



# TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

OPEN

MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS  
AND THE MAKING OF BRITAIN

## Exhibition Guide for Educators

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# Introduction

Taking Care of Business is an immersive exhibition inviting you and your students to explore the impact migrant owned and run businesses and products have on all of our lives – from the food that we eat to the clothes we wear, the apps on our phones to the products in our homes.

The exhibition features hundreds of personal stories of migrants who have set up businesses – from corner shops to tech giants – that have transformed Britain. Entrepreneurship has always been at the heart of the immigrant experience – sometimes out of choice, other times out of necessity. For many, starting a business is the only way to survive in a new land, whilst others arrive with an idea and a plan.

The exhibition takes the shape of familiar places in all of our lives; a market place, a high-street, restaurants and takeaways, department stores and corner shops. It weaves together historical and contemporary narratives, highlighting the long story of migration to Britain. It demonstrates how migration to and from Britain is part of our shared story. The more your students read, listen, watch and explore, the more they will get out of the exhibition.

The story of migrant entrepreneurs is one too often overlooked. When we hear about migration in the news or in public debate, we rarely hear about the stories of impactful businesses that were built by immigrants, we rarely hear about the stories of resilience and triumph in the face of hostility and prejudice. This exhibition is a great way to engage your students in deeper discussions about migration, race and identity – and about how migration and immigrants are often portrayed and treated in British society, politics and the media.

# Your visit



We have created these spaces to be tactile, immersive and interactive. Please ensure your students are mindful and respectful of the stories and the people who generously shared them with us, as well as the space and the objects within. Some of the objects in the exhibition have been loaned to us by the storyteller themselves, others are replicas, all need to be handled carefully to ensure they can continue to tell the stories for future visitors.

We recommend you break your class into small groups to explore the exhibition. This is due to limited space and also to ensure that students get a meaningful opportunity to discover and interact directly with the stories and exhibition content. We expect students to be supervised by a responsible adult in every area of the museum. We know that because it is a highly stimulating, tactile environment, students can often get excited; it is the responsibility of the adults accompanying the trip to ensure students are exploring the space sensibly and are encouraged to read and listen to the stories within.

This exhibition guide is designed to help you get to know the exhibition, where best to look to discover stories that relate to your learning goals. We have identified historical examples that will ground your students learning in the context of the long story of migration to and from Britain. We have highlighted the stories most suitable for primary students and explained how to make the most of your time with us. If you have any further questions about the exhibition and how to explore it with your students please contact our Education Manager, Liberty Melly [liberty@migrationmuseum.org](mailto:liberty@migrationmuseum.org)

# Activity Trails

We have developed a series of trails that lead visitors through the exhibition. They are a great way for students to explore all areas of the exhibition without being overloaded by the large amount of stories and content on display. These trails are recommended for KS3+, but if you are bringing primary students, the trails can be followed with adult supervision.

We recommend printing these in school before the visit, though we will have hand-outs available if this isn't possible. [Please find the download link for these at the end of the guide, along with other downloadable resources.](#)

The trails connect stories by theme, so we encourage students to form small groups so that they can discuss how each story is similar or not - what are the key differences? Do any stories overlap with other trails? What stories stood out to your students and why?



# Activity Trails

## Here's an introduction to the six trails and what they include:

**Refugees Mean Business** For centuries, people have come to the UK seeking refuge from war, disasters and persecution. Forced to start new lives in a new land, many have also started businesses. From French Protestant financiers to Jewish garment makers, Ugandan Asian shopkeepers to more recent arrivals, this trail invites you to discover stories from generations of refugee entrepreneurs.

**For Us, By Us** Migrant entrepreneurs are good at spotting gaps in the market that mainstream businesses aren't serving, often responding to demand from their own or other communities. From hair and beauty to safe spaces to party. This trail invites you to discover businesses past and present that have been created 'for us, by us'.

