



**Alumna Subject Graduated Place of Work Position**  
Naomi Jane  
BSc Management  
2008  
4WD Foundation  
Founder and Owner



The 4WD Foundation is a youth-led social enterprise specialising in youth communications, engagement and training. Through the delivery of creative projects and training, 4WD helps young people develop the tools they need to succeed in their personal life, career and within society.

Naomi founded the organisation in 2006. She has delivered training programmes, developmental workshops and motivational speeches for clients including Channel 4, Enterprise Educators UK and Google.

### **Why did you choose to study at Royal Holloway?**

I visited lots of universities across the country and all over London before I arrived at Royal Holloway; it was total love at first sight! I knew as soon as I walked into the grounds that this was the university for me. After exploring the campus and visiting the School of Management my feelings were confirmed. I look back on my time at Royal Holloway as the most formative and fulfilling educational years of my life.

### **What did you enjoy most about your university experience?**

The whole experience was fantastic. In terms of the degree, the Organisational Theory course was really interesting, but the module I most enjoyed was Communication Studies. It was very practical-orientated, and I now use a lot of what I learnt in my day-to-day work. I also met a number of good friends whilst studying. In terms of extra-curricular activities, I took ballet and street dance, tried trampolining, cheerleading, joined the ACS and the gym. I ran the Management Society for two years, and co-ran Inspire [Entrepreneurship Society at that time]. I also took a basic Spanish course in my second year, purely because I love the

language. I loved getting to know the great people I met and worked with. I was fortunate to have a fantastic committee behind me whilst President of the Management Society. We won a number of external entrepreneurship competitions and had a fantastic time pitching against other universities all over the country.

### **What is the most important thing that you learnt whilst at Royal Holloway?**

All of these experiences taught me so much about how to interact with people of all abilities from diverse backgrounds and in many different contexts. I learnt a lot about time management and how important it is to strike a healthy life balance – something that is often a struggle for people who run a business. The most important thing, however, was learning to admit when you are wrong. Saying sorry, putting things right and admitting you made an error isn't bad business: it's being responsible. When you run your own business you are completely responsible for everything – the good things and the bad things!

# Great minds *go on to* great places

### **Did you know what career you wanted to go into after graduating?**

I always knew that I would end up working for myself. When I arrived at Royal Holloway I was very interested in embarking on a career in the financial industry and took the relevant modules. An internship in my penultimate summer at a major accountancy firm helped me realise that finance was not my future. As I got more involved in promoting entrepreneurial activities and competitions on campus, I gradually saw that setting up and running my own business was what I really wanted to do. I've always been involved in youth work and training, so setting up the 4WD Foundation felt like a natural progression.

### **What is the 4WD Foundation all about?**

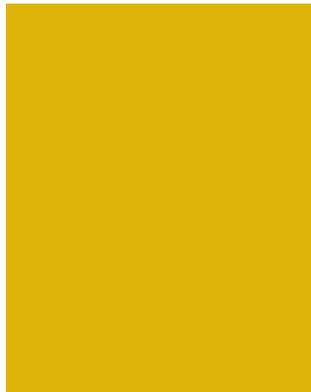
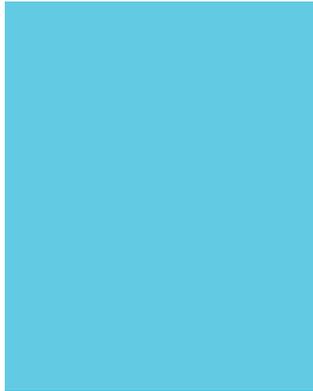
The 4WD Foundation is a youth-led social enterprise specialising in youth communications, engagement and training. We specifically work with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. We design creative projects and deliver training that takes participants on a developmental journey, so that they leave having become more confident, motivated and passionate. We also conduct research, run events and provide young people with creative work experience opportunities. 4WD helps young people to develop the tools they need to succeed in their personal life, in their career and within society.



Royal Holloway  
University of London

# people *with* passion

“Maximise your time at university ... concentrate on up-skilling yourself, discover new passions and find out what you are good at.”



## What do you enjoy about working for yourself?

There is nothing like the freedom that comes with being your own boss! I control everything, from my work schedule to the meetings I attend, the clients I take on and the days that I have off. This is balanced with the huge responsibility and pressure you experience when you work for yourself – the buck always stops with me.

## What do you do in a typical day, and what are the best parts?

There isn't really a typical day for me, and that's one of my favourite things! In a typical week I will be in meetings on a couple of days, and commute into central London either one or two days. I also spend a day working with my business partner, planning out projects. The rest of the time I am either delivering projects or working from home, collaborating with the team remotely. The 'cabin fever' associated with working from home is offset by the meetings that I attend throughout the week, and Skype is great for remedying any feelings of loneliness!

## What would be your top tip for students looking to start up their own business?

Maximise your time at university by making the most of any spare time you have around lectures and studying. University offers so many opportunities to try new things for free, so concentrate on up-skilling yourself, discover new passions, and find out what you are good at. There are lots of fantastic entrepreneurial competitions run by organisations like West Focus that can really help you hone important skills, like networking and pitching. University is also a great time to develop business ideas, meet potential business partners, and find out if you have what it takes to be an entrepreneur.

## What connection have you had with Royal Holloway since graduating?

I have been invited a number of times to speak at events aimed at current students, sharing my experiences of Royal Holloway and my professional life. It's always an honour to be able to come back to Royal Holloway. It fills me with so much happiness just to walk around the grounds and remember the amazing time that I had.

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