

# Student Entrepreneurship at Swansea University

Our Strategic Approach 2018 - 2023

RESEARCH, ENGAGEMENT & INNOVATION SERVICES

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## True to the strategic vision of our Industrial Founders in 1920 Swansea University will:

+ Provide an environment of research excellence, with research that is world-leading, globally collaborative, and internationally recognised. + Use our research and teaching strengths, collaboration with industry, and global reach to drive economic growth, foster prosperity, enrich the community and cultural life of Wales, as well as contribute to the health, leisure, and wellbeing of its citizens. + Deliver an outstanding student experience, with research-led and practice-driven teaching of the highest quality that produces global graduates educated and equipped for distinguished personal and professional achievement.

# Introduction

As Swansea gears up towards its centenary, we will be strengthening our position as a student Entrepreneurial University with a strong and dynamic ecosystem; that produces graduates that are sought after, having the combination of intellectual skills, capacity for innovative thinking, and wide experience that employers value.

Swansea University was "founded by industry, for industry", and continues to work closely with industry at the heart of its research and innovation strategy. It is explicit in our University mission to respond to the needs of business, drive economic growth, and wealth creation.

Over the past decade Swansea University has re-positioned itself globally as a leading institution for research with impact and teaching excellence. With an increasingly uncertain and unpredictable global economic environment, Swansea University recognises that there needs to be a step change, ensuring we equip our students to be entrepreneurial.

#### **Changing Landscape**

Over recent years, West Wales has relied heavily upon and benefited from European funding. There is increasing uncertainty on the level of funding and support available to regions, such as Swansea.

In addition and as outlined in the recent Reid Review<sup>1</sup> "The level of skills and knowledge within the Welsh workforce will need to increase significantly to deliver Welsh Government ambitions for enhanced productivity, competitiveness and prosperity and address the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG Act)<sup>2</sup>".

Research and innovation makes a vital contribution to the economy and society of Wales. Aligned to the Welsh Government's ambition, Swansea wants to use its' teaching, research and innovation to help graduates raise levels of productivity, build a stronger and more resilient economy, encourage enterprise and ensure the well-being of future generations.

These approaches have underpinned the University's £750m expansion and development at the Bay campus, and our commitment to the £1.3bn Swansea Bay Region City Deal, by using the power of public sector investment to create a demand-pull for new technologies and innovation in the area.

1 2

https://gov.wales/topics/science-and-technology/science/reid-review https://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act



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At Swansea University, a focus on entrepreneurship support for students has been led through the Welsh Government Big Ideas Wales Initiative. The programme encourages young people to develop entrepreneurial skills and to help those interested in starting a business take their idea forward. Furthermore, enterprise is being taught in the curriculum and there are modules delivered that are dedicated to entrepreneurship across the University.

Graduates need a wide range of skills and attributes, as well as subject knowledge, but perhaps most importantly they need an open and positive mindset and a creative and resilient approach to addressing both every day and more complex life challenges. Swansea University aims to make learning and assessment a more open environment where students learn to learn, become more independent in their learning and undertake real-world based authentic assessment, geared towards enabling them to make an impact in whatever they decide to do when they leave the University, whether it be getting a job or creating a company!

By focusing on the underlying skills, which enable graduates to become more resilient and ambitious, we hope that it will enable them to become more entrepreneurial in their approach and thinking, and in turn support and foster their creativity through competitions, training and mentorship, and help them to become the next generation of entrepreneurs.

To build upon this, we will produce graduates who are not just able to compete in today's employment market, but to lead the way as employment and entrepreneurship breaks new ground.

#### The future

In a changing world, need and demand for entrepreneurship, and particularly entrepreneurial students, as a fundamental requirement for development and growth, was recently emphasised in eight separate government and policy documents, including the Welsh Government's "Prosperity for All"<sup>1</sup> (EAP), UK Government's Industrial Strategy, Graduate Outcomes consultation and the Diamond Review. On a regional level, Swansea University will work closely with the Welsh Government to align our strategic vision with the Welsh Government's aspirations for economic development, business growth and innovation, whilst operating on a global scale.

As such, we have to prepare our graduates to be adaptable and able to spot, evaluate, and seize opportunities as they emerge.

