

Annual Impact Report
2024-25

ENTERPRISE FOR EVERY *Journey*

We believe entrepreneurial thinking belongs to everyone. It's not just about starting businesses, it's about building confidence, resilience, and real-world experience that can shape your studies, career, and future.



Bright Red
Triangle



A MESSAGE FROM OUR

*Head of
Enterprise*



This year has been an exciting journey for Bright Red Triangle as we continue to champion entrepreneurship for everyone, students, staff, and alumni alike. Our commitment goes beyond supporting new ventures; we're building skills, confidence, and opportunities that empower individuals to thrive in any career or sector.

One of the highlights has been launching our SDG5 Living Lab, a space dedicated to driving gender equality through innovation and collaboration. We're proud to be shaping an entrepreneurial ecosystem where diversity and inclusion aren't just ideals but the foundation for creativity and impact.

Our partnership with Queen Margaret University and Edinburgh College has strengthened our ability to deliver real-world opportunities for our community. Together, we're creating pathways for entrepreneurial thinking to flourish across disciplines, industries, and career journeys.

As we celebrate a year of growth, collaboration, and innovation, I want to thank everyone who has been part of the journey. The achievements highlighted in this report reflect the energy, ambition, and resilience of our community.



BRIGHT RED TRIANGLE



At Bright Red Triangle (BRT), we provide free enterprise support for life to a community of students, alumni, staff, and partners.

This year has been one of our most exciting yet, launching new initiatives, growing our partnerships, and celebrating global recognition. Our team is proud of the impact we've made together.

GET IN TOUCH



info@brightredtriangle.co.uk



brightredtriangle.co.uk



*Join our
community*

Our Mission

To cultivate innovative and entrepreneurial talent within the Edinburgh Napier University community by providing free, accessible, lifelong support.

Our Vision

To transform ideas into reality and foster a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Our Values

Responsible | Inclusive | Innovative | Ambitious

In line with our values of Responsibility, Inclusion, Innovation, and Ambition, we commit to upholding respect and integrity in everything we do. We aim to create an environment in which everyone connected to BRT feels confident, proud, and fully supported.

MEET OUR ENTERPRISE *team*

Our team is made up of experienced entrepreneurs who are passionate about helping others succeed. We bring a wealth of real-world knowledge, creativity, and expertise to our programmes and are here to guide you every step of the way.

We proudly support students, staff, alumni, and the wider community across Edinburgh Napier University, Queen Margaret University, and Edinburgh College. Whether you want to launch a venture, explore self-employment, or simply develop entrepreneurial skills to boost your career in any sector, we're here to help you thrive and reach your full potential.



Nick Fannin
Head of Enterprise



Emma Ives
Enterprise Manager



Wendy Wu
Enterprise Manager



Pete Mclean
Enterprise Manager



Kendra Byers
Business Engagement
& Communications



Liza Sutherland
Enterprise Manager



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Global recognition of our team

Our Edinburgh Napier University SDG5 Living Lab has earned global recognition, placing 3rd in the Female Entrepreneurship Empowerment Award at the ACEEU Global Triple E Awards 2025.

This honour celebrates universities driving gender equity and entrepreneurship, highlighting our work to support women and gender minority entrepreneurs.

We're also proud that Kendra Byers, our Business Engagement & Communications Manager, was a finalist for the Global Entrepreneurship Network Compass Award (Rookie category), recognising impactful contributions to entrepreneurship worldwide.

Over the past year, we've launched the SDG5 Living Lab, expanded leadership and business programmes, hosted the first Startup Huddle for women and gender minority founders in the GEN network, and represented BRT at the Global Entrepreneurship Congress in Indianapolis with 5,000+ delegates from 150+ countries.

Annual Impact Report 2024-25

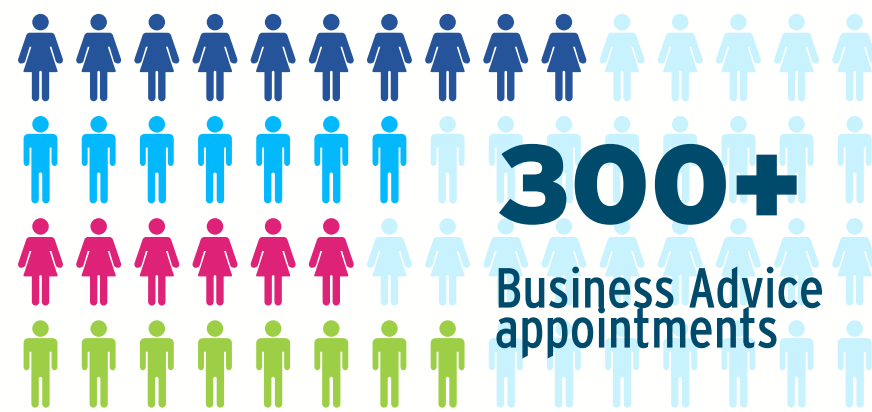
*some of this
years
milestones*



SUPPORT AT BRIGHT RED TRIANGLE

Spaces, Services, and Events

FREE EXPERT SUPPORT



Our dedicated enterprise managers offer free, unlimited advice to help you take the next step, whether that's refining a business idea, developing new skills, or overcoming challenges. This year alone, we've delivered over 300 individual support sessions, giving our community access to expert, personalised guidance that removes barriers to starting and growing a business.

