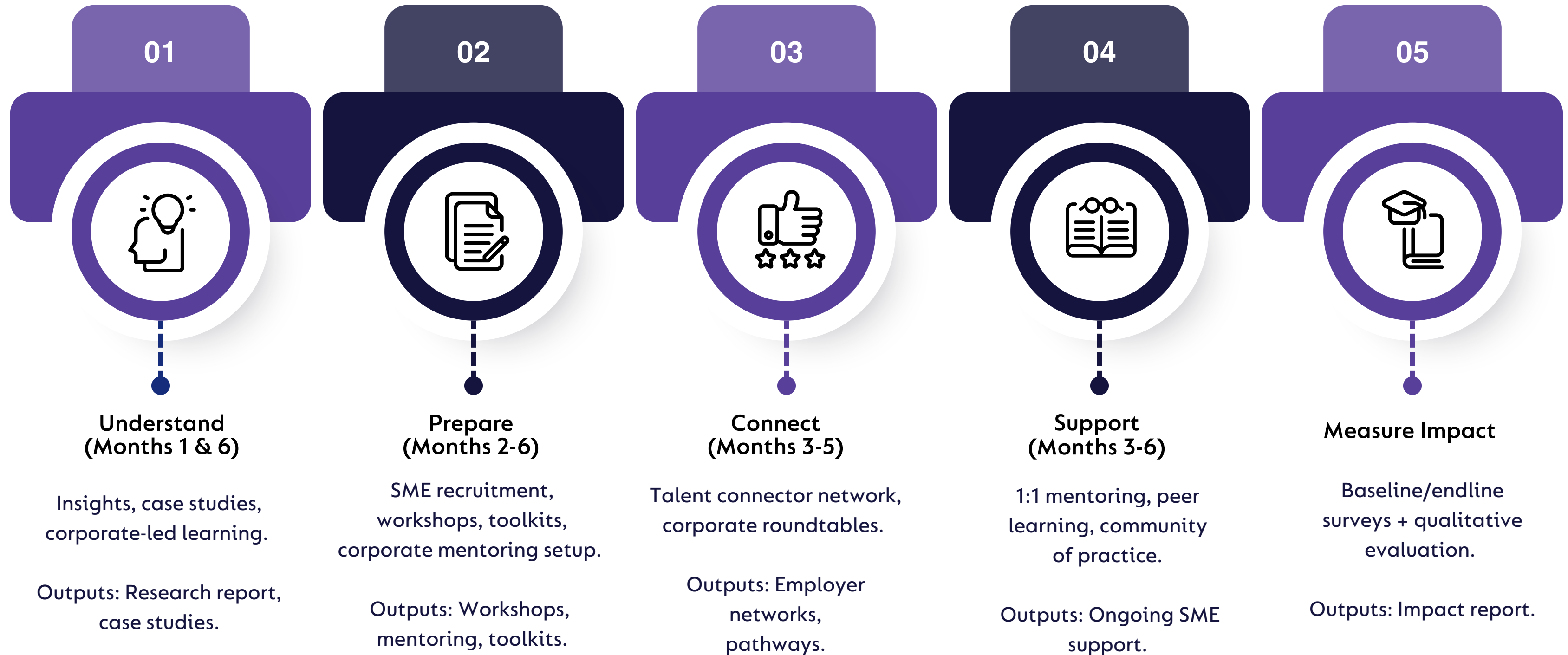
The result is significant untapped youth potential, missed SME gains, and persistent inequality.

THE SOLUTION: A 6-MONTH SME CAPABILITY ACCELERATOR - DELIVERED BY SME PRODUCTIVITY EXPERTS

Equipping SMEs to become 'youth-ready employers' by transferring expertise, building pathways, and embedding long-term change.



