



Raising Standards
Creating Opportunities



Proudly run by
**this is
purpose**

Contents

Foreword Rt Hon Justine Greening	3
Executive Summary	4
Best-in-Class Overview	6
Recommendations	8
Case studies Raising Standards in Schools	12
Case studies Creating Opportunities	32

Foreword

Justine Greening, Chair of the Purpose Coalition
and former Secretary of State for Education

The role that universities play in UK society has long been undervalued. For university vice-chancellors and their institutions, spreading opportunity and levelling the playing field is at the heart of everything that they do.

These universities are often part of the most disadvantaged communities and give people a chance to gain an education and open them up to greater opportunities. Universities have been doing levelling up, equality of opportunity or whatever phrase you might call it, for a number of years very effectively.

The contribution of universities is much more than just the individuals they help to realise their potential and that's what our 'Raising Standards, Creating Opportunities' campaign is all about.

We want to highlight the impact that the members of our Purpose Universities Coalition have in their local areas in terms of school standards and economic growth. This is sometimes overlooked but can have a massive effect on local communities.

As this report shows, many universities play a crucial role in raising school standards in their local area and do a huge amount of work with children pre-sixth form. Whether that is directly through tutoring pupils or upskilling teachers, or indirectly through being large providers of teacher training, universities are intertwined with local education systems.

Universities are also vital players in driving local economic growth as anchor institutions within communities across the UK. Of course, they provide the talent and skills that keep the economy going

but they also collaborate with businesses and are at the cutting edge of innovation in the UK. There is a huge opportunity to develop the role that universities play as anchor institutions across the UK, transforming opportunities not only for individuals but crucially for communities and the country more broadly.

With widening participation and collaboration at the heart of what they do, universities have key insights for the wider economy on how to truly spread opportunity.

This report sets out just some of the activities that universities are doing to raise school standards and drive local economies. What is clear is that the higher education sector is an engine of social mobility for both individuals and communities that the wider economy can learn from.

I'm delighted to launch our 'Raising Standards, Creating Opportunities' campaign with this report but this is only the beginning. We will continue to highlight to political stakeholders and others the amazing work of our universities and their profound importance to the UK.

Through having the right leadership and setting ambitious goals, collectively these universities give a very different perspective of the art of the possible when it comes to raising school standards and driving economic growth.

To make progress as a country, their strategic approach must become the norm across higher education but can also provide direction more widely.



Executive Summary

Universities play a pivotal role in communities up and down the country. As anchor institutions they contribute significantly to the fabric of our society, through the academic development of both students and local schools - while serving as vital drivers of regional and national economic growth. The UK's higher education sector is revered worldwide. With an almost millenia long tradition of academic excellence and research innovation, the UK's universities maintain some of the highest standards, attracting thousands of students globally year on year.

Universities contribute to raising educational standards through their active engagement and contribution to local initiatives, tutoring, mentoring, and collaborative projects. These efforts bring their expertise, resources, and research-driven approaches to benefit students and teachers alike, resulting in improved academic outcomes, enhanced teaching practices, and greater opportunities for students to fulfil their potential. Over 2021/22, 44 per cent of all people training to be a teacher were studying at a higher education institution .

As institutions, universities also serve as engines of economic growth - driving the creation of opportunities in their respective regions.

Universities also serve as engines of economic growth - driving the creation of opportunities in their respective regions. Universities in England alone contribute around £95 billion to the economy and support more than 815,000 jobs . This significant economic impact is matched by the impressive contribution universities make to the economy through life-changing research, as well as educating the workforce of tomorrow crucial to local economies nationwide - including public sector workers. A predicted 191,000 nurses, 84,000 medical specialists and 188,000 teachers will train at UK universities over the next five years .

Universities not only provide a knowledgeable and skilled workforce for employers, they foster innovation and entrepreneurship, actively engaging in close partnerships with local businesses and specialist industries.

As hubs of knowledge creation and transfer, universities nurture the talent and ideas necessary to achieve economic advancement and competitiveness across the UK. Universities are at the forefront of innovation, contributing to the growth of knowledge-intensive industries, driving regional economic development .

Despite their critical contributions, universities face a multitude of challenges that pose risks to their exemplary work and the transformative impact they have on communities. Financial pressures, including funding cuts, reductions in government support, and uncertainties caused by shifting education policies, hinder universities' capacity to invest in cutting-edge research, modernise infrastructure, and maintain the quality of education and support services.

Another challenge currently facing the sector is the need to address access to higher education. Despite efforts and significant successes in promoting a widening of access to university, persistent socioeconomic barriers continue to limit equitable access for underrepresented groups. Young people attending state schools who were not eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at age 15 were 70 per cent more likely to enter higher education by age 19 than those who were eligible. The proportion of FSM pupils accessing higher education by age 19 was 26.6 per cent compared with 45.7 per cent of non-FSM pupils, a gap of 19.1 percentage points .

Unequal access to resources, and systemic biases hinder social mobility and perpetuate educational inequalities. Universities must be put on a more stable footing and provided with clearer guidance from the Government to address these challenges and continue to ensure that the opportunities they provide are accessible to all, regardless of background or circumstance.

The potential risks to universities and wider society are significant. If universities continue to face financial constraints and inadequate support, their capacity to maintain high educational standards, conduct groundbreaking research, and contribute to local and national economies may be compromised. This, in turn, would limit the positive impact universities have on individuals, communities, and the country as a whole. Inadequate resources and persistent access barriers could exacerbate existing inequalities in higher education, impeding social mobility and perpetuating regional disparities in educational attainment and economic development.

Addressing these challenges is essential to preserve the invaluable contributions of universities.

To preserve the invaluable contributions of universities and ensure a thriving future – several suggested actions are to be made to policymakers in the form of recommendations.

Addressing these challenges is essential to preserve the invaluable contributions of universities. The sector requires sustainable funding models, increased government support, a shifted narrative, more innovative policy frameworks for inclusivity, and increased collaboration amongst universities and local businesses.

By implementing these measures, the UK can ensure the continued success of the sector and the development of the vital work universities undertake in raising educational standards and creating economic opportunities. Universities must be recognised as critical national assets, and concerted efforts must be made to overcome the current socio economic challenges – safeguarding the invaluable contributions the sector makes to society as a whole.

Best-in-Class Overview



1. University of Stirling

The University of Stirling is committed to innovative research and exploration, improving children's wellbeing and raising standards in schools throughout Scotland and beyond. The Daily Mile, where children take a 15-minute break from class to run, jog, or walk around school grounds, was founded at a local primary school, and first researched by the University. It has since received international attention, with 18,000 schools in more than 90 countries now taking part. The Scottish Government has expressed its ambition to make Scotland the first Daily Mile nation.



2. Newcastle University

Since 2009, Newcastle University has been leading the Realising Opportunities initiative, a prestigious national fair access scheme. To date, more than 11,000 students have participated in the programme which provides talented but disadvantaged students the tools to apply to leading higher education institutions.



3. Northumbria University

Despite the North East having one of the lowest levels of higher education participation in the UK - 33 per cent compared to 50 per cent in London - 63 per cent of Northumbria's undergraduate population were born and raised in the North East and 40 per cent are from areas of low higher education participation.



4. York St John University

The Enterprise Centre at York St John University offers new businesses a city-centre start up space with on-site access to academic expertise. This includes coaching and mentoring workshops from York Business School and support with digital marketing, growth planning, finance skills and bid writing.



5. University of Bolton

In partnership with Bolton Muslim Girls' School the University of Bolton runs the Mentored with NewLove programme, raising the aspirations of Year 9 girls through direct contact and mentorship with Baroness Newlove as well as visits to the House of Lords.



6. University of Chester

The Teacher Research Group model, led by the University of Chester, acts as a catalyst for change by actively engaging with schools in the Cheshire region - co-designing and developing research-informed lessons empowering teachers with effective methods.





7. University of Derby

Selected as one of the 12 Opportunity Areas designated by the Department for Education in 2016 – later transitioning to Priority Areas in 2021 – the University of Derby has been central in addressing below-average educational attainment across the region. Projects funded by the Opportunity Area have resulted in an increase in the number of children in Derby achieving a ‘good level of development’ at the Early Years Foundation Stage of 4.3 per cent since 2016 and the proportion of children eligible for free school meals achieving the same level of development impressively exceeded the national average, standing at 60 per cent compared to 56.5 per cent.



8. Staffordshire University

Staffordshire University has a long-established reputation of providing students and graduates with the necessary skills and resources required to directly develop and support new and growing businesses in a region characterised by low levels of social mobility. As well as the Belinspired programme, the University offers tailored business services through its Innovation Enterprise Zone – supporting businesses of all sizes across Staffordshire and the West Midlands.



9. University of Worcester

The Worcester Business School (WBS) ‘Springboard’ scheme, which was launched in response to the COVID-19 pandemic is a flexible student work experience service that provides a cost-effective solution for businesses seeking additional digital skills or short-term recruitment needs. Through the initiative, students can take on one-off projects and provide support where traditional internships or placements may not be feasible.



10. Loughborough University

Loughborough University harnesses the expertise of its student and academic community – contributing to learning and attainment-raising in schools and colleges. Its well-established and successful Initial Teacher Training Partnership involves more than 60 partner secondary schools in the local region.



11. Cardiff Metropolitan University

Cardiff Metropolitan University has a significant influence on raising standards across South Wales and the nation as a whole. The University is the largest provider of teacher training across all of Wales, reaching around 300 schools.



12. University of the West of England

The Inspire Sustainability project led by the School of Engineering at the University of the West of England is aiming to empower young people to have their say on sustainability solutions through school-wide summits. The STEM-focused initiative is directly enhancing learning about net zero and green jobs while changing attitudes and behaviours, and empowering communities to take climate action.



13. University of Southampton

The University of Southampton has emerged as a key economic powerhouse, generating an impressive £4.14 billion impact on the national economy every year. Crucially, approximately £1.6 billion of the regional impact is concentrated in the South East, particularly benefiting the city of Southampton and the wider region.



14. Solent University

Solent University’s Business Schools is helping to deliver 90 per cent of the Government’s Help to Grow Management programme. The scheme is directly helping local SME business leaders increase productivity, seize investment opportunities, and grow their business.



15. University of West London

The Inspire Sustainability project, led by the School of Engineering at the University of the West of England, is empowering young people to have their say on sustainability through school-wide summits. The STEM-based initiative is directly enhancing learning about net-zero and green jobs, while changing attitudes and behaviours – emboldening communities to take climate action.



16. University of Greenwich

The University of Greenwich’s enterprise centre, the Generator, helps students and graduates develop entrepreneurial skills, start new ventures and grow existing businesses. In 2022–2023 alone the University awarded funding totalling £25,000, sponsored by Santander, through the Generators flagship competition – The Enterprise Challenge.

Recommendations

The Department for Education should more widely be exploring how it can scale up the very best of some of the case studies featured in this report, as well as exploring innovative recommendations below. They collectively illustrate how much more universities can do on social impact.

Underpinning this, however, is the need for a long-term settlement for the higher education sector that provides a stable, secure approach to higher education funding and student finance. It is now crucial for this potential prize to be realised.

1 > Access and Opportunities Plans (AOPs) – the next step on from Access and Participation Plans.

Access Agreements, overseen by the then Office for Fair Access, were originally introduced in 2005 to increase opportunities for disadvantaged groups to access higher education through having clear institution level plans. They led on to the current Widening Access and Participation Plans (APPs), introduced in 2013.

Over this time, those plans have helped drive significant increases in the number of students from both underrepresented and disadvantaged groups going to university. It's time for the current APP approach to evolve again to have even greater impact and keep the sector at the forefront of driving social mobility across the country.

The APP's current focus could shift to more formally include university strategies on graduate outcomes. The existing measures of graduate outcomes are both narrow, focused on salary levels and non-contextualised. Tracking outcomes merely by salary gives particular advantage to more selective universities with a greater skew of their student body from more privileged backgrounds, likely to be innately better connected via social networks to

advice and higher salary opportunities. It also likely advantages universities physically closer to higher salary roles often located in London. In addition, it misses the clear economic shift on entrepreneurship and freelance work in the creative economy and the contribution of higher education to driving graduate start up businesses. For graduates leading startups, their initial post graduation salary may be minimal with earnings churned into growing the business, potentially masking what could be huge success later on. For these reasons, a blunt measure of graduate earnings outcomes is a weak, partial measure of a university's performance. It risks being a reflection of student connections and university location, more than the performance of the institution itself in driving enhanced outcomes for its students. That is directly discriminatory towards institutions operating in deprived areas and successfully attracting a higher number of students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Graduate outcomes for people leaving universities need a contextualised approach and evaluation, just as student intakes do for those beginning their time at university.

Universities and the sector more widely should be supported in taking the next step on this journey. The Government, specifically the Department for Education, could explore with the sector framing a new invigorated version of APP, extending it to encompass student's full tenure at university including the opportunities beyond – Access and Opportunities Plans (AOP).