“**Knowing I can always turn to BRT for advice has been invaluable.**”
– Marta, Alumni

FREE 24/7 STARTUP STUDIO

Our coworking space is completely free for our community, offering a potential saving of up to £6,500 per person each year compared to typical Edinburgh coworking spaces. That's money that can go straight back into growing ideas, not paying for office space.



110 users regularly use the Startup Studio



21 community events hosted at the Startup Studio



25 events hosted by BRT across the year



Your space to grow!

We are dedicated to making all of our spaces, events, support, and resources inclusive, welcoming, and accessible to everyone, including **LGBTQIA+ communities, ethnic minorities, disabled, and neurodiverse individuals.**



We're proud to partner with Dignity Boxes, an alumni-led social enterprise providing **freely donated toiletries to those in need.** Our studio hosts a Dignity Box where you can donate or collect essentials, supporting our community and tackling local deprivation.

OUR COMMUNITY



At Bright Red Triangle, our entrepreneurial community is made up of individuals from various backgrounds who contribute to the energy and innovation within the community. This year, we've supported participants at every stage of development, from early ideation to trading businesses.

Whether you're just starting out, building on your research, or advancing your business post-graduation, there's a place for everyone in our entrepreneurial ecosystem.

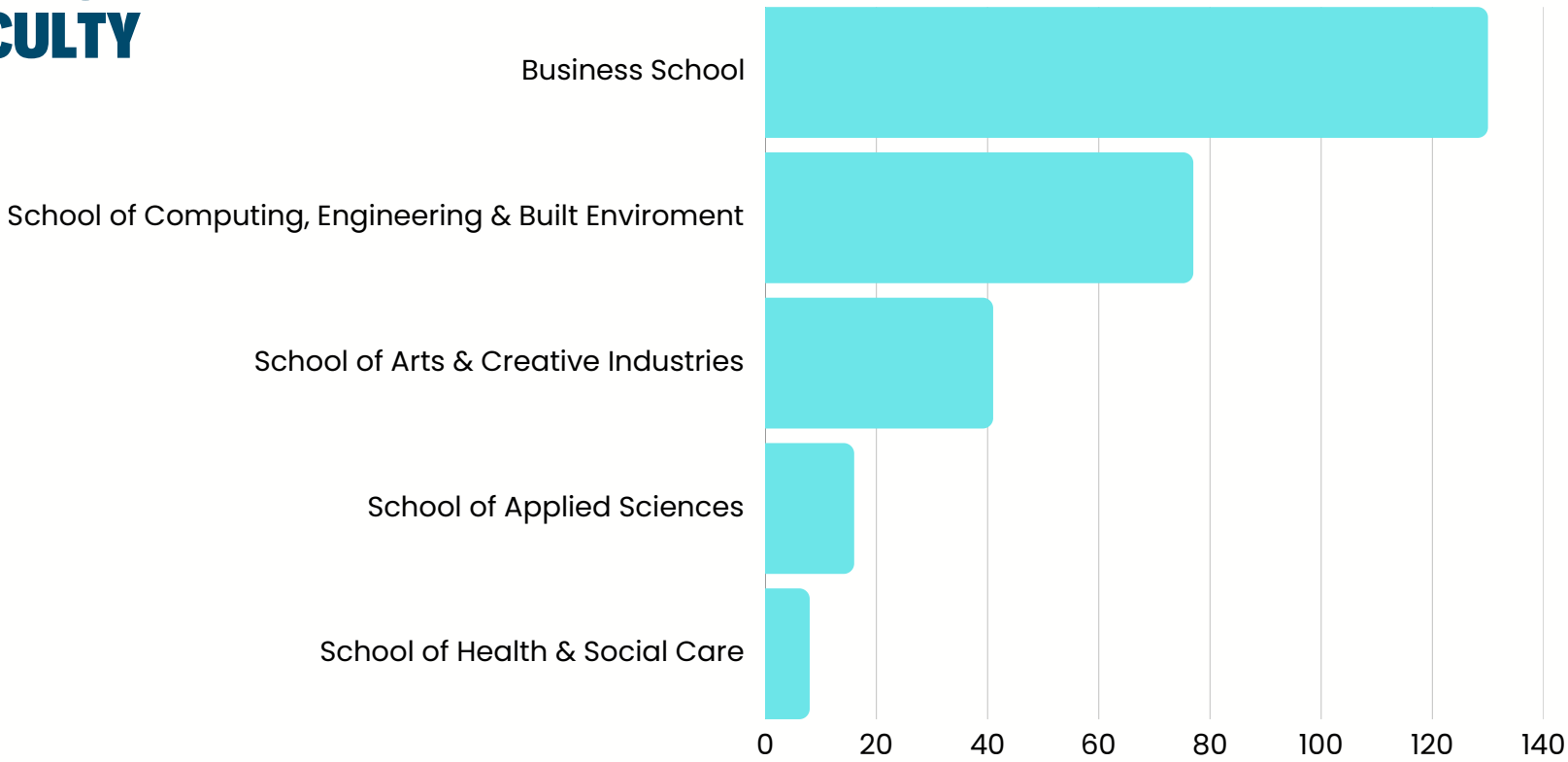
We have launched a new community platform with Startium, bringing our entire offer into one place to better support innovators and entrepreneurs.