Workforce pathways into SMEs for young people



Unlocking youth talent through SME capability

Young People Engaged
(pathways, placements or roles)

100–150

New Entry-Level Roles/
Placements created

60–90

SMEs offering roles to
individuals previously excluded
from labour market

50%+

Business Impact

- 70% SMEs report increased confidence in inclusive hiring
- 50% SMEs adopt new recruitment or onboarding practices

System-Level Impact

- 1 x Talent Connector Network established
- 3–5 corporate partners actively engaged
- Stronger integration with local skills ecosystem (Careers Hub, Bootcamps)

Long-term outcomes

- Increased SME productivity and innovation
- Sustained employer behaviour change
- Replicable model for wider regional rollout



Unlocking youth talent through SME capability

TOMs	Outcome	Metrics	Social / economic value generated per programme
NT1 – Local people employed / NT1a – More local people in employment	Employment outcomes	60–90 young people into roles; £18,000–£22,000 average salary	£1.1m–£2.0m annual wages; £1.2m–£2.7m social value
NT1 – Local people employed / NT4 – Reducing the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)	Reduced NEET outcomes	~£8,000–£12,000 per NEET individual/year	£480k – £1.08m avoided public cost (for 60–90 individuals)
NT14 – Improved employability of individuals / NT15 – Skills development for the local workforce	SME productivity uplift	£5,000–£10,000 per SME per year	£300k – £600k annual economic value (across 60 SMEs)
NT14 – Improved employability of individuals / NT15 – Skills development for the local workforce	Skills and capability development	£2,000–£3,000 per SME (training, mentoring, toolkit)	£120k – £180k capability value (across 60 SMEs)





Growth and Innovation Accelerators

We help you answer the Procurement Act requirement for diverse and resilient SME supply chains



Growth and innovation accelerators for SMEs



The Challenge

SMEs want to innovate, grow and adopt new technologies – but most struggle to turn insight into action.

Limited time, capacity and confidence create a persistent “last-mile gap”, where good ideas fail to translate into real change.

The Solution

A high-impact accelerator that combines:

- Immersive, expert-led learning - on site
- Structured implementation support (“Momentum Track”)
- Peer learning and real-world application

Instaed of traditional accelerators, this is a behaviour-change and implementation engine for SME growth.



What's included in the innovation accelerator

A structured approach to SME development.



Recruit and curate

Targeted SME recruitment, screening, and cohort design to ensure a high-quality, committed group.



Community of Practice

Facilitates ongoing peer learning and knowledge diffusion for sustained engagement.



Immersive Workshop

Expert-led sessions covering productivity, innovation, digital adoption, and leadership, resulting in actionable plans.



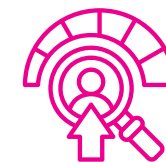
Innovation Challenge Fund

Offers micro-grants and awards to accelerate adoption and increase visibility of innovative ideas.



Momentum Track (4–12 weeks)

A phased approach with micro-learning, sprints, peer huddles, and coaching to drive real operational changes.



Evaluation & Reporting

Tracks KPIs, develops case studies, and analyzes SROI and policy insights for comprehensive impact reports.

Core features include: behavioural design for real change, a low-burden model for time-poor leaders, an implementation first approach with tangible outputs, integration with corporate and ecosystem resources, and adaptability for scalability across regions and sectors.



Innovation Accelerator impact

Business transformation /
operational business changes

70-80%

Momentum track engagement

91%

Productivity growth / uplift per
participating SME

£5-15K

Behaviour change

Strong improvements in:

- Leadership capability
- Innovation culture
- Decision-making confidence

Productivity and growth

Increased:

- revenue growth,
- efficiency
- cost savings

Long-term outcomes

- Increased SME productivity and innovation
- Sustained innovation behaviour
- Replicable model for wider cohort rollout





The Productivity Programme

We provide sustained supply chain capability development across the full contract term, not just at mobilisation



The Productivity Programme



The Challenge

Many SMEs reach a critical growth stage but lack strategic capacity at leadership level, access to experienced external perspective, and structured support to address core business challenges. Leaders are often working in the business, not on it, isolated in decision-making, and unable to translate ambition into sustained performance. Result: stalled growth and productivity, operational inefficiencies, and underdeveloped leadership and management capability.

The Solution: The Productivity Programme (TPP)

A structured, leadership-focused intervention that provides SMEs with advisory boards and experienced mentors. Creates space for leaders to step back and work on the business. Supports businesses to identify, prioritise and solve key challenges.