Under a new guise, the AOP could offer a full contextual overview of a universities social mobility impact, analysing and rewarding universities not only the access and participation of students – but also for their real-world outcomes, compared against student background and context, and the university's local socioeconomic environment and its necessary impact on opportunities locally.

AOP would see best practice developed on the transition of widening participation graduates out of university and into opportunity in the same way that APPs have driven best practice on widening access to higher education itself for these students. It would open up collective work similar to UniConnect and other initiatives but in the context of the opposite end of the talent pipeline that universities also have impact on. Stronger contextualised measurement would enable the specific social value-added per student to potentially be more effectively measured, shifting away from the narrow 'graduate earnings' based approach with all its weaknesses as set out above.

2 > Foster place-centred entrepreneurship

Universities are key economic engines of growth. Higher education acts as the direct link between growing knowledge and developing talent and connecting it to support local business. For many universities that happens by either directly supporting local SMEs or through innovative research or both. Universities have the potential to not only directly connect students with local opportunities but to be key players in supplementing and creating them through supporting entrepreneurship. They are a catalyst for new start ups as well as supporting existing SMEs to thrive and grow, providing economic growth opportunities at a local level.



We have known for a long time how important universities are in broadening access and participation to higher education, however it is now time to realise how crucial universities are also as an opportunity creator and connector.



Staffordshire University, with its Innovation Enterprise Zone, and also Solent University, as a key contributor to the Government's Help to Grow Management programme through its Business School, are just two examples of universities going above and beyond to drive entrepreneurship, create opportunities in their local communities and support local economic growth. Both cases will be noted at length further on in this report.

We have known for a long time how important universities are in broadening access and participation to higher education, however it is now time to realise how crucial universities are also as an opportunity creator and connector, both helping to drive more home-grown opportunity through stimulating and supporting entrepreneurship, but also encouraging long-term inward investment, often supported by a strategic research focus or pioneering graduate degrees that provide the technical and skills capacity that growth sectors need to develop. The sector should be encouraged and incentivised by the Government to take a longer term approach and explicitly to nurture grassroots local entrepreneurship. This could be part of a shift to an 'AOP' approach, as set out in the first recommendation.

3 > Harness universities further down the talent pipeline

Universities are key drivers of academic development and social mobility for all groups. However, traditionally, higher education institutions have always been viewed as the crucial stepping stone between an individual's school years and the working world. As we move through a socioeconomic period characterised by skills shortages, political turbulence, and economic inactivity – universities have the unique size and reach to help plug the gaps in the labour market.

The ability of the higher education sector to drive adult learning at scale has to be both recognised and steadily supported to develop.

In November to January 2023, 412,000 more people aged 16 to 64 were economically inactive than in January to March 2020, before the pandemic – a total of 21.3 per cent of all 16 to 64 year olds in the UK¹.

Harnessing the higher education sector's academic expertise, its knowledge, and links to the employment market, policymakers should explore how the relationship that universities already have with employers can be strategically developed to facilitate adult learning both of those out of the labour market and those already with employers. Upskilling and reskilling including via offering microcredentials is a huge opportunity. It is a clear opportunity to widen the scope of the Apprenticeship Levy to allow employers more freedom to partner with universities to offer upskilling and reskilling courses as well as workplace accreditations.

As of late last year, around £3.3 billion had been returned to the Treasury over the previous three years under the Government's current use-it-or-lose-it Levy guidelines².

The Purpose Coalition's comprehensive work with universities and employers across all sectors has fed back consistent messaging that although there is appetite for delivering more apprenticeships, the Levy's current scope is far too limited. Through taking advantage of universities' technical and academic knowledge as well as the sector's close ties to the local jobs market - policymakers can tackle the critical issue of where to extend the current limited Apprenticeship Levy while benefiting stakeholders on all sides.

4> A new approach to international development

23 years on from the inception of the Millennium Development Goals and successor Sustainable Development Goals, the long term development work on early years, primary and secondary education, and particularly girls education now means there is a pipeline of talent in developing countries that is keen to access the next level of education - higher education.

As a country with a strong expertise and reputation for international development, the UK higher education sector can bring its own expertise to this emerging education priority within international development. Helping domestic talent in developing countries access higher education level either by providing on the ground or online access in those countries where they are, or enabling access here via enabling international students to participate in UK

courses - are both levers that universities can pull to help drive development. The debate on international student numbers should also be viewed through this constructive prism of international development delivered by the higher education sector.

In the past 10 years, our world class UK universities have developed valuable links with counterparts in developing countries or established local presences of their own to deliver higher education. Many are providing crucial education capacity building as well as knowledge transfer to counterparts in developing countries that can hugely benefit. We should recognise how important the soft power is of these relationships delivered by UK universities, and their capacity to drive wider development - 'levelling up' abroad, as well as levelling up at home.

Set against the context of an ever-increasing squeeze of international aid budgets, the Government could strategically partner with the higher education sector to drive development, supporting the sector on its international development work.

It is a testament to the success of UK-led international development that more and more children and young people growing up in developing countries have had the chance for education and are now seeking higher educational opportunities internationally. The UK should be proud to play a central role in educating a global generation of young students - breaking down barriers that exist all over the world as well as those here at home.

²The Progressive Policy Think Tank, Over £3 billion in unspent apprenticeship levy lost to Treasury 'black hole' new data reveal, IPPR Press Release 2022, [26/06/23] <<https://www.ippr.org/news-and-media/press-releases/over-3-billion-in-unspent-apprenticeship-levy-lost-to-treasury-black-hole-new-data-reveal>>



Case studies
Raising Standards in Schools



Cardiff Met University

Cardiff Metropolitan University is home to the Cardiff Partnership for Initial Teacher Education, the largest centre for teacher education and training in Wales and one of the largest in the UK. It has over 60 years' experience and an enviable reputation for the quality of its teacher training. The partnership works with schools across Wales, ensuring the graduates moving into the sector are equipped with a high level of skill and are fully prepared for their career.

To complement the training, the school's research brings insight to bear on educational standards and practice in Wales. The Education and Social Justice Research Group focuses on all forms of education inequalities, including the impact of poverty on educational attainment, additional learning needs and the development of community focused schools.

Since 2022, Wales has been implementing a completely new curriculum in all its schools, affecting 468,383 pupils and allowing 22,000

teachers to design their own curricula within a national framework. In preparation, research from Cardiff Metropolitan University was instrumental in the National Professional Enquiry Project.

Research came from a range of disciplines. Experts aligned the research with Welsh Government's policy drivers and the professional learning needs of teachers. Specialists in health and wellbeing took the lead on improving children's participation in physical education, creating a programme of professional learning on physical literacy for teachers. Further work took place on design research and how newly qualified teachers can transition effectively into the new curriculum.

It underpinned the upskilling of teachers in 33 schools, impacting the professional practice of over 1,000 staff and the learning experience of nearly 15,000 pupils. Its success led to more than 300 additional schools embarking on the programme designed to facilitate the new curriculum.

Cardiff Metropolitan University is home to the Cardiff Partnership for Initial Teacher Education, the largest centre for teacher education and training in Wales and one of the largest in the UK.

Loughborough University

Raising pupil confidence and attainment can improve life chances and support the progression of students from under-represented groups into higher education. For many years, Loughborough University has harnessed the expertise of its student and academic community and contributed to learning and attainment-raising in schools and colleges.

The University has a long tradition of educating and developing teachers and a well-established and successful Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Partnership involving more than 60 partner secondary schools, and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in mathematics and physical education, developing around 80 student teachers a year. The University is also home to the Centre for Mathematical Cognition (CMC), as well as a new Centre for Early Mathematics Learning (CEML). Its Department of Mathematics Education is one of the largest groups of mathematics education researchers in the UK, with an international reputation for research into the learning and teaching of mathematics and statistics. Poor mathematical skills are associated with unemployment, low income, and poor quality of life, so understanding and improving mathematics learning in schools is vitally important.

In 2021-22, the University visited or engaged directly with 294 schools and colleges, plus many more through large higher education conventions.

Through a range of school and colleges liaison work, the University supports learning and attainment with activities that include:

- > Subject in a Box, developed with academic teaching staff, provides free engaging, interactive lesson resources for teachers of Year 10 pupils;
- > Virtual Mentoring Programme (VMP), a mix of both in-person and remote activities with virtual subject tutoring, to support the attainment of Year 11 pupils from less advantaged backgrounds;
- > SportMAD (Making a Difference), a skill development and aspiration raising project that uses sport to engage pupils;
- > Engineering Experience sessions for Year 11 pupils, with practical Engineering workshops and industry talks;
- > 'Levelling Up Maths' academic and pastoral tutoring for Post-16 students studying for a Maths A level and who are aiming to pursue the study of STEM and STEM-related subjects;
- > Inspiring Minds, a series of academic taster lectures and workshops for Post-16 students that explore subject areas in greater depth and enhance current studies.

The University campus is home to a huge range of incredible learning facilities, including STEMLab, and provides an inspiring setting in which the institution can engage with schools and colleges.

Loughborough University also maintains strategic partnerships with external organisations that support and maximise learning and attainment in schools and colleges. Through the University's pledge and commitment to the local region it has recently launched, with De Montfort University and the University of Leicester, the Universities Partnership. The shared mission is to provide inclusive and evidence-based educational opportunities across the local region to improve the outcomes for those facing educational barriers.



Newcastle University

Newcastle University is dedicated to raising attainment and promoting inclusive education in local schools, particularly in the North East which historically has faced challenges in educational achievement and aptitude.

For more than two decades, the university has prioritised widening participation and equal opportunities, striving to support and empower students from all backgrounds to succeed and pursue highly-skilled careers or further study.

An exemplary widening access program known as PARTNERS, developed in 2000, has become one of the most established pathways to higher education – offering comprehensive support. Over 8,000 students have benefitted from the PARTNERS program on their pathway to studying at Newcastle University.

Since 2009, Newcastle University has also been leading the Realising Opportunities initiative, a prestigious national fair access scheme involving 14 research-intensive universities.

The scheme aims to encourage talented students to apply to leading institutions. To date, more than 11,000 students have participated in this program, benefiting from the opportunities it provides.

Newcastle University also takes a leading role in the North East Raising Aspiration Partnership (NERAP), a long-standing collaboration between the five universities in the region. Together, they directly fund and undertake outreach activities for students under the age of 16. NERAP organises joint school visits to showcase higher education opportunities within the region and provides targeted support for care-experienced students and young carers.

In a significant milestone, NERAP became the first regional higher education partnership to collectively join the Care Leaver Covenant in early 2023. This national inclusion program supports care leavers aged 16-25 in their journey toward independent living. By signing this agreement, the five institutions committed to consistently providing care-experienced students with the necessary support throughout their university experience.

Newcastle University continues to demonstrate its unwavering commitment to inclusive education, striving to raise attainment levels and create opportunities for students in the North East and beyond.

Newcastle University continues to demonstrate its unwavering commitment to inclusive education, striving to raise attainment levels and create opportunities for students in the North East and beyond.

Northumbria University

The North East of England has one of the lowest levels of university participation in the UK. The level of higher education participation in the region is around 33 per cent compared to a national average of 38 per cent. In London, the participation rate rises to nearly 50 per cent, highlighting the regional disparities that still exist today.

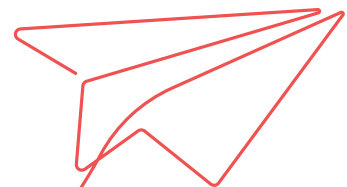
Increasing participation rates and attracting talented students from all backgrounds is a major goal for Northumbria University. The University works closely with all schools and colleges within the North East to support higher education aspirations and give students as many opportunities as possible for their future. 63 per cent of Northumbria's UK undergraduate population are from the North East and 40 per cent of undergraduates are from areas of low Higher Education participation, showing the importance of outreach activity in the region.

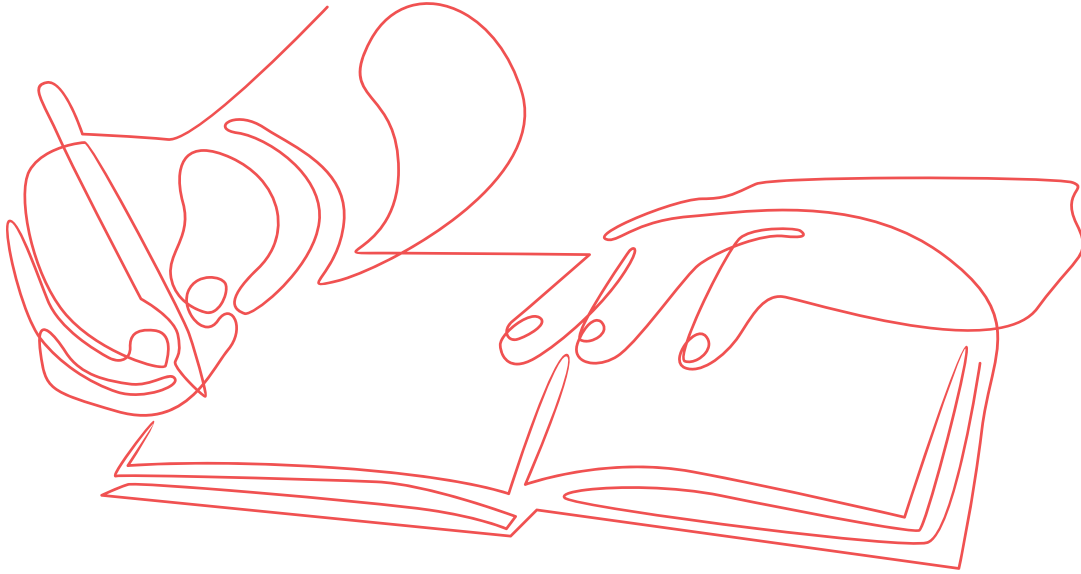
The University has a range of outreach programmes, beginning in year 5 with a scheme focusing on raising awareness and aspiration to higher education. From year 9 to year 11 students are given information about their options post-16+, such as transitioning into college and independent study.