**We Are Lewisham** London's Borough of Culture 2022 is home to businesses founded by people with roots spanning the globe. From fashion labels to greasy spoons, local favourites to London legends, discover stories from entrepreneurs whose businesses are central to the lives of so many people in Lewisham and beyond.

**Quintessentially British** From Marmite to M&S, fish and chips to KP Nuts, some brands, businesses and products have become such a central part of our lives that they are now seen as integral to what it means to be British. But just like so many aspects of our national life, these 'quintessentially British' brands wouldn't exist without migration.

**Family Affair** Families are at the heart of so many immigrant-founded businesses, from corner shops and takeaways to some of the biggest companies in Britain. The trail highlights why migrant entrepreneurship is so often a family affair.

**Who Runs the World?** It's a fact: women remain massively underrepresented in business. And yet, whether at the forefront of companies and brands we know and love, or behind the scenes making it work, women are the backbone of so many migrant-founded businesses.

# Exploring with early years

We have created areas throughout the exhibition where early years learners can play and interact with the exhibition. Find mini-drawing tables throughout, hair-play in the barbershop and the Global/Local market and construction play area towards the back of the exhibition.

Please help us keep our market shop tidy, so that other children can also enjoy some playtime fun. While older students are welcome to explore all areas of the exhibition, we hope they will be respectful and limit their time in these areas. If there are young visitors using this area, we ask that older students please explore other areas of the museum.

Global/Local is a children's market stall created by artist Neysela Da Silva-Reed as a one-stop shop for exploring the world through fruit and veg. You will find aprons and baskets so that children can act out shopping for their favourite items. You will also find two different activity sheets: a Fruit Salad shopping list and a make-your-own currency sheet.

## Key questions

What fruit and vegetables do you recognise?

Where do they come from?

Are any of these fruit and vegetables ingredients in your favourite dishes?

Are there any that are new to you?



# Exploring with primary students

Our exhibitions are for everyone, but there are some areas that have been designed with younger children in mind. We are also mindful that some stories might contain sensitive content. We have identified the most age-appropriate stories and highlighted stories in the following pages of this guide that young children might find upsetting, so that you can avoid them or broach them in a sensitive way.

We encourage you to start the visit by asking students if they recognise any aspects of the exhibition: do they have a local take-away or corner shop? What products do they use in their lives? We hope to highlight how migration has impacted our daily lives by influencing culture and society through ideas, products and businesses.

The exhibition is designed to be fun and immersive, and is packed with hundreds of personal stories. We know students often get very excited while exploring, so we suggest that each group of students is accompanied by an adult who can find one story per section for students to have a short discussion about. This will ensure students remain focused and engage with the diverse and inspiring stories.

## **Key questions**

Where did this person migrate from and why?

Why did they start their business?