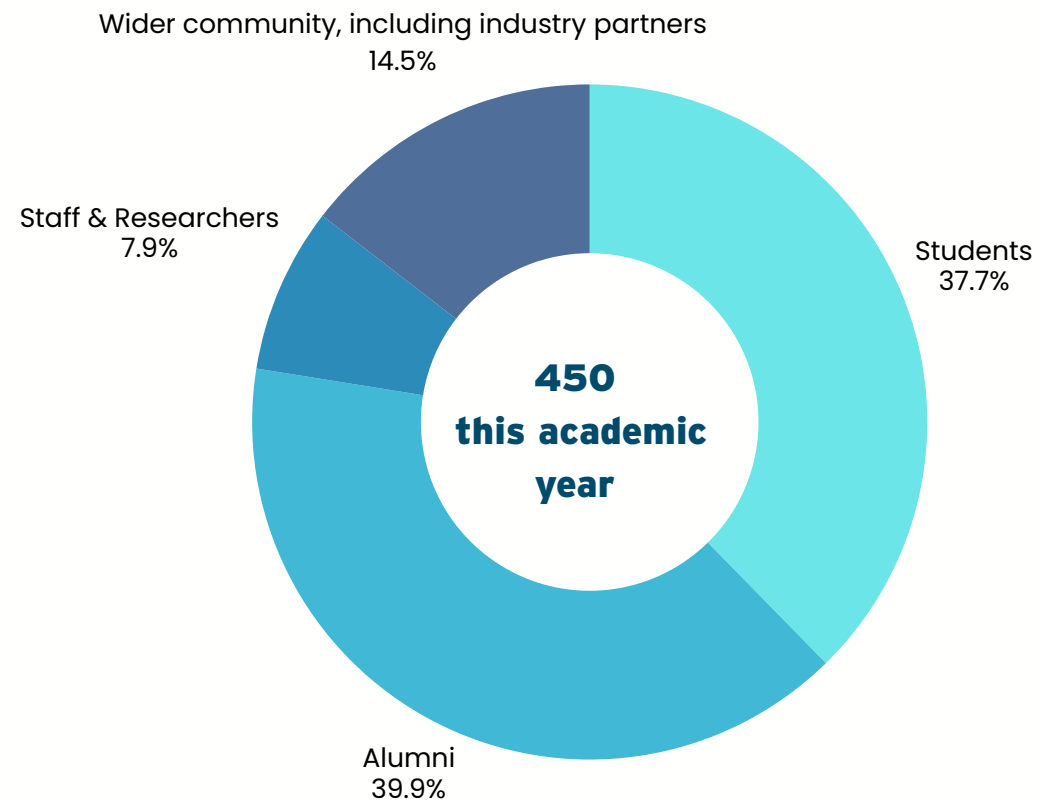
The platform enables us to expand our reach across **Queen Margaret University** and **Edinburgh College**, while improving **tracking, measurement, and communication** with our growing community.