From year 12 onwards outreach programmes offer guidance, support and information to help prospective applicants, their teachers, parents and carers make informed decisions about higher education.

The activity is nationwide but the majority of the work takes place in the North East, Yorkshire, and the North West. The activity is delivered by Northumbria University's outreach team including Graduate Ambassadors and Student Representatives who have first-hand experience of studying and everything that comes with it. The programme focuses on helping pupils feel confident to make an important life decision rather than encouraging them to attend a specific university. In 2019/20 the University engaged with nearly 20,000 post-16 students.

The University also runs an innovative supported entry scheme, NU Entry, to support students meeting widening participation criteria with university entry. NU Entry was launched to local schools in 2013 after feedback from teachers who wanted further support for certain students to help them progress. Last year the programme, which is now nationwide, engaged 905 students. Since its inception over 1,000 of those taking part in the scheme have gone on to study at Northumbria.





Programmes like NU Entry ensure that the University is strategically reaching those from under-represented communities and giving them an equal opportunity to access higher education. Northumbria is committed to raising educational aspirations and recruiting high quality students regardless of background.

NU Entry is a structured scheme for students in their first year of sixth form or college who meet specific criteria. Eligibility criteria includes the following: care leavers, those with care responsibilities, those entitled to free school meals or from an area with a low progression rate to university, as well as other specific detailed criteria. Students take part in a range of activities, from subject specific workshops to campus visits and e-mentoring.

Students participating in the NU Entry scheme get the chance to earn 16 NU entry points, which are the equivalent to UCAS points when applying to Northumbria University. Programmes like NU Entry ensure that the University is strategically reaching those from under-represented communities and giving them an equal opportunity to access higher education. Northumbria is committed to raising educational aspirations and recruiting high quality students regardless of background.

Solent University

Disadvantaged learners in Southampton have improved their knowledge, increased their confidence and are imagining new educational futures, thanks to a widening participation maths programme.

The city's state schools currently serve over 32,000 learners, but educational outcomes are consistently poor with the local authority's performance for Attainment 8 ranked at 131 out of 150 local authorities in 2020.

To help tackle this serious issue, Solent University introduced More Maths, a project that provides disadvantaged learners from Key Stage 4-5 with targeted small group tuition and intensive revisions days.

These classes are small and friendly, with no more than five students per teacher, and support learners to tackle content based around the more challenging GCSE maths topics, including algebra and probability.

Individuals sign up to the programme themselves, encouraged by this less formal approach and empowered to take responsibility for their own learning.

Their commitment and ambition is recognised with additional activities, including tours of the university's facilities and inspirational talks from recent graduates – including Commonwealth Gold medallist gymnast Kelly Simm – all developing and encouraging the children's education and career aspirations.

The programme targets Southampton learners from areas of high deprivation, low higher education (HE) participation and BAME communities. To do this, it has utilised the University's strong community connections, including former Solent Business Apprentice and current BA (Hons) Leadership and Business Management student, Ismail Ahmed, who has had great success in connecting with harder to reach areas, including Abu Bakr Mosque and The United Voices of Africans Association.

Disadvantaged learners in Southampton have improved their knowledge, increased their confidence and are imagining new educational futures, thanks to a widening participation maths programme.



The weekly tuition programme is delivered both on and off the University's city centre campus – based within a top 20% area of national deprivation – in partnership with qualified teachers from local provider, Upton Training.

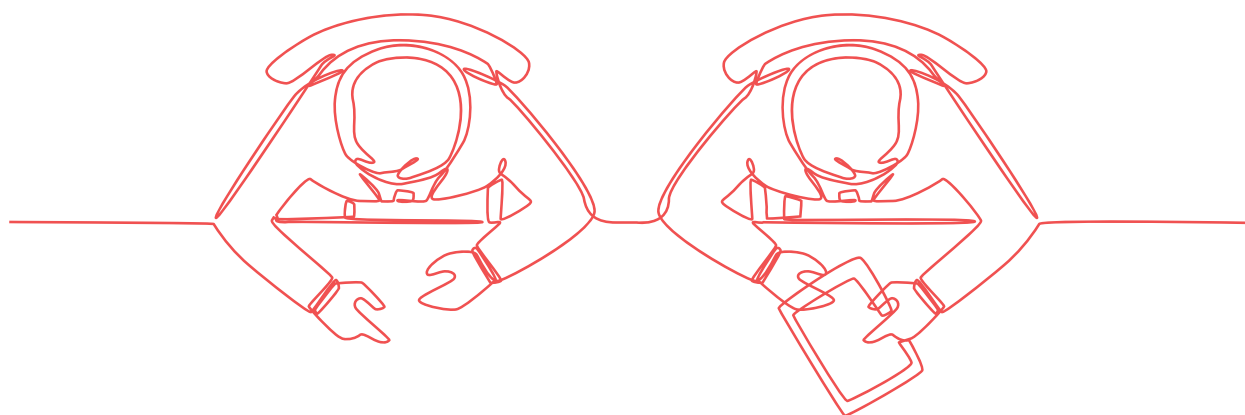
Now, since its pilot in 2021, More Maths has provided 440 learners with 3799.75 hours of tutoring – 53.8% from areas of high deprivation, 61.9% from low HE participation areas and 64.3% from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

More Maths has provided 440 learners with 3799.75 hours of tutoring – 53.8% from areas of high deprivation, 61.9% from low HE participation areas and 64.3% from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities

2022-23 outcomes include:

- > After a six-week, off campus tuition programme, out of 38 learners (Y5-8), 38% demonstrated an increased belief their maths knowledge is right for their age.
- > After a 10-week, on campus tuition programme, out of 67 learners (Y10-11), 50% demonstrated an increased confidence surrounding sitting GCSE maths exams.
- > After four, six-hour intensive, on-campus revision days, out of 149 learners (Y10-12), 50% demonstrated an increased confidence surrounding sitting GCSE maths exams.

This programme's success in providing Southampton's disadvantaged young learners with knowledge and confidence in an essential life skill, has led to increased demand – with plans now in place to develop and grow its delivery across the city.



Staffordshire University

Staffordshire University: Investing in the Future through creating opportunity and supporting the local education ecosystem.

Staffordshire University works extensively with schools nationally, regionally, and locally across the county. Alongside much outreach and community civic engagement work, the University has over the last 12 years, sponsored a Multi-Academy Trust with 20 schools. Staffordshire University Academies Trust (SUAT) is a family of schools that spans the county of Staffordshire and which draws on the educational inspiration, values and ethos of Staffordshire University.

SUAT is classified as a 'National Trust' as it has more than 16 academies. There are only 40 National Trusts in the country. Staffordshire University Academies Trust (SUAT) continues to be a well-regarded, high performing multi academy trust and growth plans have been refreshed to include both primary and secondary phase schools. There are now 4117 pupils educated in SUAT and 789 staff are employed across the schools.

The 20 schools within the Trust aim to 'Achieve Better Outcomes' for Children across Staffordshire, receive considerable finance, estate, and school improvement support where necessary alongside a robust program of continued professional development.

SUAT has four core objectives linked to its mission to Achieve Better Outcomes for children across Staffordshire:

- > Support our academies, staff and pupils in their journey to sustained outstanding performance through partnership, support and collaboration.
- > Understand our communities in order to maximise our potential to raise aspirations and outcomes for our staff and pupils.
- > Aspire to a sustainable future for our academies so that outstanding achievement and progress can be secured for generations of pupils.

- > Train and support all staff so that they can be inspirational leaders and outstanding practitioners, within a planned framework of support for their wellbeing.

Staffordshire University has representation at Member and Trustee level of the Trust and has helped to ensure robust and effective governance structures for the SUAT. The University has strong links to the trust and all of the schools. As an example, SUAT schools provide placements for students from the Education Department and Sports Science students are regularly placed at Staffordshire University Academy, where they work as coaches for the numerous sports teams.

A number of school staff also complete their MA in Education with the University. Many Primary school staff at SUAT schools contribute to the training of future teachers via the Institute of Education. Staffordshire University is a popular destination for students who leave their successful and growing Sixth Form. The Staffordshire University Institute of Education (SU) and SUAT are working together to develop even greater synergies to maximise positive impact in the areas of civic engagement, teacher training, innovation, and research. SUAT will be embedded in the Staffordshire University Access and Participation Plan (APP) and is a key ingredient in developing sponsored 'educational gain' for the city of Stoke-on-Trent and county of Staffordshire.

Over the past year, SUAT has invested £700,000 in capital improvements in its schools, including roofing works, sixth form centre refurbishments, toilet refurbishments and accessibility works, structural works, fire alarm upgrades, secure fencing to children's playgrounds, developments to early years learning environments and electrical upgrades, creating and maintaining learning and working environments which are safe, warm, dry, and are fit for purpose to support our pupils and students to achieve better outcomes. The Trust also secured £96k of Salix funding to decarbonise one school's heating system, which was completed in 2021-2022, and is currently bidding for a further £1.1m in funding for the same opportunities for four more schools.



University of Bolton

The University of Bolton actively engages in raising standards and aspirations in schools across the Greater Manchester area. The University strategically supports underrepresented and disadvantaged school children, empowering them to realise and fulfil their potential. Illustrated through two best practice programmes, the University collaborates with key partners to provide valuable resources, mentorship, and opportunities for growth.

> In partnership with The Boys' Brigade, one of the prominent Christian Youth organisations in the UK and Ireland, the University of Bolton has contributed to the launch of the 'Your Future' programme.

This pioneering national initiative aims to elevate the aspirations of young individuals within The Boys' Brigade, enabling them to make informed decisions that align with their desired future. The University's support includes funding that facilitates the production and distribution of printed resources, ensuring the effective delivery of the programme throughout the UK.

> Through a collaborative effort with Bolton Muslim Girls' School (BGMS), the University of Bolton introduced the 'Mentored with NewLove' programme. This exciting initiative is designed to support and mentor six Year 9 girls, carefully selected from a pool of applicants, with the aim of removing barriers and assisting them in reaching their full potential.

Led by Baroness Newlove, the students benefit from personalised guidance and mentorship throughout the academic year. The scheme encompasses activities that foster confidence-building not only for the students but also for their families. With support from the Office of the Provost at the University of Bolton and the dedicated administration team, the six chosen students engage in a transformative journey, which may include travel to London, a tour of the House of Lords, participation in business meetings, and attendance at events that facilitate networking opportunities. This partnership with Bolton Muslim Girls' School, part of the Prosper Multi Academy Trust, demonstrates the University of Bolton's commitment to empowering underrepresented girls and helping them overcome obstacles to achieve their potential.



University of Chester

In response to the persistently lower Higher Education (HE) participation, progression, and attainment rates observed in several schools across Cheshire, the University of Chester has embarked on a transformative intervention to address these challenges head-on. With a focus on enhancing academic achievements, the initiative aims to uplift the educational landscape by fostering research-informed content and innovative teaching practices in collaboration with local schools.

The Teacher Research Group (TRG) model, led by the University of Chester (UoC), acts as a catalyst for change by actively engaging with schools in the Cheshire region. The program sets out to co-design and develop research-informed lessons, primarily focused on Mathematics, to teach the school curriculum and empower teachers with effective pedagogical methods.

At the core of this intervention is the design and development of research-informed approaches tailored to teaching Mathematics concepts in secondary schools. The University of Chester, in close partnership with participating schools, identifies the specific needs of pupils and shapes the project's focus accordingly. This collaborative process involves observing current teaching methods and curriculum approaches in schools, as well as working hand-in-hand with educators to gain a deeper understanding of their unique context and the needs of their students.

The outcomes of this pioneering activity are manifold, benefiting schools, teachers, pupils, and the University of Chester alike. For schools and teachers, the TRG initiative offers an opportunity to

engage in research-informed learning and practice, enhancing their understanding of Maths and equipping them with improved curriculum content and classroom techniques.

The TRG scheme fosters stronger relationships between the university and schools, enabling a more comprehensive and tailored approach to educational development. Pupils, in turn, experience a host of positive effects from this intervention. The TRG program also cultivates an improved perception of Maths, reducing anxiety associated with the subject and promoting a deeper understanding. By empowering students with enhanced mathematical skills, the initiative contributes to improved attainment levels and the ability to apply these concepts across various subjects.

