



Nottingham Trent
University

Graduate Enterprise Programme

2025 – 2026

Information for applicants

Outline



The Graduate Enterprise Programme (GEP) does exactly what it says on the tin!

It's a dedicated programme of support for NTU graduates who are in the early stages of starting a business and need some help.

Based at the [Dryden Enterprise Centre](#) on NTU's city campus, the programme consists of a unique package of support including workshops, events and mentoring to help you start and develop your business.

The programme is delivered by the NTU Enterprise team and runs from 23 September 2025 – 31 July 2026. As part of the programme, you'll receive a free flexi membership of the Dryden Enterprise Centre (worth up to £600) plus access to a range of other opportunities from across NTU and wider, including support from industry experts and partner organisations.

On the programme you'll get to take part in some exciting initiatives such as a strategic consultancy project with Nottingham Business School. You'll also have the chance to apply for grant funding from Santander Universities UK. You'll be able to pick and choose what opportunities are relevant to you.

Who is it for?

- Any NTU graduate from any discipline who is embarking on a start-up business journey (this can also include freelancing).

- If you are an international NTU graduate you are eligible to apply if you have secured a Graduate Visa or other type of visa which allows you to stay in the UK (we ask for evidence of this before the programme starts).
- You consider yourself to be in the start-up phase of business and have commenced some activity (such as research) to assess viability of your idea.
- We expect everyone to attend in person, so if you're a graduate based a long distance from Nottingham and can't travel to the DEC for weekly sessions, then unfortunately this programme is not for you.
- It's important to emphasise that the programme focuses on start-up and is not for businesses who are well established and thinking about growth (if you're interested in growth support, talk to us about what else we can offer).
- If you've already completed our NTU Start Up programme, you can still take part in the Graduate Enterprise Programme, even though you will have done some of these workshops before. We will discuss which sessions you should attend before the programme starts. All the workshops from January 2026 will be new to you.

What are the aims of Graduate Enterprise Programme?

There is one aim – to help you get your business off the ground. We will give you the place to work, the tools to plan and access to our enterprising community.

The programme will provide you with the key tools to help you validate and refine your business concept and model. As a graduate entrepreneur you will be supported by our team of Enterprise Advisors and expert mentors who will help you to progress to the next stage.

Programme structure

The GEP starts on Tuesday 23 September. This is a chance to meet your graduate peers and Enterprise Advisors and understand more about the programme.

The GEP cohort will join a wider group of businesses consisting of student entrepreneurs from the Year in Enterprise placement programme and others doing NTU Start Up. Please see the timetable for further details.

The GEP will be fast paced and will cover a range of topics that are relevant to starting a business. What you learn will validate your idea – or challenge it. Be prepared to see things from a different perspective or through a different lens.

The programme is very practical, and you'll be given tools to take away and work on, related to your own goals. The resources and materials can be adapted according to your needs.

All GEP information and resources will be stored on a dedicated Microsoft SharePoint site.

Am I eligible?

To be eligible for the programme you must be an NTU graduate who is in the start-up phase of business and needs help with the basics. It doesn't matter if you are registered, unregistered, already trading or not trading. The content of the programme is designed to focus on early-stage business planning, testing and validating a business concept.

International graduates

The programme is also open to international graduates of NTU who have secured either a Graduate Visa or other visa which allows you to stay in the UK beyond your studies – further information for International Entrepreneurs can be found [here](#).

Please note: your visa status must be confirmed before commencing the programme in September.

Which industries are supported?

We welcome applications from any business industry or sector except for following categories of business: politically or religiously motivated, stocks and shares, armaments and weaponry, pornography, gambling.

Your commitment

We expect our graduate entrepreneurs to be motivated to work hard with a positive mindset about the journey ahead. We totally understand that people have other commitments (e.g. having a job at the same time) – this is the reality for most people when starting a business. However, our expectation is that you dedicate (at least) every Tuesday to the GEP – we expect you to be at the DEC on these days. We hope you will make the most of the DEC and use the space at other times too. Being at our centre brings a whole host of benefits and you will soon start to feel part of the community here. Flexible membership options mean we can support you beyond the programme. We want you to stay and grow your business with us!

Graduate Enterprise Programme – outline timetable

The GEP commences on Tuesday 23 September. This schedule is a guide, and specific session details may change.

