

Enterprise & Entrepreneurship Annual Impact Review 2024/25



The University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) continues to champion enterprise and entrepreneurship at the heart of its institutional mission, recognising the critical role innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurial thinking play in transforming lives, strengthening communities, and supporting economic growth. Guided by its mission to **“Transform Education; Transform Lives”**, the University has continued to invest in enterprise activity that empowers students, graduates, staff, and external partners to develop the skills, confidence, and opportunities needed to succeed in an increasingly dynamic and competitive world.

Through the support of Medr’s Research Wales Innovation Fund (RWIF) and Welsh Government Youth Entrepreneurship funding, UWTSD is delivering meaningful impact across its Welsh campuses and wider communities. These investments are enabling the University to build a thriving enterprise ecosystem where innovation-led learning, business creation, employability, and knowledge exchange are embedded across teaching, research, and civic engagement activity. By equipping learners with entrepreneurial capability and providing accessible support structures, UWTSD is helping to ensure that new ventures, freelance careers, social enterprises, and start-up businesses can flourish.

During the reporting period, enterprise activity delivered through the University’s Enterprise Team has included curriculum-integrated enterprise workshops, alumni entrepreneur talks, start-up grants, business and freelance development programmes, mentoring opportunities, and tailored one-to-one support for students and graduates. Collectively, these initiatives have

strengthened student employability, supported innovation, and contributed to regional economic development while reinforcing UWTSD's strategic commitment to developing future entrepreneurs, innovators, and changemakers.

Enterprise and entrepreneurship continue to play an increasingly important role within our modern university environment, supporting not only economic growth and innovation, but also enhancing the student experience, academic practice, and institutional impact within local and regional communities. Over the past year, enterprise activity across the university has demonstrated the value of embedding entrepreneurial thinking within teaching, research, professional services, and external engagement, helping to prepare learners and staff for a rapidly evolving economic and social landscape.

For students, enterprise and entrepreneurship activities provide opportunities to develop the skills, confidence, and adaptability required for future employment and self-employment. Through workshops, mentoring, live industry projects, internship placements, and start-up support, students are increasingly engaging with real-world problem solving and innovation-led learning supported by both the Enterprise Team and lecturers. Enterprise education supports the development of transferable skills such as communication, leadership, resilience, creativity, teamwork, and commercial awareness, all of which are highly valued by employers. Importantly, enterprise activity also enables our students to view entrepreneurship as a viable career pathway, supporting those who wish to launch freelance careers, social enterprises, creative ventures, or scalable businesses. This contributes directly to graduate employability, progression, and long-term career resilience.

The university's commitment to entrepreneurship also extends beyond graduation through sustained support for alumni enterprise development. Alumni-led businesses contribute significantly to regional economies through job creation, innovation, community engagement, and supply chain activity. During the reporting period, alumni engagement in mentoring, networking, and enterprise support activity strengthened connections between graduates, current students, and industry partners. Alumni entrepreneurs also act as role models and have returned to the University to deliver numerous workshops and inspirational talks, helping to inspire future generations of students while reinforcing the university's wider civic and economic mission.

From an academic perspective, enterprise and entrepreneurship increasingly inform curriculum design, teaching practice, and knowledge exchange activity. Academic staff are embedding enterprise principles into programmes across a range of disciplines, ensuring that learners engage with industry-informed challenges, innovation methods, and applied learning opportunities. This activity strengthens curriculum relevance and academic currency by

ensuring programmes remain responsive to changing labour market needs, technological developments, and emerging sectors.

Enterprise and innovation activity also contributes to research and knowledge exchange by encouraging collaboration between academic teams, businesses, public sector organisations, and communities. Working with the wider INSPIRE Department the Enterprise Team have helped Partnerships develop through enterprise activity, create opportunities for collaborative research, consultancy, commercialisation, and innovation-led projects that deliver both academic and societal impact. Increasingly, universities are recognising that entrepreneurial approaches support not only business creation, but also wider innovation culture, civic engagement, and applied research outcomes.

Professional development for staff remains another significant benefit of enterprise and entrepreneurship activity. Academic and professional services staff involved in enterprise initiatives develop enhanced commercial awareness, partnership-working skills, project management experience, and understanding of innovation ecosystems. Staff engagement with external organisations, employers, and entrepreneurs helps strengthen industry relationships and creates opportunities for collaborative working, funding development, and applied teaching practice. Entrepreneurial staff development also supports institutional agility and encourages a culture of innovation across the university.

