

YORKSHIRE INNOVATION FUND CASE STUDY:

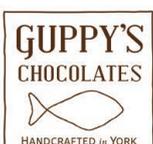
# Guppy's Chocolates



**Founders:** Fran and Peter Guppy  
**Location:** Clifton Moor, York  
**Website:** [www.guppyschocolates.co.uk](http://www.guppyschocolates.co.uk)  
**Twitter:** @guppyschocolate  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/guppyschocolates](http://www.facebook.com/guppyschocolates)

**Partner:** Sheffield Hallam University  
**Website:** [www.shu.ac.uk/business/how-we-can-help/support-and-funding](http://www.shu.ac.uk/business/how-we-can-help/support-and-funding)  
**Website:** [www.designfuturesgroup.com](http://www.designfuturesgroup.com)  
**Twitter:** @sheffhallamuni

**Funded via:** Yorkshire Innovation Fund  
**Telephone:** 01274 236 673  
**Website:** [www.yorkshireinnovationfund.org](http://www.yorkshireinnovationfund.org)  
**Twitter:** @YorkshireIF



## The Business...

From humble beginnings in a converted garage, Guppy's has blossomed into one of **York's leading chocolate producers**.

Launched in 2010 by self-confessed chocoholics Fran and Peter, Guppy's has joined a long tradition of chocolatiers in the historic city.

From their premises in Clifton Moor, Fran, Peter and their dedicated team craft a range of handmade chocolates in a multitude of forms including bars, truffles, shards and other irresistible confections.

Supplying predominantly to farm shops, visitor centres, delicatessens and other independent fine food retailers, this artisan chocolate producer is enjoying a growing reputation as York's next generation of master family chocolatiers.



## The Need for Innovation...

Following several years of steady, organic growth, Guppy's entered 2014 with a dual focus:

- to **enhance the saleability of its range** through more prominent and appealing shelf-ready packaging
- to broaden the appeal of their **signature chocolate shards** through smaller quantities with lower price points

With a price tag of £3.25, Guppy's popular 150gm packs of shards appealed to customers looking for a gift for others. By introducing new 50gm and 100gm sizes, Fran and Peter planned to appeal to people wanting an affordable treat for themselves.

"Working with Design Futures has given us a better understanding of the packaging market."

**PETER GUPPY**

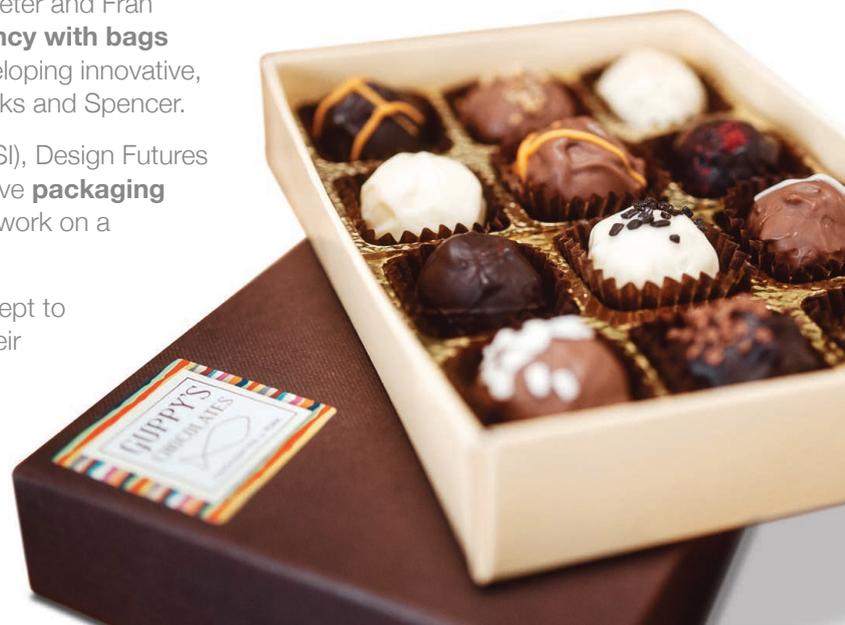
## The Role of the Yorkshire Innovation Fund...