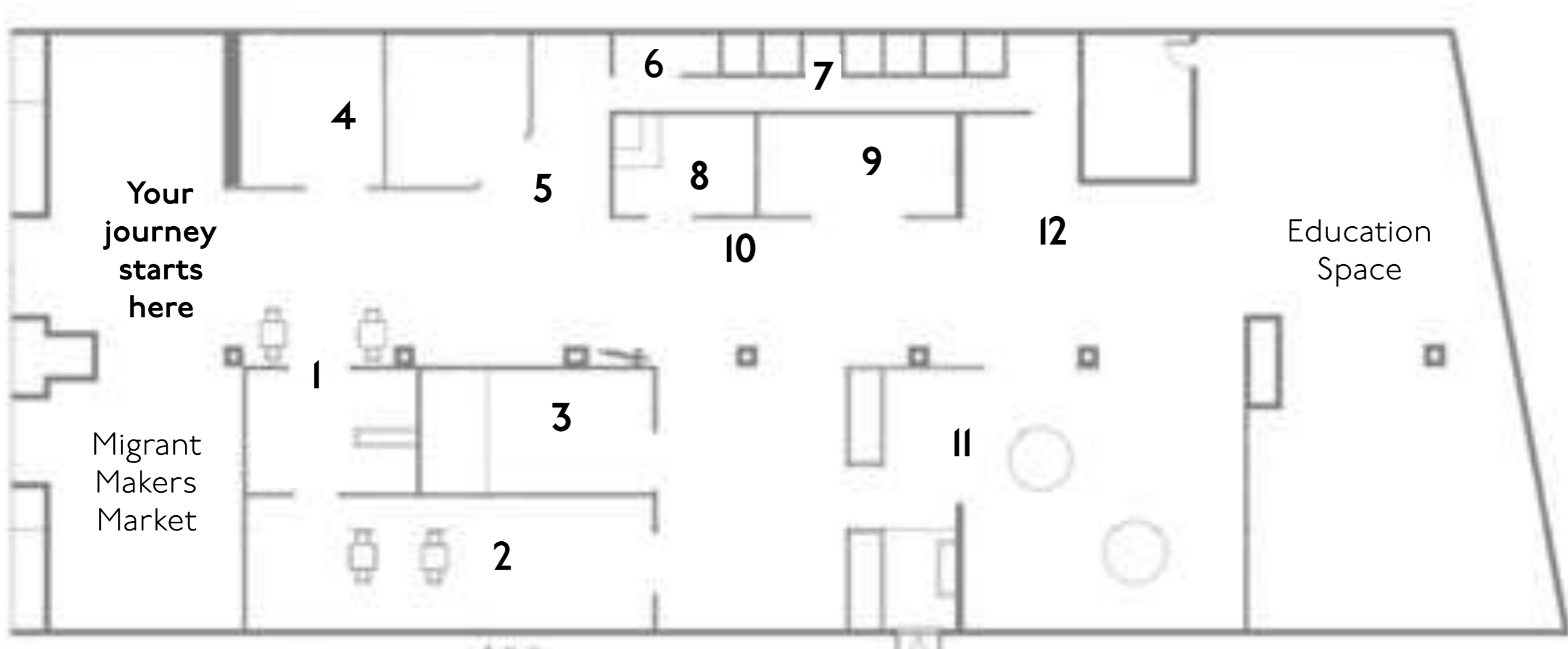
What obstacles did they have to overcome, if any?

What businesses like these have you been to/do you use?

Do you know anyone who runs or works in a business like this?



# Map



1 Cafe and Takeaway 2 The Restaurant 3 The Salon 4 Tech Zone 5 Leisure  
6 What Would You Do? 7 Lewisham High Street 8 Corner Shop 9 Home Goods  
10 Cash Machine 11 The Boutique 12 Global/Local

# The Café and Takeaway

What was the last takeaway you had? Where did you last go for coffee? Chances are, both are owned – and staffed – by migrants. This area explores cafe and takeaway businesses found on high streets across the UK.

The Chinese Takeaway is curated by journalist Angela Hui, who grew up in a takeaway in the South Welsh valleys. It is designed to be immersive – you can listen to oral histories by dialling 1-5 on the phone behind the counter. Please ensure students engage with this space sensibly, treating all objects with respect and return them where they found them.

We have created an activity sheet for Benny's Fish & Chips to encourage students to look at it carefully. You can find this under the counter of the takeaway.

## Look out for

London's first coffee house – founded in the 1650s

How Costa Coffee began

The story of Benny's Fish & Chip shop (download activity sheet here)

