

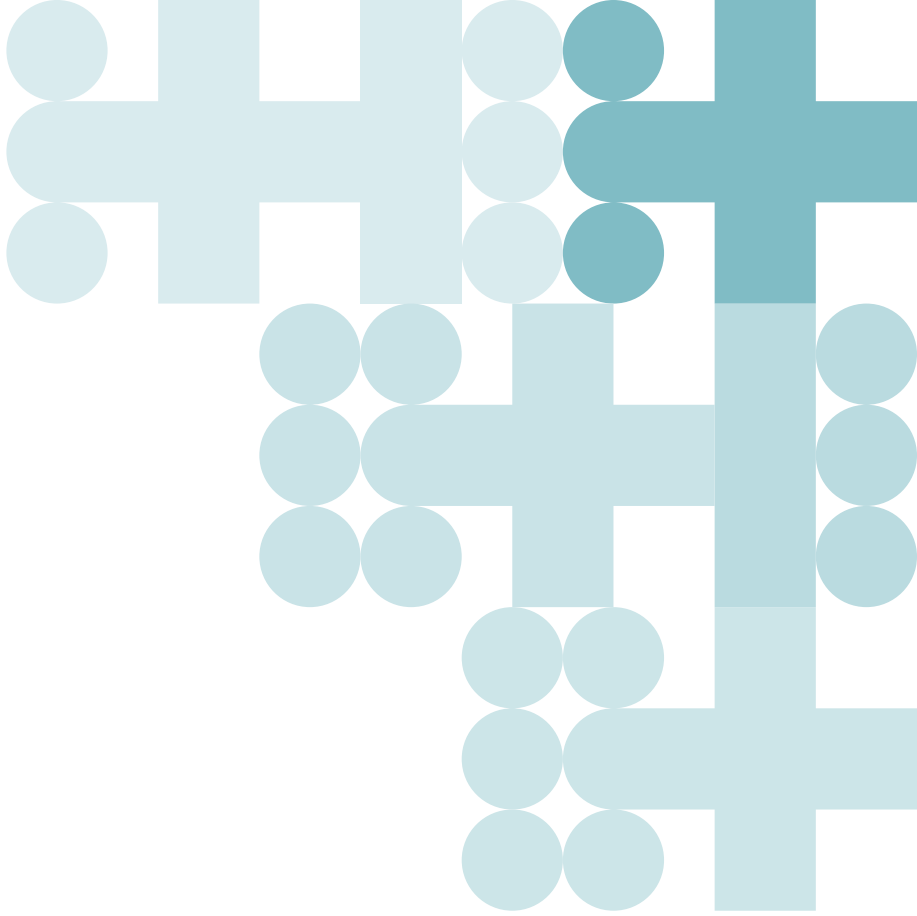
# MillionPlus

The Association for  
Modern Universities



## CASE STUDIES

Staying local to go far:  
modern universities  
as placemakers



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# FOREWORD



In today's United Kingdom, the fate of the local university (or universities) is intertwined with that of its local community. As a key employer with economic activity

stretching across the region, a university acts as a central pillar in the local economy.

Modern universities are future-looking and can help to provide solutions to the challenges of the 21st century. The historical trajectory of these institutions helps us to understand their contemporary significance. It is now 30 years since the moderns were first awarded university title. This history overlaps with the periods of intense deindustrialisation in different regions of the UK. As such, the centre of gravity has shifted in the social and economic infrastructure of many towns and cities.

Governments in both Westminster and Holyrood should reflect on the evidence presented within this report, which demonstrates the instrumental role universities have in boosting regional development, economically and socially. Universities are multi-faceted organisations that are adept at finding solutions to local problems. Their size and breadth mean they have the capacity to play a role as placemakers.

In the [accompanying research report](#), we have used mostly quantitative analysis to demonstrate the role that universities play in their local communities, here we use key case studies to tell the story of the role of modern universities in their local area.

I am immensely proud of the central role that modern universities play in developing and boosting the regions in which they are located.

The case studies included in this booklet highlight the effective ways that MillionPlus affiliated modern universities invest and work with local business, councils and Trusts, to drive forward change and, ultimately, improve the quality of life for students and local citizens.

If the Government wants to achieve its laudable aims in levelling up all regions across the UK, they must acknowledge and provide a central role for universities in their plans.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is stylized and appears to read 'Rama Thirunamachandran'.

**Professor Rama Thirunamachandran**  
Chair, MillionPlus and Vice-Chancellor,  
Canterbury Christ Church University

## ABERTAY UNIVERSITY



### Abertay University supports student entrepreneurs to drive local economic impact

Abertay University has a dedicated enterprise centre that helps students and graduates start their own business.

Bell Street Ventures, based in the university's Old College building in Dundee, provides a range of training workshops and support sessions to help students develop their business ideas and test products and services. "Selling Skills", Intellectual Property 101" and "Digital Marketing" are just some of the courses available. Students are also offered practical guidance on how to maximise applications to funding such as Scottish EDGE, Converge Challenge, Scottish Institute for Enterprise and the Santander Entrepreneurship Awards.

The facility is available to any student interested in getting started in business and is equipped with modern office space, meeting rooms, breakout areas and superfast broadband.

Muckle Studios, a start-up which helps businesses with user experience on physical and digital products, was founded by Abertay graduate Stephanie Crowe and business partner Kevin Sinclair, who she met at Bell Street Ventures.

Stephanie said: "Bell Street ventures provided me with a huge range of support when I began working for myself.

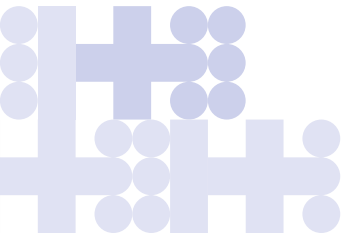


"They helped me apply for grants and funding as well as mentoring from professionals in the business world.

"Without the support of Bell Street Ventures, I don't think I would have the knowledge or the confidence to start Muckle Studios."

Stephanie and Kevin joined forces at the start of the pandemic to help businesses ensure the customers were getting the most out of their experiences. Since then, Muckle Studios has thrived as businesses and organisations have increasingly looked to strengthen online offerings through the use of apps.

Stephanie added: "One of the biggest projects we were involved in during the pandemic was working with the NHS to create an app to help get patients home from hospital more quickly through the use of volunteers."



### Abertay University uses gaming expertise to engage school children

Students from Abertay University in Dundee have used the videogame Minecraft to recreate the Isle of Cumbrae as part of a project to engage young people in the area's heritage.

Cumbraecraft is a heritage-themed game for primary school children based on the popular Ayrshire coast tourist destination. Housed on the Minecraft education platform, the game comes with eight distinct lessons and is designed to allow children to explore local heritage landmarks and learn more about their history. The resource has been designed so it can be used in both classroom and home-learning settings.

Video games design students Claire Monaghan, Fergus Coyne and Romain Bourdon worked on the project for three months while studying at Abertay's internationally-renowned School of Design and Informatics – Europe's top ranked institution for video games education.

Fergus Coyne said: "Making Cumbraecraft allowed us to use the range of skills we've learned on our courses at Abertay to create a fun product that will be used in the real-world.

"It was great to be able to create a game which will allow children to learn more about the history of their local area as well as showcase the tourism offering on the island."

The project is part of the Millport Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme which is being delivered by North Ayrshire Council and Historic Environment Scotland. The Scheme aims to preserve the historical features of the area and reinvigorate Millport as a seaside destination.

Kasia Smith, Regeneration Officer at North Ayrshire Council, said: "We are thrilled that the game is now available as a resource for our young school pupils.

"Minecraft and gaming in general are such popular things amongst young people and the team at Abertay have done brilliantly to fuse the fun and learning elements together to make the game so enjoyable and relatable for young people."



## ABERTAY UNIVERSITY



### InGAME partnership addresses society's big challenges

InGAME is a £11.5m research and development centre based in the heart of the Dundee video games cluster.

Led by Abertay University, in partnership with the University of Dundee, the University of St Andrews and local and international partners, InGAME aims to deliver innovative research and offer R&D support and services to games companies.

The primary purpose of InGAME is to increase the value and scale of the cluster and central to this is the Collaborative R&D Voucher Scheme, an independently assessed application for R&D support. The Scheme offers organisations the chance to utilise the talent, technology and knowledge available through the InGAME Partnership.

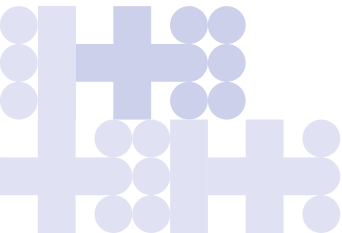


In December 2021, InGAME together with Nesta - the UK's innovation agency for social good - awarded two Dundee-based studios £45,000 each to develop video games to explore how food environments shape access to healthy and affordable produce.

One of the studios, Biome Collective, based their project on Dundee's Hilltown. Malath Abbas, Director of the studio, said: "Research indicates that obesity is a major challenge to society and the data shows our relationship with the food environment is core to this. It's a multi-layered challenge but we know that games can engage people in complex problems.

"Our goal is to make a playful experience that clarifies some of these challenges to help policy makers and the general public better understand the food environment and empower them to make a positive impact on the public health landscape."

Nesta, InGAME and Scottish health and policy experts will work with both studios to ensure the games can produce viable insights about how food environments shape people's opportunity to be healthy.



## Mountain Bike Centre of Scotland

The Mountain Bike Centre of Scotland opened in 2014 at Glentress Forest near Peebles, the UK's largest mountain bike trail centre with more than 300,000 visitors per year. It is the world's first centre for open innovation in the mountain bike industry.

Scotland is one of the top destinations in the world for the sport, with a national mountain biking strategy that goes up to 2025. In 2023, Scotland will be hosting the inaugural Cycling World Championships, featuring 13 different disciplines. It's estimated that the hundreds of thousands of visitors to its mountain biking centres bring in £150m a year to the Scottish economy.

Most recently, terms have been agreed by South of Scotland Enterprise on behalf of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal to purchase the historical Caerlee Mill in Innerleithen to create a home for a new Mountain Bike Innovation Centre.



The renovation of the listed Caerlee Mill for commercial use will help preserve an important building for the local community and for Scotland's industrial heritage. The second element of the project will see Tweed Valley Bike Park and Trail Lab created in what is thought to be a global first in terms of combining tourism and innovation. The adventure bike park will attract and sustainably manage visitors to the Scottish Borders. Both the Mountain Bike Innovation Centre and Tweed Valley Bike Park and Trail Lab will also operate as Net Zero facilities.

The Innovation Centre is predicted to contribute £141m in gross value added and create over 400 jobs in the South of Scotland over ten years.

## GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY

### Impact of regeneration along the Forth and Clyde Canal in North Glasgow



University for the Common Good

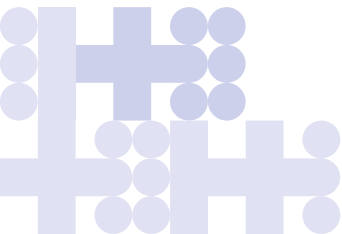
The regeneration of canals and rivers in cities around the world can positively impact health and health inequalities – leading to a decrease in mortality rates in surrounding areas. In a global first, the study led by Glasgow Caledonian University in partnership with Scottish Canals and facilitated by The Data Lab, revealed mortality rates are lower in urban areas close to canals that have undergone major transformation and regeneration compared to areas further away.

