

TLA, HISCOX & HAMILTON LEIGH ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

“WHAT DO BUSINESS LEADERS NEED TO THINK ABOUT WHEN
TRANSITIONING FROM START UP TO SCALE UP?” MAY 2024

Hiscox and Hamilton Leigh co-hosted a roundtable on 30th May at Hiscox's office on Bishopsgate, central London. The event brought together leaders representing a broad range of businesses to discuss their experiences in scaling up and expansion.

Russ Shaw welcomed the panellists and introduced the afternoon's keynote speaker, Dr Graeme Malcolm OBE. Graeme is CEO and founder of M Squared Lasers, one of the UK's most innovative technology businesses, to share highlights from his company's journey from university spin-out to scale-up.

Panellists shared lessons from their scaling journeys to date. Paul Farrerly, fractional CTO at Freeman Clark, commented that while startups have brilliant ideas and founders, "they don't necessarily understand the fundamentals of building what they want to build."

This was followed by a discussion around what strong investment strategies look like, leaning on the investor experience around the table. Thomas Cornwall, founder at Open Equity, said the key question an investor wants to hear is whether the investment is worth the risk and what its return capability will be.

Next, the panellists looked at the decreasing demands from regulators. James Klein, Partner at Spencer West, noted that businesses need a basic understanding of the regulatory frameworks in the countries they are expanding into, but conceded that the rules change constantly, creating ongoing challenges for companies.

The final part explored recruitment strategies and incentives to keep and develop talent.

Trevor Morris, founder at Thirdwave Identity, stated that it's "more about the mindset of the person" rather than their experience when recruiting. Guy Skinner, founder at Citygate Consulting, also argued that demonstrating care for talent is the key to keeping them engaged. Three key words stood out in this section of the discussion - honesty, openness and transparency.

Jason Cohen, Executive Director at Hamilton Leigh, summarised that the event created "an environment where people felt safe to share thoughts."

Our thanks to Hiscox and Hamilton Leigh for partnering with us for this session - no doubt there will be many more to come.