TPP is a 6+ month executive support programme combining Advisory Board sessions with experienced leaders, 1:1 mentoring support, structured diagnostics and business assessment, and peer learning and external perspective.

Turning leadership capability into measurable productivity and growth outcomes



The Productivity Programme journey

● Onboarding & Diagnostic

360° Assessment and challenge mapping leading to clear business priorities.

● Advisory Board Meetings

90-minute sessions every 6-8 weeks for strategic decision-making support.

● Peer Learning

Group sessions and shared insights for broader learning and perspective.

● Advisory Board Setup

Curated board and mentor matching for embedded external expertise.

● 1:1 Mentoring

Ongoing support between board sessions for accountability and implementation.

● Programme Support

Dedicated Executive Assistant and coordination, ensuring low burden on leaders.



The Proudctivty Programme: core features

Features:

- High-impact, low time burden (~90 mins per month)
- Tailored advisory support aligned to business challenges
- External perspective + challenge from experienced leaders
- Structured tools (360 assessment, scorecards)
- Fully online delivery enabling scalable reach

Target SMEs:

- Established SMEs entering growth, transition or scaling phase
- Founders / CEOs / senior leadership teams
- Businesses seeking to: professionalise operations, strengthen leadership capability, build structures for long-term growth

“I talked at length with my advisory board about scaling and the things we needed to put in place. We wanted to get the product out to more partners, generate more sales and work on our pricing.”

Grace Olugbodi,
Founder at Be Genio



Find out how Anne made the most of her advisory board

“Even though it was hard to hear certain things, it’s what we needed. You can’t have any ego or pride as a business owner, it will be your downfall – you need to come in and be ready to listen to anything they advise you to do.”

Amelia McCloskey,
Founder at
Ultimate Sync
Access

We've worked with 5000+ SMEs since 2017.

Discover more



The Productivity Programme impact and social value

SME leaders making significant business changes

80%

Increase in turnover post-programme

44%

Job creation as a result of the programme

33%

Value of annual improved operational performance and efficiency per SME

£5-15K

Value per SME of leadership capability and decision-making uplift

£2-3K

Long-term outcomes

- Reduced disruption and improved performance through stronger, more reliable SME partners.
- Building of long-term partnerships

Scott Medd,
Founder at
Indulgence
Jewellery





AI adoption programmes: 'Beyond the Hype'

We are future-proofing SME supply chains through digital capability - a measurable contribution to the innovation agenda



From AI hype to real SME adoption

SMEs are surrounded by noise around AI and digital technologies - but much of it is abstract, technical or sales-led.

As a result, many leaders understand the potential of AI but lack the confidence, clarity and practical guidance to begin applying it in their own businesses. This leads to high awareness but low real adoption, with businesses unsure which tools matter, how to apply them, or where to start.

Beyond the Hype addresses this gap through practical, expert-led workshops designed to demystify AI and translate it into real business applications.