The Data Lab, Scotland's Innovation Centre for Data and AI, funded the research project which was built on a longstanding relationship between Glasgow Caledonian University and Scottish Canals, and analysed the effects of living within close proximity to the canal on mortality rates from 2001 to 2017.

The research, which looked at the impact of regeneration along the Forth and Clyde Canal in North Glasgow – one of Europe's most deprived areas - highlights the significant physical and mental wellbeing benefits that can be achieved from investing in regenerating urban waterways globally.



Further research examined medical records of Glasgow's two million population and then put the spotlight on 137,032 people living within 1400m of the Forth and Clyde Canal in areas of high socioeconomic deprivation in the north of the city. They found that people living in deprived areas within 700m of the newly regenerated Forth and Clyde Canal had a 15% lower risk of suffering from cardiovascular disease, a stroke or hypertension. It also lowered their risk of diabetes by 12% and obesity by 10%.





## Glasgow Caledonian University collaboration with local actors in response to the Covid-19 pandemic

GCU was well positioned to contribute to the pandemic response across our key functions of education, research and our important role as an anchor institution in our local community.

Examples of collaborations with local actors include:

- More than 500 student nurses from the university immediately volunteered to join the NHS Scotland's national emergency response to the coronavirus pandemic, which rose to nearly 2,000 student nurses and staff supporting the national efforts. Health and Social care students and staff also joined the frontline and BSc Paramedic Science students also joined the Covid-19 NHS emergency response.
- GCU psychology students worked as trainees with leading Scottish charity SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health) to give mental health support to Covid-19 frontline workers.
- The university loaned specialist equipment, and donated PPE, to the NHS.
- The university provided additional financial support to foodbanks in the local communities.
- Our ARC sports centre was transformed into a Scottish Government community walk-through Covid-19 test centre. A Student Test Centre for asymptomatic cases became operational on campus in November 2020, serving students from GCU, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow Kelvin College and City of Glasgow College.
- Through the SFC's Upskilling Fund, GCU initiated a new strategic partnership with Scottish Tech Army, a not for profit company and a volunteer Covid-19 technical response team that helps Scottish Government, Local Authorities, and other organisations across the country with rapid technical development projects to address current Covid-19 related challenges, and post pandemic economic recovery. It is our joint aspiration that Scottish Tech Army volunteers will take advantage of GCU provided opportunities in Software Development, to boost their career and employment prospects.



Covid-19 laid bare not only health and care challenges, but also wider challenges borne of ongoing social inequalities highlighted during the pandemic. GCU's researchers played a lead role in addressing some of these challenges.

## GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY



University for the Common Good

### MINT (Mentoring, Internships, Networking and Talks) programme

As a direct response to the pandemic, in 2020 the GCU Foundation and Alumni Team launched MINT (Mentoring, Internships, Networking and Talks), an innovative, pioneering new programme to provide help and support to final year students and new graduates. Entering a new and very uncertain employment market, the programme enhances their employability and increases their chances of gaining employment at the earliest possible opportunity.

#### Mentoring

Students and new graduates are paired with an experienced GCU alumni mentor who provides industry advice, guidance and support to help their mentee in their next career steps. An incredible 2,000 graduates have volunteered so far as mentors, with over 1,000 students having completed or underway with the programme, of which 2 in every 3 have secured employment or further study.

#### Internships

These paid, fully funded internship positions are available to 2020, 2021 and 2022 GCU graduates in a wide variety of organisations and industries at which GCU alumni are employed, offering them the opportunity to gain hugely valuable industry experience. Over 75 graduates have secured positions so far, and 1 in 4 has secured a permanent role as a result.

#### Networking and Talks

Through our exciting Captains of Industry Talks series, students and alumni have the opportunity to grow their networks and gain valuable industry insights from industry leaders. Over 1,200 so far have attended these exclusive events, hearing from experts such as President of Millarworld at Netflix, Mark Millar, Group Chief Financial Officer at NatWest Katie Murray and award-winning British Fashion Designer Christopher Raeburn.



University for the Common Good

## MINT

Mentoring, Internships  
Networking and Talks



Glasgow Caledonian University is committed to articulation from higher education programmes at Scotland's colleges into levels two and three at GCU. Through our College Connect team and strategic partnerships with colleges across Scotland, the university has developed an effective infrastructure for articulation.

Scottish Funding Council funding contributes to the resource required to develop, review, and refresh articulation pathways through close partnership working with colleges; inform and recruit students in colleges; and support the transition of articulating students from pre-entry, then throughout their studies at university, including through mentoring. Delivery of these elements is intense for GCU, due to our very high numbers of articulation pathways and of articulating entrants:

- GCU has 235 articulation pathways for students from college programmes with full curriculum mapping which is continually maintained, developed, refreshed and strengthened, offering a breadth of choice and opportunity that is not available in most universities.
- Around 1000 articulating students enter GCU each year, and c900 of these enter directly from college into Level 2 or 3 (others enter through the additional

articulation scheme).

- GCU recruits 19% of all entrants in Scotland with an Higher National Qualification and almost a quarter (23%) of all entrants with advanced standing (SFC, 2020).

Recognising the interruption to study experienced by college students due to the pandemic, GCU enhanced the transition support available to engage students in the approach to online learning they would experience when they joined their programme at the university; to develop their understanding and confidence to work within the virtual learning environment; and to make social as well as academic connections. From March 2020, the university made available online transition activities for articulating students, including additional discipline specific transition support using online lectures, webinars, question and answer sessions and informal get-togethers; and moving transition programmes such as the College Connect Transition Programme and Maths Summer School online.

## QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY, EDINBURGH

### Edinburgh Innovation Park

In partnership with East Lothian Council, Queen Margaret University (QMU) is delivering an innovation park, with a flagship food and drink sector innovation hub at its heart. Designed to facilitate inclusive growth locally and nationally, the project is funded by the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal.

The Edinburgh Innovation Park will be located on land next to the Queen Margaret University campus. This is a prime strategic location on the boundaries of both Edinburgh and Midlothian.

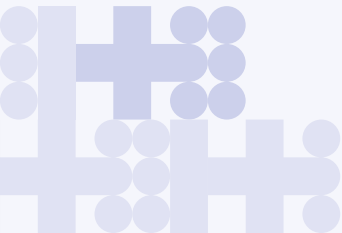


**Queen Margaret University**  
EDINBURGH

Closely aligned to the university's strengths, the hub will focus on food and drink related innovation within the context of health. It will include serviced laboratories and office accommodation as well as facilities for events. It will accommodate facilities of the Scottish Centre for Food Development and Innovation, currently based at QMU, and already a successful research partner to the food and drink sector. It will offer access to equipment, knowledge and skills to support product development and product launches. As well as bricks and mortar, there will be a full programme of activities to foster innovation, boost entrepreneurship, and address market and societal needs.

The wider innovation park will be developed over time.

Edinburgh Innovation Park will bring quality jobs and investment to the area and support an important and growing sector through research, knowledge exchange and skills training. As it develops, this strategic, sustainable development will become a nationally significant centre of knowledge exchange, innovation and high value business growth.



## Home and Belonging Project

The project is a three-year, arts-based exploration of home and belonging founded on mutual creative enquiry by care experienced young people working alongside their local communities. It began in Shetland in 2019 and has connected young people and partners across Scotland, including the island communities of Orkney and the Western Isles.

### Project aims:

- Provide care experienced young people with an opportunity to reflect on what it means to be 'at home' in private, public and community spaces
- Enable young people to develop a stronger sense of home and belonging through active participation and leadership in community-building creative exploration
- Transform how partner organisations work alongside care experienced young people, enabling young people to have a different experience of the places and communities in which they live.

### Outputs include:

- New relationships established between young people and individuals in decision-making roles within organisations with corporate parenting responsibilities, such as Shetland Islands Council's executive, social work and education departments, the NHS, UHI Shetland and the Shetland Recreational Trust.
- The project has informed the evolution of Shetland's Corporate Parenting Board, to improve corporate parenting across Shetland and provide a model for other places.
- Delivery of three Festivals of Care

Tom Boyd, Advocacy and Participation Manager for Who Cares? Scotland, said:

"In the face of what are often very challenging life journeys for the care experienced community in every part of Scotland, Home and Belonging has been consistently ambitious. It has brought the care experienced community in Shetland alongside a diverse and brilliant group of artists. It has enabled mutual creative enquiry that has engaged carers and professionals, public sector leaders and the broader community in new and powerful ways. It has forged long-lasting partnerships on Shetland and beyond. It has changed and is changing lives."

## UNIVERSITY OF THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS



### A novel natural antibody-based therapy for liver cancers

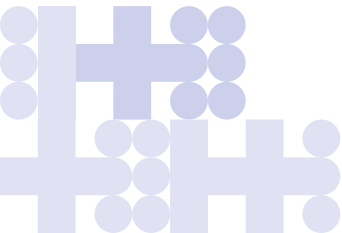
Treating liver cancer patients with therapies developed using UHI technology promotes increased survival relative to standard therapy alone.

There are approximately 800,000 new cases of liver cancer diagnosed each year. Most are people with advanced disease, which typically carries a 9% five-year survival rate. There is an urgent need to identify new technologies to improve liver cancer treatment and improve patient outcomes.

UHI research identified a role for naturally occurring antibodies in treating liver and other cancers. Specifically, in vitro studies established that natural antibodies present in plasma isolated from healthy donors can deliver increased tumour killing activity.

This research established the utility of natural antibody-based therapies to treat advanced liver cancer. By screening donor blood samples for the presence of natural anti-cancer antibodies, samples with high levels of natural antibodies are purified and pooled for use as a therapy in clinical trials taking place in China.

Working with external partner QHB Ltd, the key objective is to secure intellectual property licences to enable commercial clinical trials. Licensing this technology for ongoing Chinese trials has the potential for significant clinical and economic benefits.



## Nanomaterial-based technologies for reducing pharmaceutical contamination in water supplies

Pharmaceutical accumulation in watercourses is a growing problem worldwide and has the potential to negatively impact both ecology and human health.

This project aims to develop technologies for removing contaminant pharmaceuticals from hospital effluent to reduce their impact on environmental and human health.

Using a novel nanostructured material, micro porous hollow fibres will be functionalised to filter, capture, or 'break down' pharmaceutical contaminants. Nanomaterials provide the filter an extremely high surface area allowing high

capacity and throughput. Construction of test rigs is currently underway to quantify filter efficacy and optimise design. This study is the foundation for a wide range of nanomaterial-based applications at the interface of medicine, chemistry, and nanotechnology.

Development of nanomaterial-based technologies capable of reducing pharmaceutical contamination of water supplies has the potential to significantly improve human, animal, and environmental health worldwide.



## UNIVERSITY OF THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS



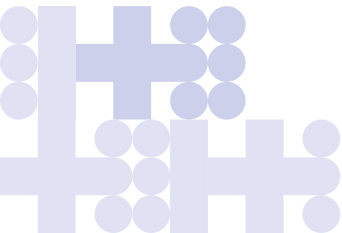
### Digital toolkit for children and young people with additional needs

Providing appropriate support to children and young people with additional care needs is essential for improving their long-term outcomes.

Approximately 19% of all children and young people in the Highlands experience life-limiting mental or physical health conditions, responsibility as young carers, or significant adversity including mental and physical abuse. Providing them with appropriate support is essential to mitigate against the long-term impact of such experiences.

This project works collaboratively with children and young people with additional support needs to design, develop, and deliver a new digital toolkit that empowers users with self-management and professional support mechanisms.