Historical photographs of German businesses attacked during WWI

Pick up the phone and hear what it's like to grow up in a Chinese takeaway

Morley's – a family-owned business that became a South London institution

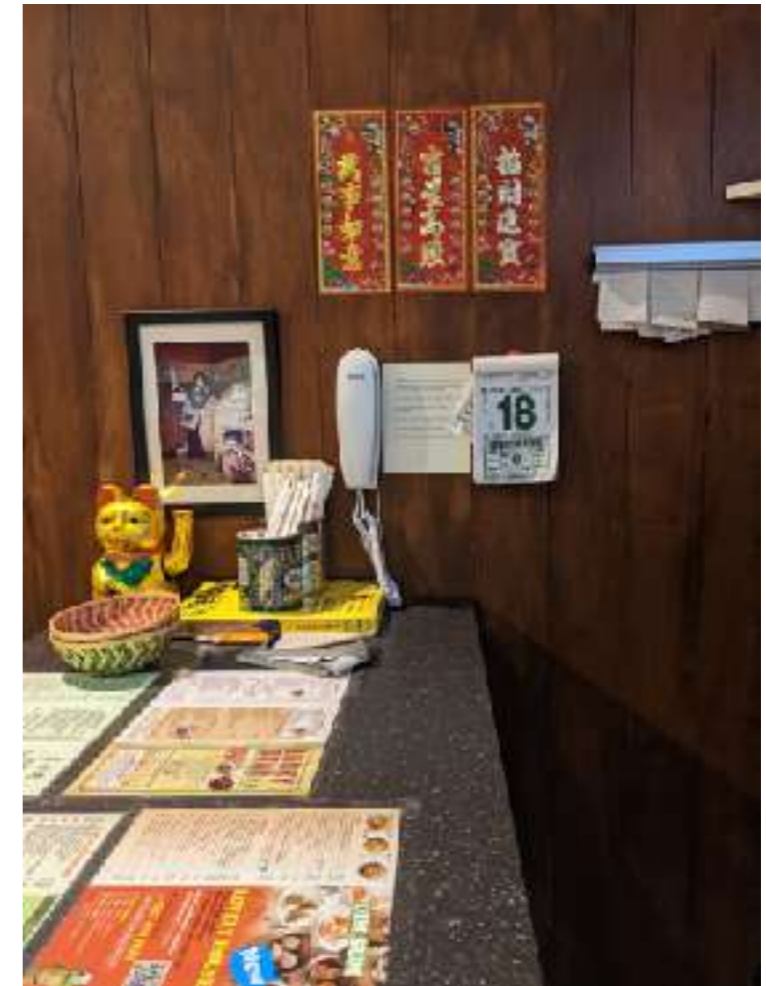
## Key questions

Do you recognise any of these businesses?

What were the experiences of the people who started and ran them?

Why did Angela Hui's parents start a takeaway business?

What does the future hold for family-run businesses like these?



# Restaurant

This area continues exploring how migration has impacted food and drink via stories of restaurant founders past and present. The gallery is laid out like a restaurant with six tables – each telling the story of a different restaurant. We encourage students to sit at each table in pairs, pick up the menus or pull the audio pods close to their ear to read and listen to each of the stories, and then discuss the themes they explore.

The wall to the right as you enter from the Takeaway displays an animation of Charlie Phillips' Smokey Joe's Diner. Step towards the wall and the animation begins.

Pull the extendable audio headphone mounted on the walls next to several of the tables to your ear to listen to the stories behind each restaurant. Please ensure your students don't damage these audio devices and rehang them on the wall after use.

The table in the centre contains a 'menu' of conversation topics and questions.

## Look out for

The animation of Charlie Phillips' Smokey Joe's Diner

The conversations table

Lewisham's legendary Irish café Maggie's

Asma Khan's all-female restaurant Darjeeling Express

Video and photos telling the stories behind Brick Lane's curry houses.

## Key questions

Do you recognise any of these restaurants or the food they serve?

What is your favourite restaurant or type of food?

What were the experiences of the people who created and ran these restaurants?

Why is food an important part of culture and identity?

What role do restaurants play in our lives?



# The Salon

Barbershops and hairdressers are often safe spaces in which people meet, commune and take care of themselves. Hair can also often be connected to our culture and identity.

The barber's chairs face mirrors that turn into video screens when students sit in them. These videos contain real-life conversations and stories from barbershops across London

The stories on the wall explore stories of hair-care businesses and salons, from global brands to Britain's first multi-million-pound Black-owned business.

We have a play area containing hair mannequin heads for younger children to play with. While older students are welcome to explore all areas of the exhibition, we hope they will be respectful and limit their time playing. We encourage students to focus on finding the stories that are available to read, watch and listen to.