The impacts of this activity have the potential to be far-reaching. By targeting attainment gaps, particularly among students from disadvantaged backgrounds, the program has the potential to elevate overall attainment levels at the primary and GCSE stages, while also facilitating KS4 progression. Additionally, the initiative seeks to foster a culture of collaboration and appreciation for external expertise among teachers, empowering them to make informed decisions based on the evidence and knowledge gained through the TRG model.

The University of Chester's unwavering commitment to enhancing educational standards in local schools through the TRG initiative is set to create a lasting impact. By harnessing research-informed practices, fostering collaboration, and empowering educators and students alike, the groundbreaking scheme is at the forefront of the educational transformation taking place in the Cheshire region.



University of Derby

The University of Derby believes in taking a comprehensive approach to raise aspirations and enhance the careers of young people. Recognising the importance of the entire education and employment pathway, the University emphasises the need for collaboration among higher education institutions, schools, colleges, businesses, teachers, parents, and carers to improve social mobility and outcomes.

As one of the 12 Opportunity Areas designated by the Department for Education in 2016 and later transitioning to Priority Areas in 2021, the University of Derby has actively addressed below-average educational attainment within the region's school system. Through partnerships with local school leaders and its leadership role in the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Collaborative Outreach Partnership (DANCOP), the University has played a significant role in transforming the lives of students.

Projects funded by the Opportunity Area, in conjunction with DANCOP, have focused on speech, language, and communication, resulting in an increase in the number of children in Derby achieving a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. During the Opportunity Area program, the target of 70.7 per cent was achieved, with a 4.3 per cent increase from 2016. Moreover, the proportion of children eligible for Free School Meals in Derby achieving a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage exceeded the national

average, standing at 60 per cent compared to 56.5 per cent.

The University of Derby also maintains close partnerships with all state secondary schools in the city, offering activities aimed at improving attainment, supporting achievement, and raising awareness of Higher Education opportunities. Their evidence-based framework, Progress to Success, spans from Year 7 to Year 11 and includes experience days, summer schools, and workshops, ensuring sustained engagement with the university.

The progress of participants is carefully tracked, revealing a clear correlation between the number of completed activities and the rate of progression to Higher Education. Out of 9,025 learners who engaged in the University's outreach activities and became eligible to progress, 48 per cent have successfully entered Higher Education. Notably, for those from the lowest participation neighbourhoods, the rate of progression into Higher Education was 46 per cent, approximately 10 percentage points higher than those who did not participate in the program.

The work carried out within the Opportunity Area has enabled the University of Derby to advance its social mobility mission from the earliest stages of the education system. Through a whole system approach, the University impacts every aspect of the student journey, from school to employment, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed and realise their chosen futures.

The University of Derby believes in taking a comprehensive approach to raise aspirations and enhance the careers of young people.

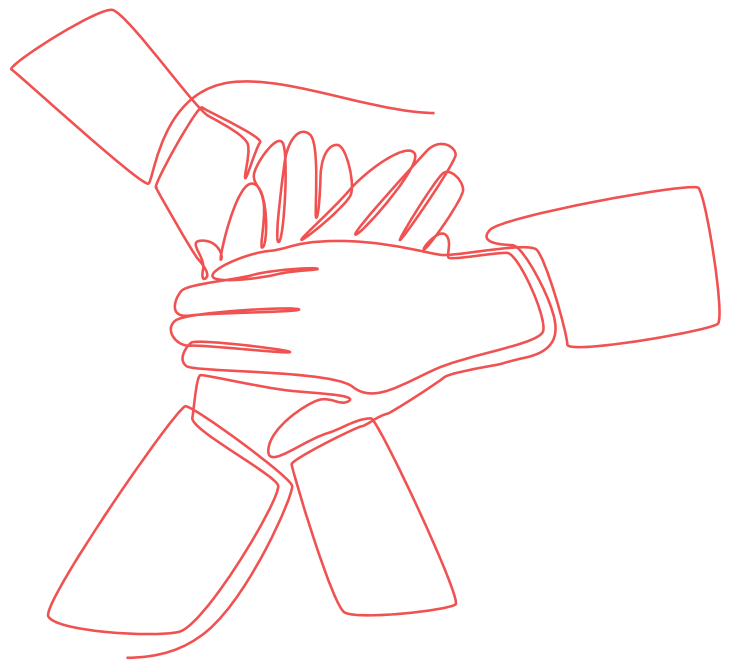
University of Greenwich

The University of Greenwich offers around 30 teacher education courses, including BA Hons and PGCE qualifications. At undergraduate level, people can study primary education, or a one-year lifelong learning professional certificate in education. Postgraduates can choose from a number of specialist PGCEs.

The University also delivers its GREat Skills project in target schools, to enhance the academic skills of local students, which will include students from POLAR4 Q1, IMD Q1, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities, and disabled backgrounds.


The project uses trained student ambassadors and offers support with university admission, helping to realise its aim of supporting attainment in the schools it sponsors.

The workshops are designed to support students currently completing a piece of academic work, those who are due to complete one in the near future or those who would benefit from the opportunity of being able to build on key skills relevant to their future studies within a Higher Education setting.



The GREat Skills workshops are suitable for all level 3 students, studying A levels, BTEC, IB, T Levels, Access courses or equivalent. The workshops are designed to support students currently completing a piece of academic work, those who are due to complete one in the near future or those who would benefit from the opportunity of being able to build on key skills relevant to their future studies within a Higher Education setting.

The workshops are also particularly suitable for students taking the EPQ as they cover many of the main skills which students develop and are expected to demonstrate within their projects.



The project uses trained student ambassadors and offers support with university admission, helping to realise its aim of supporting attainment in the schools it sponsors.

University of Southampton

The University of Southampton has displayed dedication to improving educational standards in schools and colleges, both locally and nationally. Through collaborative partnerships, outreach programmes, research and teaching initiatives, the University aims to create a better and more equitable world. With a core mission to inspire excellence and build an inclusive society, the University plays a proactive role in driving positive change within the broader education ecosystem.

One notable collaboration is the Southampton Education Forum (SEF), of which the University of Southampton is a proud member. Comprising principals, headteachers, and representatives from secondary schools, post-16 colleges, and local authorities, the SEF aims to achieve the best outcomes for students in the city, particularly those from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds. The forum facilitates the sharing of best practices, fosters discussions on key topics and challenges, and organises various activities. From subject networks that deepen subject knowledge to specialist networks supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds and focusing on careers, the SEF offers mutual benefits to all involved. Noteworthy initiatives include teacher conferences, Science Intervention Day, teacher exchange programs, and the Reading Buddies program.

The University of Southampton's IntoUniversity centre, located in Redbridge, directly addresses child poverty and disadvantaged families in the area. Through activities conducted at the centre, in schools and on campus, students from various schools receive academic support, mentoring, career guidance, and interactions with employers. This comprehensive support system empowers

young people from primary to further education and enables the University to work with students across the country through other IntoUniversity centres and partner organisations.

To increase progression to higher education, the University focuses on enhancing the standards of information available to key influencers who can support students effectively. As a member of the Advancing Access steering group, the University provides Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and contributes to the development of resources and events for teachers and advisers, with a focus on supporting students' progression to Russell Group universities.

Recognising the importance also of early intervention to the standards throughout local schools, the University's outreach and engagement programmes begin early in a student's educational journey. By adopting a 'student lifecycle' approach, the University ensures effective engagement and empowerment of learners and their supporters. The University hosts annual interdisciplinary Public Engagement Festivals which serve as inclusive and family-friendly events. Featuring hundreds of interactive activities, workshops, live shows, art performances, and laboratory tours, these festivals have proven to be an inspiration for many individuals to pursue higher education.

Through these collaborative efforts, the University of Southampton is committed to raising standards, providing inspiration, and fostering engagement among students and educators. By working closely with schools, colleges, and communities, the University strives to create a positive and transformative impact on education, empowering individuals to reach their full potential.

University of Stirling

Through innovative research and a commitment to improving children's health and wellbeing, the University of Stirling is raising standards in schools and education institutions in Scotland's Forth Valley region and at least 90 countries around the world.

University-led research into the Daily Mile, a 15-minute primary school physical activity programme, is helping to improve the health, wellbeing and learning of primary school children. Created and promoted by Elaine Wyllie, the former headteacher of St Ninians Primary School in Stirling, the Daily Mile involves children taking a short break from learning during class time, running or walking laps outside at a self-selected pace whilst chatting with their friends and having fun. No specialist shoes or clothes are required, and children should be back at their desks 15 minutes after they get up. The simple initiative was anecdotally reported to have numerous benefits, which University of Stirling investigators subsequently evidenced through a series of studies, going on to inform policy and practice through a programme of collaboration and engagement.

The package of research, led by Dr Colin Moran and Dr Naomi Brooks of the Faculty of Health Sciences and Sport, initially found that introducing the Daily Mile significantly improves fitness, fatness, physical activity and sedentary behaviour. Participants were also better placed to learn acutely, demonstrating significantly improved cognitive scores, in verbal memory, alertness, and wellbeing. Their recent work has shown that

longer term participation in the Daily Mile also leads to improved fitness levels.

A further study, considering implementation, helped to support the spread of the Daily Mile by providing practical guidance for schools to introduce the initiative. Engagement with policymakers has seen the research inform the UK Government's Childhood Obesity Strategy (2018) and fed directly into the Scottish Government's ambition to make Scotland the world's first 'Daily Mile Nation'.

Uptake of the Daily Mile transcends national boundaries, with more than 18,000 schools in 90 countries (including the Netherlands, Belgium and the USA) taking part. The Daily Mile Foundation accredits Stirling's underpinning research as a decisive factor in the rapid growth of the programme. Furthermore, data indicates that the research has contributed to at least an additional 3.8 million children around the World experiencing the benefits of the Daily Mile, a figure which continues to increase as changing policy and practice support further rollout of the programme.

The significance of the Daily Mile is magnified by the global childhood physical activity crisis. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that children engage in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise daily, yet less than 40 per cent of children meet these guidelines. Stirling's research demonstrates that the Daily Mile is a simple, easy to implement, and effective tool in addressing this challenge; one which is already making a difference to children's lives.

The significance of the Daily Mile is magnified by the global childhood physical activity crisis.

University of the West of England

The Inspire Sustainability project is led by the School of Engineering at UWE Bristol, which built on the success of the Inspire project from the Digital Engineering and Technology Initiative (DETI) which reached over 20,000 children from the West of England. Inspire Sustainability aimed to empower young people to have their say on sustainability solutions through school-wide summits.

Many young people do not know about green job career routes or have few role models in their community involved in sustainability. The project aimed to enhance learning about net zero and green jobs, change attitudes and behaviours, and empower communities to take climate action. Taking part in the activities and encountering diverse role models was aimed to boost interest in STEM-related subjects and careers.

The project partnered with three schools from the Cabot Learning Federation (CLF), all of which have a higher than national average levels of pupil premium (an indicator of socio-economic deprivation) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

A whole school approach was taken, with green jobs highlighted throughout with diverse approaches to sustainability. The resources and materials reference the Sustainable Development Goals and are based on the Climate Action Plans for the West of England and Bristol City Council. The project was run with the Climate Ambassador programme from Graphic Science and the Avon Schools Eco Network.

Each school co-developed their Summit with the student Eco Committee, leading a week of activities with a Careers Expo featuring green job role models and activities involving almost 2,400 students and 25 teachers.

The activities were evaluated by teachers and students and results were presented at the West of England Schools Summit. The solutions developed by students have been implemented in School Eco Action plans and are being disseminated throughout the CLF.

Bristol Brunel Academy has made changes around Food and Sustainability Awareness and are also working to redevelop a local playground, addressing green issues with the choice of equipment, tree planting, flowers, and recycling bins. Hans Price Academy is working towards Eco Schools Green Flag status, focussing on Global Citizenship, Energy, and Biodiversity.

Teachers indicated they have developed their understanding of green skills and jobs, enabling them to map where sustainability is taught in over 10 different curricula. This will be continued through a new Enthuse Partnership funded by STEM Learning, enabling 10 CLF schools to systematically embed sustainability and green careers throughout the curricula. Learning from this project will enable the teachers to lead on embedding sustainability in both curricula and business decisions in schools, as well as meeting Gatsby Benchmark career targets.

Learning from the project is now being developed through West of England Green Recovery funding, which aims to boost interest and career progression into green jobs. This meets the need for active and fast transition to a zero-carbon economy, as well as addressing issues of historic injustices in communities with high socio-economic deprivation.

UWE Bristol will continue to build on this work educating towards a just transition, as well as supporting communities' own climate action needs.

University of West London

The University of West London recently embarked on a groundbreaking project aimed at developing a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) course for local teachers, with a focus on promoting emotional intelligence and teacher retention. The course sought to enhance teachers' abilities to support students in the classroom by improving their skills in emotion regulation.