This work aims to improve outcomes amongst children and young people with additional care needs, thereby reducing the incidence and cost of long-term care. If successful, this project has the potential to be applied across Scotland, the rest of the United Kingdom and internationally.





## Award-winning KTP Project: Phoenix Instinct

The University of the West of Scotland (UWS) worked with Forres-based Phoenix Instinct, to develop a game-changing ultralight wheelchair – the Phoenix i – which went on to win \$1m in the global Toyota Mobility Unlimited Challenge, in 2020.

The wheelchair features an intelligent centre of gravity, giving enhanced ease of pushing, agility and stability functions never seen before in wheelchairs, including lightweight power assist to make slopes easier to ascend.

The \$4m Mobility Unlimited Challenge, set by the Toyota Mobility Foundation and Nesta, included several stages over three years. It invited engineers, innovators and designers to submit ideas for innovative technologies to improve the mobility and independence of people with lower-limb paralysis.

The challenge required finalists to work with end-users to develop devices that integrate seamlessly into their lives and environments, while being comfortable and easy to use.

Phoenix Instinct were the only UK entry.

The award-winning technology was developed in partnership with UWS through a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP).



Andrew Slorance at Phoenix Instinct said: “Working with UWS brought the company specialist skills, knowledge and university support that have been fundamental to the success of the project.”

Dr Tony Leslie, Senior Lecturer in the School of Computing, Engineering and Physical Sciences at UWS, said: “Andrew’s design is a step change in wheelchair development. Andrew has driven the project to ensure the project team never lost sight of how the ongoing design decisions could impact on wheelchair users in their daily lives, and that has been key to the project’s success.

“Recognition must also be given to KTP associate Jakub, whose contribution and commitment has been exceptional throughout the project, developing several innovations to ensure Andrew’s vision was realised. I look forward to seeing Phoenix i transforming the mindset of wheelchair designers and inspiring future global wheelchair development.

## UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF SCOTLAND

### Digital Dairy Value-Chain



The University of the West of Scotland (UWS) is a key founding partner in a £21m project – led by Scotland’s Rural College (SRUC) – that aims to create 600 new jobs and generate an additional £60 million a year for South-West Scotland and Cumbria. This will enable the region to be a global leader in developing scalable and sustainable digital solutions for the dairy industry.

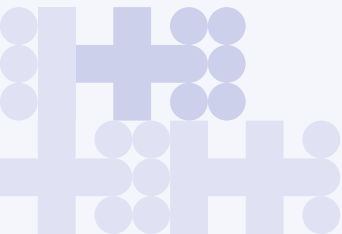
Funded by UKRI Strength in Places, the project will help to deliver advanced manufacturing processes to create a fully integrated and traceable supply chain, as well as help businesses to develop new products and explore new markets.

The project team will work with the dairy supply chain to develop and implement technologies for sensing and data handling, as well as infrastructure to support innovation and growth for local businesses, nurturing young entrepreneurs, and teaching and training of new skills and capabilities.

Globally, the dairy industry produces around three per cent of greenhouse gases related to human activity. As well as helping to decarbonise the dairy industry, the project will help to develop and retain a skilled and innovative workforce, to create new products and new ways of working.

To deliver this project, UWS will work with partners operating in the region, including SRUC, University of Strathclyde, CENSIS, First Milk, Lactalis UK & Ireland, Kendal Nutricare, Cows & Co Group, National Milk Records and SmartSTEMS.

The project will provide a platform for research and business innovation in advanced, sustainable, high-value production and processing.



## Vision Schools Scotland

Established in 2017, Vision Schools Scotland is a partnership between The University of the West of Scotland (UWS) and the Holocaust Educational Trust.

Funded by The Gordon Cook Foundation and Scottish Government, Vision Schools Scotland aims to promote excellence in Holocaust teaching, through identifying and rewarding schools that embed Holocaust education. It also creates opportunities for teachers to share good practice of school-based Holocaust education, as well as promoting and presenting face-to-face and online continued professional learning for teachers – helping them develop confidence and proficiency in Holocaust teaching.

The Vision Schools Scotland network comprises 40 schools from 16 unitary local authorities in Scotland, more than 100 teachers and 30,000 school students.

The Vision Schools programme embeds the principles of Scotland's curriculum, whose priorities include responsible citizenship, in which Education for Citizenship is permeated across the curriculum, in its encouragement of effective and sustained school-based Holocaust education.

It supports primary and secondary teachers in their teaching of the Holocaust and in addressing antisemitism, through its CPD/CPL, website and award process. By awarding schools that have achieved the required criteria, Vision Schools Scotland creates and develops a schools' network of good practice in Holocaust education.

UWS's research on the provision of Holocaust education in schools has helped shape future United Nations programmes, influencing teaching pedagogy in Scotland and in the international community.

Research findings have contributed to the recognition of the positive value of school-based Holocaust education and helped to increase the number of Scottish schools commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day.

Further, the research has contributed to the political debate on the value of school visits to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Holocaust Memorial and Museum, and educational debates on the contribution of Holocaust to Citizenship education.

# UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF SCOTLAND

## Ayrshire Growth Deal



The Ayrshire Growth Deal is a partnership involving the Scottish Government, UK Government and East, North and South Ayrshire Councils. The aim of the deal is to marry business growth opportunities to employment progression; developing the future workforce and community development and ensuring all communities benefit from economic growth.

The University of the West of Scotland (UWS) has a campus situated in Ayr and economic growth and development of the Ayrshire region is strategically important to the university.

Involvement in the Ayrshire Growth Deal presents UWS with the opportunity to strengthen Scotland's economy, develop future economic growth in the Ayrshire region, grow jobs, support green recovery, and further enhance the opportunities available for our students.

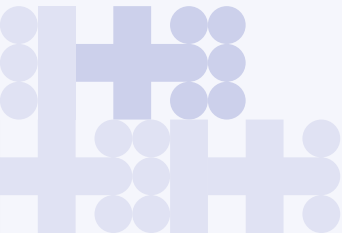
UWS is an anchor institution, jointly with Scottish Enterprise leading the development of the first Energy Masterplan for Ayrshire. In addition, the academic expertise provided by UWS will contribute significantly to the outcomes of the deal, offering specialist knowledge exchange across three of the overarching themes; Energy, Circular Economy and Environment; Regional Skills and Inclusion; and Digital.

Our focus on clean growth will drive forward a reduction in CO2 emissions and fuel poverty. Working with partners, the university will progress the development of carbon conscious properties, increase sustainable transport networks, energy storage, and the use of renewable energy techniques, to support significant green recovery.

Our specialist input to Digital will help to support the development of high-quality connectivity infrastructure in the region; will help Ayrshire businesses with their digital engagement and transformation; and will contribute to the development of digital skills and equipping a future workforce.

All of these will create action-focused initiatives that will leverage a wide range of economic opportunities through innovation, investment and collaboration.

Involvement in the Ayrshire Growth Deal presents UWS with an opportunity to heighten the experience and outcomes for our students, while delivering tangible economic and environmental impact to the local area and support local government to achieve their desired goals.







## UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE



### Best in the North for Supporting Start-up Businesses

The University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) is the top university in the north of England for producing start-up businesses.

Through its Propeller Student Enterprise Service, UCLan has given formal business and enterprise support to 851 new businesses, including sole traders, in the last six years. These companies have been created by students and recent graduates, who have received expert help within two years of finishing their academic studies.

The success means UCLan is placed fifth overall in Tide's newly published list of UK higher education providers.

Some of the most innovative and bold ideas come out of universities, where the entrepreneurs of tomorrow can hone their business acumen and enable start-ups to flourish, making quantifiable and lasting regional economic impact.

UCLan has a dedicated team working with students to help set up their own businesses, as well as offering support throughout the first three years of trading. Propeller Student Enterprise Service offers skills workshops, online resources, one-to-one support from business mentors, and interaction with a community of local businesses who work from the Propeller Hub, based in UCLan's Media Factory.

The university's Centre for SME Development works closely with sole traders, limited companies, co-operatives, social enterprises, freelancers, community interest groups, charities, not-for-profits and more to ensure they have the key skills to not only start a business but to continue trading.

UCLan also made the list for the number of graduates who have secured patents, meaning their intellectual property is protected. The university was ranked 34th with 63 graduates filing patents by, or on behalf of, UCLan in the UK and overseas.

The data used for this new table has been sourced from HESA's intellectual property, start-ups and spin-offs data and refers to graduates at universities between the academic years of 2014/15 and 2019/20.

#### Modern universities in the North West...

... create **£2.22bn** of impact as a result of their economic output.

... generate **£1.45bn** in expenditure-related Gross Value Added (GVA) in the region.

... support **19,596 jobs** (Full-time equivalent) in the region.



## UNIVERSITY OF CUMBRIA

Carlisle Citadels new campus project – a new University of Cumbria campus in the heart of the city



The University of Cumbria's mission is to transform lives and livelihoods, now and for future generations, and to work with partners to address the demand for, and support the delivery of, higher-level skills to England's North West region and beyond.

Cumbria as a region has a slow growing and ageing population, a qualification gap at level 4 and above of 38.1% vs 42.8% nationally. Young people leave the county, but demand for higher level skills significantly outstrips supply and is increasing. Research, development, and innovation are below national averages, particularly given the large local industries.

The £77.5m Carlisle Citadels project, developed in partnership with the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, Cumbria County Council and Carlisle City Council, will create an inspirational, inclusive, and accessible landmark campus in the centre of the city by 2026, symbolising the university's commitment to those living, working, and studying in Carlisle, the county and the wider Borderlands region now and for future generations. The project will secure wider social, environmental and wellbeing benefits to the community including providing over £44m of estimated economic gross added value.

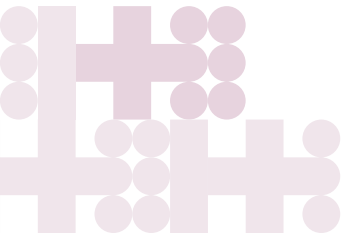
Its aims are threefold:

- Retaining those young people who currently leave the county to pursue higher education
- Increasing the participation rate in higher education to bring the county's qualifications at level four and above closer to the national average
- Working with local employers, upskilling and reskilling employees, developing the workforce for the future

Providing state of the art learning facilities and home to our Centre for Digital Transformation and the Carlisle Business Exchange (CBE), a hyper-fast digitally enabled visible access point for businesses collaboration with academic staff and students to maximise innovation and knowledge exchange, ultimately a central hub for engagement, research, and growth opportunities across strategic partnerships with employers, education providers and key stakeholders within the region and beyond.

The new campus will:

- 1) Significantly increases the visibility of the university, and the opportunities for higher education in the region, located at the key transport gateway to the city centre and incorporating two iconic grade 1 listed buildings





- 2) Boots the City's vibrancy, and vitality, enhancing Carlisle's standing as a university City, and is designed to be permeable, bringing the city into the university and the university into the city
- 3) The key focus is on skills and productivity, inclusivity, and raising profile of city and region, leading to more young people studying in county; increased participation; and upskilling and reskilling in businesses
- 4) Key portfolio areas include digital transformation, advanced manufacturing, supply chain and logistics, the low carbon economy and health and wellbeing, requiring new skills, knowledge exchange and applied research. Also, importantly, maintaining and growing the university's public services' portfolio
- 5) The increased reputation and skills will make the region attractive to prospective students from outside the area, investment and new employers.

