

# Student start-ups from North East universities create nearly 2,000 jobs

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Student and graduate start-ups from the North East's four main universities are creating hundreds of jobs and making a major contribution to the region's economic recovery, new figures suggest.

New data from the Higher Education Business and Community Interaction (HE-BCI) Survey by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) found that [Newcastle, Northumbria, Durham and Sunderland universities](#) have produced more than 450 active start-ups, including close to 100 new businesses across 2019 and 2020.

The companies started by students and graduates have generated £188.7m in turnover, almost £36m in external investment and 1,935 full-time equivalent jobs. More than three-quarters (79%) of the start-up firms remain based in the North East.

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High profile businesses founded by North East graduates include the award-winning Jam Jar Cinema in Whitley Bay, led by Newcastle University graduate Dan Ellis, and green debit card company Tred, started by former Durham students Peter

Kirby and William Smith.

The new figures showed that Newcastle in particular was one of the highest ranked universities in the UK for student start-ups, though the list was led by some distance by Oxford and Cambridge universities, plus Imperial College in London.

Prof Chris Day, vice-chancellor and president of Newcastle University, said: "We are incredibly proud of the entrepreneurial Newcastle University students and graduates who are driving change and making a difference to the economy regionally, nationally and across the globe when it is most needed.

"Our Start Up team continue to coach and further a diverse portfolio of business founders, social entrepreneurs and independent professionals who are launching growth and scale ventures and creating skilled jobs for themselves and others. It's our role to encourage them to strive for impact, creativity and excellence within their sectors and fields, despite the challenging landscape for business, as well as to celebrate their resilience, adaptability and success."

Prof Andrew Wathey, vice-chancellor and chief executive of Northumbria University, said: "Northumbria has built a strong record in student and graduate enterprise over many years, driven both by our entrepreneurial and business support services, and now increasingly through greater capacity in world-leading research that has impact on key regional growth sectors such as the digital economy, engineering, renewable energy, design, social enterprise and culture.

"These areas are all providing exciting start-up opportunities and we will continue to invest in our enterprising graduates and in research to ensure the North-East economy has a strong and sustainable future."

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Prof Jon Timmis, deputy vice-chancellor (commercial) at the University of Sunderland, said: "It is fantastic to see our students developing new businesses that create such impact and

contribute so much to our region. Supporting our students to be entrepreneurial is of great importance to us as a university and is integral to our civic role within the city of Sunderland and wider region.”

Antony Long, acting vice-chancellor and warden of Durham University, said: “It is important for us to create ways in which our students can use their learning and develop skills with real-world applications. Our Careers & Enterprise Centre bespoke support at all stages of business ideas, supporting to the world-changing entrepreneurial ventures of our alumni in the North East and all over the world.”

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