

TikTok Shop and The King's Trust Help the Next Generation of UK Entrepreneurs Soar

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A wave of young entrepreneurs will soon be the recipients of unique enterprising opportunities in the UK, thanks to an exciting new partnership.

SOAR brings together The King's Trust charity, which supports young people to build the confidence and skills to secure a job or setup a business, and leading discovery commerce platform TikTok Shop, who are launching their established global SOAR programme (Supporting Our Artisans and Retailers) in the UK for the very first time.

Originally launched last year in the US, SOAR was created to empower small and medium businesses (SMBs), entrepreneurs and creators on TikTok Shop with tailored support and resources to help them rapidly advance their businesses. SOAR will work with young people on The King's Trust Enterprise programme, which offers support and funding to help young people aged 18-30 start their own business.

The UK arm of the initiative aims to equip young founders aged 18-35, particularly those not in education, employment or training (NEET), with tools to build successful and sustainable businesses in today's fast moving digital economy. The UK programme follows the success of its US counterpart, which last year saw 80 SMBs graduate from the initiative through accelerators for underrepresented groups, such as women-owned businesses and veterans.

In the US, graduates of SOAR on average have grown their sales by 200% and doubled their follower base within just eight weeks. With more than 2,500 applicants, the US programme has shown there is a strong appetite among entrepreneurs for this kind of support. It is now expected to help more than 1,000 entrepreneurs every year across markets.

Expanding the Impact of Our Partnership

This initiative builds on the partnership between TikTok and The King's Trust, which launched in 2024.

Through its support for The King's Trust Enterprise programme, TikTok is helping more young people from a wide range of backgrounds to turn their ideas into businesses.

Alongside the SOAR partnership, TikTok has also provided advertising credits to help The King's Trust reach more young people on the platform and raise awareness of the opportunities available to them.

Together, we're ensuring more young people can gain the confidence, skills and support they need to take control of their future.

Empowering Young Founders Through Discovery Commerce

Through this partnership, young founders in the UK will gain the tools to turn ideas into sustainable businesses, while developing the skills needed to succeed in the world of e-commerce.

The SOAR programme will guide participants through each stage of business development - from planning and launch to advanced growth. Training will cover digital marketing, logistics and operations, alongside building confidence, resilience and networks.

TikTok Shop Training and Tools

Entrepreneurs will also benefit from personalised onboarding to TikTok Shop, including:

- Best practices for selling through live streaming
- Guidance on working with creators
- Using promotional tools effectively

The goal is to equip young entrepreneurs with the skills, mentorship and platform access they need to

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launch and grow successful businesses, while driving inclusive economic growth.

Three Key Areas of Focus for UK Entrepreneurs

The UK SOAR programme will focus on three priorities:

- **Digital Skills Development** - Bridging the e-commerce skills gap identified in the UK and EU Digital Education Action Plan
- **Youth Economic Empowerment** - Helping NEET individuals transition into sustainable self-employment
- **Entrepreneurial Growth** – Supporting young innovators to scale their businesses both within the UK and internationally

Jan Wilk, Head of TikTok Shop UK said: *“We believe e-commerce should be about more than transactions – it’s about connection, creativity and opportunity. That’s why we’re so excited to be launching SOAR in the UK for the very first time, building on the programme’s proven success globally.*

Through SOAR, we’re proud to work with The King’s Trust to give young entrepreneurs the skills, confidence and visibility they need to grow their businesses and make an impact. By empowering participants to create meaningful shopping experiences through storytelling and engagement, and by supporting underrepresented groups, we aim to spark inclusive economic growth while helping the next generation of entrepreneurs thrive.”

Jo McKnight, Head of Enterprise at The King’s Trust said: *“The King’s Trust Enterprise programme has supported tens of thousands of young people into self-employment, with TikTok’s support enabling us to reach even more young entrepreneurs access the confidence, skills and opportunities to make this happen.*

“By combining our experience and knowledge with TikTok Shop’s platform, expertise and e-commerce tools, we can continue to help young entrepreneurs across the UK turn their ideas into thriving businesses and ultimately, to take control of their future.”

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