Enterprise activity additionally informs institutional strategy and contributes to the university's broader role as an anchor institution within the regional economy. Universities play a vital role in supporting local growth through graduate retention, skills development, innovation support, and business engagement. Start-ups and small businesses emerging from university ecosystems contribute to economic diversification, job creation, productivity, and community resilience. Enterprise programmes also help address social and regional challenges by encouraging socially responsible innovation, sustainability-focused ventures, and inclusive approaches to business support.

The wider economic contribution of university enterprise activity is increasingly significant within national and regional policy agendas. Universities support entrepreneurship ecosystems by connecting learners, researchers, employers, investors, policymakers, and community organisations. Through incubation support at the Innovation Matrix and Yr Egin, innovation networks, and knowledge exchange activity, we help stimulate inward investment, encourage innovation adoption, and strengthen regional competitiveness. This is particularly important in areas undergoing economic transition, where UWTSD can support regeneration, digital transformation, creative industries growth, and green economy development.

Importantly, our enterprise and entrepreneurship activity also supports social mobility and inclusion by widening access to innovation and business support opportunities. Students and graduates from diverse backgrounds are able to access mentoring, training, funding, and professional networks that may otherwise be unavailable to them. This contributes to more inclusive economic participation and helps ensure that entrepreneurship opportunities are accessible across communities and regions.

Over the past year, the university has continued to strengthen its enterprise ecosystem through collaborative partnerships, targeted support programmes, curriculum integration, and enhanced engagement with industry and community stakeholders. Enterprise activity is increasingly embedded across teaching, research and employability rather than operating as a standalone function. This integrated approach ensures that entrepreneurship and innovation continue to deliver measurable benefits for students, staff, alumni, employers, and the wider economy.

Highlights



The accolade recognises UWTSD as the UK's leading institution for teaching quality, reflecting the University's commitment to delivering an outstanding student experience, innovative teaching methods, and strong graduate outcomes. The award is based on national indicators of student satisfaction, teaching excellence, and academic support, as well as the University's success in fostering an inclusive learning environment that empowers students from all backgrounds to achieve their potential.

Professor Elwen Evans KC, Vice-Chancellor of UWTSD, said:

"We are delighted to be named University of the Year for Teaching Quality. This recognition reflects the dedication, innovation and passion of our staff, who are committed to ensuring that every student at UWTSD is supported to succeed.

"Our focus has always been on providing excellent teaching and a transformative educational experience, and this award is a testament to the strength of that mission."

The Good University Guide highlights UWTSD's personalised approach to learning, close-knit community, and strong partnerships with industry and employers, which provide students with valuable skills and opportunities for their future careers.

This national recognition also builds on a series of recent achievements for UWTSD, including ranking 1st in Wales and 2nd in the UK in The Times and Sunday Times' analysis of the National Student Survey (NSS).

Professor Evans added:

"This award is not just for our University. It is for our students, graduates and communities across Wales and beyond. It is a proud moment for the whole UWTSD family."

UWTSD-IICED Experts Honoured with Prestigious Award for Advancing Entrepreneurial Education in Schools

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David's (UWTSD) International Institute for Creative Entrepreneurial Development (IICED) has been awarded the top honour in education at the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship's (ISBE) international conference, held this year in Sheffield. Recognised for their groundbreaking work in entrepreneurial education, UWTSD-IICED's team was presented with the award in the historic setting of Sheffield Cathedral, highlighting their contributions to transforming education in Wales and beyond.

UWTSD-IICED's work aligns closely with the "Enterprising Creative Contributors" goal outlined in the Curriculum for Wales. Tasked by the Welsh Government to develop national guidelines, UWTSD-IICED created multiple teacher development programmes through partnerships with Careers Wales and the National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL).

These programmes, led by Professor Emeritus Andy Penaluna, have empowered teachers across Wales to integrate entrepreneurial learning into their classrooms and develop innovative approaches to engage students in creative thinking and enterprise.

Professor Penaluna said: "Developing new training programmes is only part of the process; it takes real commitment to listen to feedback from qualified teachers and refine our approach based on their insights. UWTSD has always excelled at connecting with the needs of educators, and it has been invaluable to hear directly from those who are leading creativity and innovation across Welsh schools."

Dr Felicity Healey-Benson, co-lead of regional interventions for NAEL, spoke about the impact of the programmes:

She said: "Our research captures the voices of teachers bringing the Curriculum for Wales's Four Purposes to life, particularly as 'Creative Enterprising Contributors.' Through phases of workshops, resource development, and in-depth pilots in Carmarthenshire, we have witnessed Welsh educators' dedication to translating policy into meaningful practice. This collaborative work has not only sparked innovative approaches in entrepreneurial learning but has shown us how to further support this transformation."

The UWTSD-IICED report, *An Entrepreneurial Education Pipeline: Lessons from School Teacher Training in Wales*, won ISBE's education category award, underscoring the global relevance of entrepreneurial education in schools.