This document outlines how we will develop, embed and deliver our commitments over the next five years to create a student entrepreneurial University with the knowledge, skills and drive to be enterprising.

1 https://gov.wales/about/programme-for-government



Hilary Lappin-Scott, OBE SENIOR PRO-VICE CHANCELLOR



# **Our Vision**

Developing innovative and entrepreneurial talent is a distinctive feature of the Swansea University student experience, transforming lives and futures by unlocking and fostering a connected entrepreneurial community

FORM

ENTREPRENEURIAL

CONNECTED

#### **Our Mission**

By the end of 2023, Swansea University will:

- + Be nationally recognised as a student Entrepreneurial University
- + Embed an effective and dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem and culture
- + Produce entrepreneurial and innovative graduates that are sought after, from across all Colleges and Schools



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#### MISSION:

Be nationally recognised as a student Entrepreneurial University.

#### COMMITMENTS:

whose **vision and strategy** position student enterprise, entrepreneurship and innovation at the **heart of the organisation** 

where entrepreneurship is embedded in institutional values and policies, staff behaviours and practices

through **continually benchmarking** against the highest standard and being internationally recognised through **accreditation and national & international awards** 

#### MISSION:

Embed an effective and dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem and culture.

#### COMMITMENTS:

by unlocking, nurturing and empowering an **inclusive**, accessible and connected entrepreneurship community where people are encouraged and supported to be innovative, driven and explore opportunities

where students from all colleges/ schools are represented and engaged

through **collaborative partnerships and community development** – regionally, nationally and internationally

by building **capacity**, **leadership**, **and an enabling environment** to support external engagement, innovation, and entrepreneurship

by continually reviewing our landscape, **sharing best practice** and exploring opportunities to grow and learn

#### MISSION:

Produce entrepreneurial and innovative graduates that are sought after from all Colleges and Schools.

#### COMMITMENTS:

where **entrepreneurial capabilities**, **capacities and educators** thrive, is encouraged and recognised

through provision of exciting **opportunities for students** to enhance their mind-set / resilience, skills, knowledge and experience

by embedding **entrepreneurship learning opportunities in curriculum** across all disciplines to inspire and engage students as part of their studies

where **experiential learning and experimentation in a safe and innovative environment is encouraged and supported** 

where alumni, friends and supporters, are encouraged to **act as our ambassadors** 

#### **CASE STUDY:** Graduate Start-up

Osprey Metals Ltd. was founded in 1974 by three innovative post-graduates from Swansea University, who established the business in the region. They invented and then registered several patents for the Osprey Spray Forming process. In 1984, Sandvik acquired the company outright and has been a supportive parent ever since.

Sandvik Osprey has developed a huge portfolio of specialty alloys customized for specific clients, such as nickel- and cobalt-based super-alloys, as well as materials for aerospace and dental applications. 40 years on, the company has become an outstanding success story in the fields of powder metallurgy and advanced materials.

Still based in South Wales today, they employ 149 staff, and registered over £30 million of revenue in 2017, with profits of over £5m. The company is vital to the future prosperity of Swansea and the surrounding area, supporting regional economic development, creating skilled jobs and attracting talent and investment to South West Wales.



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# Enablers

Underpinning our commitments are our strategic enablers, which highlight the key critical success factors that will drive its delivery. These refer to the HE Innovate Framework, which is used by thousands of institutions worldwide.

- + Entrepreneurial ecosystem
- + Governance and Leadership
- + Pathways for Entrepreneurs
  - Digital Transformation
- Teaching and Learning
- Organisational Capacity



## Entrepreneurial ecosystem

The University will continue to develop and grow its ecosystem, by unlocking, nurturing and empowering an inclusive, accessible and connected entrepreneurship community where people (internal: staff, students and external: mentors and stakeholders) are encouraged and supported to be innovative, driven and explore opportunities that are ethical, sustainable and impactful on society whilst being agile and responsive to the challenges of an unpredictable economic environment.

All staff and students are important internal stakeholders supporting the

entrepreneurial agenda. The university will look to work together, creating synergies and linkages across colleges, schools and professional departments, breaking down traditional boundaries and silos.