Other social value benefits include:

- Aiding the recovery of the city centre from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic by increasing footfall and diversity of use.
- The provision of apprenticeships, employment, work experience and training opportunities, particularly to those individuals who are not in education employment or training (NEET).
- The active engagement of young people in the region as the project develops, offering teach-in opportunities focused on construction projects, the benefits of HE, and project management.
- Engagement through the LSIP and Cumbria Chamber of Commerce and the main contractor, providing opportunities for local businesses and supply chain; improvements in the local labour market skills providing a steady supply of jobs and effective support to local people. Ultimately enabling them to acquire the skills to grow their communities and meet the future needs of industry.

A planning application for the £77.5m flagship project has now won approval, with permission granted on 5 August by the relevant panel at Carlisle City Council. The lion's share of funding - £50m - is coming from the Government via the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, and is the largest grant awarded to date by Borderlands.

In addition, £4m of funding for new business exchange centre (part of the Citadels plans) has been secured from the Carlisle Town Deal.

## LEEDS TRINITY

School Partnerships Office (SPO) –  
Bradford Bus Tours

The focus of the Bradford Bus Tours, set up in 2016 by Bradford Council's Recruitment and Retention Strategy Manager, Sara Rawnsley, is to work with local Primary and Secondary schools to support trainees in preparation for their first teaching post. In 2016, 58% of primary schools and 63% of secondary schools in Bradford faced recruitment issues. The scheme also provides local schools with the opportunity to showcase the exciting and unique initiatives that they are using to improve the outcomes for children and young people within their diverse communities. In 2019-20, 108 Leeds Trinity Primary Undergraduate trainees booked onto the tours across nine schools in total; 50 Primary Postgraduate trainees across eight schools; 84 Secondary trainees across nine schools and a second day for the Secondary trainees with 75 trainees across eight schools.

This work is closely linked to the ongoing partnership development with schools in the local area, working with schools to generate placements for trainees and promote recruitment for the schools, alongside offering trainees interview and Early Career Teacher (ECT) preparation. Leeds Trinity is also involved in working with local schools in delivering ECT training, mentor training and NPQ qualifications, both in-house and via Capita.

The Bradford Bus Tours provide an effective recruitment network for graduates, offering trainees the opportunity to compare differences between settings, find out about the schools' specialisms and the measures they employ to meet the specific needs of their pupils and communities, talk to staff and tour the school to observe teaching.

Trainees also have the opportunity to meet with and speak to current ECTs in the schools, providing a sense of what it is really like to teach in a local school. By encouraging graduates to settle in the local area, the Bradford Bus Tours also support the growth of business investment within the area.

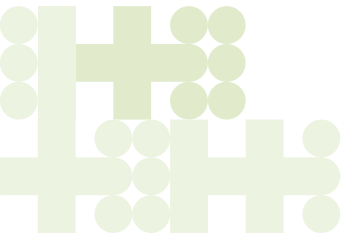


### Modern universities in Yorkshire and the Humber...

... create **£1.24bn** of impact as a result of their economic output.

... generate **£0.84bn** in expenditure-related Gross Value Added (GVA) in the region.

... support **10,546 jobs** (Full-time equivalent) in the region.



## LEEDS TRINITY

### Horsforth Brewery – an Ad:Venture



At the start of Mark's business journey, he was working from his garage in Horsforth, brewing beer on a small scale, and was ready to move into premises and look at funding options. He attended the Leeds Trinity Business Network event where he was introduced to the Ad:Venture programme. It was then that Mark was put into contact with Kris Keighley, the Ad:Venture business adviser at Leeds Trinity.

Mark worked closely with Kris to source premises; invest in larger equipment; draw up a robust business plan; and manage his cashflow forecasts. Horsforth Brewery's submission for a grant of £10,850 was successful, which meant Mark could satisfy the growing demand for his beer, leave his job to work full time in the brewery, and employ staff.

Mark now works full time in the brewery with his two employees. Mark has been able to cast his net wider in relation to selling to more retailers and providing home deliveries. Due to the company's rapid growth and to brew larger quantities of beer, a second grant was requested from Ad:Venture to find new premises to house a larger canning machine.

This meant Horsforth Brewery can produce the higher standard product required by distribution companies to sell into larger retailers. Mark is also able to help other local small craft breweries to can their products and increase the standard of their packaging and shelf life.

Mark said: "I can't thank Kris enough for helping me build on my business plan and I have really appreciated the way Ad:Venture has often given me reassurance that the path I am taking is the right one. Kris makes me be more realistic with projections rather than overly pessimistic which is my natural tendency."

In return, Mark has worked with the university's marketing and business students.



## LEEDS TRINITY

How successful employer partnerships have a positive impact on students' employability



Leeds Trinity University has a reputation for producing highly employable graduates. Its focus on careers and employability is a big reason for that, with placements, professional challenges and projects embedded into all undergraduate (UG) degrees at every level.

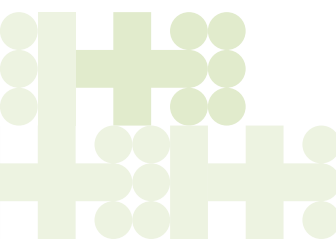
Placements are delivered in partnership with a network of more than 3,000 employers, with a focus on students as individuals. These opportunities help to develop a wide range of skills and behaviours and have a significant impact on the employment prospects of Leeds Trinity students.

One of Leeds Trinity's most successful employer partnerships is with Planet Sport, an online sports media and news agency based in Leeds. The Planet Sport team have worked with Leeds Trinity for over 10 years offering placements and support in lectures and at events, offering a vital real-world view to students.

Planet Sport are clear in their requirements from students and work closely with the Leeds Trinity placement team to communicate expectations, whilst supporting students to develop the skills required to work successfully in this industry.

Following successful placements many students are offered part-time freelance work, with many students going on to work for Planet Sport on a permanent basis after graduation. At time of writing, at least 10 Planet Sport journalists are recent Leeds Trinity graduates or current students; and they have accommodated 40 students on placement since 2015.

Over 60% of Leeds Trinity students are first in their family to go to university so partnerships like this are vital to ensure student get the opportunities and careers that they deserve.



## LEEDS TRINITY



### Leeds Trinity graduate develops successful start-up to benefit children and local region

Ellie O'Donoghue studied Psychology and Child Development at Leeds Trinity University, graduating in 2020. During the Covid-19 pandemic, and in her final year of study, Ellie launched a summer holiday camp for primary children in Wetherby. She is now the Managing Director of the successful start-up 'ScapeSchool', which provides services every school holiday, creating jobs in the local region.

Ellie said: "My business partner, Hollie Bruce, and I started planning for ScapeSchool in January 2020. At this point I was in my final year at Leeds Trinity. We finally took the leap a few months later, in March, and began planning our dream.

"ScapeSchool is a holiday club for primary school aged children (ages 4-11). We offer holidays full of fun! We have spent a lot of time thinking about how we can stand out from any other holiday club. Each day has different activities planned around the theme of the day, with lots of arts and crafts and outdoor play.

"I always knew I wanted to work with children but was never 100% sure which path to take so the course Leeds Trinity offered was perfect for me. It didn't just tie me to a teaching qualification. After I came and had a look around campus, I knew it was the place for me. I was so nervous about everything to do with starting university, but I felt at ease straight away. It was a beautiful place; all the staff were so lovely and welcoming and that was my decision made.

"Leeds Trinity has helped me in so many ways. It has given me the confidence to be able to stand in front of a room of people and speak confidently. Before university, I would never done that. It has also given me the reassurance that I am capable of doing anything if I put my mind to it."



## BATH SPA UNIVERSITY

### Bath Spa University Short Course Unit



Formed in 2021 during lockdown, the Short Course Unit's (SCU) first foray was in partnership with Bath College of Further and Higher Education. Entitled Restart, our first short course targeted enterprise skills provision in hard to reach communities, delivering to 90+ participants, 86% of whom were women, enabling their reskilling and upskilling for self-starter businesses.

During the summer of 2021 the SCU successfully bid for Creative Digital Bootcamps in Web Development, Creative Computing and Digital Marketing. 400 students successfully completed the programme with 70% of those progressing into employment outcomes in 6 months; again with a 80+% female population.

During spring 2022 through to November 2022 the SCU has been successful in all its new bootcamp bids in addition to repeating the first Creative Digital tranche. New courses include Cyber, Net Zero, Environmental Data Science and Data Analysis, Digital Upskilling for Primary and Secondary Teachers, AI and Machine Learning, Immersive Audio.

The bootcamps have also provided the blueprint the ISTART transdisciplinary pathways in Sustainability, Digital Skills, and Enterprise. A partnership between both of Bath's Universities, Bath College, the BaNES local authority, the West of England Combined Authority, ISTART blends skills, innovation and research for applied vocational learning and business start-ups. The initial phase is slated to start in January 2023 as a major economic platform for the region.

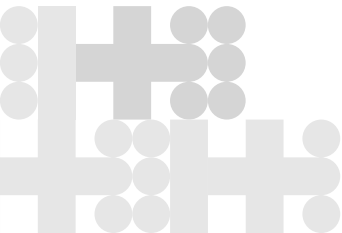
#### Modern universities in the South West...



... create **£1.64bn** of impact as a result of their economic output.

... generate **£1.1bn** in expenditure-related Gross Value Added (GVA) in the region.

... support **13,887 jobs** (Full-time equivalent) in the region.



# BATH SPA UNIVERSITY

Social Enterprise Gold Mark, July 2022



Bath Spa University has been awarded the Social Enterprise Gold Mark in recognition of its outstanding work as a social enterprise, making it the first University in the south west to achieve this standard, and fifth in the whole of the UK.

The Social Enterprise Gold Mark is a prestigious accolade assessing social enterprise best practice through a rigorous external assessment process. The University achieved this in recognition of its commitment to putting people, communities and the environment at the heart of its work.

Bath Spa demonstrated Outstanding Practice across areas which are central to social enterprise excellence including governance, stakeholder engagement, business ethics, financial transparency and social impact.

Bath Spa University's Gold Mark Assessment identified:

"You add considerable value to this in many areas of your work. You seek to enhance the experience of your students whilst at the University and place a particular emphasis on providing opportunities for them to become more employable as a result of the additional activities they can undertake. You also seek to link your students to the needs and opportunities within the local economy, creating additional social and economic impact in the city of Bath, including being a good employer. You have considered your role as

a corporate citizen and seek to maximise your positive impact in your community. These goals are clearly reflected in your strategic plan, demonstrating an embedded commitment to creating additional social value through your work.

"You have been extremely successful in recruiting students from your local community, in particular those who would not have automatically considered going to university, as part of the Widening Participation agenda. Eighty-two per cent of your students are from Widening Participation groups, 73% of students are from the South West region and you have demonstrated that a wide range of support is provided to students to enable them to participate fully in their studies and the life of the university and have additionally awarded over £2m in grants and bursaries to students in 2020-1.

The university is now using its Gold Mark standing as a platform for establishing a Social Enterprise Place in Bath and the surrounding region, focusing on a wide gamut of businesses from BCorps to micro providers. This is connecting further with work in building a Creative Quarter around the Arts Campus on the Locksbrook Road, in partnership with the relocation of Bath Fashion Museum. The driver underlying both the Social Enterprise Place model and the Creative Quarter is sustainability.

## CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY

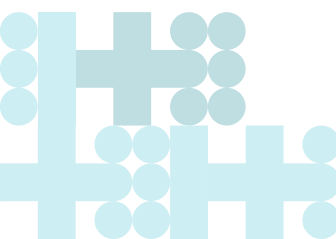


### Social Impact Through Collaborative Working: Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) and Discovery Park (DP)

Discovery Park (DP) is one of the largest science and business parks in Europe and home to a diverse range of international and local businesses in a broad range of sectors. Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) has built a successful relationship with the park across numerous collaborative initiatives, benefitting DP's business tenants, our students, regional and wider society:

- In 2016, CCCU pioneered a Life Sciences Industry Liaison Lab at Discovery Park, enabling the university to foster dynamic and industry-relevant connections. More than 50 industry-focused projects have been delivered, 70% of which provided internships and more than 40% led to employment of students. In 2021, a new partnership with Comax Life Sciences brought together business, research and innovation to investigate new ways to combat the transmission of diseases.
- In 2019, a unique collaboration between academia, Pfizer and STEM Learning saw the opening of a Community Lab at DP. The lab provides local schools with access to the industry standard facilities and equipment normally out of reach in the classroom, helping to educate and inspire hundreds of young people to pursue STEM careers and to grow the local STEM skills base. During 2019, over 200 students experienced the lab and 3,500 + young people had engaged with DP and its partners.
- In Dec 2021, the Discovery Park Skills Hub was launched with CCCU as a leading partner. The focus of the hub is to enable employers to have access to skills, guidance and funding opportunities. Since the launch, CCCU has engaged with 24 tenant companies at DP, supporting their business needs, with recruitment and apprenticeships being most in demand.

DP's Health Hub is being developed to work in synergy with the Skills Hub, enabling healthcare sector companies to identify opportunities to collaborate and to tap into CCCU's student and academic talent.





# CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY



## ERDF Hi3 Network Project and Discovery Park (DP)

Hi3 Network is defining the future of moving-image, screen-based and creative technologies through innovative research and development.

A network of industry specialists, researchers and businesses developing new products, services, experiences, and new research at our creative digital hubs in Canterbury, Folkestone, and Maidstone.

Businesses working in creative technologies or interested in applying creative technologies to expand their business can benefit from access to research opportunities and experimental studio space.

Three purpose-built hubs will provide studio space, editing and co-working facilities and are located at Canterbury Christ Church University, Screen South at digital:glassworks, Folkestone and Maidstone Studios.

Innovation Vouchers can also be won as part of an ongoing programme of events. These vouchers give longer-term access to the network's studio spaces and researchers.

Hi3 Network is led by London South Bank University in partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University, Creative Folkestone, Maidstone Studios and Screen South. It is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (£6.1m) and the programme will run until June 2023.

The project is supporting emerging screen industry initiatives in the Southeast Local Enterprise Partnership (SE LEP) region and bringing value by:

- Establishing a network of screen industry professionals and applied researchers across SE LEP.
- Providing three Hubs, each with a studio, two edit suites, and a co-working space. These will bring SMEs and researchers together and house/grow centres of excellence for R&D & innovation in the manipulation of screen images for film, television, exhibition, performance, and gaming.
- Providing state of the art facilities for cloud working, which will enable the development of cloud-based production. This means SMEs working in the SE LEP area will grow cloud-based production activity; material can be edited in SE LEP for firms across the globe.

### Modern universities in the South East...



... create **£2.12bn** of impact as a result of their economic output.

... generate **£1.27bn** in expenditure-related Gross Value Added (GVA) in the region.

... support **16,070 jobs** (Full-time equivalent) in the region.

## SOLENT UNIVERSITY

### Stepping into success



Step into Success is the Solent University widening participation programme, which gives disadvantaged learners in years 5–13 the chance to access a variety of activities, events and resources designed to instil a passion for learning and raise their aspirations for the future.

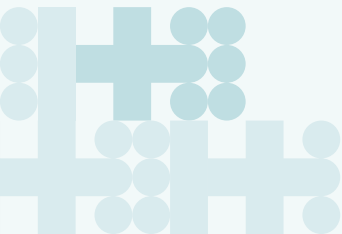
The programme aligns with our Access and Participation Plan, working with schools, colleges, virtual schools, and local community organisations. The groups targeted by the programme include, Looked After Children, disabled students, those from areas of high deprivation/low HE participation and BAME communities.

The DFE reported (2017) that when disadvantaged learners achieve at the same level as non-disadvantaged learners (Key Stage 4) they are almost equally likely to progress to higher education. The Sutton Trust also reported (2020) the significant impact of Covid-19 on disadvantaged learners attainment.

In response to these reports and to continue our support of disadvantaged learners in our local community, during 2021-22 the Step into Success team launched the More Maths Programme which aims to raise attainment for those sitting GCSE exams whilst removing attainment as potential barrier to progression to further and higher education.

So far, the intensive programme has engaged two cohorts of 50 and 60 learners taking part in weekly after school revision activities (cohort one – 8 weeks, cohort two – 11 weeks).

The content for the programme is focussed around the GCSE Maths syllabus, with learners provided with math focussed resources, while working with qualified teachers who are supported by the university's student ambassadors acting as positive role models.



During 2020-21, Solent Business School (SBS) worked with the Chartered Association of Business Schools to deliver the specialised government-funded programme for leaders of small businesses.

Working with businesses across the southern region, SBS has supported over 140 businesses.

Carolne Walsh, Director of SBS, says: “We’ve received really positive feedback from the organisations who have participated in the programme. They have said that it is helping them think differently about their business and how they can emerge from the pandemic stronger and more resilient.”

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

“The events industry has been so severely impacted by Covid-19, however the SBLP at Solent Business School has provided me with the ideal platform to reassess our focus with a view to ensuring we remain resilient in order to survive these challenging times,” says Sarah Moss, Director, Jack Up Events.

Wendy Moffat, Director, John A Ray & Associates Ltd goes on to say, “Participating in this course has provided the opportunity to take a critical look at our business model and how we operate. More importantly, it is giving us the tools to make changes right now, not just to see us through these challenging times, but to create a vision for the long-term future success of our business.”

Solent Business School is now helping to deliver the Government subsidised Help to Grow Management programme – with modules covering financial management, strategies for growth and innovation and digital adoption. By the end of the programme, business leaders will develop a tailored business growth plan with access to Solent’s mentoring and an alumni network.

## SOLENT UNIVERSITY

### Delivering live briefs to gather creative insight



Home improvement retailer, B&Q works with Solent University to deliver live business briefs, gathering creative insight from the university's student body.

B&Q's Store Support Office (SSO) is a major employer in the region. It houses a variety of customer and business focused support roles, of which the company actively recruits from the university.

B&Q has worked with Solent for several years to deliver live briefs, providing mutual benefits to their business and our student community. As well as providing fresh insights and thinking from our students, this activity provides B&Q with an opportunity to engage with their potential future workforce.

In response to Covid-19, B&Q continued working with the university to deliver a virtual live brief that saw students put forward solutions as to how B&Q could:

- use social media influencers in their future advertising campaigns
- better position their digital offering for their customers
- improve communication with colleagues working from home during the pandemic.

Over 50 of our business management students took part in the virtual challenge, which saw briefings and collaboration sessions delivered through Microsoft Teams. The students also shared their thoughts on what could make a great graduate scheme - suggesting ideas such as getting the opportunity to rotate around different business areas, spending time in stores to get to know B&Q's customers and taking up placements in sister companies abroad.

Prompted by these ideas, B&Q are considering how they could implement changes. Deb Garrett, Employer Brand Manager at B&Q, says:

"Having a fresh perspective on our business from Solent's students, who may well be the next generation of homeowners, is really valuable. They see things differently, have unique ideas of what customer service should look like in the digital age, and bring a wealth of diverse experiences and opinions that give us new ideas to work on.



Solent University's Faculty of Sport, Health and Social Sciences offers a number of programmes and activities that support staff, students and the local community.

This includes Health for Her, a weight loss programme designed to provide an appropriate and safe exercise environment to facilitate an increase in physical activity participation for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic women from low socio-economic areas of Southampton.

Providing an all-female, non-intimidating environment which caters for cultural and religious restrictions, it enables women to experience and enjoy a variety of sports and physical activity.

The project teaches health literacy, encourages a healthier lifestyle, supports behaviour change, boosts confidence and increases social cohesion.

Thanks to the university's Covid Response Fund, equipment for the participants to take home and keep was purchased, so they could exercise at home throughout the pandemic. This enabled 33 women to continue their health and fitness journey throughout the second and third lockdowns through a Facebook group.

Students have also benefited from the project which, through real world learning, provides opportunities to learn new skills, gain confidence and improve employability. Two of the students have already secured a job opportunity based upon the work experience gained through the project.



Health, Nutrition and Exercise student, Hayley James, has secured her dream role as Lifestyle Advisor with Onside – a charity that provides support services to vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the community in Worcestershire and Herefordshire.

Hayley said: "As I grew in confidence, I became more adaptable, which improved my employability. Knowing the ladies are enjoying the sessions gives me a sense of accomplishment."

H4H has been awarded further funding from the 'This Girl Can Community Fund' so that the project can be delivered across the city, continuing to benefit both the local community and students.

## UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS (UCA)



### Maide Pop up Shop

The Maide Pop up Shop was a student-led initiative to raise money for Choose Love, the Charity for refugees and displaced people affected by the war in Ukraine. In conjunction with Canterbury Whitefriars Shopping a group of Year 2 students set up a temporary store in a prominent high street location, creating a shop fit, branding, social media marketing and running the event for the weekend. The students sold prints, drawings, cards and other commercial visual communication, all created by staff and students. The event raised more than £2,000 for the charity.

### Brewery tap project

The UCA Brewery Tap Project Space is a multipurpose teaching and events space, converted from a former pub in the heart of the 'Creative Quarter' in Folkestone's East End harbour area.

The space was acquired in 2013 as a means of enabling students to construct and test work alongside the possibility of broadening their communities of practice with local arts organisations in a regional context of growth and cultural expansion within the creative industries.

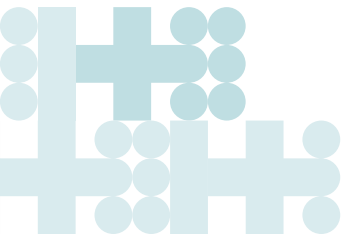
The space supports activity between UCA staff, students, graduates of UCA, and regional arts organisations, creative businesses and individual creatives. This has supported a range of collaborative projects, workshops and events at the

location. Since taking over-use of Brewery Tap, it has been used and visited by over 14,000 people.

Over a period of several years this has enabled a range of economic impacts, including:

- Public commissions for graduates
- Graduates re-locating to the town
- Graduate jobs
- Increased visitors to Folkestone's Creative Quarter, supporting its economy

The evolution and growth of the space, and its value, has exceeded the university's expectations in relation to impacting the cultural ecosystem of the town. It places UCA firmly at the heart of the Creative Quarter in Folkestone and represents a small cost for large gain - supporting expansive collaborative economic impact in the creative industries in the town.



## Tansa exhibition: collaboration between MA Digital Media and South Hill Park Arts Centre

Students from UCA's MA in Digital Media provided social media marketing support to South Hill Park Arts Centre in Bracknell to help promote the Tansa exhibition. Tansa was an exhibition showcasing the work of a group of textiles artists who had visited and been inspired by Japanese textile workshops.

The support included filming and photographing the works and interviewing some of the artists. The students also devised a schedule for when and how the materials should be posted on Instagram.

