

# Real world social network CitySocialising selected for NESTA creative mentor program

Submitted by: Citysocializer

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CitySocialising, the UK-wide social network (<http://www.citysocialising.com>) that enables outgoing city-based professionals to connect offline with new local friends, has been selected as one of twenty four leading light businesses to be teamed up with representatives from high growth companies to build the world class businesses of tomorrow in a new initiative.

The scheme run by the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA (<http://www.nesta.org.uk>)) with delivery partners Pact and Grant Thornton has been designed to unleash the potential of some of the UK's most promising advertising, TV production and digital companies and help them grow into significant players in the sectors.

Having been selected from hundreds of entries, each of the twenty four companies has been matched with a highly experienced mentor who will share their years of business and industry experience with their mentee. They will also gain access to practical advice with the aim of helping them take the next steps in growing their business and becoming a major contributor to the UK economy.

CitySocialising's CEO, Sanchita Saha, will be mentored by Andy Taylor, Digital Media Director at global production and distribution company All3Media (<http://www.all3media.com>). Originally qualified as a lawyer, in March 2000 Andy joined new media agency Victoria Real as Head of Legal and Commercial Affairs. He became Managing Director of the company at the end of 2000, a year in which Victoria Real was the fastest growing company in the UK and Endemol acquired a 50% stake. In May 2003, Andy moved to Channel 4 where he was Managing Director, New Media responsible for developing Channel 4's brand on new platforms, including innovative services such as 4Docs and Channel 4's on demand service4OD before moving to All3Media.

Sanchita Saha commented:

"This news has come at the ideal time as we are about to embark on our next growth phase after achieving our recent early-stage investment. We are soon to launch a new version of our product, enter new markets and invest in marketing to build our brand. It's an honour to gain such a talented and dynamic mentor - Andy's incredible background and experience of all the challenges we are about to face will in no doubt be of great benefit to the business, and to me personally, through this next phase."

Launched in London in January 2007, CitySocialising subsequently rolled out sister-networks in regional cities around the UK and Scotland, including Manchester (<http://manchester.citysocialising.com>), Glasgow (<http://glasgow.citysocialising.com>) and Leeds (<http://leeds.citysocialising.com>), and has recently secured early-stage investment of £260k in a deal led by the London Business Angels. Although the current site has been developed on a shoe-string budget, the business has uniquely demonstrated revenues and profit through organic growth alone with no marketing undertaken to date.

Jon Kingsbury, Director of the Creative Economy at NESTA says: "Creative businesses are highly networked, but getting practical, intelligent advice on business growth, from people who appreciate their

sector, is tough to find. Our programme focuses on the highly innovative, creative businesses which will contribute to the creative industries leading the UK out of recession.'

For more information, please visit: [www.citysocialising.com](http://www.citysocialising.com) or [www.nesta.org.uk/creative-business-mentor-network/](http://www.nesta.org.uk/creative-business-mentor-network/)

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Editors notes:

About CitySocialising:

Launched in January 2007 with funding and support from the Prince's Trust (<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk>), CitySocialising is now available in 12 UK cities including London, Manchester, Leeds, Nottingham (<http://nottinghamandderby.citysocialising.com>), Edinburgh (<http://edinburgh.citysocialising.com>), Glasgow (<http://glasgow.citysocialising.com>), Brighton (<http://brighton.citysocialising.com>) and Bristol (<http://bristolandbath.citysocialising.com>). A unique proposition for a social network, CitySocialising focusses on connecting users offline with new friends (<http://london.citysocialising.com>) in their local area at socialising events and activities organised by members and by CitySocialising Editors.

Catering for a professional crowd based in or moving to cities, CitySocialising members are 25 – 40 year olds keen to meet new people (<http://london.citysocialising.com/search.asp>) locally and make the most of their city's social scene and attractions.

The second version of the site will include live city event listings, bespoke event creation tools, much improved social networking functionality and a site redesign and will also launch in further new cities, including Sheffield (<http://london.citysocialising.com/wantus1.asp>), Newcastle (<http://london.citysocialising.com/wantus1.asp>), Liverpool (<http://london.citysocialising.com/wantus1.asp>), Cardiff (<http://london.citysocialising.com/wantus1.asp>), Oxford (<http://london.citysocialising.com/wantus1.asp>) and Reading (<http://london.citysocialising.com/wantus1.asp>).