Breakdown

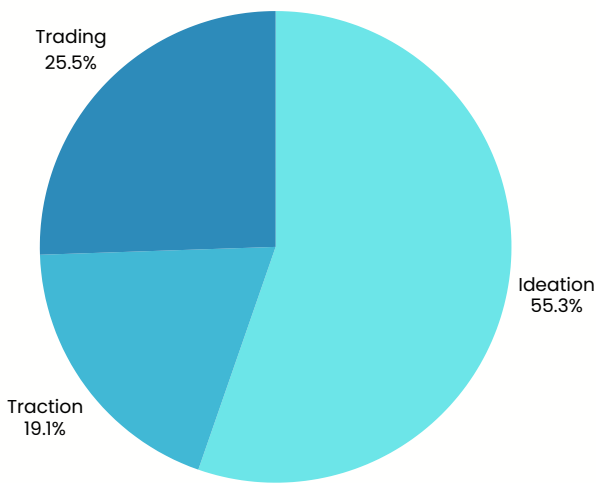
BY ENU FACULTY



TYPE OF ENGAGER



VENTURE STAGE



COLLABORATION

Spotlights

Discover how our partnerships are driving innovation, inclusion, and enterprise across Scotland and beyond. From launching the SDG5 Living Lab with Women's Enterprise Scotland to our partnerships with Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh College, and Start for Future, as well as working with South of Scotland Enterprise and the Mountain Biking Centre of Scotland, these collaborations are expanding opportunities, creating impact, and shaping the future of entrepreneurship together.



Read our partnership news



SDG5 LIVING LAB PARTNERSHIP

The SDG5 Living Lab at Edinburgh Napier University, launched in partnership with Women's Enterprise Scotland, is driving real change in gender equality and entrepreneurship. Through training, funding, and international collaboration, we're creating opportunities for women and gender minorities to lead, innovate, and thrive.

This year, our work was recognised globally, achieving 3rd place worldwide at the ACEEU Triple E Awards 2025 for Female Entrepreneurship Empowerment.



11% increase in women engaging with BRT

1st Startup Huddle in the world for women & gender minority founders

Discretionary Fund launched for gender equity funding support

“I will never forget this course, especially the patience and kindness everyone showed, particularly when I was speaking. I truly appreciate all the thoughtfulness and encouragement.”

— Participant of the Trailblazers Programme

Driving Change in Entrepreneurship

This year, we launched the first Startup Huddle for women and gender minority founders as part of the Global Entrepreneurship Network, bringing together entrepreneurs, mentors, and investors to share knowledge and build connections.

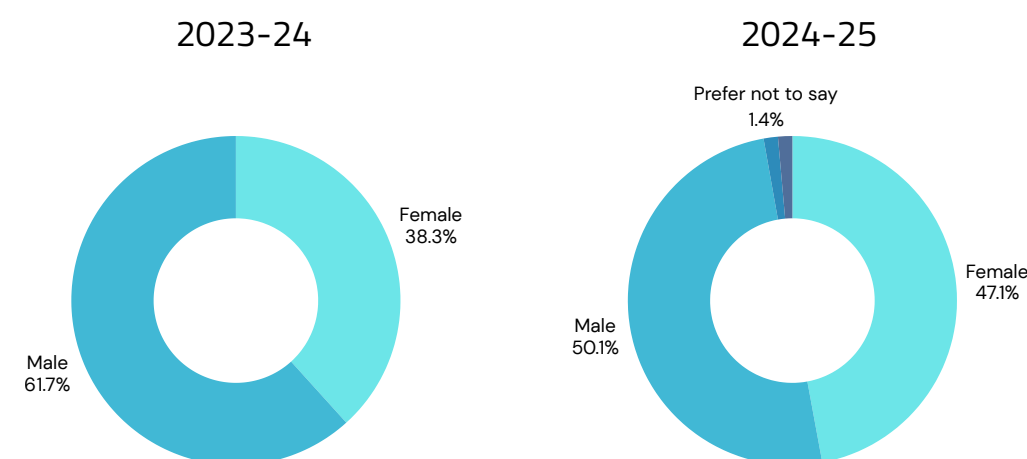
Investing in Leadership

The Women in Leadership programme and the new Trailblazers initiative are equipping participants with the skills, confidence, and networks to take the next step in their entrepreneurial journey.

Funding for Founders

Our new Discretionary Fund offers targeted financial support for women and non-binary founders, reducing barriers to innovation and growth.

Gender Breakdown



Learn more about our SDG5 Living Lab



EXPANDING ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT ACROSS INSTITUTIONS

COLLABORATION
Spotlights

At Bright Red Triangle, collaboration drives everything we do. This year, we joined forces with **Queen Margaret University** and **Edinburgh College** to create a shared entrepreneurial ecosystem spanning 60,000+ students and 8 campuses.

Together, we're delivering events, programmes, and opportunities that build confidence, skills, and real-world impact, while aligning with Scotland's National Innovation Strategy and the Entrepreneurial Campus Blueprint to position Southeast Scotland as a leader in enterprise and innovation.

