

Enterprise & Entrepreneurship

Annual Impact Review 2023/24



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD), continues to champion enterprise and entrepreneurship at the heart of its mission. Through the support of MEDR's Research Wales Innovation Fund (RWIF) and Welsh Government's Youth Entrepreneurship funding, UWTSD is driving meaningful impact for students, graduates, and the wider community.

By equipping our learners with entrepreneurial skills, confidence, and opportunity, we are building a thriving ecosystem where new ventures and startups can flourish. From curriculum-integrated workshops and inspiring alumni talks, grants, business and freelance courses and tailored one-to-one support, UWTSD ensures that students and graduates are not only prepared for business success but also inspired to innovate and lead.

These initiatives, delivered through the Enterprise Team strengthen student employability, fuel regional economic growth, and reflect UWTSD's bold strategic vision — to empower the next generation of entrepreneurs and changemakers.

UWTSD's Mission is to **"Transform Education; Transform Lives"**



Highlights

UWTSD tops the table for supporting graduate start-up businesses

UWTSD is the top-performing higher education institution in the UK for helping graduate start-up businesses which are still active after three years. Figures from the 2022/23 Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey (HE-BCI) show that UWTSD is ranked in first place out of 220 universities across the UK for new graduate start-ups that are still active after 3-years (894) and has also secured a first for the number of active businesses (1,056).

This latest prestigious ranking highlights not only the initial support students receive but the ongoing relationships that are cultivated between the University's alumni, current students, and staff. UWTSD's entrepreneurial graduates, who are leaders in their respective fields, generously share their expertise and experiences, creating a vibrant, supportive network that fuels continuous learning and success.

"The latest figures are more than just numbers; they reflect the heart and soul of our community," said Professor Kathryn Penaluna, Professor of Enterprise Education, Head of Enterprise, and Director of the International Institute of Creative Entrepreneurial Development (IICED) at UWTSD. "Our dedicated lecturers and professional teams do not simply launch start-ups; they engage in lifelong relationships with our graduates. These enduring connections not only help new businesses thrive but also bring invaluable real-world insights back to our classrooms."

“We are incredibly proud of our alumni, who contribute significantly to the university and the broader business community. With over 1,000 successful entrepreneurs connected to UWTSD, their willingness to give back and support the next generation of business leaders is truly inspiring.

Innovation Matrix



UWTSD's new centre for digital innovation and enterprise in Swansea on its SA1 Campus.

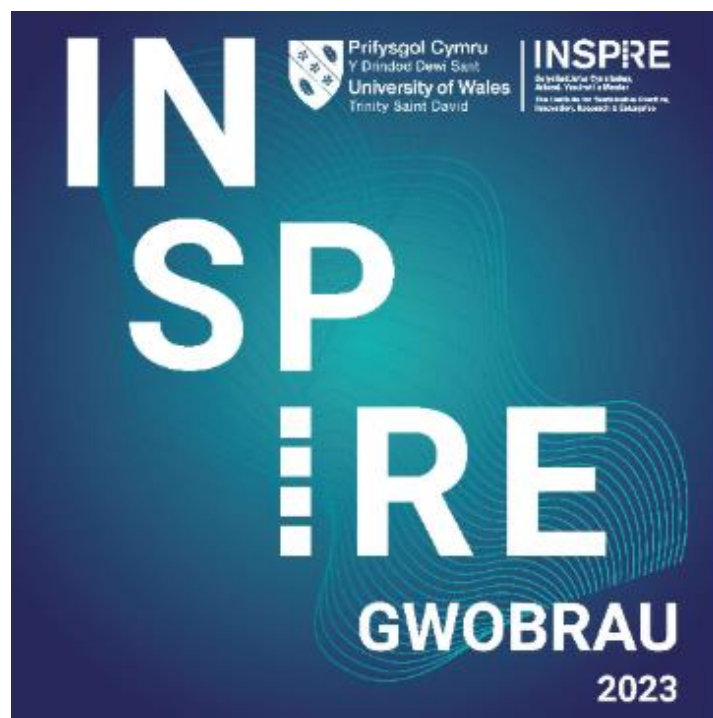
The 2,200 sq. m Innovation Matrix is situated alongside the University's existing IQ and Y Fforwm buildings. It offers a unique opportunity for businesses to connect through co-location in high quality space and to partner with UWTSD.