## Look out for

Dyke & Dryden – Britain's first multi-million-pound Black-owned business

Winifred Atwell – pop star turned salon owner

Interactive barber shop videos (sit in barber's chairs and they will start)

Story of luxury haircare brands Vidal Sassoon and Toni&Guy.

## Key questions

What obstacles did Len Dyke and Dudley Dryden face when trying to get a loan for their business?

Which stories show someone spotting a gap in the market and then successfully filling it?

Who was Britain's first celebrity hairstylist and where were their parents born?

How many countries do Toni & Guy now operate in?



# Tech Zone

The Tech Zone explores how immigrants to Britain have created technology that has transformed our lives, from 19th-century inventors to modern-day app developers.

Students can watch a series of phones and tablets to find out about the stories behind apps like Citymapper and Candy Crush. Or explore the displays and discover more historical stories, from the founder of radio-wave transmission to the pioneer of modern-day eyeglasses.

Due to the nature of the objects in this area we have placed them behind cases. We also ask that students do not climb on the electric scooter or bike - these are not to be played with as they are valuable and easily broken.

## Look out for

The apps in the display cabinet

The inventor of the radio, Guglielmo Marconi

The story behind wearable robotics firm UnHindr

## Key questions

How many of these technologies are part of your daily lives?

Who invented the Citymapper app and why?

Why did Ugur Tanriverdi end up creating his own medical tech business and how do his inventions help make a difference?

Why do you think there are so many new technologies founded by newcomers?



# Leisure

We all need somewhere outside the home to have fun, let ourselves go, catch up with friends – or make new ones. Yet, many immigrants, in particular people of colour, have been excluded from or felt unwelcome in existing pubs, dancehalls and clubs. In response, entrepreneurs created new kinds of venues that have revolutionised nightlife, music and entertainment culture.

The leisure area of Taking Care of Business explores everything from clubs, music, cinemas and film to nightlife, travel and hotels. It's a good place to open a discussion about the structural difficulties people faced when trying to create a new life for themselves, and the importance of safe spaces. It features examples from the 1960s and 1970s as well as from today, so can be used to explore what has changed over time, and to discuss what more can be done to create a more inclusive leisure industry.

## Look out for

The Night Spot, where you can watch 4 short videos about spaces immigrant communities have carved out for themselves: from Irish dancehalls to daytimer raves - please note these play on a loop.

The Box Office, where you can discover the story behind Odeon cinemas as well as the British-Nigerian founded agency that produced some of the biggest stars of cinema today – John Boyega (Star Wars) and Letitia Wright (Black Panther).

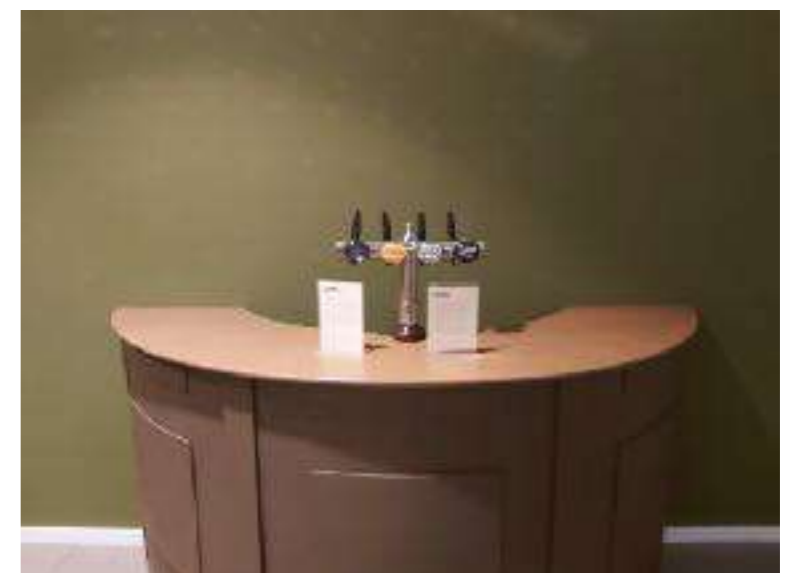
## Key questions

What obstacles did the founders of these leisure businesses face?