Feedback from industry partners, including representatives from 25 schools in Hounslow, Ealing, as well as other boroughs, was overwhelmingly positive. Participants expressed a need for tools to improve staff wellbeing in addition to student wellbeing, and that the CPD training provided them with valuable resources. The post-evaluation survey indicated that most participants found the course highly useful and expressed their willingness to pay for similar training in the future.



Feedback from industry partners, including representatives from 25 schools in Hounslow, Ealing, as well as other boroughs, was overwhelmingly positive.

Notably, Oaklands School approached Dr. Linda Dinc – the project lead – to request an evaluation event at the University of West London, showcasing the effectiveness of their emotion regulation strategies. As a result, the course is now being developed for a wider market in the secondary and further education teaching sectors. The University aims to roll out the course to other schools across West London and potentially present it to national stakeholders, including the Department of Education.

The University of West London's efforts in designing and delivering the CPD course have proven instrumental in enhancing standards in local schools. By equipping teachers with crucial emotional intelligence skills, the University has contributed to creating a supportive and conducive learning environment, improving mental health for both teachers and students, and strengthening teacher-student relationships. This successful initiative has the potential for further expansion, benefiting schools throughout West London and potentially influencing policy at a national level.

University of Worcester

A project carried out by Dr Carla Solvason, Angela Hodgkins, Michelle Malomo, and Rebecca Weston from the University of Worcester's Institute of Education and Institute of Health aimed to support the health and wellbeing of employees within a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT).

Recognising the significant impact of teacher wellbeing on children's development, the project sought to address the high levels of stress and burnout among teaching professionals.

In the initial stage of the project, a survey was designed and administered to assess the mental and physical health and wellbeing of the staff within the MAT. The survey included recognised measures and qualitative questions to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current situation. The responses indicated that the workforce felt overwhelmed and underappreciated, highlighting the need for interventions to support coping mechanisms and create space for health and wellbeing during challenging times.

Based on the survey findings, a series of six health and wellbeing workshops were designed and piloted with 12 teaching staff from one school. The workshops received overwhelmingly positive feedback, with participants expressing that the sessions surpassed their expectations and provided useful tools for supporting their wellbeing. The workshops also fostered discussions among the staff, creating a sense of permission to prioritise self-care.

Moving forward, the project aims to roll out the programme across the MAT. To ensure longevity of practices and habits, the researchers propose training health and wellbeing leads in all settings and phases, enabling momentum to be maintained.

In another initiative, the University of Worcester's Business Opportunity Sponsorship & Support (BOSS) Competition was launched to enhance students' learning experience, raise graduate standards, and contribute positively to the local community. The competition invited students to form groups and develop business plans for ethical and sustainable products or services that benefit the local community economically. The winning team received financial support, mentoring, and membership benefits, with their proposal focusing on a bike sharing scheme in Worcestershire.

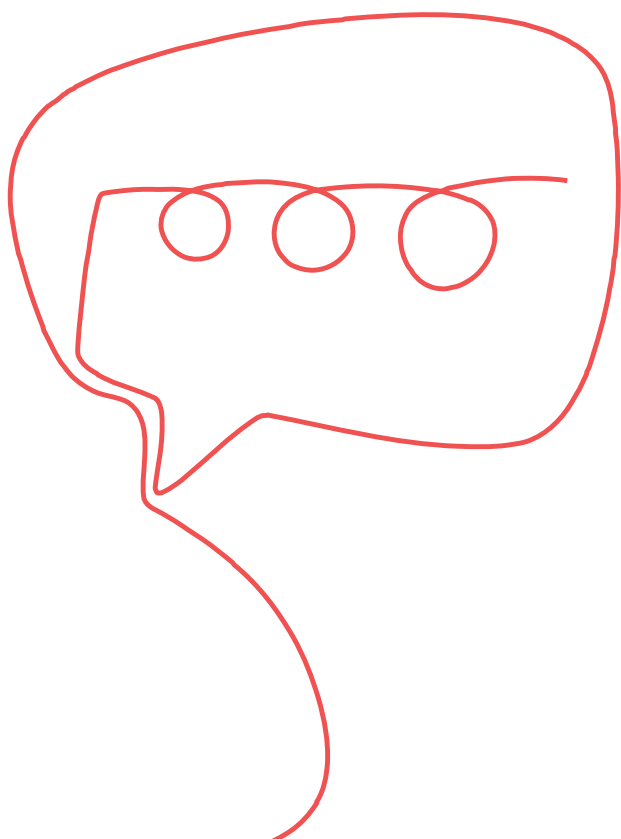
The BOSS Competition garnered interest from local businesses, promising future participation and increased funding. The initiative also received positive feedback from the winning team, expressing gratitude for the opportunity to develop real-world experience. The project's success has secured further sponsorship to expand the program in the coming years.

These initiatives exemplify the University of Worcester's commitment to raising standards in schools through cutting-edge research expertise. By addressing teacher wellbeing and fostering student entrepreneurship, the University is making a transformative impact on both its students and the local community.

York St John University

York St John University's 'Let's Do Uni Club' programme offers primary school pupils a firsthand experience of university life. In 2022, 28 young learners from four primary schools in York participated in academic sessions covering various disciplines, fostering an understanding of higher education and future career paths.

Early exposure to future planning has proven to be crucial. According to a 2016 UCAS survey, children who express a desire for higher education by age 10 or earlier are 2.6 times more likely to attend competitive universities compared to late decision-makers. The 'Let's Do Uni Club' aims to capture the interest of a younger age group, creating positive educational experiences and boosting confidence as pupils transition to secondary school.



The 'Let's Do Uni Club' aims to capture the interest of a younger age group, creating positive educational experiences and boosting confidence as pupils transition to secondary school.

During the scheme, participants created a gallery reflecting on their on-campus experiences. A follow-up event allowed parents and guardians to view their children's work and discuss the program's benefits. Feedback from one parent highlighted the transformative effect: "From a child who never wanted to attend university to one who is now inspired to be more creative."

Rachel Glennon, education outreach coordinator at York St John University, expressed delight at the programme's impact on young participants and their families. Positive testimonials included praise for the initiatives' inclusivity and changed perceptions of university as an essential part of a child's future.

The 'Let's Do Uni Club' demonstrates York St John University's commitment to raising standards in local schools by introducing primary pupils to university life, fueling their curiosity and ambition while nurturing confidence for their educational journey.



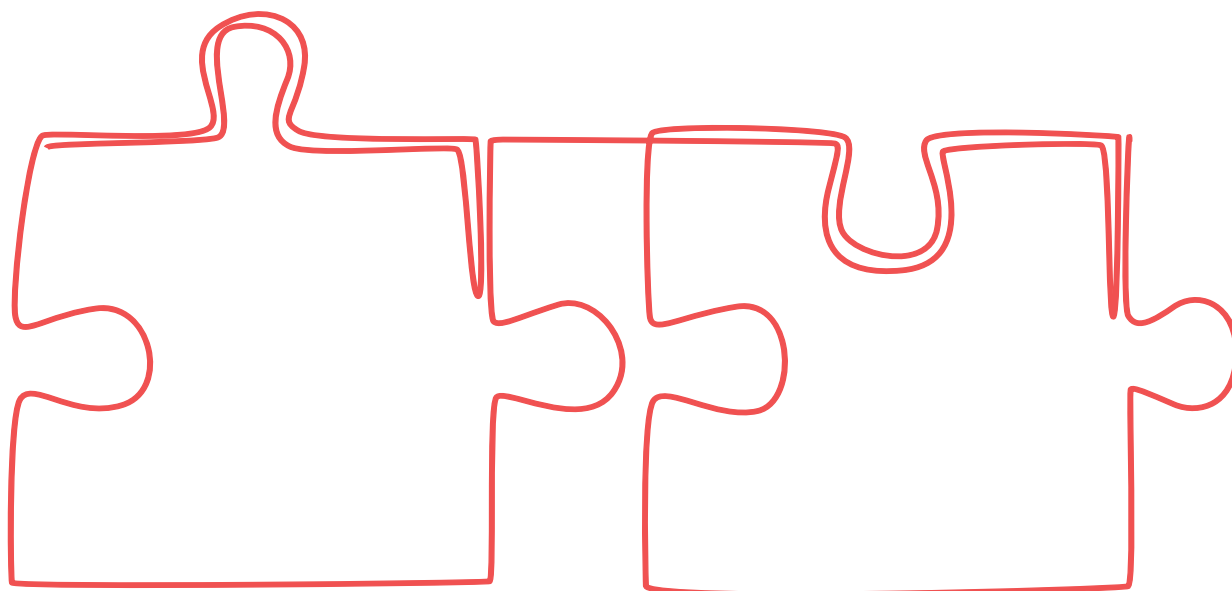
Case studies
Creating Opportunities



Cardiff Met University

Cardiff Met has been one of the top UK universities for Graduate start-ups each year for the last six years and the University's staff works extensively to encourage students and graduates to start and grow new organisations through:

- > Provision of incubation space.
- > Funding for start-up activity targeted at widening participation students.
- > One-to-one coaching and mentoring support provided to those seriously considering starting a business or freelancing.
- > Bootcamps and training programmes such as the 'Social Enterprise Academy' and 'CF5 Bootcamp'.
- > Collaborative working with entrepreneurial ecosystem stakeholders, including NatWest and Business Wales, to ensure students and alumni can make the right connections.
- > An entrepreneurship dissertation offered within the University's business information systems (BIS) programme.
- > Hackathons arranged with local companies.



Cardiff Met has been one of the top UK universities for Graduate start-ups each year for the last six years

Loughborough University

Loughborough University has a number of initiatives to support local businesses and encourage entrepreneurship within its students.

For example, the University offers a consultancy service to businesses and organisations, offering its academic, research and sporting expertise.

Consultancy enables interested parties to establish relationships with either individual academics or an expert team drawn from different areas of cutting-edge research.

LU's professional and commercially-orientated service is the ideal way to:

- > enhance an organisation's research capabilities.
- > hire in trusted expertise to tackle time-critical and complex challenges.

For many of the University's clients, consultancy is the route into a mutually beneficial long-term research partnership. For all of the University's clients, it strives to ensure it meets their specific needs, enabling them to remain competitive and progressive.

Loughborough also partners iNet. The iNet Team helps small and medium sized businesses in Leicester and Leicestershire to innovate and thrive.



The team help:

- > Help to secure grant funding towards the capital and revenue costs of innovation and growth projects.
- > Support for collaborations between companies and UK universities.
- > Advice and information in support of innovation and growth.

For all of the University's clients, it strives to ensure it meets their specific needs, enabling them to remain competitive and progressive.

Newcastle University

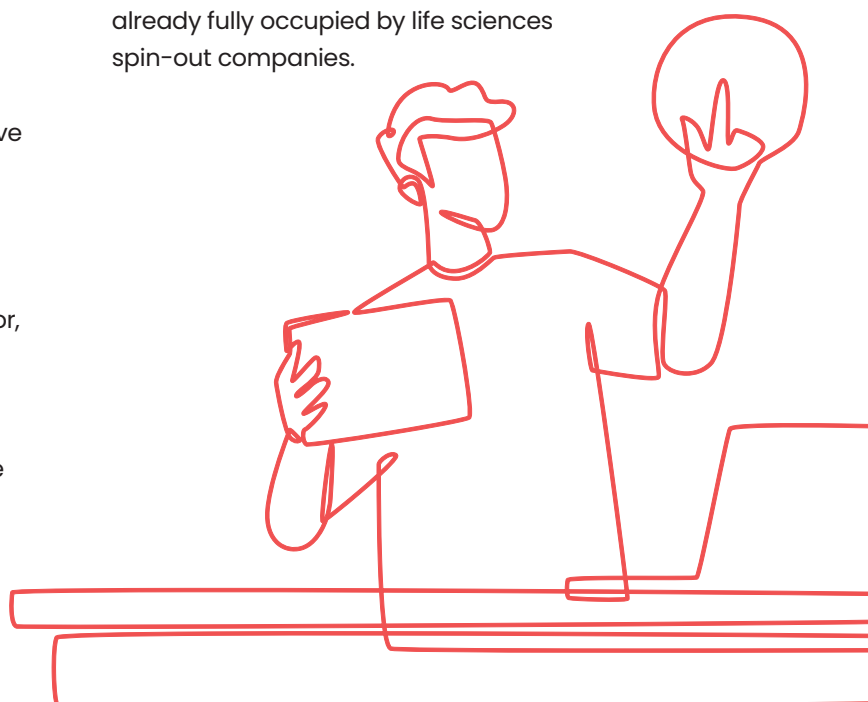
Newcastle University is also leading the way in contributing and future-proofing the local economy – developing knowledge, skills, and advanced manufacturing that will be key to unlocking the green economy. The University has created the Institute of Electrification and Sustainable Advanced Manufacturing (IESAM), a partnership between the region’s universities and further education colleges and the North East Institute of Technology, funded by Innovate UK. IESAM provides a common curriculum for electrification skills and is the first of its kind to address industry needs by developing a flexible, high-quality PEMD training pipeline in the region. IESAM is part of the University’s proposal to establish a new entity, the Electrification Process Innovation Centre (EPIC), to address the specific skills and capability challenges that industry is currently struggling to overcome. In partnership with public and private sector organisations, EPIC will bring existing research and skills training organisations together with industry to exploit the North East’s leadership in electrification. In the West End of Newcastle, the University is building the UK’s first Health Innovation Neighbourhood, connecting research in healthy ageing to enable people to live longer, healthier lives.

