



CARDIFF MET ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Impact Report

2025-2026

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg
This document is also available in Welsh



NatWest



Ariennir yn Rhannol gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Part Funded by
Welsh Government



Cardiff
Metropolitan
University

Prifysgol
Metropolitan
Caerdydd

Research, Innovation
and Enterprise Services

Gwasanaethau Ymchwil,
Arloesi a Menter



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Introduction

Behind the great student business ideas that comes from Cardiff Met, are staff from across the University ready to back them.

Based within Research, Innovation and Enterprise Services, the Cardiff Met Entrepreneurship team exists to turn "what if" into "what's next," supporting venture creation, idea generation and entrepreneurial upskilling through a packed calendar of support and networking events that connect our community with entrepreneurs who have been there before.

Partnerships are important to us.

We work alongside Welsh Government, NatWest and Engineers and Scientists in Business Fellowship to open doors for our students. This brings funding, expertise and opportunities directly to our students and graduates.

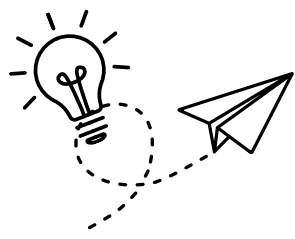
We've also been busy behind the scenes.

Through closer collaboration between Cardiff Met Entrepreneurship, Libraries, Careers Service, Quality Enhancement Directorate and the Professional Learning & Development Academy, entrepreneurship support is being accessed inside and outside the curriculum. A growing community of practice is helping academics bring real-world opportunity into the classroom, giving students the confidence and skills to shape their own future careers.

This impact report captures the 2025-26 academic year in full: the numbers, the ventures, the people, and the small moments that added up to a genuinely standout year.

Highlights:

- Highest ever number of Start-up bootcamp applications
- Establishing a new partnership with NatWest
- Broadening our reach into doctoral/post grad research and commercialisation



A STUDENT'S ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT JOURNEY



STAGE

1

EXPLORE YOUR IDEA



BUSINESS ADVICE DROP INS

Drop in to chat to the team about your idea and get advice on your next steps



VENTURE FORWARD

Attend these sessions to curate your business plan and map out your idea



SKILLS WORKSHOPS

Upskill yourself with our business skills workshops



MEET & MINGLE

Get inspired by guest speakers and network with our community

STAGE

2

FUND & TEST YOUR IDEA



FLASH FUND

Apply for up to £250 to test your ideas



SEED FUND

Apply for up to £500 to start your business and take the next steps



MARKETS

Test trade your products at one of our markets

STAGE

3

LAUNCH & GROW



START-UP BOOTCAMP

Join our immersive four day programme to accelerate you from idea to launch



RISING FOUNDERS

Apply for a share of £10k to start or grow your business



PEER ENTERPRISE NETWORK

Join other student and graduate founders to network and get advice



CATALYST MENTORSHIP

Get a mentor to help you on your start-up journey

EQUIP

Support to take individuals from idea to venture creation



21

Equip activities & workshops



22

Traders at the Winter Market



15

Flash Funds Awarded



£16,550

In funding distributed



17

Graduates supported by the Catalyst Mentorship Programme



15

Peer Enterprise Network Meetings



3

Winners of the inaugural Cardiff Met School of Technologies Entrepreneurship Award. Supported by Engineers and Scientists in Business Fellowship



EMPOWER

Meaningful interventions of at least one hour, designed to build enterprise skills or entrepreneurial competence, both in and outside of the curriculum

727 STUDENTS EMPOWERED



14

Extra-curricular activities



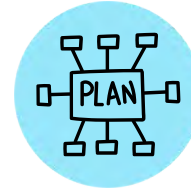
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In-curricular sessions