What has changed since then – and what hasn't?

What was the impact of this business? What impact did these businesses have on the communities they serve – and on Britain's leisure industry and arts and culture?

**Please note:** The Night Spot includes stories about alcoholic drinks brands and is designed to look like a pub.



# What Would You Do?

This is an interactive activity inviting visitors to put themselves in the shoes of entrepreneurs who have encountered pivotal movements in their lives and careers. If you were faced with the same choices that they had to make, what would you do?

Each item in the shopping cart represents a different entrepreneur's story. Visitors are invited to select an item from the shopping basket and place it on the 'checkout' - an interactive video will begin in which each entrepreneur introduces themselves and invites visitors to make key decisions.

This area should have a maximum of 5 students at any given time, and students should take care with the products and be careful to put them back in the basket.

**Calculator:** Dame Stephanie Shirley, a tech pioneer, philanthropist and founder of Freelance Programmers.

**Cassette Tape:** Corey Johnson, a philanthropist, music producer and founder of record label Defenders Entertainment and studio The Digital Holdings.

**Pan Cornflour:** Johanna Alvarez, the founder and owner of Ivan Store in Elephant and Castle

**Reggae Reggae Sauce:** Levi Roots, a Dragons' Den-backed food entrepreneur and musician. Founder of food-and-drinks business Levi Roots.

**Spanner:** Sukhpal Singh Ahluwalia, the founder and Non-Executive Chairman of Dominvs Group, former founder and Chairman of Euro Car Parts and philanthropist.

**Please note:** Corey Johnson's video (Cassette Tape) contains references to a bank robbery that he was involved in as a teenager.



# Lewisham High Street

The Migration Museum has been located in the heart of Lewisham since early 2020.

It is a vibrant, diverse community featuring businesses founded by migrants with roots spanning the globe.

We have converted these former changing rooms into 7 listening booths.

Each booth tells the story of a different Lewisham business, featuring audio in which each business founder tells their story, as well as portraits by artist Karimah Hassan.

Students can sit on the stool provided in each booth and listen to the stories using the headphones provided.

We suggest students listen to one story each, then spend some time recounting each person's story to classmates or teachers – their name, business, motivations and journey.





# Corner Shop

The Corner Shop area has been curated by TV presenter and author Babita Sharma. Her story is framed in the context of the racial tensions in the 1970s and 1980s which put corner shops, like the one her parents ran, on the front line.

Students can explore this replica corner shop and hear the stories of Babita and other shop owners by picking up the cans and listening.

We have stocked the shelf immediately to the right as you enter with a range of migrant-created products that are widely sold in corner shops and supermarkets. We have created a 'shopping list' activity in this area which encourages students to find the names and country of origin of each items' creator – you can find this on the shop counter.

## Look out for

Babita Sharma's story, told via captions throughout the space

The till behind the counter is the original till from Babita's parents' shop

Listening cans – pick up to listen

The 'shopping list' activity

## Key questions

When was the last time you went to a corner shop?

What role do these businesses play in our communities – and our lives? Why did so many families decide to run a corner shop?

Who were the National Front and how did the racism and violence they inflicted damage the lives of immigrant families?

Which 'quintessentially' British item has the most surprising migration story?

**Please note:** Durex is one of the products featured on the shelf of well-known brands. We appreciate that the nature of this product may distract students from its story, so we have placed it on the highest shelf.



# Home Goods

The Home Goods section of the exhibition explores the migration stories behind popular home goods stores, furniture makers, designers and common household items.

There are no interactive stories in this gallery, but it is a good place to have small group discussions while still immersed in the exhibition: sit on the MADE.com sofa, looking at the Orla Kiely curtains and the Ercol furniture that are staples in homes across Britain.

## Look out for

The story of Tom Kremer, the creator of the Rubik's Cube.

