



Awards 2025

Outstanding Entrepreneurial University

Institution Name	University of South Wales
Submission title or project name	Beyond start-ups: building a culture and strategy of innovation and entrepreneurship
Nominee / key personnel	Jonathan Jones (USW Enterprise); Richie Turner (Startup Stiwdio)
URL	https://www.southwales.ac.uk/news/2025/may/entrepreneurial-university-of-wales-usw-ranks-top-three-in-uk-for-graduate-start-ups/
Submission	The University of South Wales (USW) is a national leader in entrepreneurial education, ranking first in Wales and sixth in the UK for graduate start-ups, with 136 businesses launched in 2023-24. A university-wide shift to challenge-based learning is embedding enterprise into all courses, informed by the Enhancing Entrepreneurship project, which embedded enterprise into 23 courses and helped to develop a growing international partnership with Tumkur University in India. USW offers a rich extracurricular enterprise programme through its careers team, including masterclasses, mentoring, start-up funding and tailored support for freelancers and aspiring founders. This sits alongside the university's enterprise teams – Startup Stiwdio and USW Exchange – and specialist activity supporting women, creative industries and global majority communities. The university also leads a regional innovation programme and is powered by an alumni network of more than 2,000 entrepreneurs. Enterprise is embedded in our culture – driving transformation across education, industry and communities.



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Institution Name	Swansea University
Submission title or project name	Embedding entrepreneurship at the heart of Swansea University
Nominee / key personnel	Peter Dunstan (deputy pro vice-chancellor enterprise, knowledge exchange and partnerships); Emma Dunbar (associate director and head of knowledge exchange); The Enterprise Strategic Committee at Swansea University, including the IP and Commercialisation team led by Rhys Bowley, the Student Enterprise team led by Kelly Jordan, and the faculty Enterprise, Partnerships and Innovation leads.
URL	
Submission	Entrepreneurship is a strategic cornerstone of Swansea University's vision and culture, rooted in its founding principle – created by industry, for industry. As one of the institution's five strategic pillars, enterprise permeates every aspect of our work – from teaching and research to partnerships and civic engagement. This integrated approach for entrepreneurial excellence has enabled us to cultivate a dynamic, inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem that delivers tangible and meaningful social and economic impact at regional, national and international levels. We are proud of Swansea's priority to capitalise on the breadth and depth of our strengths to achieve our vision as a leading global as well as local university in enterprise. Our 2023-28 Institutional Enterprise Strategy focuses on three key themes: unlock talent, enabling environment and impact in place. Through our inclusive, collaborative and impactful model, from groundbreaking research to successful start-up ventures, Swansea University is setting a new benchmark for entrepreneurial higher education.



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Institution Name	Imperial College London
Submission title or project name	Scaling innovation: from west London to the world
Nominee / key personnel	Ben Mumby-Croft (director of entrepreneurship); Alyssa Gilbert (director of innovation, Grantham Institute); Graham Hewson (head of incubation and prototyping spaces)
URL	https://www.imperial.ac.uk/enterprise/entrepreneurship/
Submission	Imperial College London's 2024 strategy, Science for Humanity, placed innovation and entrepreneurship at the heart of its mission. In 2023-24, Imperial rose to second in the QS World University Rankings, with <i>The Times</i> crediting its entrepreneurial strengths as a key factor. Home to one of Europe's leading start-up ecosystems – including the Imperial Enterprise Lab, the White City Incubator and the climate innovation centre Undaunted – Imperial was named Europe's top large university for start-up creation by Redstone and is the only university with two hubs in the <i>Financial Times</i>' top 125 European Start-up Hubs. In 2024, we launched Imperial Global to scale inclusive innovation worldwide, co-founded the Earthshot Climate Innovation Network, and took 30 student and academic founders on international visits. Flagship programmes such as WE Innovate National and the Commonwealth Startup Fellowship are expanding access across the UK and globally, while Imperial's founder-first policies, such as the Founders Choice™ equity model, continue to shape best practice.



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Institution Name	University of Southampton
Submission title or project name	Embedded entrepreneurial excellence achieved through the 'triple helix' approach at the University of Southampton
Nominee / key personnel	Professor Mark Smith (president and vice-chancellor); Professor Mark Spearing (vice-president, research and enterprise); Diana Galpin (director of enterprise); Associate deans enterprise: Robin Chave (CEO, University of Southampton Science Park); Katy Gordon (director of careers, employability and student enterprise); Sarah Rogers (associate director, careers, employability and student enterprise); Thomas Simmonds (head of student enterprise and events)
URL	https://www.southampton.ac.uk/about/strategy/triple-helix
Submission	The University of Southampton's "triple helix strategy" is an institutional approach in which research, education and enterprise are distinctively intertwined to successfully embed enterprise and entrepreneurial excellence across our culture and programmes, achieving greater impact and accelerating new ways to tackle the world's most complex problems. The Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise Strategic Plan ensures that the enterprise vision set out in our university strategy stays on target and delivers against our institutional KPIs. Successes include our Student Enterprise support, including the 2024 launch of the Student Enterprise Junction space, the 2024 launch of Successful Futures, a strategic major project that embeds enterprise skills across the curriculum, and the broader start-up ecosystem including the Future Worlds tech start-up accelerator, the University of Southampton Science Park, innovation hubs within faculties, and our lead projects undertaken as part of the SETsquared partnership, such as the Deal Readiness Toolkit and iCURE.



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Institution Name	Northeastern University - London
Submission title or project name	The Start-up Hub
Nominee / key personnel	
URL	
Submission	At Northeastern University - London, entrepreneurship is not a department but rather an institutional ethos, embedding innovation across all aspects of the university. Its distinctive approach centres on the Start-up Hub, launched in February 2024, which uniquely houses 22 external start-ups and eight student ventures while strategically pairing companies with students for authentic work experience. The model has generated significant impact: the number of student entrepreneurship societies grew from one to five, hosting 66 events for 1,300-plus students, while creating 12 internships, six co-ops and three challenge projects. Cross-sector partnerships with organisations such as the UK Department for Business and Trade have produced 38 collaborative events, building a real-world ecosystem around the university. Northeastern's scalable approach extends internationally through collaborations, enabling joint showcases and Europe-wide networking. The embedded model permeates curricula, student services and governance, catalysing interdisciplinary research and new academic modules while deepening alumni engagement as investors and mentors, demonstrating transferable institutional transformation.



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Institution Name	Cranfield University
Submission title or project name	
Nominee / key personnel	
URL	
Submission	Cranfield University has embedded entrepreneurship across its culture, strategy and operations, creating an environment where innovation flourishes. Guided by its Research and Innovation Strategy 2022-27, entrepreneurship is led at the institutional level through the Bettany Centre for Entrepreneurship and strategic oversight from the Innovation Committee. Students, staff and alumni benefit from initiatives such as the Cranfield Seed Fund, where students engage directly in venture investment, and the Green Future Investments Partnership, a three-stage innovation pipeline that has supported 98 ventures and leveraged more than £19 million in funding. Entrepreneurship is woven into teaching via the Cranfield Venture Programme, corporate challenges and regional SME support programmes. Nationally, more than 1,000 SMEs have benefited from Cranfield's government-funded growth programmes. Recognised by Small Business Charter accreditation and Bloomberg's top UK/Europe MBA ranking for entrepreneurship, Cranfield delivers sustainable, transferable impact and fosters entrepreneurial mindsets across its postgraduate community – shaping future leaders and enabling sector-wide innovation.