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[www.blastbeat.org](http://www.blastbeat.org)  
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Press Release – 20th September 2011



# **BLASTBEAT WITH O2 THINK BIG UK FINALS AT THE INDIGO2 IN THE O2 ARENA**

## **TUESDAY 25TH OCTOBER 2011 – 2PM TO 6PM**

**// 12 of the Best Young Unsigned Music Acts & Event Social Enterprises  
in the UK**

**// Minister Nick Hurd MP to present 30 Awards this Tuesday**

**// Chipmunk & Wretch 32 set to perform afterwards @ the Think Big Gig**

**// All at the Indigo2 on the 25th October from 12 midday to 11pm**

Blastbeat and O2, through their community programme Think Big, have joined forces to find the best Musicians and Social Entrepreneurs in the UK – that's two competitions in one, the first about music and the other about social enterprise. The National Finals of the competition culminate on the 25th October, bringing together cool, fantastic young people from all over the country to celebrate their various achievements at the Indigo2. 12 bands from all over the country who have been victorious in regional heats compete for the chance to win a management contract and recording opportunities via Blastbeat and assistance to further their burgeoning careers in the music industry. The acts will perform 2 self-penned original songs in an afternoon exploding with music talent, a totally different proposition from many other talent contests.

The bands were set on the path to stardom by groups of students from schools all over the country who have participated in the Blastbeat programme in 2011. These students arranged a Battle of the Acts event at their school, selecting the best original young musicians from their area to perform. The students are competing to be the crowned best Events Social Enterprise (ESE) in the UK, with the TOP 3 winning a £2,500 O2 Think Big level 2 awards, including a year of mentoring from O2 and Blastbeat mentors to continue to grow their social enterprises and youth community work.

With Blastbeat, students create their own business plan, source local bands; manage finances, event management, marketing and promotion, whilst presenting their work



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back to the Blastbeat and O2 “Think Big” judges. Each ESE is made up of pupils choosing their own roles or jobs, working together to be the best ESE in the areas of event management, music social and multimedia. Students will develop good links with other participating schools and neighbouring schools and the business community where they will seek musical talent, audience members, sponsorship and mentors. Students and their ESEs also endeavour to make their event as carbon neutral as possible as a team member takes on the role of “ecology manager”.

**Nick Hurd MP, Minister for Civil Society** will be presenting prizes (5.15 pm) to the best ESE and individuals. Nick has been mentoring students through the Blastbeat programme from Northwood School in his NW London constituency. Nick says “Having first heard about Blastbeat at a presentation in the House, I am wholeheartedly supporting this initiative, initially by introducing Blastbeat to the commercial and academic communities in my constituency, which I trust will draw attention to the value to this excellent programme and initiative and encourage uptake”. After having acted as a mentor himself in a school in his constituency over several months he commented “What Blastbeat offers is a fun way for connecting young people with the skills they are going to need in life, particularly if they are interested in getting involved in business and the world of work, it's just a brilliant way of connecting young people's excitement and passion around music and the chance to develop those skills by actually setting up a real business and running a real concert.”

Helen Parker, O2's Community Manager Comments; “Think Big” partners with 35 different youth charities and organisations across the UK who support and develop young people. For 2011 we are delighted to be partnering with Blastbeat who reach out to young people through their passion for music, enabling them to develop business skills and become more socially aware. Much of the Blastbeat programme focuses on the practical side of the music business, however all the skills learnt are totally transferable to any business.”

So far, more than 10,000 young people have directly benefited from their involvement with Blastbeat as well as hundreds of thousands of those who have participated as members of the audience. Robert Stephenson, founder and DG of Blastbeat says “These fantastic young people now understand what it is to run a social enterprise, make some money, give something back to their own communities and have a lot of fun in the process. Students gain a full range of transferable life, business and music skills in the process.

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Through Blastbeat young people run their own events, stage local acts, make a profit from gigs, and decide the causes they want to support. They get great satisfaction in personally handing over a donation, and making a difference in their and other people's lives. We wish to thank O2 the Dept for Education, Tim Loughton MP particularly Nick Hurd and the Dept for Civil Society - Cabinet Office Transition Fund for making it possible to give this opportunity free to many underserved communities and young people. Mr Stephenson adds, "Many of the young people we've worked with in London would ordinarily think about starting their own business, but Blastbeat makes that achievable and fun and changes peoples lives and heightens their aspirations."

**The National finals of Blastbeat will be staged in the Indigo2 at the O2 Arena on the 25th October 2011 from 12 midday.**

**Bands competing include:**

Amethyst Tetra (Warrington)  
14 Car Pile Up (Watford)  
Mammoth Sound (Hackney, Greenwich and East London)  
In Dante's Eclipse (Wolverhampton)  
Dae La Ruse (Ealing/Acton)  
The Soul Fly Music Group (Tottenham)  
Hot Fudge (York)  
Feird Wish (Stourbridge)  
Find Me Next Fall (Ruislip)  
Demmo (Harrow)  
Bentley Park (York)  
*One more TBA*

**Guest Acts**

KAMAHL KELLY (E Croydon), JUST ME AGAIN (Ruislip), KWAMZ, ( London and Leeds) KINDEST OF THIEVES ( Warrington)  
Maters of Ceremonies - Don and Bowaa



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### Notes to Editor and Photo Editors

// Minister Nick Hurd MP arrival at the O2 @ 4.45pm to present awards at 5.15 sharp –  
Leaving at 6pm

// For more information, please contact:

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**O2:** Victoria Ferguson 07872670284, victoria.ferguson@o2.com

### About Blastbeat

Blastbeat Education UK is a registered charity (1136121) that provides full support for the Blastbeat programme to schools, colleges and youth clubs in England.

See [www.blastbeat.org](http://www.blastbeat.org). This includes a full student mentor programme, curriculum, booklets, web sites and a dedicated moderated safe social network with a tool kit for participants. Mentors visit the schools or colleges involved every few weeks to help participating students.

Please take a look at the music videos of the semi finals and great talent on [www.blastbeat.tv](http://www.blastbeat.tv).

Please also look at our YouTube Channel [www.youtube.com/blastbeatuk](http://www.youtube.com/blastbeatuk) - those videos include many testimonials from stakeholders, programme explanations etc.

### About Think Big

Full details can be found on the website [www.o2thinkbig.co.uk](http://www.o2thinkbig.co.uk)

Think Big is O2's sustainability strategy to influence wide social and environmental change. We want to draw on the collective power of our technology, customers, employees and communities to make a much bigger difference than we could do on our own.

Think Big encompasses two broad areas: People & Planet. Under Think Big for People, O2 is committed to championing and helping young people in society. This is achieved through an innovative social action programme which provides cash, training and support to young people who are making a difference in their communities, and through O2 Learn which aims to make some of the UK's best teaching talent accessible to young people wherever they are. Under Think Big for Planet, O2 aims to champion sustainable business growth by promoting sustainable living through our products and services, by continually reducing our carbon emissions, and by operating as efficiently as we can.