

# Zoe Jackson MBE

## Founder and Director Living the Dream Performing Arts Company



Multi-award-winning entrepreneur, Zoe Jackson MBE, set up the Living the Dream Performing Arts Company at the age of 16 in 2006 to inspire young people and to subsidise her own performing arts education.

Zoe started Living the Dream with a few hundred pounds of sponsorship from family and friends and went on to attract local arts funding to put on shows featuring young people whilst she was still at school. She managed Living the Dream whilst studying for a full-time BA Honours degree in Dance and Performing Arts at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts.

Since graduating, Zoe has grown Living the Dream to include a school of performing arts, a professional dance company, a talent agency and a charity, the Dream Foundation.

Zoe is passionate about championing young talent, creating access to arts education, entertaining audiences and encouraging young people to live their dreams.

Her strength as a leader and as a role model is in her passion for inspiring and empowering people and has led her to be a leading figure in performing arts in the UK.

Follow Zoe on @ZoeJacksonLTD

Book Zoe Jackson through Conference Speakers International.



Zoe Jackson has won a number of awards for her social entrepreneurship across the arts and business.

In June 2015, **Zoe was honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours List with an award of the Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire** for services to young entrepreneurs and the performing arts.

In 2015 Zoe also received the first '**Queen's Young Leaders Award**', which recognised 60 young people across the Commonwealth who were making a difference in their communities.

Zoe has received several other awards including **the Women of the Future in the Arts, Media and Culture award** with Shell, was listed in **Elle Magazine's "Top 100 Inspiring Women"** alongside Michelle Obama and Beyoncé and she won the **Creative Industries Entrepreneur of the Year** with the Great British Entrepreneurs.

Zoe is frequently featured on television, radio and the news in arts and entertainment, business and education.



**Sir Richard Branson has supported and endorsed Zoe** after she was selected to speak with him on behalf of young entrepreneurs in the UK. Zoe worked with Sir Richard and Virgin to campaign for the Government's Start Up Loans scheme and was instrumental in influencing Government policy.



# Highlights of Media and Television

Zoe is regularly featured in local and national media with her significant awards, achievements and captivating story. She has been called on by Government, press and the education sector to speak on behalf of young people, entrepreneurs and discuss education, entertainment and the arts including BBC, CNBC, Sky, ITV and several radio stations.

## [Zoe Jackson on Great British Menu 2016](#)

Zoe was selected to be on the Great British Menu on BBC2 as she received an award from The Queen and this series celebrated those honoured by Her Majesty to celebrate her birthday.



## [Queen's Young Leaders Award – BBC News](#)

In 2015, Zoe Jackson won the first Queen's Young Leaders award which recognized 60 young people across the Commonwealth transforming the lives of others in their local communities.

## [TV Documentary Feature](#)

Zoe has filmed for a new series called 'Youngtrapreneurs' with NXG Media which follows the lives of 6 young entrepreneurs.

## [Watch the Story of Living the Dream](#)

Find out more about Zoe Jackson's journey setting up Living the Dream from age 16.



# Highlights of Press

Zoe and Living the Dream have been featured in The Independent on Sunday, The Sunday Times, The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph, The Evening Standard, Forbes Magazine, The Observer, The Metro, Elle Magazine, Cosmopolitan Magazine and The Huffington Post.

## [Zoe Jackson Listed in 'Elle Magazine's Top 100 Inspiring Women'](#)

Zoe Jackson appears on *Elle magazine's* 'Top 100 inspiring women' list - alongside Michelle Obama, Victoria Beckham, Oprah Winfrey, Adele and JK Rowling. Other names featured include Annie Lennox, Kelly Holmes, Dolly Parton, Hillary Clinton and Angelina Jolie.

## [Forbes interview](#)

Fearlessness, Passion And Generosity: A Recipe For The 'Dream' Startup

## [Huffington Post Interview](#)

Young Entrepreneur of The Week: Zoe Jackson, Performing Arts Company Founder, And Richard Branson's Inspiration

## **Nationwide Campaign for BTEC**

In 2016 Zoe became an ambassador for the BTEC campaign 'I Choose BTEC' with Pearson alongside Peter Jones CBE and was featured in a highly successful advertising campaign on London buses and in schools and colleges throughout the UK.

ELLE

Forbes

THE  
HUFFINGTON  
POST



# Testimonials

"One of Britain's brightest young business brains." **The Independent on Sunday**

"In Britain, Jackson has become a poster girl for female entrepreneurship" **The Sunday Times**

"Zoe is an example of a truly successful female entrepreneur to whom I to give my full support and endorsement. Zoe, like me, started her business age 16 and has impressed me with her commitment to doing good and making a difference, whilst building Living the Dream. Her contribution to young entrepreneurs has been outstanding. Zoe became involved with my Control Shift campaign and helped enormously in persuading the Government to launch the Start Up Loans scheme. I am proud she acts as an ambassador for Virgin Media Pioneers to inspire young entrepreneurs and she recently helped me to launch Virgin Start Up. I have been impressed by her professionalism and her vision for the future of young people. We need more to see more young people like Zoe becoming successful entrepreneurs." **Sir Richard Branson, Virgin**

"Vodafone involved Zoe Jackson in a key part of our on-going leadership development programme with our senior leaders. Zoe Jackson told her inspirational background story to over 1000 global leaders at Vodafone over a five-year period.