Active involvement from a range of external stakeholders has been shown to be a contributing factor in successful Entrepreneurial Universities. Building and sustaining relationships with key partners and collaborators is essential in achieving the full potential at Swansea University for entrepreneurship in teaching and other activities.

#### We will:

+ Continue to build our internal communities ensuring we support each other, share best practice, resources and cross faculty teaching, learning, enterprise and innovation, wherever possible.

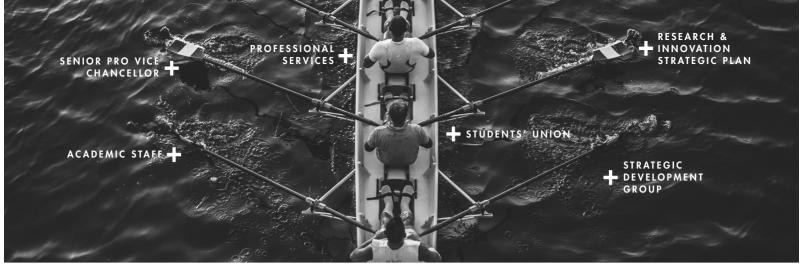
+ Develop a mechanism for staff, students & graduates to pledge their support and continued commitment to entrepreneurship at Swansea.

+ Continue to build long term strategic relationships with our External stakeholders, seeking new opportunities and fruitful partnerships.

+ Encourage international engagement within the ecosystem by sharing best practice, attending and presenting at conferences, supporting Alumni campaigns, placements and secondments.

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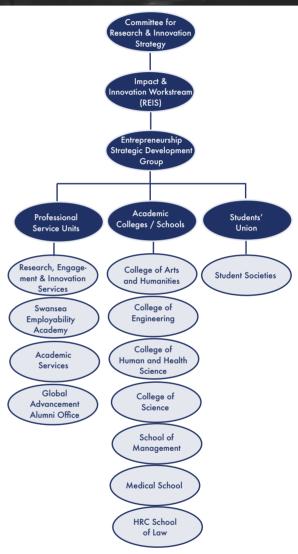


# Governance & Leadership

Under the leadership of the Senior Pro-Vice Chancellor and with strong governance embedded in our Research & Innovation Strategic plan, Swansea University is well placed to develop an entrepreneurial culture within our institution.

Reporting to the Committee for Research and Innovation Strategy and led by the Head of Engagement, Innovation & Entrepreneurship based in the Department for Research, Engagement and Innovation Services, an Entrepreneurship Strategic Development Group was formed in April 2018 to help drive the entrepreneurship agenda. Led by the Enterprise team in REIS, the group includes academic staff, Students' Union representatives and professional services support staff from across the University that champion entrepreneurship to feed into the strategy.

Staff are a key part in any strategy delivery, entrepreneurship education, support for business start-ups and all entrepreneurial activities that the University wants to develop. Many areas of the entrepreneurial agenda are fast moving, with associated need for upskilling and knowledge acquisition. Therefore development of a staff support network to encourage participation will help drive the successful delivery of the Strategic vision.



#### We will:

+ Strengthen our model for coordinating and integrating entrepreneurial activities at all levels and across campus, including development of 15 student entrepreneurship ambassadors from societies and each College / School.

+ **Enable student driven entrepreneurship** by investing resources, working with the Students' Union and supporting Student Societies run by students to celebrate and promote entrepreneurship, collaboration and skills development.





#### CASE STUDY: Module 'Sustainable Engineering Management for International Development'

This is a master's programme run by the College of Engineering which is truly cross-disciplinary (Engineers, Scientists and Social Scientists) who learn and test their entrepreneurial traits in real in-country projects with real stakeholders and real deliverables. The aim is to develop practitioners who can think rapidly, flexibly and creatively to support sustainable engineering solutions.

Reflective Practice and Self Awareness: "A great opportunity to develop both personally and professionally, this course has shaped my aspirations and enhanced my career prospects significantly." Arron Goodfellow, mechanical engineer

Leadership Development: "The module have exposed me to informed decision making, which is a quality of a transformational leader." Simon Ntramah, civil engineer

# Entrepreneurial Teaching & Learning

As a University, we understand that not all our students aspire to be entrepreneurs, but nevertheless we would like them to acquire an entrepreneurial mind-set to prepare them for a world of uncertainty, the emergence of new industries, a competitive labour market and support welath creation.