First-of-its-kind collaboration in Scotland

Entrepreneurial Support

Bringing together enterprise expertise, creative leadership, and vocational training to deliver entrepreneurial opportunities for students and communities.

Regional Upskilling & Innovation

Driving innovation and tailored training to boost SMEs, public sector organisations, and regional economic growth.

Entrepreneurial Campus Blueprint Delivery

Embedding entrepreneurial skills and mindsets into teaching and learning across all campuses and disciplines.

Knowledge Exchange Concordat

Piloting a collaborative model for knowledge-sharing to strengthen Scotland's entrepreneurial culture and networks.

*Collective community of
over 60,000 students*

8 campuses → Connected

20+ workshops/events → Delivered

3 institutions → Partnering for Scotland's economic future



OUR START FOR FUTURE PARTNERSHIP

Bright Red Triangle is proud to be part of Start for Future (SFF), a global alliance of universities, startups, industry leaders, and public organisations driving systemic innovation across Europe and beyond.

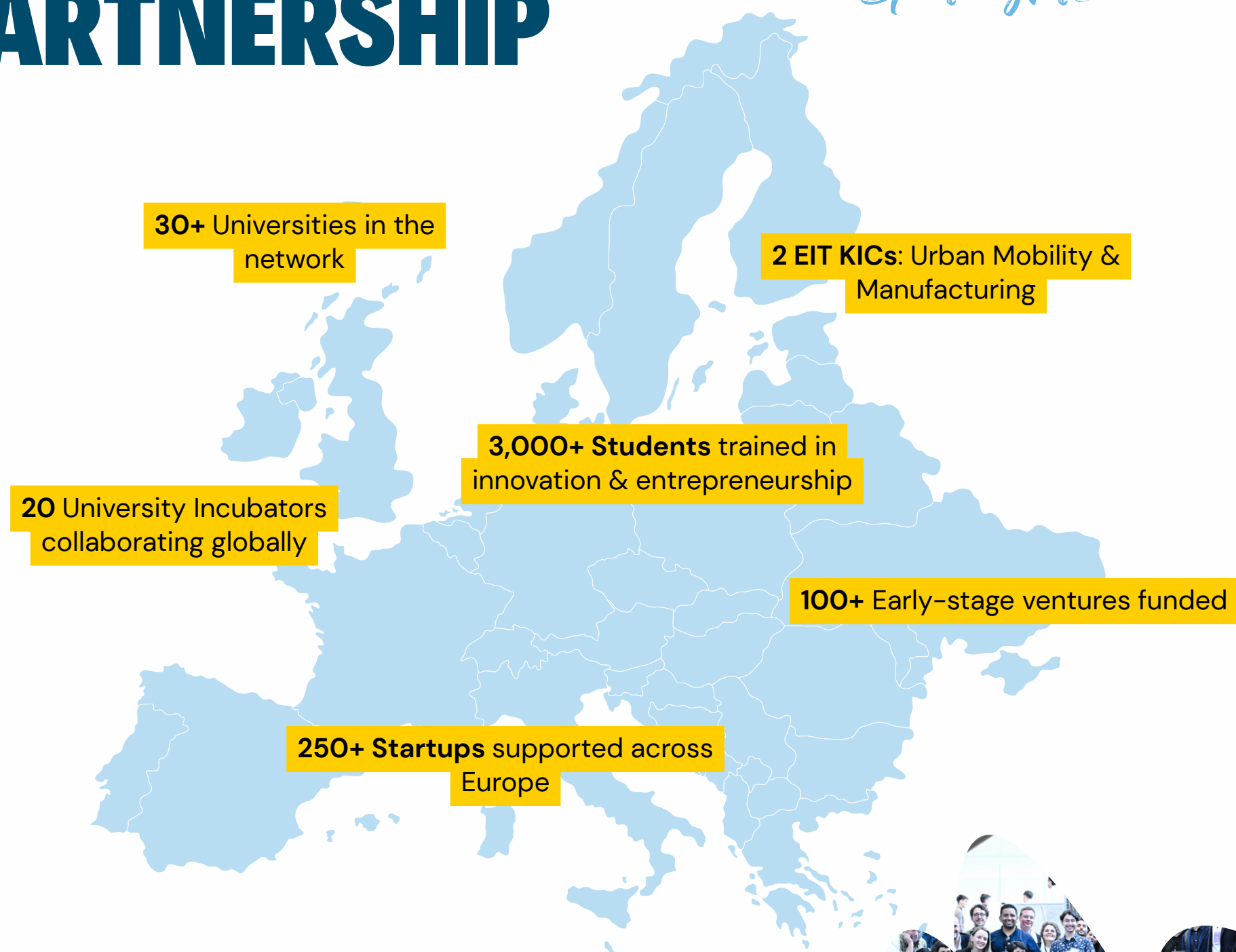
This partnership connects our students, staff, and alumni with international entrepreneurial opportunities, from training and mentoring to funding and venture building, accelerating the journey from ideas to real-world impact.

