

# Supporting Graduate Businesses

## Nice as Pie

### Overview

Nice as Pie Dance Theatre is a new contemporary dance company formed by Laura Polson, Katy West and Romaine Etwaroo – three graduates from Bath Spa University, who won a 15-month residency, which will help them to establish and grow their business.



Nice as Pie receiving award

### About the Project

Bath Spa University's "Launchpad" scheme is a pioneering opportunity in 2009 for two graduate performance companies per year to win a 15-month residency that will lead to the launch of professional theatre companies that are self-sufficient businesses for the longer term. The graduate entrepreneurs will be expected to create and sell their own show for a tour in the South West and to perform it at the Edinburgh Festival in 2010. The graduates are drawn from final year Dance, Drama Studies and Performing Arts students at the University.

Nice as Pie is a dance theatre company that strives to create aesthetically stimulating and physically demanding dance theatre which specialises in audience interactivity through the creation of sensory predominant environments. Nice as Pie wants to present its audiences with multisensory experiences that they can interact and engage with – such as walking bare foot over grass, drinking cold cups of tea, inhaling aromas, and touching textural surfaces like bricks and blinds – all whilst viewing contemporary dance.

Nice as Pie are dedicated to the following principles:

- Making innovative and accessible high quality performance work
- Encouraging and provoking audience interaction through multisensory environments
- Delivering highly physical and aesthetic performance that fizzes with energy and explodes upon the senses
- Creating dance theatre which becomes a place of social exchange rather than simply spectacle

### Fast Facts

- Nice as Pie is a contemporary dance company specialising in audience participation and multi-sensory environments
- The Launchpad Scheme is one of the first of its kind for a UK university
- The residency provides support in the form of rehearsal and office space, technical and resource materials, and specialist mentoring and business training



Nice as Pie performing

## Benefits

Nice as Pie received a prize of £750 from the University's Business Support Office, to put towards marketing their business, and were funded to attend Business Link's three day course in starting and running a business.

Between June 2009 and September 2010, Nice as Pie will have access to:

- Artistic and business mentorship from industry professionals
- Intensive business skills training
- Up to £10,000 of 'in kind' support in rehearsal and office space, marketing and promotional support, technical and resource materials
- Help with the artistic development of their dance product, shaping the company, branding and marketing, tour booking, web presence

Nice as Pie has been given access to the University's Entrepreneur-in-Residence for free one-to-one sessions to discuss their business development plans in relation to their creative aspirations.



Nice as Pie show scene



Nice as Pie webpage

## Outcomes

Nice as Pie is already creating a stir in the local dance scene with their unique look and a strong focus on audience participation and multi-sensory experiences. Their piece 'Dogfight', for example, is an installation work where Nice as Pie invite the audience to 'sample the delightful pies, sip the hot tea and unravel hidden characters'. It is an exploration of escapism in war-time Britain using all the senses. They have performed at Kafe, the Bath Contemporary Arts Festival and their latest show 'Eat Your Own Words' was performed on 6th and 7th June 2009 at the Chapel Arts Centre as part of the Bath Fringe Festival.

Nice as Pie are touring throughout the South West with their innovative brand of contemporary dance and will be hosting creative workshops at local schools. They also have a guaranteed place at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2010.

[www.niceaspiedancetheatre.com](http://www.niceaspiedancetheatre.com)

## Perspective

“This is only the beginning for one of the brightest talents to emerge from Bath in recent years. Keep your eyes, ears and indeed nose open for performances in the near future.”

Theatre & Reviews  
Bath Chronicle

Bath Spa University's Business Support Office acts as a catalyst for engaging with employers, providing enterprise opportunities for students and graduates, and maximising on the expertise of the university for the benefit of the local business community. For further information, contact the Business Support Office at [businessenquiries@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:businessenquiries@bathspa.ac.uk)  
[www.bathspabusiness.com](http://www.bathspabusiness.com)