These skills include; leadership, resilience, self-management, determination, ability to spot opportunities, courage to take risks, commercial awareness, creative and innovative thinking, prioritisation and time management, problem solving, communication and team work.

Such skills students learn during their time at University. However, they do not always have the opportunity to experiment and apply these into practice. This can have an impact on student's career readiness and have a long-term impact on the University's reputation, represented on students outcomes.

At Swansea, there are already a number of entrepreneurial methods of learning and teaching being delivered across campus. A recent Module Mapping activity, conducted by the Academic Quality Services, highlighted that there are a number of modules focused on Entrepreneurship within our curriculum. In addition, there are many more modules that have associated entrepreneurial skills and behaviours embedded, without being recognised as such.

#### We will:

+ Support the 7 Colleges / Schools learning and teaching groups to embed entrepreneurship into their curriculum, delivered through a range of methods, promoting diversity and innovation in teaching and learning.

+ Provide staff access to support and training, through workshops held every semester to increase their knowledge of Entrepreneurship, and toolkits on how to embed Entrepreneurship into their subject specific areas. This will be supported at conferences such as SALT (Swansea Academic Learning and Teaching conference.

+ Share best practice of embedding

entrepreneurship education within the University and using the ETC Toolkits platform, to share modules and exercises to help with tackling implementation challenges such as the practically and physical how's to assess and support, collaborate and engage with external stakeholders to contextualise the learning.

+ Recognise Entrepreneurial teaching and encouraging staff to become EEUK Fellows.



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### enablers: Pathways for Entrepreneurs

The University has developed a framework to support the "Entrepreneurial" Journey. Providing an environment of inclusivity and accessibility to help our undergraduate and post graduate students to develop their entrepreneurial skills and mindset, gain valuable experiences and knowledge and encourage business startups.



#### We will:

#### Be Inspired **T**

+ Raise awareness and provide an introduction to

**entrepreneurship**, encouraging ethical, sustainable and social enterprises that adds value to others, through curriculum modules, case studies, events, mentors and real life success examples including alumni and Swansea ambassadors.

+ Increase wider participation across campus, including reaching communities and enterprise hubs.

#### Be Involved 🏟

+ Encourage greater participation, diversity and experiential learning opportunities, through competitions, schemes, start up exhibitions and networking events to enable entrepreneurs to explore, test and showcase their ideas.

+ Provide a framework of training and advisory services, in order to help support the transition into business start-up. This will include access to existing internal provisions and strategic projects.

+ Build and sustain relationships with key partners and collaborators in research, knowledge exchange and in other external facing activities, through the provision and access to internal as well as external networks such as 'Swansea University: LINC'.

#### Be Enterprising 🛪

+ Provide opportunities for student mobility (local and internationally) between academia and external environment such as 'entrepreneurship placements' and internships to help students gain valuable experience and knowledge exchange, putting into practice their skills and address real life problem solving.

+ Create a designated and safe space for innovation and startups, encouraging Colleges and Schools to provide spaces for students, when not used for teaching to experiment, collaborate and test ideas; such as labs, pop up markets, innovation spaces and other first class facilities.

+ Enhance current investment and funding opportunities for students, through programmes such as Santander and AgorIP as well as through our wider eco system of external stakeholders.

+ **Recognise and reward entrepreneurial learning** and achievements through accreditations, awards and certifications.



### ENABLERS: Digital Transformation

Swansea University recently launched its Digital Transformation Strategy 2021, which will transform our digital world to benefit our student experience.

Through the integration and optimisation of digital technologies to support innovation and entrepreneurship, Swansea will ensure that our digital environment is innovative and informed, whilst being supportive, adaptive and secure, allowing all of our digital citizens to be more productive, engaged, collaborative and equipped for changing digital advancements.

#### We will:

+ Align our entrepreneurial needs to the Institution's Digital Strategy and commitments to create a 'digital first' mind-set and culture in our teaching, learning, innovation, entrepreneurship, collaboration and operational activity, which will enrich our core activities and services.

+ Use digital platforms to support activities so that Information and learning can be done remotely from sessions (I.e. Webinars talks, entering competitions digitally through videoing pitches and Intranet systems to provide resources for all our stakeholders).