Since joining in 2019, Bright Red Triangle has:

- **Strengthened SFF programmes** across Europe
- Helped support **250+** startups regionally and internationally
- Joined the **SFF management team** to shape the future of cross-border innovation
- Provided **training and mentoring** for students and entrepreneurs worldwide

“We’re thrilled to have BRT on the SFF management team, where together, we drive our shared mission to accelerate the journey from invention to innovation, ensuring that no region is left behind.

— Pavlina Vujovic, Head of Internationalisation, Strasczeg Center for Entrepreneurship



Innovation Without Borders



MORE COLLABORATION HIGHLIGHTS



Academic Programme for Entrepreneurship

Through our partnership with the **Strascheg Centre for Entrepreneurship (SCE) in Munich**, we offer students hands-on, international entrepreneurship experiences that build enterprise skills and global networks.

Each year, **10** Edinburgh Napier students travel to Munich for the APE Bootcamp, joining **60+** students from Germany, Denmark, and Canada for an intensive week of design thinking and innovation challenges. In return, we welcome **30** SCE students to Edinburgh for 3-day innovation challenges, connecting them with our students, staff, and entrepreneurial community to co-create solutions aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

"I had a great time on the Bootcamp, the mentors brought a real mix of knowledge and I've kept in contact with other students from the programme. My biggest takeaway was to see value in your own insight and experiences and it only adds to the fruitfulness of the collaboration."

— Khaleel, APE Bootcamp Participant

Higher Business Live

In partnership with the Edinburgh Napier Business School and 20 secondary schools across Edinburgh, we deliver Higher Business Live, a one-day interactive event for **600+ Higher Business Management students**.

Hosted at Edinburgh Napier's Craiglockhart Campus, the event turns classroom learning into a real-world experience. Each year, we select a theme from the curriculum and bring in entrepreneurs from our community to share insights, set challenges, and mentor students as they develop solutions in teams.

Business School lecturers expand on key topics, and students present their ideas in a competition-style finale, gaining feedback from experts while building employability skills like teamwork, communication, and problem-solving.

Higher Business Live is a chance for students to collaborate across schools, meet entrepreneurs, and experience Edinburgh Napier University as a hub for innovation and future study opportunities.

600+ students gaining real-world business experience in one day

20 secondary schools across Edinburgh collaborating with Edinburgh Napier University

Prospective students



MORE COLLABORATION HIGHLIGHTS



The UK's First Cycling and Outdoor Business Incubator

Bright Red Triangle is proud to have partnered on the **UK's first dedicated Cycling and Outdoor Business Incubator, First Tracks**, providing expert guidance and sector-specific insights to aspiring entrepreneurs. The inaugural programme, based in the South of Scotland, supported **20** participants in developing new products and services, combining business mentoring with practical industry know-how.

"Joining First Tracks was a brilliant move for us. We started the course with a thousand ideas but no plan. Eight weeks later, we have focused our thinking to the point that we now have a clear plan to take us right through to launch. It has been a real turning point for our new venture."

— Ruth Sutherland of Lauder's agri-tourism business, Hillhouse.

The success of the first programme has paved the way for its **return in 2026**, continuing to support innovative entrepreneurs in the cycling and outdoor sectors.



Appin Entrepreneurship Award

Bright Red Triangle, in collaboration with Maggie Anderson, within the Business School Entrepreneurship Team, proudly supports the Appin Entrepreneurship Prize, funded by alumni and successful entrepreneurs Damien O'Looney and Bing Li. Launched in 2022, the prize celebrates and nurtures early-stage entrepreneurial ideas, providing funding, mentorship, and practical guidance to help students and graduates turn their concepts into reality.

Since its launch, the prize has supported **8 innovative ideas** with **£11,000 in funding**



"Pitching at this event was an incredible experience that really challenged me to consolidate my dreams into a clear, credible business plan. Being surrounded by such a passionate community of future entrepreneurs and hearing so many innovative ideas was amazing."

Winning the award means so much – not just the funding, but the validation that this idea can genuinely make a difference."

— WombWise founder and Appin Award winner Emily Youngs



ENTERPRISE

Spotlights

Discover the journeys of innovative minds from our community who are turning ideas into impact. From game-changing products to digital solutions, these case studies highlight the creativity, perseverance, and passion of our entrepreneurs. Get inspired by their milestones, challenges, and next steps and see how support, mentorship, and determination can bring ideas to life.



