

**REACHING THE BUSINESSES THAT OTHER POLICIES HAVE FAILED TO
REACH? DEVELOPING ETHNIC MINORITY BUSINESS SUPPORT IN THE
UK THROUGH INCREASING ENGAGEMENT WITH MINORITY
COMMUNITIES**

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One of the fundamental issues in the landscape of UK business policy is the unevenness in the take-up of mainstream support and advice by businesses, particularly by ethnic minority owner managers who have tended to rely instead on self-help and informal sources of assistance. This paper contributes to the debate on the development of policy designed to reach the businesses that have traditionally been under-represented in the client base of mainstream business support agencies. The paper analyses a model of business support which seeks to enhance the activities of existing, community-based organisations and utilise them as a vehicle to reach business owners within their own ethnic minority groups. *A priori* the advantages of this approach includes the ability to develop support that is appropriate to the needs of ethnic minority owned businesses and reach those business owners who require support. This culturally embedded model has the potential to overcome the barriers that have historically impeded the appropriate development and take-up of business support. On the other hand, questions may be asked of the quality of the support and assistance provided if business advisers are not sufficiently trained and connected with the mainstream. The paper concludes by placing the role of culturally embedded support into broader policy debates.