UCA received very positive feedback from South Hill Park Arts Centre on their engagement:

"South Hill Park Instagram exhibition page saw an increased engagement during this time.

"We saw an increasing in engagement during the exhibition period both online via social media and visitors' numbers."

## Free-range Charity Events Canterbury

UCA Canterbury students and staff from the Visual Communication Course regularly contribute, visual communication, moving image and musical input to these charity events organised by Free Range.

Free Range is an award-winning arts charity that presents adventurous music, film and dance events with a policy of free-entry. Since the organisation was established in 2012, it has delivered 226 extraordinary events and worked with over 1000 artists.

Through presenting genuinely independent cultural events of the highest quality in an informal, playful and provocative way, Free Range has helped to create a strong regional community of artists, audience members and organisations that care about adventurous culture

## UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON



### Springfield Campus: the transformation of a derelict brewery

The University of Wolverhampton's £120m Springfield Campus seeks to stimulate economic regeneration in Wolverhampton and the Black Country by bringing together school level education, employer training provision and higher education on one site. Situated on a former brewery site, Springfield has transformed a derelict area of the city.

The campus is a significantly important regeneration project for the West Midlands and when fully operational will be the world's largest construction education campus developing the skills and knowledge base for the future of construction.

In August 2020, the university's School of Architecture and Built Environment (SOABE) re-located to a purpose-built £28m building on the campus. The university worked closely with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (BCLEP) and City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) to unlock growth deal funding, evidencing how SoABE could help to achieve regional strategic economic objectives by raising employability, education and skills and improving Black Country business competitiveness.

The Springfield Campus is also now home to the National Brownfield Institute (NBI), which will provide high quality brownfield research and innovation across the West Midlands. Led by the university, in partnership and supported by key stakeholders, including CWC, BCLEP and WMCA, the NBI opened in January 2022 and will create a world-class industry cluster focusing on brownfield regeneration.

Also present on the site is the £12m Elite Centre for Manufacturing Skills (ECMS), which opened in August 2017. This is an employer-led training facility for the Black Country designed to improve productivity and growth in the high value manufacturing sector. Lastly, the Telford Thomas University Technical College is also situated on site, providing education for pupils aged from 14.

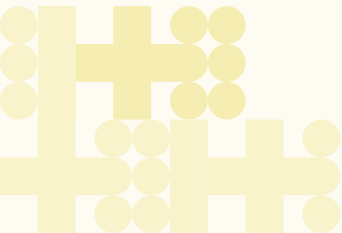
#### Modern universities in the West Midlands...



... create **£1.85bn** of impact as a result of their economic output.

... generate **£1.17bn** in expenditure-related Gross Value Added (GVA) in the region.

... support **16,388 jobs** (Full-time equivalent) in the region.







Raising Voices, Changing Minds, Ending Poverty was an awareness raising project commissioned by VOICES, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, on behalf of the Hardship Commission for Stoke-on-Trent. The project ran from November 2021 until March 2022.

Raising Voices was a collaboration between Staffordshire University, Expert Citizens CIC, All the Small Things CIC and a steering group made up of 12 local community members, some of whom had a lived experience of hardship and poverty. Each member brought their own experience and expertise of local issues to make project decisions, co-create and co-deliver community sessions, and amplify community voices which may have previously gone unheard.

The project combined creative in-person storytelling sessions with a social media campaign to provide insights into the daily trade-offs that people make when experiencing hardship in Stoke-on-Trent.

Creativity was built into the project to promote discussion, providing flexibility in how people could engage with the campaign. This included postcards, poems, podcast, photographs, clay tiles, and wellbeing tips. More than 200 people took part in these creative community sessions.

An end-of-project exhibition held at Staffordshire University allowed us to display the project outputs in the community and share the voices of those with lived experience of hardship in Stoke-on-Trent. These outputs were shared via to the social media campaign which reached 35,000 people in the 6 month project.

The exhibition saw the signing of a Manifesto for Change by the steering group and the Hardship Commission. This outlined the need and desire for the two parties to continue working together, aligning community members with an official group that had no prior community voice involved with its operations. The confidence gained by steering group members has led some to full-time employment. Additionally, members have been asked by local councillors to begin conversations about shaping poverty policy in Stoke-on-Trent.

## STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY

### Staffordshire University's Innovation Enterprise Zone



Staffordshire University's Innovation Enterprise Zone (IEZ) is the flagship centre where they develop relationships and strategic partnerships with employers to support innovation, enable high tech incubation, nurture start-ups, and provide access to work-based learning. The IEZ is a £13 million investment and a key aspect of the local enterprise & innovation ecosystem. It stimulates the local economy through innovation-led growth and higher skills development in the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire region.

Staffordshire University works in partnership with local stakeholders including Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, district and borough councils, Local Enterprise Partnership and Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce to take a coordinated and strategic approach towards driving investments in research and development (R&D) and the creation of high-value jobs.

The IEZ provides local SMEs with access to dedicated innovation projects including new product development, prototyping, digital innovation, health/ medical, innovation planning and support for businesses in transport, logistics and

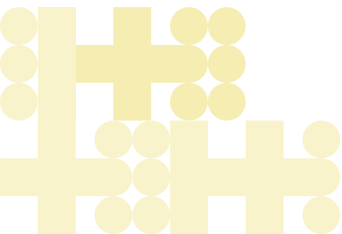
mobility. The university has developed, in collaboration with local employers, several dedicated innovation facilities in advanced manufacturing, materials, innovation, and creativity, all of which are available to local employers.

The IEZ connects local employers with our students and graduates by enabling work-based learning that supports specified business need. It also provides access to the facilities needed to nurture regional socio-economic growth. Regional businesses benefit from access to the university's research, students and graduates. Examples include the design and prototype of an innovative ballistic vest, medical devices and bespoke software solutions to streamline operations.

In the last 3 years over 500 businesses benefited from the Staffordshire University's Innovation Enterprise Zone contributing to 60 new products, services or processes and more than 900 people have benefited from the continuing professional development offer including microcredentials, short courses or masterclasses.

Sara Williams, CEO of Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce:

"The Innovation Enterprise Zone at Staffordshire University offers fantastic support to local businesses and making a real difference in helping them grow in partnership with the university".





Home to a diverse student community from a broad range of backgrounds, Staffordshire University is an innovative, state-of-the-art institution situated in the heart of a low-skilled, low-income economy – a favourable situation for maximum impact.

A global institution, with a significant number of students studying its courses overseas, the University's strong civic values ensure it is committed to helping its home city tackle a broad range of social problems.

Ranked 298th out of 324 local authorities in England, Stoke-on-Trent is a social mobility 'cold spot'. In terms of education – a key determinant of social mobility – participation rates in higher education are between 16 and 28 per cent in Stoke-on-Trent, compared to more than half (50.2 per cent) nationally.

The percentage of Staffordshire University's undergraduates who are first-generation entrants to higher education is 60 per cent, compared to 45 per cent across the wider sector. It's against this background that the University's Step Up to Higher Education programme is making a difference on the ground.

As an academic transition programme, Step Up helps to bridge the educational gap for individuals considering Higher Education.

The initiative is primarily designed to enable participants to develop their writing, referencing, research and critical thinking skills – all of which are critical for success at university – while helping them to build their self-confidence and crucially, personal self-belief.

Initially established in 2007, Step Up has a long history and trajectory. The course widens the participation of hard-to-reach demographics, such as refugee students, mature students, students who have experienced homelessness and students who have faced addiction. Within this context, it has enjoyed significant success working collaboratively alongside local councils and the YMCA to identify students in the area who stand to benefit from the course.

Step Up has since expanded its outreach activities as part of the Youth Employment and Skills (YES) Consortium, which in 2022, received £527,466 through the UK Government's Community Renewal Fund, as part of the national levelling up agenda.

Another area in which Staffordshire University is leading the way is closing the digital divide.

Over the course of the pandemic, the University offered students studying at home access to hundreds of laptops.

The University and the Students' Union worked together to help thousands of students who found themselves in financial difficulty – with almost £1 million being distributed in hardship funds during the 2020/21 academic year. This directly helped more than 3,400 students. The funding pot was made up of cash from the Government's funding package to address student hardship, distributed via the Office for Students, in addition to other funding from the University, including £40,000 from the University's own Horizon Fund.

## STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY

Be Inspired Graduate Start-Up Programme at  
Staffordshire University

The be inspired at Staffordshire University (biSU) programme began in 2001 and starts approximately 40 Staffordshire-based graduate businesses every year. It retains graduate talent in the region, boosts the local economy and creates jobs.

The social impact of the programme is strengthened by our partnership with NatWest who provide support through its 'women in business' programmes. Also collaborating with the Chambers of Commerce and County Council, biSU graduates are supported to increase their social capital by facilitating networking with other businesses in the region.

Self-employment rates are traditionally lower for women but within biSU, the gender breakdown of the project is minimum 50/50, with 68% female entrepreneurs in the last cohort.

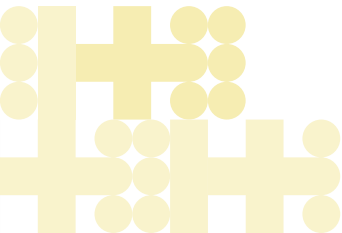
The university ensures that the programme is accessible to all, with 27% of participants having declared a disability in comparison to 13% of the Staffordshire University student population.

16% of biSU participants are non-white British, compared to 94% white British residents in Staffordshire. 29% of the last cohort are from mixed or non-white ethnicities.

**Heywood Inclusion** created by a Staffordshire graduate, provides consultancy to businesses ensuring their websites are accessible to all including those with learning disabilities and visual impairment. Nick Heywood, Director, builds from personal experience. The values underpinning his business are based on social equality and justice.

**Bedford and Basil** Alex Dawson was made redundant during the pandemic. With biSU he developed his mobile pizza truck and employed 2 people to help with catering for corporate functions. During the pandemic, he produced and distributed pizzas to his local community.

**Inspired Mindset** was started by Julie Bricknall a 2021 graduate. It provides positive mindset and leadership workshops for the Chambers of Commerce, local authorities and NHS. She has just bid on a large NHS contract which will have positive impact in the community.



## LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

EST 1892 **LSBU**

LSBU Group: education pathways across secondary, further and higher education

London South Bank University (LSBU) operates as part of a unique group structure – the LSBU Group - which was born out of the ongoing commitment to our civic mission. It enables us to create strategies and pathways by which local people of all characteristics and talents, at any stage of their educational journey, can be supported through the education system to achieve their full potential, and to contribute their skills, energies and commitment to wider society throughout their lives. In order to raise local aspiration and attainment, LSBU aligns combined outreach activities with the needs of local stakeholders and partners, including leveraging employer relationships to provide work experience and other employer engagement in local schools.

LSBU Group comprises: London South Bank University; South Bank Academies (a Multi Academy Trust running South Bank Engineering UTC and South Bank University Academy); South Bank Innovation; and South Bank Colleges (comprising Lambeth College and South Bank Technical College [under development]). These organisations work to a shared mission, set of values and educational framework to achieve shared outcomes.

### Modern universities in London...

... create **£3.89bn** of impact as a result of their economic output.

... generate **£2.12bn** in expenditure-related Gross Value Added (GVA) in the region.

... support **21,988 jobs** (Full-time equivalent) in the region.



In 2021, work began on London South Bank Technical College, the first comprehensive technical college for a generation. Once the Lifelong Loan Entitlement is introduced in 2025, it is hoped that LSBTC will provide a flagship example of flexible learning – providing Level 4 and 5 technical qualifications which are both valuable in their own right and provide clear pathways into further study.