Read some of our Member Stories



SHANLEY MCLEAN – GETTA GRIP SHIN SHIELD

CrossFit athlete Shanley McLean designed Getta Grip Shin Shield to boost rope-climbing speed and safety. **Winner of the £2,000 Appin Entrepreneurship Award**, Shanley has turned her prototype into a market-ready product, launched a website, and showcased it at major fitness events.

With BRT's support, Shanley is now expanding her brand, partnering with No Rep for a T-shirt collaboration, and preparing to launch Grip Wax to help athletes improve their grip.



Message from Shanley:

"Keep pushing forward, even when things get difficult. Even when things seem tough, remember that others believe in you and your idea – that belief can be a huge motivator. Embrace the support you receive, whether through competitions, mentorship, or networks like BRT. It's invaluable in helping you stay focused and continue moving forward with your business."



Read more of Shanley's Story



"I gained the belief I needed in myself and my business, which pushed me to keep going and grow my idea."

MICHAEL IFE – FOUNDER OF MINDWELL

Michael Ife created MindWell, a mental health app designed to provide personalised support for students, professionals, and individuals in need. **Awarded a £500 Appin Entrepreneurship Grant**, Michael has developed early prototypes, wireframes, and started coding the app. MindWell was also **shortlisted for the Santander X UK Awards 2024**, showing the app's promise in addressing mental health gaps.

Michael is now focused on user testing, working with mental health professionals, and building partnerships to scale the app globally.



Message from Michael:

"Keep your vision clear, and don't be afraid to seek support from mentors or networks. BRT helped me with practical advice and encouragement at every stage, and that made all the difference in getting MindWell to where it is today."



Read more of Michael's Story



"The mentorship and funding I received kept me motivated and on track."

ACCESSIBLE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



£28,200

funding allocated to
support the ventures
of ENU student, staff
and alumni

*Supporting ideas, innovation,
and enterprise across our
community.*

At Bright Red Triangle, we're dedicated to empowering our community through accessible funding opportunities that help turn ideas into reality.

This year, we supported entrepreneurs through pitching competitions, innovation challenges, and the launch of a discretionary fund designed to make funding more flexible and inclusive.

- Pitching Competitions: We awarded £3,600 in total, helping students, staff, and alumni bring their ideas to life through our £500 pitch prizes.
- Innovation Challenges: Winning teams received £2,700 to develop creative solutions tackling real-world challenges.

- Discretionary Fund: With £16,900 allocated, this new fund will provide tailored support for founders, with a focus on women and non-binary entrepreneurs through our SDG5 Living Lab.

Together, these opportunities give our community not only funding but also the mentoring and confidence needed to take the next step in their entrepreneurial journey.

Note: These funding opportunities are made possible through partnerships with Santander Universities, Converge, Appin, and the Scottish Government – all supporting our mission to help students, staff, and alumni turn ideas into impact.

£3600

Discretionary Fund (SDG5 Living Lab)

£16,900

Pitch Competitions (Appin & Bright Red Sparks)

£2700

Student Innovation Challenges

£5000

Converge Microfinance Fund, supported by the Scottish Government

WORKING WITH COLLEAGUES ACROSS ENU



At Bright Red Triangle, we're proud to work alongside colleagues across Edinburgh Napier University who bring creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurial thinking into their teaching, research, and professional practice.

We know there's already so much enterprising work happening across the university, and we want to support, celebrate, and amplify those efforts showcasing Napier as a truly enterprising institution.

Whether it's **bouncing around ideas, guest speaking in classes, supporting student projects, or co-creating initiatives, we're here to help turn ideas into opportunities.** Our team is always happy to collaborate, connect, and explore how entrepreneurship can add value to your work and to the student experience.

Scan the QR codes to find out how to engage with BRT and access our Share-It kit for quick, easy ways to promote the service.



Let's talk – BRT Engagement form



Promote BRT with our share it kits

“

We've collaborated to embed practical entrepreneurship in academia, from developing start-up case studies to supporting student ventures through the 'Start for Future' programme. Their collaborative approach has been key in bridging academic learning with real-world opportunities, enriching students' experiences beyond the classroom.

Dr. Chris Cramphorn
Associate Professor, Entrepreneurship
The Business School

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“

BRT is the go-to resource for students looking to start a business, develop a side hustle, or freelance. While I guide students on employability and navigating the job market, I always direct them to BRT for expert advice on business planning, pricing, and marketing. Their support is invaluable for every ENU student exploring entrepreneurship.

Louisa Henderson
Career Development Consultant
Student Futures

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“

This partnership has been vital in engaging our entrepreneurial alumni network. Through their events and initiatives, we've not only discovered and connected with talented alumni but also inspired them to give back as speakers, article contributors, and marketing campaign participants. Their work has created a thriving cycle of support between current students and alumni.