+ **Provide safe spaces across our University** that have first class digital infrastructure for enabling experimentation, innovation and research.

+ Upskill stakeholders with digital skills through knowledge exchange programmes so that they can be cascaded through to others. (I.e. coding workshops, app design, social media).

### **CASE STUDY: Graduate Start-up**

Graduating from Swansea University with a degree in Mechanical Engineering in 2003, Andrew Downie went on to found NetBop Technologies Ltd, located in the centre of Swansea. It is an award winning, approachable and high performing web development company, that has showed consident growth over the last 5 years, now employing 7 people. In 2008, Andrew was profiled by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) as one of the UK's top six most talented young entrepreneurs.

On his time at Swansea University, Andrew commented:

"I found the Mechanical Engineering course to be really interesting as the modules were varied. I liked the fact that not only did we cover several Engineering disciplines, but also a mix of IT, programming, business and even a basic accountancy module. All of which helped to encompass a well-rounded degree."

"I had always had a strong interest in IT and was confident I wanted to run my own business, but wanted to have a degree to fall-back upon should the worst happen. After graduating successfully with a 2:1, I put my plans into place to start my own business and was very grateful for the programmes Swansea University had to help assist with this."





### **CASE STUDY: Student Incubation Space**

In 2017, Swansea University launched its first student Incubation hub, an environment where students can come and seek guidance & advice, develop skills and work collaboratively in a safe space to experiment and start their own business.

Picture - from left to right: Ann Swift (Welsh Government), Professor Hilary Lappin-Scott OBE & Jackson Pickard (Swansea University), and Caroline Thompson (Be The Spark).



#### ENABLERS:

## **Organisational Capacity**

#### **Resourcing and Funding**

Develop a sustainable financial strategy to support entrepreneurial development, management and implementation plan, that will be supplemented by a wide variety of funding sources, including investment by external stakeholders.

# The University will look to:

+ Invest in student participation, reward, recognition and development to motivate, inspire and support its entrepreneurial agenda.

+ Implement a communication plan to encourage understanding, participation and shared successes.

+ Value external stakeholders and partners, as they bring additional skills, knowledge and opportunities for development (such as offering use of facilities and services, mechanisms for shared risk and reward for engagement, opportunities for fellowships, industrial professors or guest teachers).

### Welsh Government Big Ideas Wales

encourages young people to develop entrepreneurial skills and to help those interested in starting a business take their idea forward. Through provision of mentoring, inspiring talks from local entrepreneurs and role models, workshops, schemes and support for graduate start-ups and national competitions.

### Santander Universities

Swansea University is 1 of 83 Santander Universities across the UK, Santander Universities provides students with funding and support for education, employability and entrepreneurship activities.

### Industry and Entrepreneurs

through Swansea University LINC, our external engagement network to strengthen knowledge exchange, business networking and collaboration opportunities that will lead to economic growth and prosperity.

### Be The Spark Movement

bringing together 5 key stakeholders across Wales (Government, Academia, Investors, Entrepreneurs, Industry) to promote and drive innovation-led entrepreneurship.

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Swansea University LINC is a network to bring together stakeholders from Government, Academia, Investors, Entrepreneurs and Industry across Wales to work together for growth.

The free to join network provides a platform for our students to meet with potential employers, investors and mentors; supporting and encouraging collaboration, innovation and entrepreneurship.

#### **Further Information**

www.swansea.ac.uk/linc

## "This is your University"

Professor Hilary Lappin-Scott OBE, April 2018

# Swansea University: LINC will increase:

- + Visibility of Swansea University, staff and students.
- + Engagement and experience for students with external organisations facilitating employability; entrepreneurship; post graduate study and research.
- + Collaborative opportunities with external organisations.
- + Opportunities to **improve** teaching excellence and student outcomes.
- + Knowledge exchange opportunities between the University, students, external organisations and the community (KTP's and Smart partnerships).
- + Economic growth, productivity, and prosperity in the region, Wales, and the UK.







# Measuring the Impact of our

# Entrepreneurial University

Underlying the drive to create a more entrepreneurial university is the need to understand the impact of the changes which are made.