The aim was for the participants to widen their aspirations and entrepreneurial thinking. Zoe is a pleasure to work with, extremely professional and fun, and she delivered dance teambuilding workshops which were fun, vibrant and energetic. The sessions have made a significant impact on all of our participants and I am very strongly recommending Zoe Jackson to work with us on future projects like this."

**Debi Basu, The Vodafone Way Programme Leader**

"As a former Education Minister, I believe that Zoe Jackson has demonstrated with Living the Dream more than any I have seen the capacity of young people to demonstrate talent, business acumen and showcase their abilities to a wide audience. Zoe is one of the most talented and level headed young people I have ever known. She has good business strengths, is hardworking and most importantly has a vision for young people that is first class. The production is entirely by young people, for young people, and is a professional product of the highest quality."

**The Rt Hon Baroness Ashton (former leader of the EU), Patron of Living the Dream**

"Zoe came to visit the Peter Jones Enterprise Academy students as a guest speaker. She was an inspiration to our students, her hard work and determination shone through her honest and heart-warming story. Zoe's passion to succeed and make a difference is her star quality and she is a true self-made entrepreneur. It was a pleasure to meet Zoe and I look forward to working with her again and hopefully having her back to inspire more students."

**Kate Angel, Business Enterprise Manager - The Peter Jones Enterprise Academy**



# Awards and Achievements

2015 – Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE), for services to Young Entrepreneurs and the Performing Arts  
2015 – Queen's Young Leaders Award – The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust, Comic Relief and The Royal Commonwealth Society  
2014 – Top 100 Inspiring Women – Elle Magazine (alongside Michelle Obama, Beyonce and Oprah Winfrey).  
2014 – Creative Entrepreneur of the Year – Great British Entrepreneur Awards  
2014 – 10 UK Female Entrepreneurs to follow – StartUps.co.uk  
2013 – Attended Global Startup Youth Conference in Malaysia with John Kerry, US Secretary of State  
2013 – Selected by Virgin to launch Virgin Start-up with Richard Branson, James Caan and Richard Reed.  
2013 - Winner - Accelerate 250 for Britain's High Growth Businesses  
2013 – Finalist - HP Smart Business Awards for Next Generation category  
2013 – Finalist - National Diversity Awards for the Entrepreneurial Excellence award for age.  
2012 - Youngest Finalist - Natwest Everywoman Artemis Award  
2012 – Winner - Smarta 100 awards.  
2012 - One of the UK's best 80 small businesses with The Pitch  
2012 - One of Cosmopolitan magazine's "40 fierce women under 40"  
2012 - Selected to act as one of 12 ambassadors for the Start Up Loans alongside James Caan (Dragon's Den).  
2012 - Instrumental in persuading Government to launch the multi million pound Start Up Loans scheme  
2012 - Selected by Virgin Media to speak on a panel with Richard Branson at the Global Entrepreneur Congress.  
2012 - Winner - Young Person of the Year award with the Chamber of Commerce Business Awards  
2012 - Finalist - MADE Changemakers award  
2012 - Winner - Youth Achievement Award - Universal Federation for Peace and Women's Federation for Peace  
2012 - Finalist - Lloyds TSB Enterprise Awards  
2011 - Winner - Women of the Future in the Arts, Media and Culture award, Shell  
2011 - Winner - Future 100 Social Entrepreneurs award - Ernst and Young  
2011 - Winner - Mayor's Pride Award for Cultural Innovation  
2011 - Selected by Virgin as a keynote speaker at Richard Branson's book launch for 'Screw Business as Usual'.  
2011 - Selected by Virgin to meet Prime Minister David Cameron to discuss launching the Start Up Loans scheme.  
2011 - Selected by Virgin as one of three young entrepreneurs to launch Richard Branson's Control Shift Campaign, including speaking on a platform, alongside Vince Cable, Secretary of State.  
2009 - Winner of the Top Ten Teenagers in the UK - role in inspiring young people. PR Company - Ing Media



# Living the Dream:

## School of Performing Arts

Provides exciting classes and performance opportunities for 3-18 year olds in street dance, break dance, contemporary dance, musical theatre and acting in Hertfordshire and London with over 500 students attending weekly classes, showcases, flash mobs and workshops.

We aim to inspire young people so they can grow in confidence and ability in an energetic environment allowing them to express themselves and believe in their dreams.

## Professional Dance Company

Provides vibrant performances at events, flash mobs, PR stunts, energisers and corporate teambuilding for international brands. Living the Dream was invited by Her Majesty The Queen to perform at Westminster Abbey for Royal Commonwealth Day in 2013, has performed at private events for Sir Richard Branson and annually at Wembley Arena for charity event WE Day.

Zoe has worked as a creative director on advertising campaigns for global brands including British Airways. Living The Dream's list of clients include Vodafone, Virgin, ITV, Comic Relief, Prêt à Manger, John Lewis and RBS.

## Dream Foundation

A registered charity which supports disadvantaged young people to have free access to arts education, training and performance opportunities.

The Charity uses the power of dance to change young people's lives and the bursaries make it possible for young people to gain in talent and self-belief and helps raise their aspirations for their futures.

## Talent Agency

Provides a platform for talented young people for work in West End shows, music videos, TV and film. The talent agency is growing and represents some of the most talented children, teenagers and professional dancers, actors and choreographers in the UK. Successes include providing performers for Matilda the Musical, Thriller Live, Little Mix tour, Fleur East at Wembley and a CBBC TV series.