8

Skills Workshops



5

Venture Forward business planning workshops



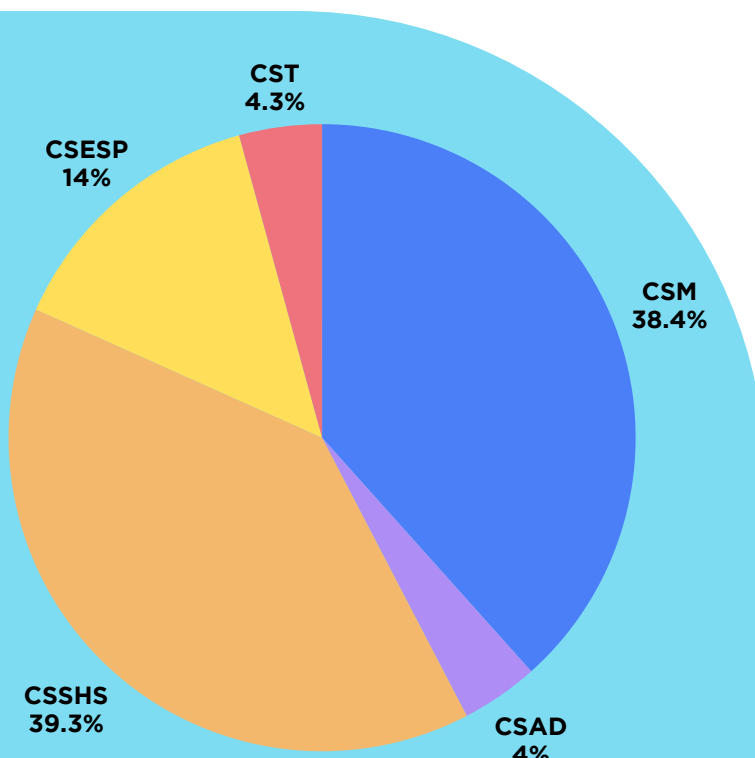
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Pan Wales Hackathon



83

Applications for funding calls



Empowered students by school

CSM - Cardiff School of Management
CST - Cardiff School of Technologies
CSSHS - Cardiff School of Sport and Health Sciences
CSESP - Cardiff School of Education and Social Policy
CSAD - Cardiff School of Art and Design

EMPOWER

Case Study: Collaboration with Cardiff School of Technologies

This year we collaborated with CST to deliver multi-level engagement activity to equip students with opportunities to enhance their entrepreneurial skills and develop ideas. Supported by the Engineers and Scientists in Business Fellowship, we opened a competition to pitch an impactful project idea to win up to £1500. We also delivered an Innovation experience 'work experience' option for the core level 5 module. Students could choose to attend our mini-bootcamp and go from problem identification to idea generation and pitching, ready to submit to their ideas to the funding competition. Our award winners were:

Elin Forster - 'Find It Your Way' is an adaptive navigation app for people with disabilities and elderly users. It provides personalised accessibility focused navigation, adapting for visual, mobility, sensory, or even cognitive needs.

Amirhossein Hajianfar - 'Medialingo' is a tool designed to bridge the engagement gap in language learning by transforming your favourite TV shows into personalized lessons.

Ali Yousaf - A customisable chrome extension to summarise and streamline terms and conditions pages before accepting.

ENGAGE

Activity to champion entrepreneurship and innovation to promote it as possible and desirable



16

Business Advice
Drop Ins



3

Meet and Mingle
Networking events



5

Curious about commercialising your research
information sessions



START UP BOOTCAMP



36 participants



4 days



Industry experts



Start-up showcase

From Ideas to Action in One Immersive Week



+63%

in readiness to start a business within the next 6 months



+75%

increase in knowing where to access business support



100%

would recommend this programme to others

TOP GROWTH AREAS



Identifying support



Marketing strategy



Intellectual Property



Business finance

WHAT PARTICIPANTS VALUED MOST



MEET THE EXPERTS

Access to experts, tailored advice and real-world insights



START-UP SHOWCASE

Presenting ideas with confidence and getting feedback and advice



PEER LEARNING

Learning alongside others and becoming part of a supportive community

“

I'm leaving feeling really excited to get started

”

“

Went way above my expectations

”

“

I have really enjoyed it and found it incredibly valuable

”

How participants described the experience

INFORMATIVE EDUCATIONAL INSPIRING

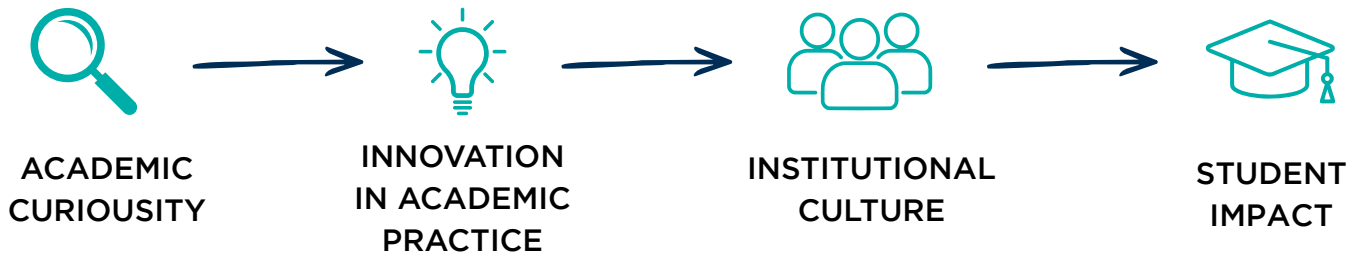


From a diverse cohort to a connected community, the bootcamp increased growth across all areas, equipping and inspiring participants to take the next steps to launch their ventures.