Orla Kiely designer curtains

Robert Dyas's story of migrating to Britain with just £5 in 1872

The story of the Lebus family who migrated from eastern Europe in the 1840s.

## Key questions

Do you recognise any of these objects or designs? Do you have anything similar at home?

What skills and ideas did these people bring to Britain?

Can you think of any other stores or designers that have migrant backgrounds?



# Cash Machine

Britain's banking industry has been shaped by generations of migrants.

This interactive cash machine explores this through three stories; by placing each bank card into the machine, each video will play.

**City of London:** Exploring how London has been transformed over centuries into a city where people come from around the world to borrow, lend and invest – generating vast wealth, but also widening inequalities both here and abroad.

**Bank of England:** Created in the 17th Century after the arrival of French Huguenot refugees.

**Fintech:** Nowadays we manage our money with a few swipes on our phones, but until recently sending money and making payments – especially to people overseas – was a long and expensive process. Migrant-founded financial technology (fintech) companies such as Revolut have made the process much simpler.

## Key questions

What evidence is there of change and continuity when you look at the impact of migrants on the UK's banking and financial sectors?

Why did London become the centre of the banking industry?

How have modern-day fintech companies changed how we do banking?

How have immigrants shaped our economy since the medieval ages?



# The Boutique

The Boutique area explores stories of immigrants who have been influencing styles in Britain for centuries – from French Huguenot refugees who brought in fine silk-woven fabrics worn by high society, to postwar Caribbean communities who introduced dressmaking skills and street styles that remain popular today.

Some of our best-known fashion brands and retailers – from Marks & Spencer to Selfridges, Burton to Boohoo – were founded by migrants or their descendants. Fashion designers from around the world have found a creative environment in the UK to set up their brands. Meanwhile a new generation of British-born designers with migrant heritage has emerged, exploring questions of identity, sustainability and globalisation.

## Look out for

Interactive t-shirt design

Osman Yousefzada's video with spoken word artist Red Medusa

Biba – the defining style of the 'Swinging Sixties'

Rimmel: the 'London Look' designed by migrants.

Althea McNish and her influence on subsequent generations of designers

Stories of people from across the world who worked in Britain's garment industry.

## Key questions:

What designers and shops do you recognise?

In the film 'Here to stay', what is the artist saying about cultural appropriation?

Who was Althea McNish, where did she migrate from and how did her migration story influence her designs?



# Migrant Makers Market

The Migrant Makers Market is the Migration Museum's concept shop, selling products made and created exclusively by migrant-founded brands.