At a national packaging trade show in the spring of 2014, Peter met **Design Futures** – Sheffield Hallam University's team of product and packaging designers.

Despite having never worked with a university before, Peter and Fran soon realised the **potential of partnering a consultancy with bags of commercial experience** and a track record in developing innovative, effective packaging for household brands including Marks and Spencer.

After successfully applying for a Strategic Intervention (SI), Design Futures helped Fran and Peter to explore new ideas for innovative **packaging that would stand out on the shelves** but could also work on a practical level for their growing network of retailers.

Over a six month period, initial ideas evolved from concept to completion and, in January 2015, Guppy's launched their best-selling chocolate shards in 50g and 100g sizes.



## The Impact...

The launch of the new sizes has enabled Fran and Peter to extend their client base to a **new network of independent retailers** including coffee shops where the 50g packs are proving an affordable treat for Yorkshire's coffee lovers.

Initial fears that Guppy's longstanding customer base might switch to the smaller pack sizes proved unfounded and sales of the smaller sizes have impacted very positively on turnover.

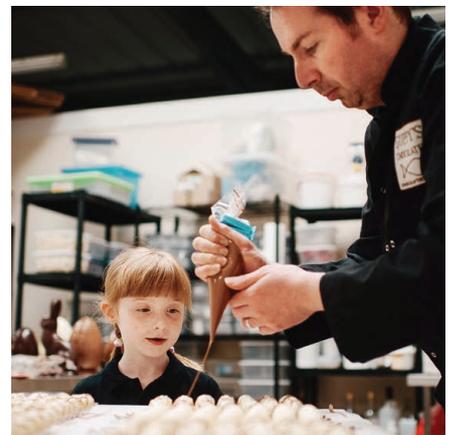
Enhancements to packaging have also improved the saleability of other products within the Guppy's range while higher demand has impacted positively on working hours for Fran and Peter's four part-time members of staff.

Following the success of the Strategic Intervention, Fran and Peter privately commissioned Design Futures to develop header cards for their new seasonal product range of chocolate penguins, reindeers and rabbits.

**"Working with Design Futures has given us a better understanding of the packaging market"**, says Peter. "We've also been able to make savings by cutting out middlemen after the Design Futures team put us in direct contact with packaging manufacturers."

## The Future...

Looking ahead, Peter and Fran plan to increase turnover at a manageable pace. With one eye on capacity and the other firmly on quality, Guppy's focus remains on producing chocolate that sells itself.



## About The Yorkshire Innovation Fund...

**The Yorkshire Innovation Fund brings together ten of the region's higher education institutions to help small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Yorkshire and Humber region to grow.**

Part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the fund helps small businesses to develop ideas for new products, services or processes by funding collaborative projects with the region's universities, drawing on their expertise, specialist equipment or facilities to develop ideas which result in business growth.