Added to this, the University’s Arrow programme, which supports North East SMEs to develop their capacity and capability, and Northern Accelerator, a collaboration between Newcastle, Durham, Northumbria, Sunderland, Teesside and York Universities set up to commercialise research, are stimulating innovation and strengthening the region’s economy.

Considering the landmark devolution deal for the North East on the horizon – the work currently undertaken by Newcastle University means it is positioned well to take advantage of the huge opportunities the deal will present, for the University and the wider region.

With an expanded combined authority, a new elected Mayor, and the promise of a £4.2 billion deal, there is a real opportunity now for the University to build on and further develop the existing collaborations with partners in the public and private sectors and local communities.

The University’s ambition is to continue to build on the success of Newcastle Helix, the site it developed in partnership with Newcastle City Council and Legal & General, in attracting companies to set up in the region. The Biosphere, a purpose-built laboratory and office building for science innovation, research, development and commercialisation is already fully occupied by life sciences spin-out companies.



Northumbria University

Northumbria University plays a vital role in driving economic opportunities and fostering growth in Newcastle and the North East. As one of the largest employers in the region, employing over 3,000 people, and attracting 35,000 students to live and study in the city, the University contributes significantly to the local economy. With over 60 per cent of its students also choosing to remain in the region after graduation, Northumbria University serves as a key provider of skilled graduates to the regional workforce.

Recognising the importance of student and graduate enterprise, the University has consistently ranked among the top five nationally for graduate start-ups. This achievement can be attributed to the success of the Student and Graduate Enterprise service, which provides invaluable advice, guidance, and mentorship to students and graduates aspiring to pursue careers as freelancers, self-employed individuals, business start-up founders, or entrepreneurial employees.

To further support entrepreneurial endeavours, Northumbria University established the Incubator in Autumn 2019. This dedicated space serves as a hub for pre-start-ups and businesses founded by Northumbria students and graduates. The Incubator offers state-of-the-art facilities, including hot-desking spaces and meeting rooms, while providing registered start-ups with individual mentoring

sessions from the university's Enterprise team and access to external mentors from the local business community. Additionally, the Enterprise team organises workshops, spotlight sessions, and networking events to foster a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Since its inception, the Northumbria University Incubator has provided support to over 230 pre-start-ups, 140 start-ups, and established businesses. These ventures collectively generate an annual turnover of £102.84 million, employing 1,172 individuals and making a significant contribution to economic growth and business development in the region.

In conjunction with its commitment to entrepreneurship, Northumbria University operates a Business Clinic that offers free consultancy services to a wide range of organisations. Through this initiative, groups of business students form consultancy firms and undertake projects for external clients. Instead of the traditional dissertation, final-year undergraduate and master's students engage in consultancy projects, leveraging the expertise of highly experienced Business Clinic staff. They meticulously analyse client problems, explore potential solutions, and provide comprehensive reports with well-justified recommendations. Students then present their recommendations directly to the clients.

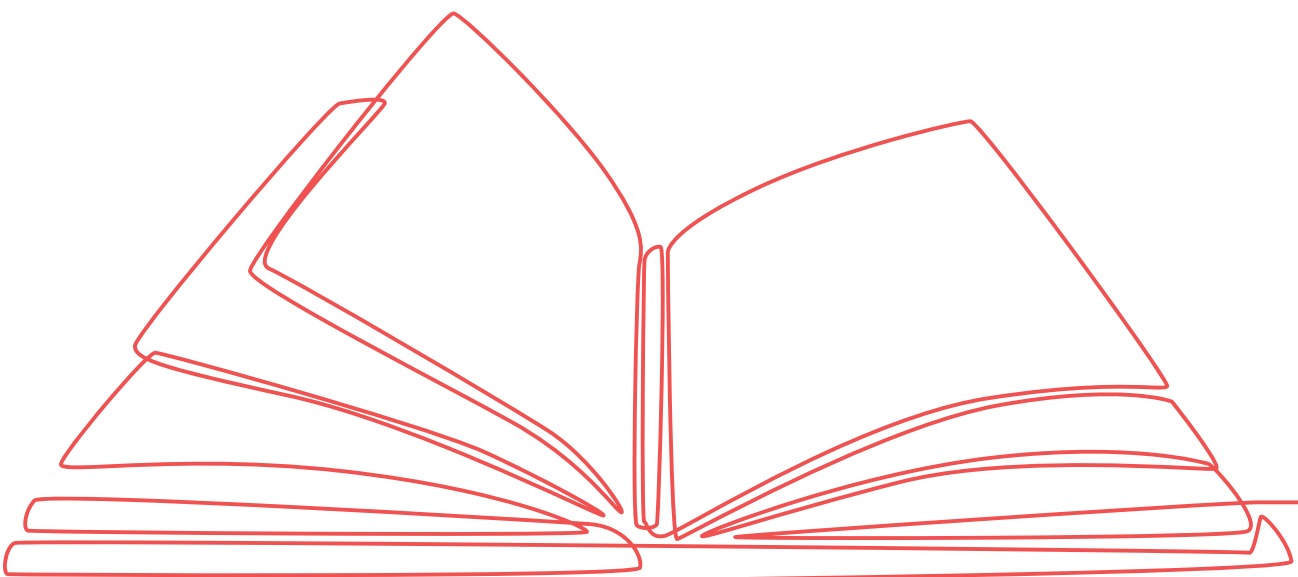
As one of the largest employers in the region, employing over 3,000 people, and attracting 35,000 students to live and study in the city, the University contributes significantly to the local economy.

The Business Clinic caters to businesses of all types, from multinational corporations and SMEs to social enterprises, charities, and not-for-profit organisations. Since its inception in 2013, the Business Clinic has completed 600 client projects, involving 2,400 students. The value of the consultancy advice provided exceeds £3.3 million. During the 2021/2022 academic year, the Business Clinic witnessed the participation of 509 students, marking its largest cohort to date.

Projects conducted by the Business Clinic encompass a diverse range of fields and organisations. Notable collaborations include partnerships with the Dyspraxia Foundation for branding support, Smile for Life Children's Charity for marketing and feasibility assistance, and the Newcastle Disability Forum for business structuring and finance guidance.

Other projects span areas such as digital marketing, information systems, HR, relationship marketing, tourism marketing, and sponsorship management, benefiting organisations such as P&G, Parkers, Greggs, National Trust, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, NSPCC, Carlisle Council, and the English Schools Athletic Association.

The overwhelmingly positive feedback received from clients highlights the impact of Northumbria students' reports on their decision-making processes. With 100 per cent of clients acknowledging the value of the provided insights, Northumbria University's Business Clinic continues to drive positive change and make substantial contributions to the economic landscape of Newcastle and the North East.



Solent University

During 2020/21, Solent Business School was one of 20 business schools working with the Chartered Association of Business Schools to deliver the specialised Government funded programme for leaders of small businesses. Part of a £20 million government-provided package to help small businesses, it has already helped thousands across England.

Working with businesses across the southern region, from Cambridge to Truro, Solent Business School has supported over 140 businesses which actively enrolled on the programme, of which more than half are Hampshire-based.

To aid business resilience and future growth in the current climate, the Small Business Leadership Programme has created peer groups that drive innovation and help small business owners in making the key decisions that will lead to sustainable growth.

Building on the success of this programme the Solent's Business School is now helping to deliver the 90 per cent of the Government subsidised Help to Grow Management programme.

The programme aims to help SME business leaders increase productivity, seize investment opportunities, and grow their business.

The course is a blend of online and face-to-face sessions. With just one session a week, it's designed to fit around existing work and personal commitments.

During the course, businesses get access to:

- > 10 hours of 1:1 mentoring from a business expert to help you and your business grow.
- > A carefully designed practical curriculum.
- > Development of a bespoke business growth plan to help your business and team reach their full potential.
- > Range of peer networking sessions with a chance to share experiences and best practice.
- > Access to the nationwide alumni network which includes guest speakers, bespoke business clinics, and networking events.

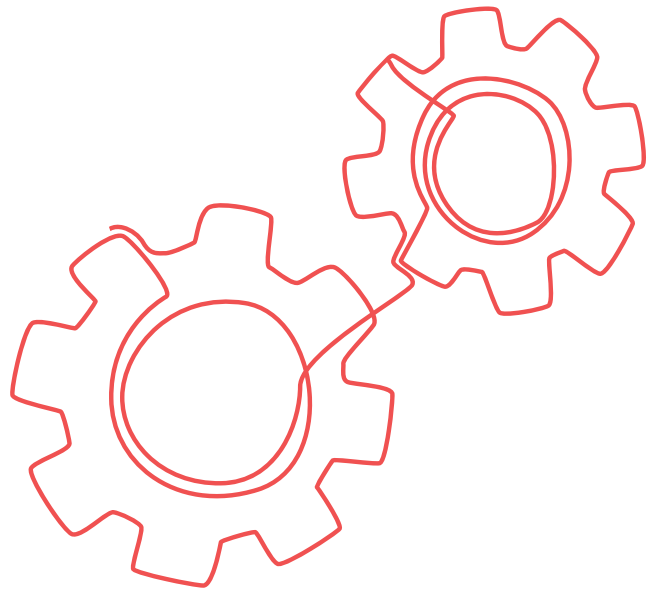
One local business that has taken part in the programme is QGate Software Limited. Director James Jury said: "The people who have been involved in delivery of the Help to Grow: Management course at Solent University have been 100% dedicated and their passion comes through in each subject matter they present."

The people who have been involved in delivery of the Help to Grow: Management course at Solent University have been 100% dedicated and their passion comes through in each subject matter they present."

Staffordshire University

In 2022, Staffordshire University became the educational partner of the Peter Coates Foundation, a charitable organisation born out of Peter Coates' deep roots in the Stoke-on-Trent area and his philanthropic passion for giving back to his community. The Foundation's aim is to create a thriving and growing ecosystem of businesses to drive the economy forward and to support urban regeneration activities through a mixture of educational philanthropy, venture philanthropy and other urban regeneration philanthropy.

Staffordshire University has a long-established history of providing students and graduates with the skills required to help get new and developing businesses off to a flying start through its long established Belnspired programme, and they also offer a suite of tailored business services via their Innovation Enterprise Zone (IEZ) to support businesses of all sizes across the region. However, through the development of the Peter Coates MSc Entrepreneurship programme, Staffordshire University have created a unique experience for emerging entrepreneurs to develop their innovative idea into a scalable, investible and sustainable business through a programme designed by entrepreneurs, for entrepreneurs. This disruptive entrepreneurial education programme focuses heavily on practice, exposing students from diverse backgrounds to the entrepreneurial process, to commercially relevant concepts, contacts and opportunities.



From design to delivery, local entrepreneurs have been integral to the programme's success, enabling students to benefit from, and contribute to, a growing entrepreneurial community across the region. A key aspect of the course is that it is accessible to all through inclusive recruitment practices and through the offer of full bursaries from the Peter Coates Foundation.

Additionally, upon completion of the programme graduates will have the opportunity to pitch for up to £300,000 of investment from the Foundation. Staffordshire University welcomed its first cohort of 31 students in January 2023, an outstanding group of creative and innovative entrepreneurs who are already making their mark on the region – Staffordshire University is looking forward to its second cohort starting in September 2023.

University of Bolton

The University of Bolton has played a pivotal role in creating opportunities in an underprivileged region of the country - as exemplified by the inspiring journey of student midwife Carol Grech.

Carol's life underwent a remarkable transformation with the assistance of the University of Bolton's Greater Manchester Business School. Despite leaving school without qualifications, Carol's determination led her to pursue education at Bolton College, where she completed her A-levels in science and biology.

In 2007, she enrolled at the University of Bolton, becoming the first in her generation to attend university and obtaining a foundation degree in Health and Social Care. After dedicating 15 years to public health and paediatrics, Carol's true passion for midwifery emerged. She seized the opportunity to enrol in the newly introduced Midwifery Degree at the University in 2021.

Despite the challenges of the rigorous Midwifery Degree, including demanding shifts and academic difficulties due to dyslexia, Carol received unwavering support through a personal learning support plan. She fully embraced student life, forming friendships and gaining independence and confidence. Upon graduation, Carol aims to become an exceptional midwife and expand her business, Baby Blossoms.

The University of Bolton has been instrumental in Carol's journey, exemplified by the support provided through the Bolton Ignition Fund. This fund provided financial backing for Carol's business venture, highlighting the University's commitment to transforming lives.