As LSBU continues to embed progression pathways across the Group through secondary, further and higher education, we hope to open up many more opportunities for the people of south London, removing barriers that have historically stood between so many students and their futures.

## LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

EST 1892 **LSBU**

## Mayor's Green Skills Hub and LSBU

The Mayor of London has launched a new approach to jobs and skills, focused on championing London's skills offer and supporting Londoners into good jobs in sectors key to London's recovery.

London South Bank University will be part of the newly launched Mayor's Academies Programme through the LSBU Green Skills Hub. The £44m programme will support Londoners to gain the skills that they need to enter good work in the digital, green, health, hospitality and creative industries. This is being supported by a new campaign which will raise awareness of the thousands of adult learning opportunities available in the capital, aiming to connect Londoners with local provision.

London's green jobs sector is expected to rise 115% by 2030 and LSBU's Green Skills Hub will give thousands of Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark residents the chance to build successful careers in the fast-growing green sector. Around 50% of the residents who take part in the LSBU Green Skills Hub will be from underrepresented groups.

The LSBU Green Skills Hub is part of the Mayor's Academics Programme and by April 2024 aims to:

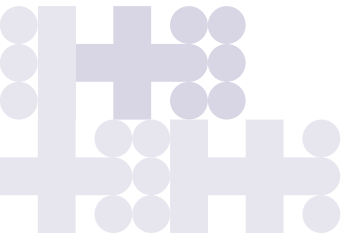
- Create 382 jobs and apprenticeships and 119 work placements in the green sector



- Provide 1,230 qualifications to residents from Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark
- Organise Apprenticeship events, Jobs Fairs and Employer Workshops for Lewisham, Lambeth, Southwark residents.

The training and jobs offered by the LSBU Green Skills Hub comes from a partnership of twenty organisations, including:

- Five education providers: London South Bank University (LSBU), South Bank Colleges, Lewisham College, the Skills Centre and The Engineering & Design Institute London (TEDI-London).
- Twelve London-based businesses: Clarion, Artel, Astudio, Hill Group, 21 Construction, Equans/Engie, Keltbray, Ardmore, Waterman, Lendlease, British Land and Morgan Sindall
- Three South London councils: Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark.

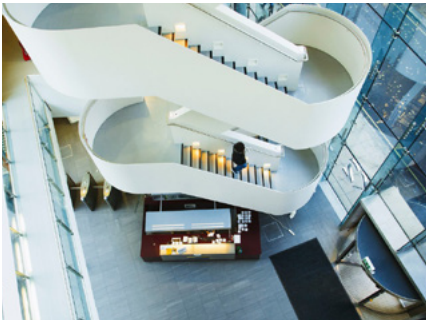


## BIG South London and LSBU

London South Bank University (LSBU) is providing a support programme helping businesses in south London to recover from the huge pressures they have faced from the pandemic by growing and improving their productivity. The BIG (Business, Innovation and Growth) South London is powered by the South London Partnership, a subregional collaboration of five London boroughs: Croydon, Kingston upon Thames, Merton, Richmond upon Thames and Sutton.

LSBU is working in partnership with Kingston University, Roehampton University, Wimbledon College of Arts, St Marys University and Sussex Innovation Centre to deliver the Innovation Support Programme on behalf of BIG South London, with 80 businesses being offered one-to-one mentoring and workshops to:

- Provide business health checks
- Review and improve their product ranges
- Develop their financial management and digital skills.



The Business Innovation and Growth South London programme provides:

- Innovation Health Checks: with one-to-one sessions, mentors will develop tailored support plans and point businesses toward the right workshops to make the most of the programme.
- Innovation and Growth Workshops: with a series of workshops targeted at businesses at all stages of innovation and growth, allowing businesses to start implementing strategies from the Innovation Health Checks.
- Knowledge Base Engagement: with intensive support packages will give businesses access to world class facilities, student and academic expertise.

LSBU also runs a range of other business support schemes. The Help to Grow business support programme was launched on 25 October 2021 and will support 600 small and medium-sized businesses over the next three years. Participants receive personalised learning from industry experts at LSBU and are supported to develop a tailored growth plan to enable their businesses to reach their full potential. The business support programme is delivered in a range of locations across London including Croydon and Southwark.

## UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON



**University of  
East London**

### Nursing partnerships at UEL: working with the NHS

Nursing at the University of East London (UEL) has excellent partnerships across the North East London networks for student placements. These include the Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust, Barts Health, the Homerton NHS foundation Trust, North East London Foundation Trust and Imperial College NHS Foundation Trust. The department also has good links across the private and independent sector, too, and aims to train local nurses for the local area where there is an acute shortage of nursing staff.

In October 2021, a group of students started a new two-year UCAS entry nursing associate programme with Imperial College Healthcare. The sponsored nursing associate programme aims to give members of the local community the opportunity to begin a nursing career at the trust – while developing the nursing workforce.

The nursing associate role is a support role that bridges the gap between healthcare support workers and registered nurses, helping with the delivery of care under the supervision of a registered nurse.



The students undertake their nursing associate placements at one of Imperial College Healthcare Trust's hospitals, alongside associated community partners, with dedicated support from their nursing education team.

The Department of Nursing includes more than 1,000 students and multiple ways to access the nursing profession, including a short course designed to pique interest in the field.







## ARENA: supporting sustainable business

The ARENA project provides support to London start-ups, spin-outs and SMEs seeking to develop and commercialise their innovative ideas, products and services that advance resource efficiency, urban green infrastructure, and nature-based solutions for urban resilience.

Through ARENA, UEL's Sustainable Research Institute (SRI) provides bespoke academic expertise and access to specialist equipment. The resources and guidance allow businesses to realise their potential and strive towards ethical and sustainable models of operation and experimentation or innovation to achieve green aspirations. This three-and-a-half-year initiative (2019-2022) was funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

As of February 2022, the ARENA project has registered 50 eligible businesses to which support is being provided. Of these, 26 businesses (52%) have pursued better resource efficiency and/or the circular economy practices, while 20 (40%) are being supported to develop nature-based solutions and urban green infrastructure and four (8%) improved in both areas. 23 businesses (46% of the total) are based in East London.

The 'green economy' is worth more to London's economy than the construction and manufacturing sectors combined and lies at the heart of London's aspirations to become a world-leading low carbon city in harmony with the natural environment. The growing 'low carbon and environmental goods and services' sector is already worth £40bn in sales and employs nearly 250,000 people. The programme provides opportunities for UEL students, either as part of their studies or as interns, to meaningfully engage with entrepreneurs in this burgeoning and lucrative sector.

ARENA is an incubator, growing the green economy sector and providing an anchor point in the larger regeneration project of the Royal Docks Enterprise Zone and partnering on the Mayoral Green Skills Academy. SRI continues to promote sustainable practices and support local business initiatives by extending ARENA into the entire region through ENE and SENE programmes in the East and South East of England.

## UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

**University of  
East London****Brickfield Newham: building community  
through creativity**

Throughout May 2021, the residents of Newham were introduced to Brickfield Newham, a community-based research project that reinvigorates interest in the importance of clay to the construction of the urban landscape. Participants at the five events explored the themes of the project through performance arts and the craft of brickmaking.

Members of the Newham community came together with UEL students and artisans from Cornwall to build and fire a kiln on a construction site in the Royal Docks for Newham's first 'Brick-a-thon' in which participants fire as many bricks as possible.

Rooted in Newham's history of maritime trade, the project was accompanied by the return to the Royal Docks of the Blue Mermaid, a replica of a ship which was lost to a mine in 1941. Powered solely by its sails, the barge followed traditional trade routes along the Thames to bring clay for the project from Essex into the heart of London.

Brickfield Newham provided a creative space for children and young people to share experiences of living in Newham and to listen to each other's vision of their future. The young people were guided through theatre workshops to imagine their perfect street, build it with clay and improvise the interesting inhabitants who might live there.

Students from the university investigated themes of dwelling, living and claiming the earth through performances. The site was opened to the public to enjoy a Brick Making Festival, the first public performance in Newham since the Covid-19 lockdown in 2020.

Brickfield Newham was a collaboration between the University of East London, Victoria & Albert East, Victoria & Albert Museum Research Institute and Brickfield. It was generously supported by Newham Heritage Month, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and an Arts Council National Lottery Grant with in-kind support from ThisIsProjekt and Newham Council.





### In it for the long run: building effective partnerships

As a top ranked university for social mobility in the UK, widening participation is embedded across everything UEL does. Working in partnership with local schools, colleges, local authorities, virtual schools, professional bodies and employers, the university is committed to helping young people from all backgrounds to understand what higher education can offer them and prepare them for the transition into and through university. More than half of UEL students are first in their family to enter higher education and come from the local area.

The Outreach and Access team work to form three-year partnerships with schools, ensuring that the young people who need the most support receive it.

UEL has worked in partnership with Clapton Girls' Academy for over five years with over 25 interventions and over 100 contact hours.

Students who participated in the first cohort (2017/2018) are now in Sixth Form or College. Of the 15 participants that took part from Clapton Girls Academy, eight remained at the school's Sixth Form and all eight applied to university.

Continuing with the example of Clapton Girls' Academy, where consent to being tracked has been given and data could be matched, 25 students that attended the Schools and Colleges projects are now at university.

## LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY



### A new heart to Holloway Road

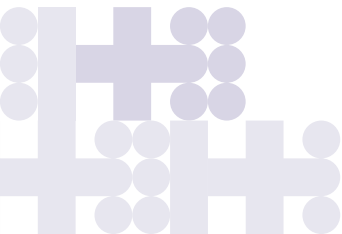
London Metropolitan University is putting money into our local community, for the benefit of our local community, through a new Estates Strategy. This will see close to £100m invested into university buildings, to help create a new 'heart' to the Holloway Road campus that feels like home, while allowing the university to better welcome and interact with its local community and stakeholders through community-accessible areas to run pro-bono clinics, community events and more.

This will include a new business and social enterprise area, a Rainbow Room and the new 'Health Hub'. Supported by the local GP Federation, Council and NHS Health trust, as well as the current low-cost injury and rehabilitation clinic, the Health Hub will be run by students and graduates and offer free or low-cost services to the public, such as physiotherapy, nutrition advice and guidance, sports activities and more.

The Strategy also includes an ambitious climate management plan. The university has an excellent track record and will continue to be lead in this area, utilising expertise, time and energy to help local communities with their own greening agenda.

The university will follow a new carbon and environmental management plan that meets and exceeds the requirements of the London Plan, set out by the Mayor of London, in terms of reducing carbon emissions, enabling graduates to continue this vital work and improving the environment in which teaching, learning and work occurs.

Working closely with Islington Council, this plan sees London Metropolitan University committed to being a carbon net-zero university by 2030, with all onsite electricity from renewable sources; and to reduce total water use by 15% by 2025.



## Understanding the BAME employment gap

A research project from London Metropolitan University and Islington Council has found that mistrust of national employment services is a key barrier to people of ethnic minority backgrounds finding employment.

Analysis of data highlighted that across Islington, there are higher levels of unemployment among African, Caribbean, Black/Black British, Turkish and Bangladeshi residents - 48% of Bangladeshi and Pakistani residents in Islington are unemployed and 41% of Black/Black British residents are unemployed – compared to 18% of the white population.