+ INPUTS	Big Ideas Wales Santander Universities Professional Services Units
	Colleges / Schools / Students / Stakeholders
+ ACTIVITIES	Be inspired
	Be involved
	Be enterprising
+ OUTPUT	Mind-set / Resilience
	Skills
	Knowledge
	Experience
+ OUTCOME	Engagement
	Start-ups
	Social Enterprise
	Investments
	Employability
+ імраст	Teaching Excellence & Student Outcomes
	(Framework)
	Social and Economic Growth
	League Tables
	Awards

#### We will:

+ Be recognised as a student Entrepreneurial University, through accreditation and shortlisting at national awards such as the Times Higher Education (THE) awards.

+ Grow student engagement by 30% each year through activities such as training, events, workshops, mentoring, enquiries and competitions.

+ Build the ecosystem by establishing 15 student ambassadors, 10 new external stakeholder relationships and engage 20 new members of staff from across the University each year.

+ Run campaigns to identify 10 Alumni Entrepreneurs to pledge their support for the student Entrepreneurial agenda.

+ Support 40 staff each year through training and accreditation programmes.

+ Monitor and evaluate knowledge exchange activities each year, including 10 placement/ secondment opportunities, 40% annual increase in student start-ups, 20 new users of the incubation hubs, £10,000 of investment, and 10 mentors.

+ Capture Data & Integrate effective information management systems to support the Institution's commitment and vision to be a world leading student Entrepreneurial University.

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## **CASE STUDY: Competitions**

The Big Pitch, run by REIS, saw students from across disciplines pitch themselves or their business idea to an esteemed panel of external organisations.

"I've learnt so much and it has definitely improved my confidence going forward in my life." **Joseph Newton, Sport and Exercise Student** 

"Thank you very much for the opportunity you've provided with The Big Pitch competition, I have found it extremely beneficial and enjoyed the whole process. I'd also like to extend my thanks for deciding that my business idea (eSportsConnect) was one to invest in, so I am eternally grateful for the chance to start my own business." Louis Bromfield, Politics Student.

## THE BIG PITCH

THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO PITCH YOUR SKILLS, ABILITIES OR BUSINESS IDEA. PRIZES INCLUDE:

2X INTERNATIONAL PLACEMENTS TO CANADA WORKING WITH AN ENTREPRENEUR 4X DOMESTIC PLACEMENTS BUSINESS START UP FUNDING FROM A POT OF £6K INCUBATION SPACE FOR START UPS MENTORING & SUPPORT MEMBERSHIP TO NETWORKS

GET YOURSELF READY FOR YOUR PITCH WITH OUR PROGRAMME OF WORKSHOPS WHICH WILL DEVELOP YOUR ENTERPRISE SKILLS.

ARE YOU? CREATIVE, DETERMINED, SELF MOTIVATED, PASSIONATE A PROBLEM SOLVER, A RISK TAKER, ENTREPRENEURIAL OR HAVE A BUSINESS IDEA

#### Developing innovative and entrepreneurial talent is a distinctive feature of the Swansea University student experience, transforming lives and futures by unlocking and fostering a connected entrepreneurial community Missions Embed an effective and dynamic Be nationally recognised as an Produce entrepreneurial and entrepreneurial University entrepreneurial ecosystem and innovative graduates that are sought culture after **Enablers** Entrepreneurial Governance & Learning & Pathways for Digital Organisational Transformation Leadership Teaching Entrepreneurs Capacity ecosystem **Metrics** 10 alumni 40 staff 40% annual Shortlisted Build ecosystem: Grow Knowledge Exchange 15 student to pledge internal activities including: increase in for national supported ambassadors. their each year engagement 10 placements student start-Awards & by 30% 10 external & 20 incubation hub users Accreditations support ups & 20 internal 10 mentors £10,000 relationships each investment year **Key Milestones Bay Campus** Enterprise Implementation **Gifting Packages** Staff Training Application for Webpages Live and plan and investment to Incubation space Entrepreneurial programme live Support Enterprise Awards completed November 18 December 18 June 19 June 19 November 19 July 23

**Our Vision** 

Our legacy is to build our reputation, support regional growth and be recognised as a world leading Entrepreneurial University.

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