Additionally, the University of Bolton is actively involved in developing the Institute of Medical Sciences, a state-of-the-art medical and clinical skills training facility at the Royal Bolton Hospital, slated to open in 2024. A collaborative project involving the University, Bolton College, Bolton NHS Foundation Trust, and Bolton Council, the Institute will offer unparalleled training opportunities for aspiring and existing healthcare professionals.

With a focus on practical, skills-based learning within a live hospital environment, it will facilitate direct pathways to clinical healthcare employment. The Institute will provide a range of courses, apprenticeships, and continuous professional development opportunities, benefiting approximately 3,000 learners annually and contributing £150 million to the local economy over its lifetime. The project received £20 million in funding from the Levelling-Up Fund in 2022, marking a significant investment in the region's future.

Through its initiatives, support, and dedication to transforming lives, the University of Bolton has become a beacon of opportunity in an area facing numerous challenges, empowering individuals like Carol Grech to overcome obstacles, pursue their dreams, and achieve success - creating a ripple effect of positive change in the entire community.

The University of Bolton has played a pivotal role in creating opportunities in an underprivileged region of the country



University of Chester

The local challenge in the Cheshire and Warrington area revolves around its aspiration to become the most sustainable and inclusive subregion in the UK. This objective presents the complex task of achieving local growth while simultaneously ensuring positive environmental impacts and avoiding disproportionate harm to disadvantaged groups within the community.

Recognising its role as a local anchor institution, the University has embraced its responsibility to engage proactively and responsibly in placemaking while providing opportunities for its students, who are integral members of the local community.

In response to this challenge, the University has actively collaborated with local stakeholders, communities, and students to co-create solutions that stimulate and influence sustainable and inclusive growth.

Recognising its role as a local anchor institution, the University has embraced its responsibility to engage proactively and responsibly in placemaking while providing opportunities for its students, who are integral members of the local community.

Some of the notable initiatives undertaken by the University include:

- > Active leadership on the Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission (SIGC) of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- > Adapting support for local small businesses by introducing a sustainable growth boot camp.
- > Co-creation of world-leading conservation and sustainability education in partnership with Chester Zoo.
- > Input into Chester West and Chester's One City Plan, which recognises the University's pivotal role in developing a skilled workforce, addressing the climate emergency, diversifying the local population, and driving the local economy forward.
- > Student-led leadership through the Green Expo event, facilitating discussions on possible solutions to the climate emergency and individual action with local schools and businesses.
- > Academic leadership of the local industrial decarbonization HyNet consortium, including the establishment of the HyNet Skills, Learning, and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Subcommittee. This subcommittee focuses on ensuring that industrial decarbonisation provides inclusive skills and employment opportunities for local people.
- > Investment exceeding £6.5 million in relocating the University's provision in Warrington to the town centre. This move aims to embed the University within the community, remove barriers to accessing higher education, and reduce car travel.

> Development of sustainable leaders through the Venture team, which supports over 1,000 students in engaging with enterprise and entrepreneurial activities.

> Provision of inclusive digital upskilling opportunities through the Digital on Tour van. This initiative visits local communities, schools, and businesses, showcasing the benefits of digital technology across various sectors using drones, LiDAR scanners, and AR/VR headsets.

As a result of these efforts, the University of Chester has celebrated several accomplishments thus far, while acknowledging that achieving sustainable and inclusive local growth requires a long-term commitment.

Some of the notable achievements include:

> Working with 515 small businesses and 275 potential entrepreneurs locally, leading to increased turnover for 61 per cent of responding businesses, job creation for 53 per cent despite the pandemic, and 42 per cent of potential entrepreneurs subsequently establishing new businesses.

> Publishing of case studies highlighting female entrepreneur-led businesses and successful ventures initiated by three University students in collaboration with supported small businesses.

> Agreement on an EDI Charter by the HyNet Skills, Learning, and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Subcommittee. This charter outlines the University's mission to create opportunities, foster growth, and make a significant impact on the diversity and perception of the energy industry within the local communities.

> Positive feedback from local placemakers, including Andy Carter MP, regarding the University's new site in Warrington. The investment is seen as beneficial for the area's regeneration and for establishing close links with the hospital and planned health and social care academy to train the next generation of healthcare professionals.

> National recognition of the University's student entrepreneurship offer as best practice in March 2020.

> Establishment of a partnership agreement with Cheshire West and Chester Council, solidifying the commitment to achieve shared goals that meet the evolving needs and aspirations of the local area.

The investment is seen as beneficial for the area's regeneration and for establishing close links with the hospital and planned health and social care academy to train the next generation of healthcare professionals.



University of Derby

SureScreen Scientifics, an independent, family-run business specialising in forensic analysis, partnered with the University of Derby's Invest to Grow program to fuel their expansion into DNA analysis. With a focus on environmental and ecological screening, SureScreen developed a groundbreaking method using DNA sweeps to identify species such as Great Crested Newts, a task typically performed through trap-setting. This innovative approach proved to be more accurate, environmentally friendly, and cost-effective.

Recognising the immense market potential of their DNA analysis services, SureScreen aimed to bolster their capabilities in this field. They had acquired an additional building adjacent to their main facility, which required substantial renovation and customization to accommodate the specific needs of DNA analysis. In order to capitalise on emerging market opportunities without delay, SureScreen applied for funding through the University of Derby's Invest to Grow program.

In June 2015, SureScreen secured £68,430 from the Invest to Grow program, contributing to a total project budget of £228,100. This financial support enabled them to outfit the new facility with state-of-the-art equipment and infrastructure necessary for conducting DNA analysis.

Recognising the immense market potential of their DNA analysis services, SureScreen aimed to bolster their capabilities in this field.



As a result of the Invest to Grow funding, SureScreen Scientifics successfully established a dedicated laboratory for their DNA-focused operations. This expansion allowed them to immediately offer enhanced services to their customers, resulting in a significant increase in sales and profitability within the first year. Moreover, this development led to the creation of eight new jobs, with expectations of additional job opportunities in the next 12 months. Furthermore, SureScreen continued their collaborative efforts with the University of Derby by involving two PhD students in DNA research conducted within the newly established laboratory.

By engaging with the University of Derby's Invest to Grow program, SureScreen gained access to valuable resources, fostering innovation, research, and development. The partnership not only enhanced the skills of SureScreen's existing and new workforce but also propelled the business forward, delivering positive contributions to the East Midlands economy.

University of Greenwich

The University of Greenwich's enterprise centre, the Generator, helps students and graduates to develop entrepreneurial skills, start new ventures, and grow existing businesses. Nurturing entrepreneurship is a crucial part of the economy, as entrepreneurs have the ability to drive market change. In 2022-2023, the university awarded seed funding to entrepreneurs totalling £25,000 via nine bursaries sponsored by Santander, and to six Enterprise Challenge category winners. Over 1200 students from all subjects across the university participated in some form of enterprise support.

The Enterprise Challenge is the Generator's flagship competition that provides mentoring, training and funding for entrepreneurial University of Greenwich students who want to pursue an idea. All students and recent graduates of up to two years out are eligible to apply. Applicants do not need any prior business experience to take part.

There are two streams involved in the competition:

- > A Social Stream, for businesses that primarily aim to have a positive impact on the environment, society, or health.
- > A Commercial Stream, for businesses that primarily aim to generate profit.

Applicants receive free 1-1 advice, training activities, mentoring, and the chance to win generous cash prizes to help them build their enterprise.

Students and graduates who are already trading can access further support via the Generator's summer Accelerator programme, which provides a week of intensive practical support to help them to develop their brand identity, business models, and new sales and marketing strategies. Upon completion applicants are offered free desk space in the university's co-work space, which has a mix of open plan desks and private meeting spaces.

In addition to helping students to start and grow their own businesses, the Generator also helps students to develop entrepreneurial skills by working as consultants for other businesses via #GreHacks, a programme of 2 day hackathons run in partnerships with local organisations. Students have the opportunity to work in interdisciplinary teams to solve real challenges the organisations are facing, and have worked with a range of partners including Made in Greenwich, Peabody, the Caine Prize for African Writing, Pixel Pond, Cassava Republic Press and Tutor Hive.

In 2022-2023, the university awarded seed funding to entrepreneurs totalling £25,000 via nine bursaries sponsored by Santander, and to six Enterprise Challenge category winners. Over 1200 students from all subjects across the university participated in some form of enterprise support.

The University is currently implementing a comprehensive T-Level Placement scheme for the academic years 2022/23 and 2023/24.



The University is currently implementing a comprehensive T-Level Placement scheme for the academic years 2022/23 and 2023/24.

The scheme aims to achieve several key objectives:

- > Providing placements for T-Level students from the University's partner college, LSEC. These placements are particularly significant as around half of the students participating in the scheme are the first in their families to pursue higher education.
- > Strengthening the relationship between the University and its partners, fostering closer collaboration and developing employability links that benefit both students and the local community.
- > Enhancing the learning experience of T-Level placement students by offering them an opportunity

to succeed in their Level 3 qualification.

The placements also serve as potential pathways into further study or employment, equipping students with valuable skills and experiences.

- > Enabling staff at the University of Greenwich to develop supervisory and mentoring skills through their involvement in overseeing the T-Level placements. This aspect of the scheme offers professional development opportunities for faculty members and contributes to a supportive learning environment.
- > Demonstrating the University's ongoing commitment to diversity and widening access to higher education. By actively engaging with T-Level students and providing them with opportunities to thrive, the institution aims to create a more inclusive educational landscape.

University of Stirling

Creating opportunities: Harnessing the potential for productivity and inclusive growth through the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal

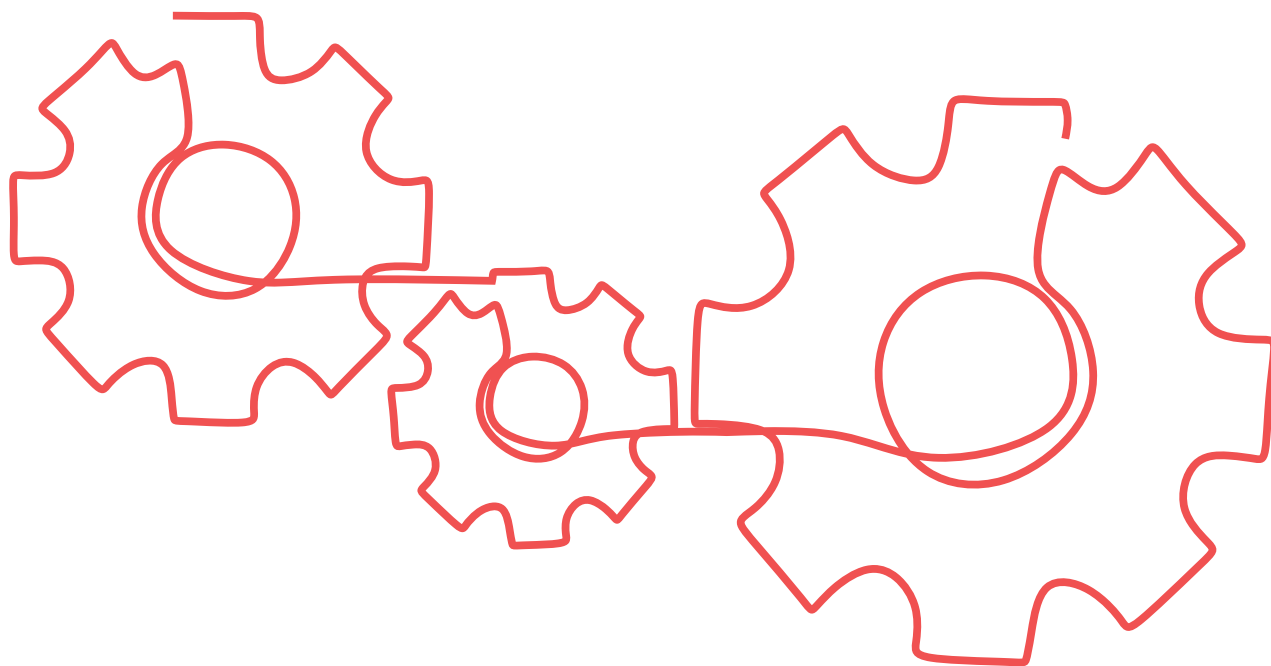
The University of Stirling is a signatory and major beneficiary of the £214 million Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal. The package, which includes £90.2 million investment from the UK and Scottish Governments, will ignite the region's unique potential, driving productivity, prosperity and job creation through responding to pressing global challenges.

Research and innovation play a central role in achieving the Deal's vision; more than £46 million is being invested into three major University-led programmes, each of which make a distinct contribution to tackling global challenges. A £17 million UK Government investment in the University's world-leading Institute of Aquaculture, to create the National Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Hub (NATIH), will enable even closer working between internationally renowned researchers and industry, supporting global food security by catalysing one of the world's fastest-growing sectors.