EQUIPPING ACADEMICS

Rather than asking how we equip students to be more enterprising, much of what we do is drive entrepreneurial attributes and mindset through academic disciplines.



Academics who engage with innovation inspire a culture of possibility, shaping experiences and outcomes for our students

HOW WE SUPPORT ACADEMICS



QUALITY ASSURANCE

Embedding enterprise and employability through our quality processes and direct programme support



SOCIAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

A practitioner-led space for collective learning, idea-sharing and professional development

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN ACTION

64 NEW PROGRAMMES WITH DEMONSTRABLE ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Entrepreneurship Team worked in direct support of many programmes and modules, with a standout this year:

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP MODULE

Extensive curriculum enhancement focused on enterprising behaviours and knowledge



SOCIAL LEARNING COMMUNITY



8 EVENTS delivered over the last two years



100+ COLLEAGUES directly engaged



72 MEMBERS of the virtual community

Staff have connected with case studies from:

Psychology · Biomedical Sciences ·
Management Strategy · Journalism · Sport ·
Business · Fashion Marketing

Watch videos from our academics on Youtube



TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO IMPACT

Doctoral researchers are already fluent in the language of discovery. Throughout their PhD, they develop expertise in research design, critical thinking, evidence generation and the creation of new knowledge.

Our role is to help them develop the capability to translate that expertise into real-world impact, ensuring that research can be understood, adopted and applied beyond academia.

RESEARCH CREATES KNOWLEDGE. TRANSLATION CREATES IMPACT.

WHAT IS RESEARCH TRANSLATION?

Research translation moves research beyond academia so that its findings, insights and innovations can be understood, adopted and applied in the real world. It begins by asking three simple questions:



WHO COULD BENEFIT FROM THE RESEARCH?



WHAT DIFFERENCE COULD IT MAKE?



HOW COULD THIS RESEARCH BE TRANSLATED INTO PRACTICE?

This may lead to collaboration with industry, informing public policy, improving healthcare, shaping communities, supporting public services or developing new products and services.

Importantly, research translation is not a single event at the end of a PhD - it is a capability that can be developed throughout the doctoral journey.



Pictured: The 'Day at the Museum' event as part of the Impact Accelerator series

THE RESEARCH TRANSLATION JOURNEY

HOW CARDIFF MET DEVELOPS THIS

1.RECOGNISE POTENTIAL My research could create value beyond the thesis	1 GUIDANCE RESOURCE Introducing research translation and pathways to impact
2.UNDERSTAND VALUE Who could benefit from my research and why does it matter?	1 PHD LAUNCH EVENT 2 DOCTORAL INDUCTION SESSIONS 5 CURIOUS ABOUT COMMERCIALISATION SESSIONS Embedding research translation from the beginning of the doctoral journey.
3.DEVELOP CAPABILITY I can build the confidence and skills to communicate research, engage stakeholders and explore opportunities	IMPACT ACCELERATOR SERIES Delivering four hybrid practical research translation workshops and one in-person "Day at the Museum"
4.TRANSLATE RESEARCH I can test ideas, engage external audiences and identify appropriate pathways to impact.	12 DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS Participated in the Impact Accelerator Series during the year

BUILDING CAPABILITY BEYOND THE THESIS

The value of this work extends far beyond venture creation. Its purpose is to develop researchers who understand how to move knowledge beyond publication and into real-world application and impact.

Whether they pursue careers in academia, industry, healthcare, government, public services or entrepreneurship, doctoral researchers can leave Cardiff Met with the confidence and capability to communicate the value of their work, engage with external audiences and identify appropriate routes to impact.

INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF RESEARCH LEADERS

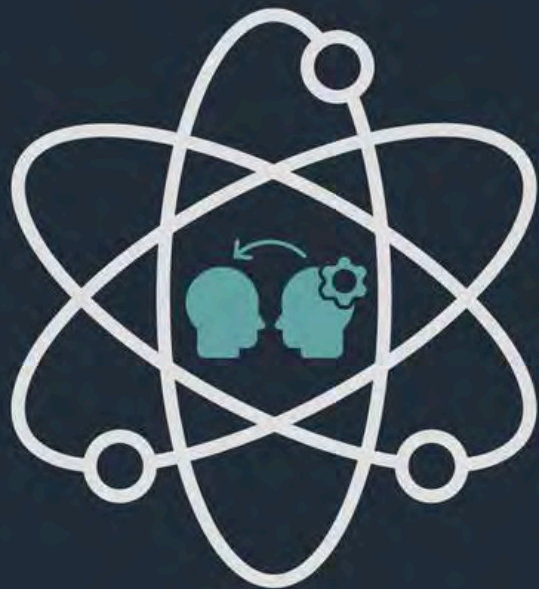
As Cardiff Met continues to strengthen its research culture, the Commercialisation Team will continue to create opportunities for doctoral researchers to build the confidence, capability and networks needed to translate research into real-world impact.

By embedding these capabilities from the beginning of the doctoral journey, we are investing not only in today's research, but in the next generation of researchers who will apply, share and extend knowledge throughout their careers.



Not every doctoral researcher will commercialise their research and they do not need to. Every doctoral researcher, however, can develop the capability to translate their research into real-world impact.





CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

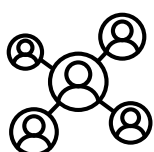
CATALYST

MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

CONNECTING PEOPLE, ACCELERATING PROGRESS

The Catalyst Mentorship Programme continues to play an important role in Cardiff Met's entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem by connecting people with the experience, insight and networks that can help them move forward. Originally developed to support student and graduate founders, Catalyst now also contributes to the University's growing commercialisation activity by facilitating introductions for academics and doctoral researchers exploring pathways to impact beyond academia.

Through a combination of formal mentoring relationships and targeted introductions, Catalyst helps individuals access trusted advice, constructive challenge and real-world perspectives. Whether developing a business, exploring commercial opportunities or translating research into impact, access to the right people at the right time can significantly accelerate progress. Formal mentors continue to support the programme through its Code of Practice, while the wider Catalyst network provides valuable connections that help members of our community take confident next steps.



CONNECT

People with experience, insights and networks

ACCESS

Trusted advice, constructive challenges and real-world perspectives

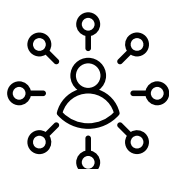


ACCELERATE

Progress through the right introductions at the right time

NETWORK

A wider Catalyst network which opens doors and creates opportunities



My making process is more business-oriented, making pricing my work a lot easier and more economically viable. All this progress has been seriously propelled with my mentors advice and support.

Larissa Guida



PEER ENTERPRISE NETWORK

SOUNDING BOARD, SUPPORT NETWORK AND SPACE TO GROW

5 In-person

9 Online

We create trusted communities for student and graduate entrepreneurs navigating the challenges of starting and growing a business. During 2025-26, the PEN members came together through a combination of in person and online sessions, creating regular opportunities to learn from one another and share the realities of entrepreneurial life.



Meeting monthly, PEN offered something that many early stage founders struggle to find elsewhere: a confidential space to openly discuss challenges, seek advice and test ideas with people who genuinely understand the journey they are on. Members regularly told us that the opportunity to speak honestly about issues affecting their business, without judgement, is one of the most valuable aspects of the network.



Beyond practical business learning, PEN helped founders build meaningful peer relationships, increase accountability and realise that they are not alone in facing uncertainty or setbacks. The result was a supportive community where members gained confidence, learnt from shared experiences and left with fresh perspectives and actions to take forward in their ventures.



Attending PEN has been so beneficial making valuable connections with other small business owners who truly understand the challenges and opportunities we face. I walked away with fresh ideas, practical advice, and potential partnerships that I wouldn't have found anywhere else. Highly recommend for anyone looking to grow their network and business

Katie Carroll



AWARDS SUCCESS

The Entrepreneurship Awards are an annual event to celebrate the students, graduates and academic staff who've demonstrated exceptional entrepreneurial qualities across the past year. The awards are an opportunity to recognise their achievements, determination, and innovations which have led not only to the creation of successful ventures but also contributed positively to their communities and industries.

Aspiring Individual Award

Amirhossein Hajianfar, Cardiff School of Technology.

Founder of Medialingo, an AI-powered Intelligent Tutoring System designed to personalise and automate language learning

Passion and Purpose Award

Martine Brown, Cardiff School of Art and Design.

Founder of Textiles Reimagined - tackling textile waste by working towards a community textile hub in Cardiff that encourages repairing and reusing clothing.