Runner-up Dr Trudie Murray from Munster Technology University in Ireland, whose research is also focused on entrepreneurial education, praised UWTSD's achievements:

She said: "Seeing Wales' impact celebrated at this level is inspiring. The work done by Professor Penaluna and his team provides valuable lessons in advancing entrepreneurial education across all stages, a message that resonates strongly here in Ireland."

Professor Norris Krueger, a leading global expert in entrepreneurial education, also commended UWTSD-IICED:

He said: “Creating a comprehensive entrepreneurship education system requires both vision and heart, which Professor Penaluna and his team bring to the table. Their work in Wales is now a model for entrepreneurial learning around the world.”

Building on its success, UWTSD-IICED has recently completed work with UNESCO, supporting entrepreneurial university leadership across South America and the Caribbean. Discussions are also underway with the OECD to expand these efforts globally, further solidifying UWTSD’s role as an international leader in entrepreneurial education.

Nikki Lawrence, Chief Executive of Careers Wales, shared her congratulations:

“Careers Wales was delighted to work with Professor Penaluna on some professional learning and resource developments for schools. We were very pleased with the outcomes and the positive feedback from teachers. We congratulate Professor Penaluna and contributors on their ISBE best paper award.”

A new Entrepreneurial Innovation module has been developed and is planned to be delivered in 2026. An outline of the module is below.

Welcome to the Entrepreneurial Innovation module; the two concepts identified in this module of ‘entrepreneurship’ and ‘innovation’ are strongly related. So much so that generally the terms are used interchangeably, even though innovation is not the same as entrepreneurship.

The module will look at the numerous disruptive innovations that have been introduced by entrepreneurial firms, such as the electronic calculator, alternating electric current, sound motion pictures, and the turbojet engine but added to that will be recent examples of entrepreneurial innovation that include biotechnology, the personal computer, Internet search engines, Social enterprises and the notion of Sustainability.

It will be argued that entrepreneurial innovation is one of the true sources of national competitive advantage. And, that even though we know that almost all entrepreneurs innovate, the real issue will be not whether entrepreneurs innovate, but rather, when and where they do so.

This module is introductory in nature and provides an overview of the basic elements and philosophies of entrepreneurship, as well as some background knowledge on the evolution and development of actual models of business, before moving on to current practice in the field. The indicative content of this module includes:

- Definitions of entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity.
- Business Models
- Impact of technology
- Global and social innovation
- Sustainability-led innovation

- Developing entrepreneurial and creative traits.
- The drivers for innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship.
- The determinants of organisational innovation and organisation creativity, and intrapreneurship.
- Strategies for idea generation and development.
- Assessing and selecting feasible business concepts, including stages of new product development.
- Intellectual Property issues

Teaching sessions will be interactive and will involve students in practical exercises, case study analysis, scenario building and discussions. This will facilitate the development of analytical, evaluation, synthesising, communication, team and leadership skills through self-directed, discovery and peer assisted learning.

Assessment will be formative through questioning and task setting during learning sessions and via two assignments, one video presentation and the showcase produced at the end of semester 2.

Aims:

- To demonstrate theoretical and practical awareness of creativity and innovation for both individual and organisational contexts.
- To enable the student to recognise opportunities and select appropriate innovative and entrepreneurial processes in new and existing organisations.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to demonstrate the ability to:

- Recognise the role of creativity and innovation in responding to global challenges.
- Apply the skills they have learned to develop new and alternative solutions.

Learning and Teaching:

A student-centred framework will be employed that inspires curiosity and develops individual's aspirations and concepts. Students will become familiar with concepts, principles and practices relating to the topic via workshops, seminars and entrepreneurs who will be used as guest speakers. The conceptual, theoretical issues will underpin the approach – delivered during weekly lectures the teaching strategy within these sessions will include group discussion, the analysis of case studies (both paper based and video) documentary clips and

other media. Teaching sessions will be interactive and will involve students in practical exercises that will develop wider understanding and provide extension activities to “stretch and challenge” students in their learning and discussions.

Reflection and analysis will be key features to support this experiential learning methodology.

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 (18 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.

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

UWTSD Outputs for 2024/25

Measure	Total
Number of staff championing entrepreneurship within their academic school or department	10
Private Sector Investment (PSI) to support Entrepreneurship	0
Number of students introduced to entrepreneurship and innovation	1044
Number of students participating in activities to increase entrepreneurial capacity (skills, knowledge, and experience)	149
Number of unique students and graduates receiving support to take steps towards self-employment or business start-up (prestart support)	320
Number of unique student and graduate businesses started (post start).	24

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.