



UNIVERSITY OF THE
WEST of SCOTLAND
UWS

Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Fund Strategy

June 2025



Section A: Overview

1. Institutional Context

The University of the West of Scotland (UWS) operates across four campuses in the South and West of Scotland and an additional campus in London. Learning, teaching, and research are delivered through four schools: Business and Creative Industries; Computing, Engineering, and Physical Sciences; Education and Social Sciences; and Health and Life Sciences. The University emphasises real-world impact, from its inclusive learning and assessment approaches to co-creating solutions for innovation and improvement with local communities

In line with the ambitions of KEIF, our recently published Strategy 2030 prioritises: student success which will be underpinned by KEIF through our entrepreneurial support programmes such as Demola, Research and Innovation which will use programmes such as KTP to drive industry impacts, global impact which will see us partner with our places and communities with the help of KEIF funding to support our contribution to regional and international places.

The University will continue to hold the majority of KEIF funding centrally, prioritising investment locally in line with our priority KEIF ambitions and through the Schools to support the University groups, centres and institutes. In line with the UWS Strategy 2030 ambitions to tackle the UN Sustainable Development Goals and significantly increasing the scale of our KE&I activity, KEIF funding will continue to be combined with earmarked internal funding as well as other external funding from bodies such as InnovateUK and used to grow capacity through the funding of student internships, academic leadership programmes and to support our institutional commitment to nurture KE&I talent. Recognising the University's strengths in delivering innovation in hard-to-reach places, a range of investment vehicles to develop distinctive and impactful innovation will be deployed across the University in line with the following strategic objectives:

- Promoting positive innovation culture through the launch of an Innovation Leadership Programme
- Recruiting and maintaining talent such as growing our Women in Leadership series
- Capacity building and strategic investments such as ongoing investment in our spin out companies
- Differentiation

2. Overview of Strategic Ambitions

The University of the West of Scotland's (UWS) emerging *Strategy 2030* emphasises its role as a place-making institution that makes meaningful contributions - economically, culturally, socially, and intellectually - within its regions and internationally. Over the next five years, the Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Fund (KEIF) strategy will serve as a critical component of this mission, supporting UWS's anchor institution role.

Our KIEF strategy includes a number of areas of focus: supporting our existing student start-up companies and staff spin-out companies and creating more of them; growing our extensive industry engagement by extending our successes in Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD); as well extending our Regional/Strategic Partnerships.

The additionality of KEIF at UWS will stretch across the main areas of University activity including addressing some of the key skills needs of our local and national economy most notably through Graduate Apprenticeships, research impact with IP commercialisation and KTPs, and international impact through KTP and international CPD. Our strategy is to grow awareness and participation in these priority areas of the KEIF ambition so that it makes an increasingly valuable contribution to our regional and national economies.

This investment is helping UWS achieve some distinctive impact which it otherwise would not be able to afford. An example of this is our introduction of, and continued commitment to, the Demola programme in the Glasgow City region - the cost of which accounts for over 30% of our total outcome grant and without which we could not make such an investment. Its emerging role in both shaping entrepreneurial mindsets and creating ideas which can be funnelled into spin-out and start-up activity is invaluable. Another example of additionality is in the area of increasing industry engagement through Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) where the KEIF funding provides UWS with the capacity to host events, run targeted marketing campaigns and invest in building valuable, long-term industry relationships where our partners engage with us multiple times and in different ways. The platform grant provides us with the matched capacity without which we would not be able to sustain and build this for the future.

KEIF funding also contributes to the partnership work we undertake with key regional stakeholders including Chambers of Commerce, Local Authorities, industry bodies etc.

3. Alignment to Scottish Government Priorities

UWS will continue to align its KEIF strategy with the Scottish Government's *National Strategy for Economic Transformation* (NSET) and *Scotland's National Innovation Strategy*, most notably in the areas of entrepreneurial learning, world-class entrepreneurial infrastructure, talent retention and sector-wide entrepreneurial mindset.

NSET Project 1: Embed First Rate Entrepreneurial Learning Across the Education and Skills Systems

- Demola – promoting project-based entrepreneurial learning; providing inspirational role models and mentors to young people
- We will further develop our ASPIRE programme which is designed to embed entrepreneurship, creative thinking and other meta-skills into the curriculum. We will also expand our mentoring and advisory capacity using our KEIF funding to support students and staff (especially underrepresented groups) engage with industry and develop entrepreneurial initiatives

NSET Project 2: Create a World Class Entrepreneurial Infrastructure of Institutions and Programmes Providing a High Intensity Pathway for High Growth Companies

- UWS notes involvement in/agreements with private sector accelerators (Filament STAC, Techscaler, Elevator) and so will develop and align private sector incubators and help build Scotland's international reputation as a start-up nation

NSET Project 3: Attract and Retain the Very Best Entrepreneurial Talent from at Home and Abroad

- To ensure talent stays in Scotland, UWS will attract entrepreneurial students from around the world and provide post-education pathways that help retain their expertise in our places

NSET Project 4: Build an Entrepreneurial Mindset in Every Sector of our Economy

- UWS provides multiple interventions to promote entrepreneurialism amongst staff and researchers. We will connect our new academic promotions criteria to our REF Environment, People, and Culture to ensure staff at every level are exposed to entrepreneurial training as part of ongoing professional development.

UWS proactively supports the Government's *vision for Scotland to be one of the most innovative small nations in the world*, as outlined in Scotland's National Innovation Strategy.