Activity	Date/time	Details
01: Welcome to the programme	Tuesday 23 September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome to the Dryden Enterprise Centre.• Outline of the programme.• Get to know your peers and facilitators.• Introducing your business idea.• Expectations of the programme.• Complete relevant paperwork.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tour of the DEC.
02: Business Modelling Using the BMC	Tuesday 30 September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing the Business Model Canvas (BMC) strategic entrepreneurial tool. • The BMC will help you devise and create a realistic model for your start-up business.
03: Business Model Validation	Tuesday 7 October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to test and validate your business model using the BMC. • Feasibility, Desirability and Viability. • Testing assumptions and measuring impact. • Lean Start Up Methodology • Minimum Viable Product
04: Marketing basics for your start-up business	Tuesday 14 October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing you with a solid understanding of the basics of marketing (and a bit about branding) for start-ups. • Learn how to make informed decisions when planning your marketing strategy.
05: Business Essentials – registration, tax and legals	Tuesday 21 October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to navigate the legal requirements of starting a business. • Learn all about business registration and what's the right route for you.
06: Using LinkedIn for Business Afternoon session: + Introduction to networking + Pricing Strategy	Tuesday 28 October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how to make the most of LinkedIn as a start-up business. Hear some top tips from a LinkedIn expert! • Tips on networking and making useful contacts. • What's involved in pricing your products and services? This quick intro to pricing will help you.
07: Communicating your business to the world	Tuesday 4 November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to talk confidently and effectively about your business. • Develop and practice an elevator pitch. • Tips on successful networking
08: Funding for your start up. Afternoon session: Introduction to Mentoring	Tuesday 11 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring finance and funding options for start-ups. • The value of coaching and mentoring in enterprise and entrepreneurship • Preparation for Meet the Mentors event on 25 November.
09: Creating content for your start up	Tuesday 18 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you go about creating exciting, far-reaching and authentic content?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to reach your desired audience and create impact with your content. • Explores different types of content.
10: Meet the Mentors	Tuesday 25 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with our external mentors for some quick-fire, one-to-one speed mentoring.
11: Reflection session: what's next for your business?	Tuesday 2 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step back and review your progress. What's changed for you since you started the programme? • How do you get to the next stage? - launching, establishing and growing your business. • Set specific goals and develop a plan for next steps. • What other support is available from NTU and the DEC?
12: One-to-one mentoring	Tuesday 9 December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to book a one-to-one session with Jane Brown to discuss goals and actions on an individual basis.

Spring/Summer Sessions

From January – July 2026 there will be follow-on workshops, one-to-one mentoring, peer group sessions and networking events. Topics such as AI in business, sustainability, data analytics and intellectual property will be covered. There will also be a series of 'roundtable' events led by industry experts.

A full timetable will be shared with you nearer the time. Most workshops will be on a Tuesday, but sessions may take place on other days of the week too.

Please note: You must attend every Tuesday (as a minimum) for the entire programme (12 days in total).

There are three stages in the application process;

1. Submission of your application (by the deadline)
2. Review of your application followed by offer of Interview (or notification that you have been unsuccessful)
3. After interview. Offer of place on the programme (or notification that you have been unsuccessful)

How to apply International Graduates

Submit your application form by the closing date **Monday 28 July**

You must submit your application form by this final deadline to be considered for the programme.

Application form for International Graduates

After the closing date we will review your application to check eligibility and email you to offer an interview (or confirm that you have been unsuccessful).

Interviews for International Graduates take place on **Monday 4 August**

The interview is informal – you do not need to prepare anything. We are keen to meet you and understand more about you and your business. The interview can be online. If you are unable to attend that day, please let us know as soon as you can.

Confirmation of offer or rejection – **after your interview**

We will follow-up after the interview with a successful offer of a place on the GEP or to inform you that you have not been successful.

How to apply UK Graduates

Submit your application form by the closing date **Monday 28 July**

You must submit your application form by this final deadline to be considered for the programme.

Application form for UK Graduates

We will review your application (usually within 6 weeks) and invite you to interview (or confirm that you have been unsuccessful).

The first interview date for UK Graduates is on **Tuesday 20 May**

The interview is informal – you do not need to prepare anything. We are keen to meet you and understand more about you and your business. The interview can be online or in person. If you are unable to attend that day, please let us know as soon as you can.

Confirmation of offer or rejection – **after your interview**

We will follow-up after the interview with a successful offer of a place on the GEP or to inform you that you have not been successful.

Further information

If you have any queries about the Graduate Enterprise Programme, please contact Enterprise@ntu.ac.uk

[NTU Student Enterprise on Instagram](#)

[NTU Enterprise](#)

[Dryden Enterprise Centre](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

We look forward to receiving your application!