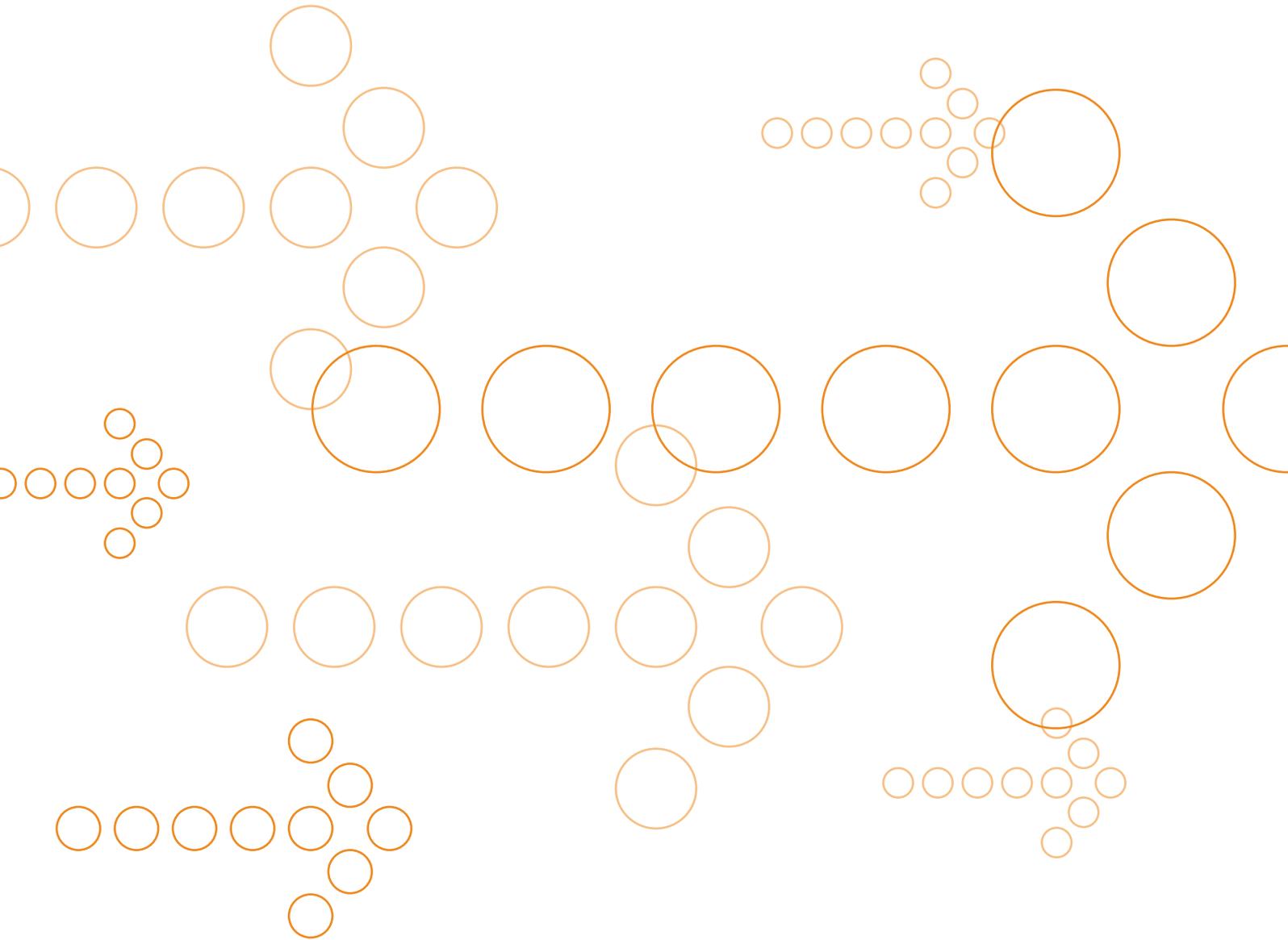
The project has attracted £3.06million of investment from the ERDF as part of Europe's support for local economic development through the Yorkshire and Humber ERDF Programme 2007-13. Partner universities contributed a further £1.87m, bringing the total investment to £4.93m. The project team are based at the University of Bradford.

The delivery partners are: The University of Bradford, The University of Huddersfield, The University of Hull, The University of Leeds, Leeds Beckett University, Leeds College of Music, Leeds Trinity University, Sheffield Hallam University, The University of York, York St John University. The University of Sheffield is a strategic partner.

### **Yorkshire Innovation Fund**

**University of Bradford, Richmond Building, Bradford, BD7 1DP**

**T: 01274 236 673 E: [yif@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:yif@bradford.ac.uk) [www.yorkshireinnovationfund.org](http://www.yorkshireinnovationfund.org) Twitter: @YorkshireIF**



**Yorkshire Innovation Fund**

Funding access to University  
Research and Innovation

**Yorkshire Innovation Fund**

University of Bradford, Richmond Building, Bradford, BD7 1DP

**T:** 01274 236 673 **E:** [yif@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:yif@bradford.ac.uk)

**[www.yorkshireinnovationfund.org](http://www.yorkshireinnovationfund.org)**

**Twitter:** @YorkshireIF



**EUROPEAN UNION**  
Investing in Your Future

European Regional  
Development Fund 2007-13