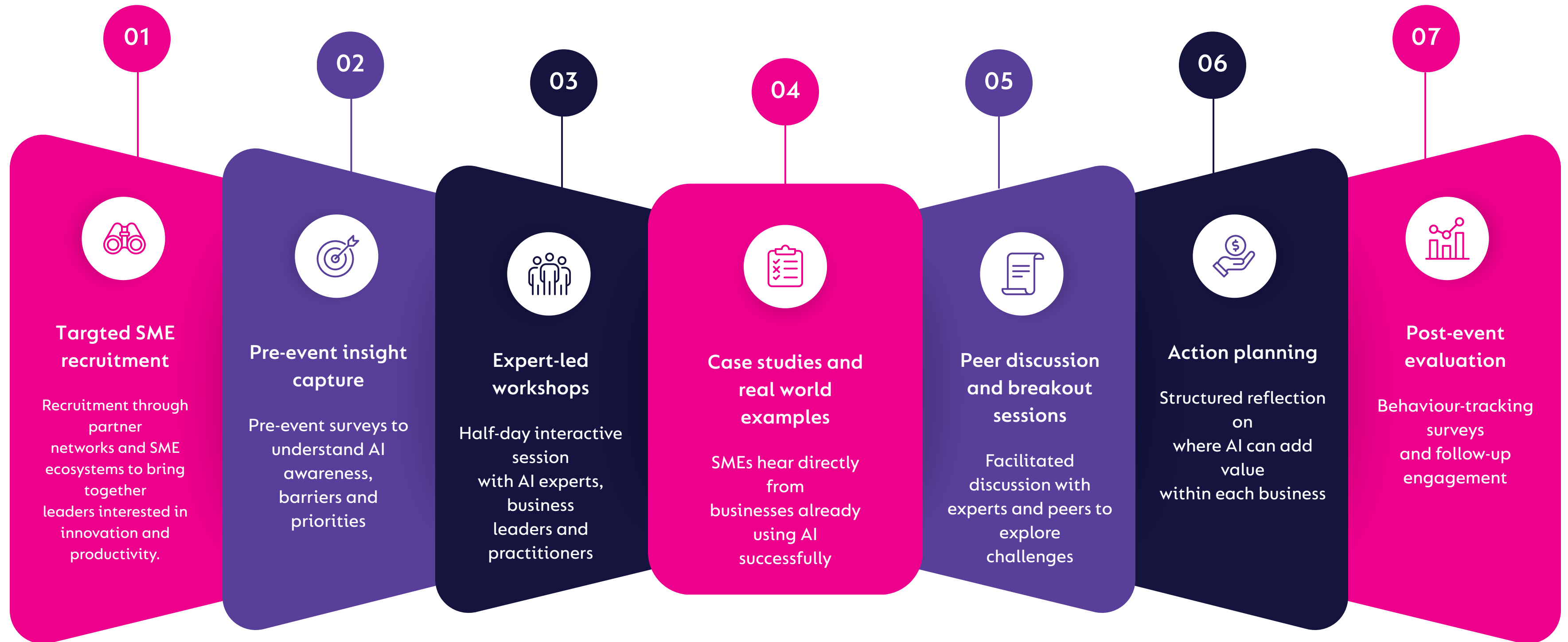
By combining expert insight, real SME case studies and peer discussion, the programme helps business leaders understand the opportunities, navigate risks and leave with a clear action plan for applying AI in their organisations.



In person and online workshop to bring about real AI adoption behaviour change in SMES.



SME AI adoption framework



Case study: Making AI work for business productivity

Bringing together SME leaders, industry experts, and technology partners to explore how AI can improve business productivity and operational performance.

Key Features:

- Collaboration with partners including Microsoft and leading productivity experts
- 450+ SMEs recruited
- Participation from 45+ SME leaders across sectors per workshop
- Expert contributions from academics, technology specialists, and experienced business leaders
- Interactive panel discussions and breakout sessions exploring practical AI applications

Insights Generated:

- AI can significantly improve business efficiency, supply chain management, and marketing automation
- SMEs face common barriers including cost, skills gaps, data concerns, and uncertainty about tools
- Leaders value practical guidance and peer discussion over theoretical content

“We came away with a much clearer understanding of the AI landscape and practical strategies for implementation.”

– SME participant



95% of participants said they felt more informed about integrating AI into their business after the workshop



SME AI adoption workshops: outcomes and impact



Programme Outcomes

- SMEs gain a clear understanding of AI opportunities and applications.
- Leaders identify practical use cases such as efficiency gains, supply chain optimisation and marketing automation.
- Businesses develop action plans for adopting AI tools and strategies.
- Increased confidence in navigating risks, data concerns and regulatory issues.



Behaviour Change Impact

- Increased SME confidence in using AI.
- Improved understanding of where AI can drive productivity.
- Greater willingness to experiment with AI tools.
- Increased collaboration between SMEs and technology partners.



Social and Economic Value

- Skills and capability development.
- Improved digital and AI literacy among SME leaders.
- Productivity enablement.
- Adoption of technologies that improve efficiency, marketing performance and operational workflows. Innovation adoption.
- Economic resilience.



Partnering with leading organisations since 2017





Interested in a conversation?

Reach us on:

@ partnerships@bethebusiness.com

☎ [07843370255](tel:07843370255)

🌐 bethebusiness.com