Existing businesses looking for growth as well as dynamic start-ups will gain access to UWTSD's cutting-edge facilities as well as specialist technical support to help accelerate new product development.

There will be Incubation space available for UWTSD's students and recent graduates to start their businesses with the support of the Enterprise Team and wider UWTSD community.

Professor Elwen Evans, KC, Vice-Chancellor of UWTSD said: "The Innovation Matrix is already delivering a positive impact on the region's economy, and I'm delighted that so many local businesses have been able to work with Kier on its construction. We now look forward to welcoming new and established business to co-locate and collaborate with University within this exceptional building to bring greater economic and social benefits to Wales."

Inspire Awards





The INSPIRE Awards ceremony was a highlight of the university's calendar, bringing together students, staff, industry partners, and members of the wider community to celebrate and recognise excellence in research, innovation, enterprise, civic and industry engagement.

One of the winners was Nikola Chakrakchiev with support and guidance from the UWTSD's Enterprise Team started his own businesses, demonstrating exceptional creativity, originality, and impact. Nikola started a recruitment agency, Fortisan Recruitment Solutions, in the form of a limited by shares Community Interest Company (CIC) with charitable outputs to help Ukraine refugees.

Futures Fund Entrepreneurship Grant



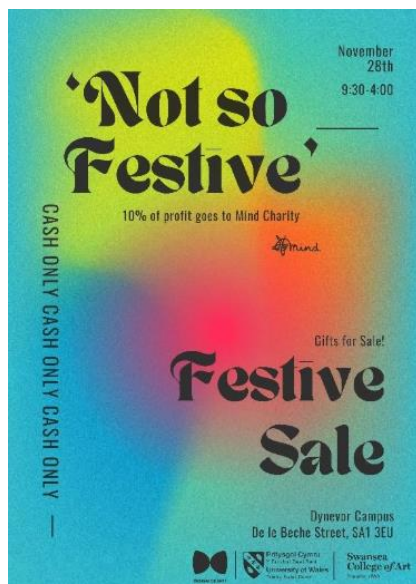
Access to finance is one of the most common barriers faced by individuals with the ambition to start a business. UWTSD address this challenge through the provision of £500 startup grants, giving students and recent graduates the vital early-stage support needed to transform ideas into action.

This funding provides a springboard for entrepreneurs to cover essential costs such as business registration, developing a prototype, creating a website, or purchasing equipment — practical steps that move a concept closer to becoming a viable business. By removing the immediate financial burden, these grants allow aspiring entrepreneurs to focus on building their ideas with confidence.

The impact extends beyond the individual. Startup grants widen participation by enabling people from all backgrounds to access entrepreneurial opportunities, ensuring that innovation is not restricted by personal circumstance. Businesses supported in this way are more likely to grow, create employment, and contribute to regional economic development.

Through its £500 grants (14 were issued), UWTSD is not only investing in new ventures, but also in the future prosperity of communities. This targeted support strengthens student and graduate employability, fosters innovation, and underlines the University's role and value to the regions it represents.

Not So Festive Sale – Test Trading opportunities



2nd Year students from UWTSD Swansea College of Art held a Festive Sale where the students were test trading. They had a wonderful insight into how to talk to customers, how to price their creations etc. and were far more confident by the afternoon in 'selling' their items to customers.

Launch of Enterprise Club



UWTSD's monthly Enterprise Club launched where our first guest speaker was to James Owen entrepreneur and alumnus (of BA Filmmaking, 2021) and he shared his story from starting his business to employing people and winning awards.

Freelance & Business Startup Course



UWTSD ran 3 interactive Freelance & Business Startup Course throughout the year both in person and online. It covered such topics as those listed below and where they could formalise a Business Model Canvas tailored specifically for their individual needs and aspirations.

- Taking your idea and building it into a solid proposition for customers
- Understanding how to develop your product / service
- Pricing your product / service

- Considering developing revenue streams
- Marketing and pricing your product or service
- Understanding cost structures
- The legal elements of trading including legal structures and tax
- How to run your own business, from finance to admin, staff to premises
- Growing your business and building a sustainable business for the future

Publication of 'Unpacking the 3Es – a national perspective' – January 2024

January saw the Advance HE publication of our 'Unpacking the 3Es' – a national perspective', commissioned by HEFCW, edited by Professor Stuart Norton and Professor Andy Penaluna, which offers a glimpse into our work at IICED. Our focus is on reshaping the way Employability, Enterprise, and Entrepreneurship (3Es) are approached in education. In collaboration with Carmarthen Business School (CBS), we believe we have innovatively addressed this need through our online Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) in Enterprise Skills which transcends traditional educational models, aligning closely with the evolving needs of the job market and the entrepreneurial sphere.

