



Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

20th March 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

Establishment of COVID-19 SME Advisory Board

Further to our recent discussions and communication with your advisor Eliza, I am writing to thank you for the leadership that you and your government are showing at this difficult time. We would like to present you with observations and suggestions for measures to enable British businesses to survive and flourish when we are through this crisis.

- Support is needed now:
 - Many good companies cannot afford to run for even weeks without cash coming in.
 - Businesses are making decisions in real time, and redundancies are happening right now.
- It isn't just the leisure, retail and hospitality sectors that are suffering:
 - The complete collapse of business confidence is hitting almost everyone,
 - This is apart from a small number of sectors that are profiting or even profiteering.
 - Help must reach the businesses that really need support; almost every business will be affected so help needs to be far broader-based than we've seen announced so far.
- The government may be relying on a banking sector that we know just doesn't work:
 - The British Business Bank especially is bureaucratic, slow-moving and just doesn't get business.
 - The instinct of most banks will be to protect themselves, and profit from other peoples' problems.
 - This needs very clear directions to banks, or government needs to hand control over emergency funding to a hands-on Board that's genuinely working in the best interests of the economy and real business.
- We strongly recommend setting up a working group of real SME leaders right now, to advise No 10 directly:
 - Not the usual establishment figures but real business people.
 - Putting No 10 directly in touch with people who actually know business rather than just think they represent business.
 - We offer to be part of this and to help bring people together to form the group.

We will make ourselves available at any time should you or your advisors wish to meet.

Yours sincerely,

Jurga Zilinskiene MBE

CEO

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Chairman

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