

# Business Plan Competition Merit Award Winners

Daniel Parker & Sarah Thomas – Kiro Clothing Ltd

## Overview

Two final year students at Bath Spa University – Daniel Parker and Sarah Thomas – won the Merit Award of £500 for their business idea, which set up a fair-trade fashion brand linked to music gigs and t-shirt throw-downs, but also available through high street retail outlets, that carries ethical and compassionate messages to society.



Daniel & Sarah receiving award from Prof Neil Sammells

## About the Project

Daniel Parker and Sarah Thomas were students in Commercial Music and Art & Creative Writing respectively when they had a vision to see a generation of young people use fashion as a medium to carry a message to society of freedom, love, hope and compassion – the message at the heart of the company. 10% of the company's net profit will go towards a charity dealing with music therapy in the community.

Kiro Clothing's designs are bold, eye-catching and each carry a narrative. They use silk-screen printing methods onto t-shirts, sweatshirts and other similar items that are Fair Trade certified. Certain designs will allow consumers to personalise their garments to suit their individual character. A t-shirt throw-down is a concept event – growing in popularity in America but not yet exploited in the UK, where guests can get their own clothing customised at a Kiro party to serve as a reminder of the night.

Since music and fashion are closely intertwined, Kiro Clothing is aimed at young adults and particularly those inclined towards the alternative music scene and with a conscientious attitude towards bettering society and promoting positive truths.

Many consumers buy clothing with a generic message or brand image and yet are unaware of its underlying significance or meaning. Each Kiro design carries a back story into the concept behind the work. This is presented with the garment to the customer, so that they are aware of the statement their garment is making. Each narrative portrays a positive message based around one of the four key aspects of hope, freedom, compassion and love.



## Fast Facts

- Kiro Clothing won a Merit Award of £500 to spend on marketing the business.
- Daniel and Sarah sought regular feedback from the Business Support Office as they developed their business plan, and took part in the supporting workshops, which led to a strong entry to the competition.



Kiro items at Bath Pavilion Fashion Show

## Benefits

Taking part in the business plan competition helped Daniel and Sarah to follow their business idea through. Feedback on drafts of their business plan at various stages meant that they were able to address areas they were weaker on and learn from advice.

As finalists, Daniel and Sarah had the benefit of valuable feedback from the judges, to help them improve and develop their venture.

## Outcomes

Since winning the award Kiro Clothing has continued to trade, including through the high street retailer Gaff in Bath. As well as a regular stall at the Green Park Market in Bath they have showcased at the C3 Charity Fashion Show in February 2009, where they previewed the new range of Kiro gear in the latest colours and styles.

Additionally, Daniel and Sarah have secured 'Kill it Kid' band endorsement of their products, with the lead band member recently interviewed wearing the latest Kiro scarf.

To maximize sales and promotion opportunities, Kiro Clothing has a website under development which will include an online store. Currently, they promote through online social networks such as Myspace and Facebook

Brand interest is maintained with special promotions. For example, in December 2008 they introduced a limited introduction white 'clocks' t-shirt and a special Christmas offer gave 10% discount as a 'thank you' to their customers.



Kiro fashion items

## Perspective

“We have to say a massive thank you to the Business Support Office for all the support and help with developing the business plan for Kiro Clothing. Winning the merit award means we can get started earlier on a marketing campaign for the business.”

Daniel Parker, BA Commercial Music, [www.kiroclothing.com](http://www.kiroclothing.com)

“Daniel and Sarah showed fantastic presentation skills and their confidence in this area will stand them in good stead when selling their product idea to shops and retailers. It's really good that they've created the product, got sales and booked events already – it's already underway and happening and shows you really believe in it. They really know their market and their enthusiasm and energy will see them through.”

Simon Bond, Chair of Judges and Director of Innovation Centre, Bath

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)