Designer Maker Entrepreneur Min Symposium

IEEC UK Conference – Belfast



Rebecca Jones attended the Enterprise Educators Conference this year held in Belfast. Rebecca shared her research work to date at the conference and delivered a workshop “Enabling Entrepreneurs to Thrive: Contribute to the discourse, do current practices enable entrepreneurs to align business growth with personal goals, values and business viability?” This workshop explored the critical but often overlooked issue of aligning business growth strategies with the personal goals and values of entrepreneurs. Highlighting the importance of this alignment for business sustainability and owner well-being, the session offered valuable insights and practical tools.

Meet & Mingle Networking Events

In collaboration with the Enterprise Champions from Swansea University we ran a Meet & Mingle event each semester to help our entrepreneurial students build their networks, develop skills, have a Q&A with alumni entrepreneurs and learn of local start-up initiatives and funding in the region. The events also featured colleagues from Big Ideas Wales to showcase the support on offer for young adults in the region.



Swansea Startup Expo



Over 300 aspiring business people in Swansea (along with our students) were encouraged to attend a free event being sponsored and supported by the UWTSD to help inspire, support and guide them. Enterprise Team member Dylan Williams-Evans delivered 8 workshops throughout the day focussing on accelerated growth.

Professor Ian Walsh, Provost of UWTSD's Swansea and Cardiff campuses said: "UWTSD is proud to sponsor this innovative event in support of business development in the region.

"The demand for entrepreneurial skills in our region has never been stronger or more needed. Creative and critical thinking, flexibility to respond to challenges and opportunities, as well as understanding business and sustainability are key and help us to progress our learners' careers in whichever field they may choose, and such skills are embedded in our programmes and projects."

Enterprise Team Supports Young Enterprise Award Ceremony on Lampeter Campus



The University of Wales Trinity Saint David's Enterprise Team was delighted to support the Young Enterprise Regional Finals and Award Ceremony, held on the University's Lampeter campus. The collaboration marks a significant stride in fostering the entrepreneurial spirit among young individuals and equipping them with essential skills for the future.

Young Enterprise is a national charity committed to motivating young people across the UK to succeed in the evolving world of work. With a mission to empower young people to discover, develop, and celebrate their skills and potential, Young Enterprise focuses on reducing youth unemployment and bridging the skills gap faced by many young individuals today.

Rebecca Jones, Enterprise Development Manager at UWTSD was part of the judging panel for the event. She said: "Enterprise is such a core skill these days and to see the young people embracing innovation and the practical side of running a business was a joy."

UWTSD Outputs for 2023/24

Measure	Total
Number of staff championing entrepreneurship within their academic school or department	14
Private Sector Investment (PSI) to support Entrepreneurship	£2,500
Number of students introduced to entrepreneurship and innovation	1595
Number of students participating in activities to increase entrepreneurial capacity (skills, knowledge, and experience)	238
Number of unique students and graduates receiving support to take steps towards self-employment or business start-up (prestart support)	160
Number of unique student and graduate businesses started (post start).	29

In conclusion

The University has in the last year committed to and continues to fostering a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship, supporting students, recent graduates, and staff in turning innovative ideas into tangible outcomes. Through a combination of strategic initiatives, dedicated programs, and targeted funding, the University provides practical opportunities for individuals to develop entrepreneurial skills, test new business concepts, and access mentorship from experienced professionals.

Students benefit from workshops, startup programs, and grants that enable them to experiment with business ideas in a low-risk environment, while recent graduates are supported in scaling ventures beyond the University setting. Staff are encouraged to engage in entrepreneurial activities through professional development, knowledge exchange, and collaborative projects, reinforcing a vibrant innovation ecosystem across the institution.

This comprehensive support structure has led to measurable impacts, including the successful launch of startups, the creation of local employment opportunities, and the enhancement of the region's economic growth. By equipping its community with the knowledge, confidence, and resources to pursue entrepreneurial ventures, the University demonstrates its ongoing commitment to driving innovation, fostering creativity, and cultivating an enterprising mindset that benefits both individuals and the wider society.