



Imani Hekima

Background of business

Bradford-born Imani Hekima, who lives in Manningham, was encouraged to take an interest in music by his Jamaican parents taking piano lessons through a scheme funded by the Bradford West Indian Parents' Association and eventually passed his Grade 8 examination. From the Yorkshire Martyrs school he successfully applied to study music at Bretton Hall, near Wakefield, where he gained a degree. Aspiring to become a professional musician

and music teacher, he sought advice from his local Jobcentre and library, where staff referred him to a Kickstart partner, Into Business. This led to Imani joining the pioneering 'test trading' initiative made available in the District through a partnership between Bradford Kickstart and JobcentrePlus.

Support journey

Imani's journey typifies the 'stepping stones' programme through which Kickstart and its partners support their many clients. His local library referred him to a Kickstart partner, Into Business, who helped him apply for the test trading initiative via his local Jobcentre. Staff at the Jobcentre told him about Amaze Yourself, the highly motivational, confidence-building course funded by Kickstart at the University of Bradford. During this course he learned about the wide range of training courses, skills workshops and networking opportunities provided through the Kickstart programme by Bradford Chamber. He subsequently attended courses in IT and communications, as well as Business Clubs. In addition, Imani has received strong support from Fabric, the forum for the arts and music in the Bradford District.

Where they are now

With increased self-confidence, Imani intends to remain self-employed at the end of the six month test trading period. His services as a professional pianist are increasingly in demand from clients including the University, for whom he played during their Graduation ceremony. He also teaches keyboard skills, writes his own songs and is developing a reputation as a Bollywood style piano player. After successfully playing in this style at an Asian wedding feast (Valima) he has built a repertoire of Asian music from Bollywood film scores. Imani believes he is the only Bollywood pianist in the Bradford District. His latest engagement is to play at the University's 'Bollywood Ball.'

Background Information

Client Name: Imani Hekima

Ward in which trading or resident: lives in Manningham

Business Name: Imani Hekima, musician, keyboard tutor, Bollywood pianist

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