Entrepreneurial Project of the Year

Hope International Project – a CSAD and CST collaboration led by Clara Watkins, Jane Lewis and David Jarvis

MSc Sport Broadcast Placement Module - Welsh Gymnastics collaboration led by Adrian Rapps and Peter Lamburn

Outstanding Achievement Award

David Barton and Heather Smart – founders of Kaydiar Ltd, a medical device company specialising in footcare for pressure-induced wounds, lesions, and musculoskeletal injuries



RISING FOUNDERS

The Rising Founders Competition offers entrepreneurial students funding and support to drive forward their businesses. Applicants submitted their business ideas and were invited to deliver a pitch to win a share of £10,000. Pitches took place at the NatWest Accelerator Hub and judges were blown away by the quality and professionalism of their ideas and presentations. This year's winners were:

Abril Mendoza - Arrel Marketing

Arrel Marketing supports small to medium businesses with their marketing requirements through storytelling and strategic digital campaigns.

Alex Hyman - Alikosports

Aliko Sports is a creative content production agency specialising in tennis, padel and pickleball. They exist to offer content for athletes, events and agencies.

Chris Goddard - MODUflow

MODUflow is an approach to modular, ergonomic and adaptive working environments.

Iwan John - The Hash Brown Guys

Delicious loaded hash browns prepared and sold across festivals and food markets.

Martine Brown - Textiles Re-Imagined

A high street community offering lessons and techniques to upcycle and repair textiles.

Patryk Białowas - S.E.A. Dragons

S.E.A. Dragons is a data driven esports organisation and the reigning Welsh Esports League Club Champions.

Sarah Cload - Grove

Grove creates modern golf apparel for the golfers who value the walk more than the scorecard.

Tejin Manson -TM Training Academy

Delivering strength and conditioning training for young athletes via tiered scholarship pathway, to increase access and reduce financial barriers for young people in sport.

Youseff Ali - Tiger Bay Cleaning Limited

A domestic and commercial cleaning company with a real social purpose.

CASE STUDY: KYLA SCOTT

FOUNDER OF LIGHTER BRIGHTER MINDS



WATCH OUR INTERVIEW
WITH KYLA ON YOUTUBE

Lighter Brighter Minds, is a community organisation dedicated to improving the mental health and wellbeing of children, teens and their primary care givers; existing to make mental health and wellbeing support more accessible for everyone. LBM deliver a range of programmes that help attendees improve their confidence, resilience and overall wellbeing in supportive, inclusive environments.

Kyla studied for an undergraduate degree in Psychology, followed by a Masters degree in Health Psychology, and knew that she wanted to pursue a career that would be making a difference.

The idea for Lighter Brighter Minds came from Kyla's own families' experiences, realising that many children and their parents were struggling to find safe, welcoming spaces where they could talk openly, learn practical wellbeing skills and access support before reaching crisis point.

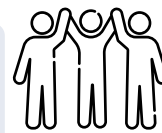
LIGHTER BRIGHTER MINDS SERVICES



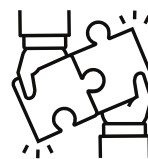
Community mental health and wellbeing workshops



1:1 mental health sessions for young people and their care givers



Community outreach activities for young people



Collaborative projects with schools, local organisations, and youth programmes

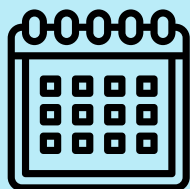
"I believe that the best support happens within communities, so our approach is all about bringing people together, creating safe spaces and helping individuals build lasting connections alongside developing practical wellbeing skills."

Awarded £40,000 National Lottery Funding across 4 years to invest in new community wellbeing programmes



"Cardiff Met Entrepreneurship was a huge support during the early stages of my journey. The team provided mentoring, business advice, practical workshops and opportunities to connect with other entrepreneurs. They challenged me to think strategically, helped me build confidence as a founder and gave me the tools to develop Lighter Brighter Minds into an organisation that could grow while staying true to its social purpose."

HOW TO HELP AN ENTREPRENEURIAL STUDENT



Direct students to MetHub

Tell them to search for 'entrepreneurship' for all of our events and activities



Tell them about a Business Advice Drop In sessions

Students can drop in to one of our regular sessions to meet with a member of the team and discuss ideas



Ask us to deliver a session

We can offer in-curriculum sessions and workshops to upskill your cohorts with entrepreneurial skills



Tell us about anyone with a business

If you know someone who has started a business, email us and let us know!



Get them to follow us on social media

Follow us on LinkedIn and Instagram to hear updates and relevant news



Build your enterprise knowledge

Join our Community of Practice to meet and connect with other entrepreneurial staff

We thank you for your ongoing support of our activities!



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