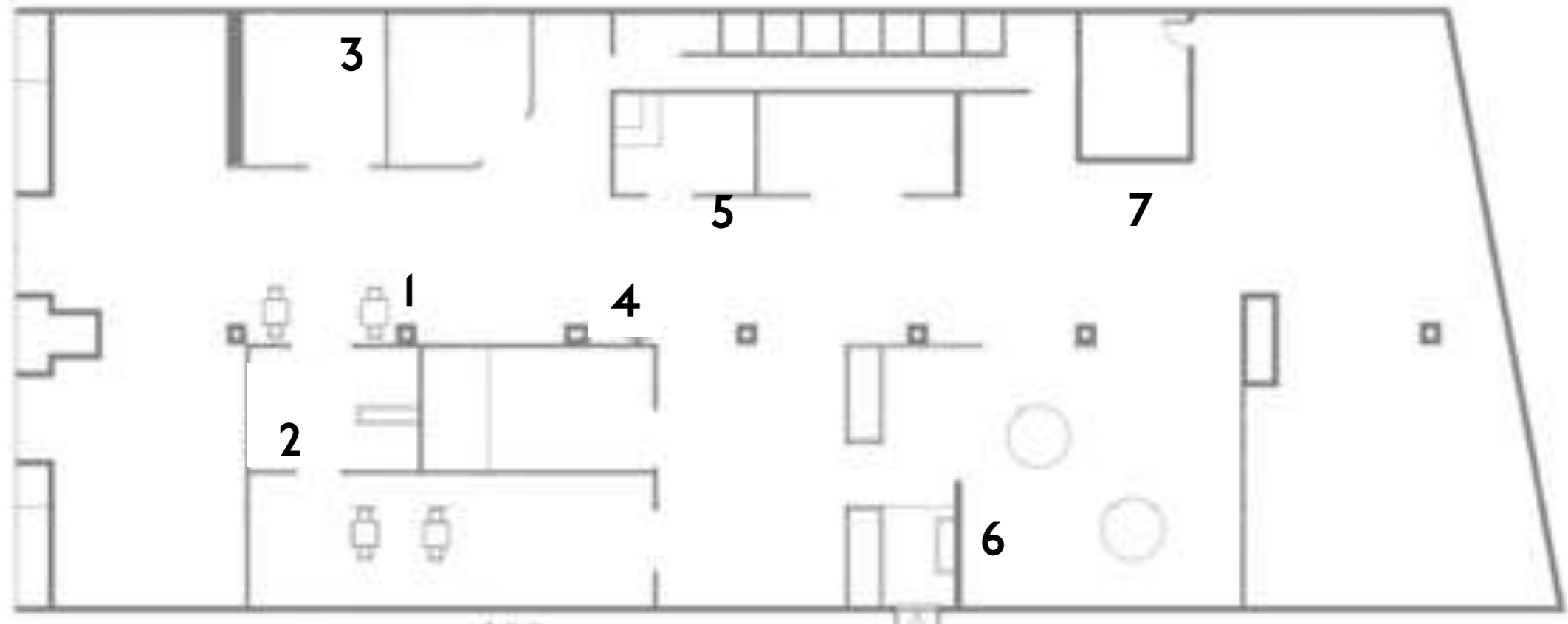
While you explore the beautiful and unique range of products you will find 'Meet the Maker' cards which tell the stories of the creators behind the items on sale.

We ask that students only visit the shop in small supervised groups of no more than 10 students at a time. If students want to make a purchase, please arrange this at the end of the visit or during the lunch period. Please encourage students to be sensible when in the shop and ask them to prepare their money ahead of getting to the till. Please be aware the this area may often be busy and is positioned by the entrance to the museum.



# Historical Stories

We know how important it is to frame contemporary migration stories within the context of the long-history of people coming to – and leaving from – Britain. Migration is not just a modern story, it is one that dates back thousands of years, and has always shaped our industries, technologies, cultures and societies. We have highlighted where you can find some of the historical stories in the exhibition:



1. Pasqua Rosée's 17th-century coffee house
2. German businesses at the turn of the 20th century
3. Dollond Spyglass c.1750
4. Italian Ice Cream in the 19th century
5. Cash Machine: City of London and Bank of England.
6. Garment Industries
7. Irish migration in the 20th century

# Resources

**BBC Stories, Meet the kids who grew up in Chinese takeaways**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=li9o8B\\_9sXo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=li9o8B_9sXo)

**Broadcast from BBC One (2016) with Babita Sharma**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oUHI9f9Y7aU>

**TedX, Babita Sharma: The corner shop and the truth about immigration**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oS7se-pAUzo>

**Beyond Banglatown**

<https://beyondbanglatown.org.uk/>

**Our Migration Story: Germanophobia and World War I**

<https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/oms/germanophobia-and-germans-in-britain-in-the-early-twentieth-century>

**Our Migration Story: Building Italian communities: caterers, industrial recruits and professionals**

<https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/oms/building-italian-communities-catering-war-service-industrial-recruitment>

**Turner Contemporary and Counterpoints Arts: The Great British Fish & Chips schools resource**

<https://turnerc-assets.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/uploads/2021/06/19112850/The-Great-British-Fish-Chips-Schools-invite-V3-final.pdf>

If there are particular stories, sources or videos from the exhibition that you would like to use in your classroom, please let us know and we will try to make them available. We also recommend you visit our education resource bank for more migration resources and activities.