The research found that residents were more able to access support that they trusted, including many community-based organisations and the council's iWork service. However, many were unaware of the relevant services, and some expressed mistrust of national employment services, such as the Job Centre.

As a result, the council is keen to improve its outreach into local communities, by using more locations that residents use, and in which they feel comfortable.



Working with representatives on the council's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employment forum, the council will also explore how it can ensure that council premises are 'safe places', where residents can get the support they need.

With the cost-of-living crisis, there is an urgent need to get local people into well paid, secure jobs. This research reveals some of the systemic barriers faced by our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents.

Working with trusted partners in the community is vital and the Islington Working Partnership plays an important role in helping people into good work, and helping families out of poverty.

This research will help the Council track its progress in supporting those who face the most challenges in getting back into work. The university and the council will work together with local employers and organisations to achieve the ambition of 5,000 people into work by 2026.

## LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY



### Connected communities

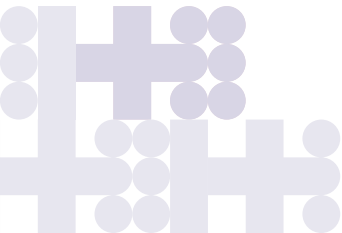
As a city, London is facing the most challenging period in recent history. The disproportionate impact the pandemic has had on different communities has further exacerbated deep-seated inequalities. There has been a particular effect on local economies and high streets and the services that London boroughs and the Greater London Authority deliver have been put under significant pressure.

As the focus shifts towards recovery, it is clear that local governments will not be able to achieve the social, economic or environmental progress needed by relying on old forms of development.

London Metropolitan University's Connected Communities Project, led by Professor Diana Stirbu, is gaining an understanding of how current challenges and opportunities can be harnessed. It aims to strengthen and cultivate participatory local democracy and to put forward and put in practice a transformative vision that is aimed at regeneration by common endeavour and alternative approaches to keeping wealth in the local economy, thus counteracting economic insecurity and inequality. In doing so, the project seeks to support the collaboration between local authorities and their communities to enable a strong civil society.

Through document analysis and qualitative primary research the project examines narratives and practices of community engagement within the context of regeneration work in London boroughs with the view to identify gaps and potential needs the local authorities in Hackney, Islington and the Royal Docks face in terms of designing and implementing effective and meaningful community engagement strategies that would support reshaping London's built environment (mainly town centres and high streets).

Through knowledge exchange activities the project has explored themes such as the transition from impact of the crisis to recovery, community engagement between non-participation and empowerment, towards a citizen science place-making agenda and community wealth building together with our network members.



## Upward Bound

Upward Bound is a programme aimed at supporting the attainment and aspirations of young people in participating Islington secondary schools. It provides an alternative learning environment within a university setting – addressing the academic, social and cultural needs of the cohort.

Since 2006, Upward Bound has been a valued supplementary educational intervention for Islington schools, supporting pupils through GCSEs and beyond. The programme successfully raises its pupils' attainment and continues to surpass national and borough results. Students in year groups 9 & 10 participate in the programme for two years, allowing them to feel a sense of community and, importantly, stability.

In 2021-22, the programme supported around 200 students through its programmes, which run on Saturday mornings during term time for 29 weeks each year.

It provided bespoke academic guidance for young people from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds in Islington at its Saturday sessions, through a structured, fun learning environment. Upward Bound Careers events are attended by professionals from a variety of industries, giving students the opportunity to interact with people working in different sectors. Peer mentors deliver a range of informal workshops on study skills, employability skills, work experience and volunteering opportunities and several other themes.

Student Ambassadors deliver informal sessions with students on higher education pathways and experiences and support the cohort consistently throughout the academic year building positive relationships as powerful role models.

Sessions are interactive, and include videos, documentaries, debating, team building and other interactive activities. There are regular outdoor activities and trips as attendance rewards. Physical awards are also presented at the end of term.

The participants also took part in a poetry slam event, working with professional poets to publicly perform their own written creations. This aimed to build the confidence, knowledge and creativity of the cohort.

## UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE



### Partnership with Luton Council to give paid research placements to students

Earlier this year, the University of Bedfordshire launched a new successful partnership with Luton Council, to give paid placement opportunities for third year Psychology students who are interested in research.

The ongoing project has seen students undertake engagement surveys in the local community and across several cultural events in Luton, including the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations and Luton Pride.

The aim of the activity is for the feedback to enable both Luton Council and the university to have a better understanding of audience interests and how best to align the local cultural events provision with community demand.

This was a partnership between the university's Arts and Culture Projects team and the Council, with one student who took part in the project crediting the research as the reason she has decided to pursue qualitative design for her master's research.

This community activity is one of many supported by the dedicated Arts and Culture Projects team, whose work delivers across cultural education, community engagement, partnerships and advocacy, and skills development agendas.

#### Modern universities in the **East of England...**



... create **£1.08bn** of impact as a result of their economic output.

... generate **£650m** in expenditure-related Gross Value Added (GVA) in the region.

... support **7,537 jobs** (Full-time equivalent) in the region.





The University of Bedfordshire has a successful ongoing partnership with Bedford's Blues Foundation, the charity section of Bedford Blues Rugby Club, working across the local area to inspire the community.

In collaboration with the university, the Blues Foundation launched a community lifestyle and wellness project – TRY To Change – in May 2022, which is a realistic and sustainable weight management programme for those looking to make lifestyle changes. This project allowed participants to maintain both their physical and mental health through a series of health and fitness projects including exercise classes and mini workshops.

More recently, in September 2022, the Blues Foundation was announced as the official partner of the university's new Sports Coaching and Development degree, helping to support the charity's community work and enhance student learning and employability. The course partnership will ensure that students can gain valuable upskilling and career development opportunities through a range of year-round placement opportunities with the Blues Foundation that will give them an opportunity to experience real-world sport development. Students will also be given the chance to work with the Blues Foundation on a select number of research projects, helping to gather critical insight into the impact of the initiatives on both the lives of individual participants and the wider community.



## UNIVERSITY OF SUFFOLK

### Discovering wellbeing in the library



Libraries have been more than places for borrowing books for many years. Libraries host a wealth of activities and events, serving as hubs for their communities. The project goal was to determine what impact libraries can have on the well-being of their users. It was undertaken as a KEEP+ funded project with a joint research team of computer scientists and social scientists in collaboration with Suffolk Libraries.

The assumption is that to be happy, people need various emotional, social and other needs (e.g. attention, respect, social connection, etc.). Suffolk Libraries hosted tens of thousands of events annually across its county wide network pre-Covid and these have resumed gradually as pandemic conditions have eased. It is suggested that these activities can meet these needs. By matching the unmet needs of a library user to suitable activities, libraries can enhance users' wellbeing, life satisfaction and social connection. Due to the number of events, an AI-based prototype recommendation engine was developed using natural language processing techniques to automatically tag activities and then match activities to the needs and constraints of the users.

In the latter half of 2021 as libraries reopened, a questionnaire was administered to 338 users which measured loneliness, positive and negative affect, general self-efficacy, social assurance and social connectedness. For users aged 18-57, statistically significant results indicated that regular and historic usage of libraries was negatively predicted loneliness and positively predicted social connection. An additional pre-event and post-event facilitated intervention with a questionnaire administered to 47 library users yielded statistically significant evidence for the activities positively affecting satisfaction with life and mental health. No significant findings were established for other wellbeing indicators. Based on this, the university and Suffolk Libraries will be seeking funding for a pilot project to identify the benefits or otherwise of social prescribing of library events.



### School of Health and Sports Sciences, Health and Wellbeing Building

A £13m renovation on the University of Suffolk's north campus has been transformed into the Health and Wellbeing building. The restoration was completed by local contractors, Barnes Construction working with KLH Architects, Superstructures and Castons, and 75% of the materials are from the region. Bob Steward, Joint MD of Barnes Construction said "This scheme complements our already extensive experience of working in the education and health sectors. As an Ipswich-based employer, the university is pleased to be involved in a project in the heart of our hometown, which not only enhances educational opportunities locally, but also supports the recruitment requirements of the NHS and other healthcare providers."

To support the changing needs of health and social care services the new building will enable the university to increase the number of places for students wishing to study as nurses, midwives, paramedics, radiographers, and radiotherapists as well as starting a new course in physiotherapy. It will give local people an increased opportunity to be part of the local health and care workforce impacting positively on the wider economy.

The building houses brand-new clinical simulation facilities, two state-of-the-art six bedded hospital wards, a midwifery birthing unit, a new sports and exercise facility, a working radiography imaging suite, paramedic science rooms, counselling and physiotherapy clinic rooms and the Institute of Health and Wellbeing research. It is also home to the new Integrated Care Academy promoting integrated care among our student body, practice partners and the wider community. This innovative facility will place the University of Suffolk as a national leader in health and social care education.

## UNIVERSITY OF SUFFOLK

### DigiTech Centre



The DigiTech Centre is a collaboration between the University of Suffolk and BT plc, with funding from the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership. The £9.6m investment has led to the creation of a state-of-the-art facility based at Adastral Park, one of the largest science and technology campuses in Europe. The ambition is to create a nationally significant ICT research and training facility within the Eastern region that will in turn transform the digital landscape of the UK.

The specialist laboratories and equipment at DigiTech have been designed to be utilised by university staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students, and industrial collaborators. Already a student project has made use of its AI Compute Server to train several hundred different deep learning models to identify the most effective neural network for identifying the presence of Covid-19 infection in blood samples. Degree apprentices have utilised the Juniper networking sandpit for hands-on training on enterprise grade network equipment so that they can work safely on the equivalent infrastructure that underpins broadband in the UK. In the Cyber Range, undergraduates practice

how to defend computer systems against hackers, while they use industry-standard tools to collect, process and analyse digital evidence in the Digital Forensics Laboratory. The Centre has become a home for research into the sustainability of computing (through measuring the energy requirements of software execution), analysing the business value of Internet-of-Things applications, and developing non-invasive techniques to identify strokes and create a new portable brain scanner.

Through hackathons held at DigiTech, students have created their own social capital, leading to them gaining internships, placements and job offers with some of the 150+ high-tech companies of the Innovation Martlesham cluster at Adastral Park. The DigiTech Centre is already creating new opportunities for individuals and organisations and powering the expansion of computing teaching and research at Suffolk.



## The Zest programme: A young adult palliative care and transition service in East Suffolk

Introduction: Young adults with Life Limiting Conditions require life-long palliative care, due to medical advances, the number of 16–19-year-olds with palliative care needs in the UK has increased by 45% over the past decade. These young adults face many challenges during the transition to adult services. The Zest service at St Elizabeth hospice was developed to support this transition and this review was commissioned to get a greater understanding of the service.

A mixed method of qualitative and quantitative approaches was used to collect the data, this included analysing existing data sets and 23 semi-structured interviews with various service providers, stakeholders, and service users.

Analysis of the quantitative data showed that predominantly, the Zest service is used by patients with a primary diagnosis of irreversible but non-progressive conditions, 1394 contacts were recorded within the review period (2 years), and almost half the patients had utilised a short stay or day care services. Analysis of the qualitative data revealed four themes: engagement and the importance of the service, transition, general support, future developments. Participants identified large gaps in transitional care support which the Zest service addressed. The role of the Transition Coordinator, short breaks and social events provided by the service were commended by most participants.

This mixed method study has given important insights into the Zest service, the experiences of service providers, service users, and stakeholders has increased the understanding of the need, referral patterns, and the various elements offered by the service as well as its impact on service users.





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