Research and innovation play a central role in achieving the Deal's vision; more than £46 million is being invested into three major University-led programmes

Scotland's International Environment Centre (SIEC), funded through £22 million investment from the Scottish and UK Governments, tackles the delicate balance between economic growth, environmental sustainability and social inclusion. Spanning high-tech, data-led innovation to support sustainable business practices, through to unique opportunities for local skills development, SIEC provides an international exemplar of a 'just transition' to Net Zero. Flagship SIEC projects include the Forth Environmental Resilience Array (Forth-ERA), which uses digital technology to create a world-first environmental observatory of an entire river catchment, and 'Young Pathfinders', an educational outreach programme that supports local secondary school pupils to prepare for the challenges and opportunities of a climate changed future.

The world's ageing population creates significant challenges, from suitable homes, assistive technologies and appropriate care, through to demand for new products and services as individuals and families live independently, for longer. The Intergenerational Living Innovation Hub (ILIH), funded through £7.25m UK Government investment, responds to this challenge by bringing researchers, industry, healthcare providers and innovators together to pioneer new ways for an ageing population to live, work and socialise. Architects, designers, construction companies, and technology providers will work in collaboration to help bring commercially and socially viable solutions to life, testing new ideas and concepts in a 'living lab'. By developing effective products and services, the Hub will make a tangible difference to people's lives, transforming the narrative around ageing from one of challenge to opportunity.



An anchor institution in the Forth Valley, the University works proactively with regional partners to maximise the opportunities provided by City Region Deal investment. This includes an innovative scheme requiring suppliers appointed through the University's Deal-related procurement to engage with local schools – via Scotland's Developing Young Workforce (DYW) programme – and leveraging hundreds of additional employment opportunities. The Memorandum of Understanding between the University and DYW is first of its kind among City Deal partners in Scotland, further testament to Stirling's pioneering approach to exploring new opportunities to affect social change.

The scale of UK and Scottish Government investment in the University through the Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal reflects the confidence of investors, partners and stakeholders in the University's distinct role as an enabler of opportunity within the Forth Valley, and further afield. Creating growth, jobs and skills development pathways while addressing major societal challenges, the University is further demonstrating its commitment to prosperity and inclusion by adding value through its own initiatives, ensuring its social footprint leaves a deep impact.

University of Southampton

The University of Southampton has emerged as a key economic powerhouse, generating an impressive £4.14 billion impact on the UK economy annually – according to the Economic Impact Report by London Economics. The report analyses a university's economic and social influence during the 2020/21 academic year.

Significantly, approximately £1.6 billion of the regional impact is concentrated within the South East, particularly benefiting Southampton. As the region aims to recover from the pandemic, the University, its staff, and students are poised to drive the economic revival in Southampton.

The report examines the economic impact of the University's teaching, research, enterprise, knowledge exchange, and international student contribution to the national economy. Notably, the university's expertise in research, enterprise, and knowledge exchange alone contributes over £2 billion to the national economy. The University's Science Park, home to 100+ companies with a £370 million turnover, has also boosted the local and national economies by £928 million while attracting talent and investment.

In the 2020/21 academic year, the University also educated 21,000 students, with new students contributing approximately £134,000 each to the UK economy. Moreover, the University serves as a major employer, creating and sustaining over 16,000 jobs nationwide.

Additionally, the University of Southampton contributes £69 million to Southampton's tourism industry through study trips, business meetings, and visits by friends and family.

Key findings from the report included:

- > The University of Southampton generates an annual economic impact of £4.14 billion across the UK.
- > For every pound spent by the University, £7.40 is generated in economic benefit.
- > Approximately £1.6 billion of the regional impact occurs in the South East, with a significant portion in Southampton.
- > The University's activities benefit all regions and sectors of the UK.
- > Research, enterprise, and knowledge exchange activities contribute £2.07 billion to the national economy.
- > Teaching and learning activities from new students result in an economic impact of £682 million.
- > First-year international students generate an economic contribution of £553 million.
- > The University of Southampton Science Park boosts the UK economy by £928 million.
- > The University contributes £69 million to Southampton's tourism industry.

The University of Southampton's remarkable economic impact demonstrates its pivotal role in driving growth, fostering innovation, and creating diverse opportunities for the UK economy as a whole.

The University of Southampton's remarkable economic impact demonstrates its pivotal role in driving growth, fostering innovation, and creating diverse opportunities for the UK economy as a whole.

University of the West of England

University of the West of England (UWE) Bristol, as an engaged university, actively collaborates with communities and businesses in the West of England and beyond, driving economic opportunities and meeting the specific needs of the region through localised growth initiatives. By working closely with local policy makers, businesses, and community organisations, UWE Bristol aligns its activities with the region's industrial strengths and aspirations for inclusive, sustainable economic innovation, growth, and workforce development.

To effectively address regional demands and ensure inclusivity, UWE Bristol co-designs and develops programs and interventions in partnership with industry, businesses, and learners. By involving strategic business and community partners in the co-delivery of these programs, UWE Bristol maximises its impact in terms of inclusive and sustainable economic growth, reaching target groups and providing evidence-based support.

UWE Bristol actively drives innovation in the region, evidenced by its successful delivery of regional innovation and economic growth support to SMEs since 2018. This endeavour has attracted significant funding, including £24 million from European Structural Investment Funds and regional growth funding, leveraging over £18.5 million in private sector investment and resulting in the creation of 1,561 new jobs.

Accelerating growth is another key focus for UWE Bristol, demonstrated through its University Enterprise Zone (UEZ). As one of the four UEZs commissioned by the central government, UEZ at UWE Bristol serves as a hub for innovation and

enterprise, facilitating the growth of new and scaling businesses. Future Space, an innovation hub within UEZ, has already generated £19.8 million in GVA and created 504 jobs through 107 high-growth businesses. Launch Space, an incubator for early-stage and graduate start-ups, has supported nearly 150 founders, resulting in 274 jobs and £60 million in investment.

Within UEZ, UWE Bristol funds an Entrepreneur in Residence who provides tailored investment and business support to start-ups and growing businesses, as well as an Innovation Manager who fosters knowledge exchange opportunities between UEZ businesses and UWE Bristol researchers and students. Additionally, UWE Bristol collaborated with the region's four universities to establish a regional pre-incubator, a £900,000 initiative designed to support individuals from idea conception to starting and scaling a tech company.

Building skills in the region's workforce is a vital aspect of UWE Bristol's commitment to creating economic opportunities locally. The university actively partners with local organisations to co-create and deliver innovative skills programs that address identified skills gaps and support post-COVID-19 economic recovery. Notably, the Green Skills for Jobs and Entrepreneurship program is a pioneering initiative that provides green skills training, paid internships, and start-up support to minoritized individuals aged 18-28 who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. UWE Bristol's dedication to transforming futures and fostering inclusivity in the workforce is central to their approach to regional economic development.

University of West London

The University of West London (UWL) has established strong connections with local government initiatives in Ealing and Hounslow, contributing to the support and interaction within the community.

These partnerships have positioned UWL as a key driver of economic growth in West London, aligning with the Ealing Master Plan and the Hounslow Regional Plan.

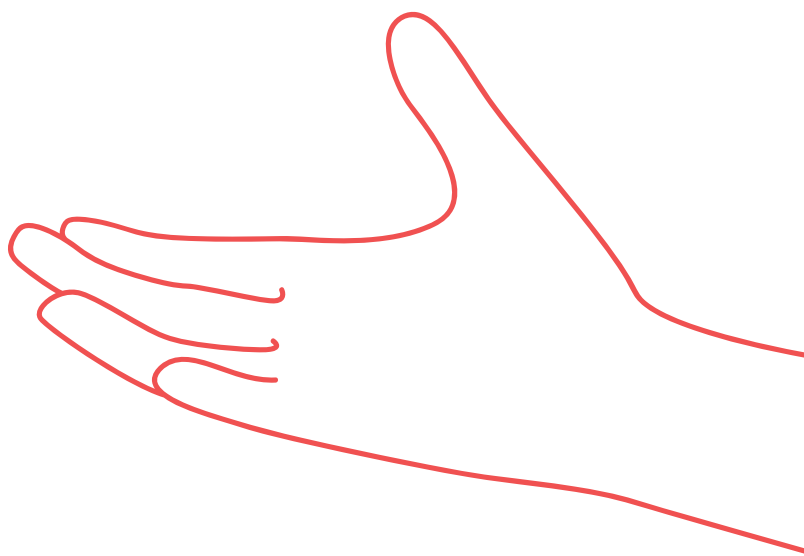
Through collaborations with businesses, local authorities, and community groups, UWL is actively fostering a skilled workforce for the future and nurturing businesses that propel economic expansion while addressing local regeneration challenges. The University believes in actively engaging in impactful networks and partnerships to amplify its influence.

UWL's involvement in various initiatives exemplifies its commitment to community engagement. Noteworthy endeavours include participation in the Ealing Council's 'Recovery from the pandemic' scrutiny panels, partnering with Ealing Council's Business Growth and Net Zero team to host workshops for local businesses, and collaborating with local government to develop a mobile app on wearable devices for enhanced public safety.

The University believes in actively engaging in impactful networks and partnerships to amplify its influence.

The University has also undertaken initiatives such as delivering cooking classes to residents with type 2 diabetes and engaging the local community in sustainable food practices and micro-anaerobic digestion processes to address net-zero carbon targets. Additionally, UWL actively participates in local government-led industry and community roundtable events throughout the year.

These close collaborations with local government bodies have strengthened relationships and optimised project outcomes for UWL. The University's positive social impact is evident through benchmarking exercises and regeneration metrics, including job creation, business start-ups, and other significant economic and social value indicators. By actively contributing to local government initiatives, UWL is creating economic opportunities and driving positive change within the community.



University of Worcester

The University of Worcester is actively creating economic opportunities in the region through fostering and supporting entrepreneurship.

One successful scheme is the Worcester Business School (WBS) Springboard scheme, which was launched in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This flexible student work experience service provides a cost-effective solution for businesses seeking additional digital skills or short-term recruitment needs. Through the initiative, students can take on one-off projects and provide support where traditional internships or placements may not be feasible. The Placements Office assists employers and students throughout the recruitment process by promoting roles and providing suitable student CVs.

As part of the Springboard programme, two students were supported in undertaking environmental impact projects with local companies. In one of the projects, a student conducted a sustainability audit for a medium-sized organisation in the medical technology industry. The audit provided valuable insights into the organisation's sustainability position and influenced their distribution channels.

Another ongoing student project involves a student working with a local small business to align their practices with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Discussions are also underway to assess

the environmental impact in schools through collaborations with the local Schools Business Manager network. The Springboard Programme has seen resounding success, with over 60 employers expressing interest and 33 students taking up project roles in the past 14 months. Another scheme run by the University of Worcester – EnRich – focuses on young people in Worcestershire who want to start a business or work self-employed. This pre-startup business program, running from summer 2021 to 2023, offers 12 hours of free training to develop skills and knowledge necessary for starting a business.

The areas covered by EnRich include business planning, legal structures, funding, sales and marketing, and entrepreneurial mindset development. Participants are also provided with mentoring and follow-on support through the Business and IP Centre at the Hive. The program culminates in an annual QuickPitch event, sponsored by a local law firm, where attendees have the opportunity to present their business pitches to an invited panel.

These initiatives by the University of Worcester's WBS demonstrate their commitment to driving economic growth and supporting entrepreneurship in the region. Through practical experiences, training, mentoring, and networking opportunities, the University empowers students and local community members to pursue their business ventures and contribute to the local economy.

York St John University

The Enterprise Centre at York St John University offers new businesses a city-centre start up space with on-site access to academic expertise. This includes coaching and mentoring workshops from York Business School and support with digital marketing, growth planning, finance skills and bid writing.

Following The Enterprise Centre's launch in Spring 2022, AgriSound became the first firm to take advantage of the Centre's free facilities and support networks. It's a growing environmental tech business that was founded with a mission to protect pollinators by reinventing insect monitoring. They aim to deploy sensors across the planet to transform how people monitor insect activity and make a positive impact on biodiversity.

Since its establishment, AgriSound has partnered with a number of companies and projects, including Dyson Farming, Innocent Drinks, National Trust Scotland and Royal Horticultural Society to spread their message. M&S has since announced a three-year collaboration with the agri-tech firm,

designed to help farmers better manage pollinators and increase crop yields. The collaboration will see two M&S Select Farms install in-field sensors to track the number of pollinators visiting their farm in real-time and target specific interventions for improving numbers.

Launched in January 2020, AgriSound was one of only ten start-ups in the UK selected to present at COP26. AgriSound chief executive Casey Woodward explained why the University's Enterprise Centre works so well for them: "There were a host of reasons that we chose to base ourselves here, including access to expertise, great facilities and the opportunity to work with the students.

"A major draw was also how it's meant we can reduce our carbon footprint as it's in the city centre with public transport connections and ready access to local networks.

The University is a great place to foster new business. You can develop and grow, alongside other people doing the same thing in the same space."

The Enterprise Centre at York St John University offers new businesses a city-centre start up space with on-site access to academic expertise. This includes coaching and mentoring workshops from York Business School and support with digital marketing, growth planning, finance skills and bid writing.