Ashleigh Thow
Alumni Relations Manager
Marketing and External Relations

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They are a pleasure to work with, offering invaluable expertise, insights, and support while staying deeply connected within the start-up sector both locally and globally. Their collaborations, including with Women's Enterprise Scotland and the SDG5 Living Lab, have been instrumental in inspiring and empowering more women to pursue entrepreneurship.

Aoife O'Sullivan
Business Engagement & Communications
Research, Innovation and Enterprise

”

MEET OUR ENTREPRENEURS IN RESIDENCE

Our Entrepreneurs in Residence (EIRs) play a pivotal role in driving BRT’s mission to foster entrepreneurship.

These accomplished innovators bring real-world experience, insights, and mentorship to our community, helping students, alumni, and staff turn ideas into thriving ventures.



Lynne Cadenhead
Chair of Women’s Enterprise
Scotland and Entrepreneur in
Residence



Nanik Ramchandani
CEO of Lasting Asset and Entrepreneur in
Residence, School of Computing, Engineering, and
Built Environment



Dr Leonardo Binetti
CTO & Co-Founder at AraBat and
BRT Entrepreneur in Residence



Mary Jane Brouwers
Director at Mint Ventures and
Royal Society Entrepreneur in Residence



Find out more about our EiR’s



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As Royal Society Entrepreneur in Residence, I’ve had the privilege of encouraging women across ENU to become ‘entre-curious.’ It’s been inspiring to see their confidence grow through tailored support.

Together, we’re creating a safe space to demystify commercialisation, and I’m excited to see the innovative companies our ambitious women entrepreneurs will build.

Lynne Cadenhead

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“

BRT is the most important resource in the ENU ecosystem, offering the priceless opportunity to solve problems and think outside the box.

With two-thirds of Gen Z preferring to work for themselves, BRT’s team of experts helps individuals pursue their ambitions and learn through experience.

Nanik Ramchandani

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“

As an alumna and former staff member, it’s especially meaningful to contribute to the entrepreneurial journeys of students, graduates, and staff from ENU, Queen Margaret University and Edinburgh College.

This role is a fantastic opportunity to inspire and guide emerging entrepreneurs as they shape innovative, sustainable ventures that make a meaningful impact.

Dr Leonardo Binetti

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“

I am delighted to take on this position and support the Investing for Impact Hub.

Bringing together investors, academics and entrepreneurs to drive impactful change is at the heart of what I do, and I look forward to collaborating with the University to help develop projects that are investment ready and aligned with sustainability goals.

Mary Jane Brouwers

”

WHAT'S ON

Bringing our community together



1500+ Freelancers trained

Freelance Academy

A **3-hour crash course** to launch, grow, and scale your freelance career.



Trailblazers

A **6-week program** for women and gender minorities to boost entrepreneurial skills, confidence, and build a supportive network



Amplify

Supporting women in SACI by fostering entrepreneurial thinking, providing opportunities to learn from **inspiring industry professionals**, and encouraging **networking and collaboration**.



Social Innovation Challenges

We run multiple Social Innovation Challenges throughout the year, where **students work with local community partners** to create solutions addressing sustainability and UN SDG goals, turning ideas into **real-world impact**.



Startup Huddle

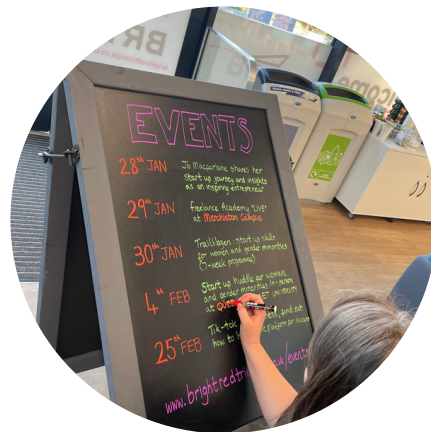
A supportive community where entrepreneurs share challenges, swap advice, and build connections.



36+ ideas pitched!

Bright Red Sparks

Watch Napier **staff, students, and alumni** pitch their ideas for the chance to **win £500**. Plus, hear an exclusive interview with a **Napier alumni** about their enterprising career.



ADHD & Enterprise

Working with ADHD experts Procrastination Station CIC we bring you a **three-part training programme** combining **ADHD education** alongside **business start-up support**.

Plus more...



Looking forward
**TO MAKING EVEN
MORE OF AN
IMPACT NEXT YEAR**

Edinburgh Napier
UNIVERSITY



Bright Red
Triangle

A big thank you
**TO ALL OUR PARTNERS &
OUR COMMUNITY**