



Fay Sharpe, founder of Fast Forward 15, likes to welcome Jackie Mulligan as the first Shero on this new FF15 feature. “Every month we hope to spotlight someone from our industry that is making a difference, doing their bit or has created a successful business. I first met Jackie 5 years ago when she offered to be one of the first mentors on my FF15 programme, she was dynamic, full of great ideas and a great mentor in our FF15 community.”

Here Jackie tells us a little bit about herself, please like, ask questions and comment in this new series to highlight incredible women in our industry.

Who is Jackie Mulligan?

“I am Dr Jackie Mulligan, I have worked in the UK for lottery, theatre, events and in the Caribbean and worked in academia where I led international research projects as well as teaching and researching and got to be one of the founding mentors for FF15. I had been in my last academic job for 11 years and was old enough to know better when I took the leap to fight for my local high street. I always had a passion for small enterprise, place and community and could not bear to see the decline of local businesses when there seemed to be an easy way to level the playing field. Whilst writing my PhD thesis which was all about creativity and social psychology, I started to realise the importance of our physical environments and people on our state of mind and motivation and it motivated me to address my growing concern on the negative impact of declining towns on our mental health and well-being, I packed up my academic career, my almost finished thesis and founded [ShopAppy.com](https://www.shopappy.com) in 2016. ShopAppy enables communities to browse, book and buy local with easy click and collect after hours and over COVID-19 I added local delivery. I had an idea, no tech or retail experience but I did have a strong motivation to make a difference and felt passionately that it was time to shape a better future for places. I also liked the idea of collecting shopping from a local pub so I could combine two of my favourite hobbies of drinking gin and shopping.

The journey has been tough, more of a climbing wall than a learning curve but the key is I have learned so much along the way. For COVID-19 we pivoted the business to include delivery and we grew from 29 towns to 102 towns in 3 weeks, we are now starting ShopAppy in over 120 towns, we have a partnership with VISA and I have been working with Saatchi and Saatchi on a rebrand and our first billboards. It is hard work, involves

many sleepless nights and personal sacrifice, but I feel a sense of purpose and urgency that drives me and now my team of 10 people forward.

I have lots of tips from this experience, but my key ones are to take chances to do things you believe in, understand that success is as much about know-how as it is about know who and realise that when you are creating something new, there is no road map but that new paths are made by walking, you will trip up, there will be bumps....But just keep going.”

Dr Jackie Mulligan

Founder

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