UWS drives innovation in our SMEs by leveraging funding and delivering R&D projects, in particular through KTP, and we develop skilled workforce for future industries through CPD offerings, and work-place learning and GA programmes.

UWS strengths lie in **all** of the Innovation Strategy's four priority Innovation Cluster themes: *Energy Transition, Health & Life Sciences, Data & Digital Technologies, and Advanced Manufacturing*. UWS's industry-centred approach proactively enables *Scotland's businesses to grow and diversify through innovation*.

Through UWS involvement with the **Research Commercialisation Directors' Group**, we will maintain active dialogue with Government and sector colleagues as the proposed Research Commercialisation Framework is developed. Collectively, we will influence policy and strategic funding to promote innovation and enterprise in our own institutions, regionally, and nationally, in line with Innovation Strategy's focus on *innovation-led entrepreneurship and commercialisation*.

Section B: Platform Grant and Capacity

4. Platform Grant

UWS will match-fund the Platform Grant through investments in full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, enhancing capacity in key areas such as KTPs, enterprise development, and skills training. This investment will:

- Strengthen entrepreneurial programmes like the Demola initiative
- Expand skills training for industry through Graduate Apprenticeships and CPD
- Increase UWS's contributions to local economies across its five campus regions

To support the University's innovation and KE ambitions to advance knowledge and develop solutions to global challenges, for the benefit of society and economic development, KEIF funding will be deployed through shared professional services and strategic vehicles including:

- Niche equipment/facilities
- Cross-institutional support for people development with respect to KE and Innovation
- Activities designed to enhance the UWS entrepreneurial culture and environment
- Bid writing support for KE and Innovation projects including KTP, CPD and Spin-outs

5. Overall Capacity for KE&I

UWS employs 19 full-time professional services staff dedicated to KE&I and estimates that over 50% of its academic staff engage in research-related activities including KE&I. The institution plans to grow this number through targeted development programmes for early-career researchers and increased participation in the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

Section C: Metrics and Outcomes

6. KE Metric Activity

The University of the West of Scotland (UWS) prioritises its Knowledge Exchange & Innovation (KE&I) activities to align with the Scottish Government's strategic priorities for economic growth and innovation. The Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) Knowledge Exchange & Innovation Fund (KEIF) provides essential resources to enhance UWS's capabilities across multiple KE metrics, with a focus on maximising societal and economic impact.

UWS has forecasted activities aligned with SFC's KE metrics, particularly targeting high-impact areas such as outreach – including Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP), enterprise schemes, continuing professional development (CPD), and research. These activities align with the National Strategy for Economic Transformation and Scotland's National Innovation Strategy by aiming to build stronger connections with industry, enhance workforce skills, and drive entrepreneurial growth within our communities and beyond. For instance, taking a joined-up approach across our areas of focus, will enable UWS to deliver scalable and sustainable impact while fostering long-term partnerships with industry.

The KEIF will be leveraged to advance UWS's capacity to support entrepreneurial endeavours and innovation-driven projects. A significant portion of KEIF funding will be allocated towards enterprise schemes, which, based on the forecast data of growth rates of participation over the last 4 years would grow our numbers from 250 per annum to over 1000, 1% of whom may start up a business. This exponential rise in participation in our entrepreneurial programmes is projected to contribute meaningfully to Scotland's economic goals.

Our experience is that funded CPD schemes help drive industry participation in wider skills development. As these funding mechanisms decline (e.g. Loss of the Upskilling Fund) we will need to invest (i.e. KEIF) in CPD to maintain a smaller level of income, but one that is sufficiently meaningful to onboard our business partners into a wider skills engagement (e.g. Graduate Apprenticeships). UWS aims to address workforce skill gaps, particularly in high-demand sectors, ensuring a future-proofed workforce and continuous pipeline of trained, knowledgeable professionals who can contribute to their local economy – supporting prosperity and industry performance and productivity. This is driven by early signs of demand for new programmes such as Town Planning and Social Work for Local Authorities and private providers.

UWS's focus on outreach – specifically, KTP, will be critical to achieving both financial sustainability and knowledge transfer objectives. Our plan is to grow the portfolio back to an annual level of 25-30 projects which will create a revenue level of at least £2m per annum. This area is not only revenue-generating but also drives innovation adoption across industries, fulfilling SFC's priority to bridge academic research with real-world applications.

KEIF support is instrumental in allowing UWS to establish sustainable frameworks for KE&I activities. The fund will enhance UWS's capacity by supporting staff roles dedicated to KE&I, particularly in academic and leadership positions that focus on translating research and expertise into commercial and community-centred

outcomes. Furthermore, KEIF will enable UWS to implement and scale initiatives aimed at graduate start-ups and University spin-outs, ensuring survival rates by providing these ventures with access to mentorship, funding, and market access resources.

7. Graduate Start-ups and Spin-outs

UWS will use KEIF funding to grow our entrepreneurial ecosystem through initiatives like The Hive, a hub for student and graduate entrepreneurs. We will continue to invest in significant ‘top of the funnel’ activity to ensure that the widest range of students can participate in entrepreneurial thinking regardless of whether they choose to go on and develop a start-up. Our strategy over the next five years will be to advance our work in all ten priority themes identified in the Entrepreneurial Campus Blueprint namely:

Theme	UWS strategy
Align and interact with your regional ecosystem and external partners to accelerate	We will grow our Collaborative Programmes: Partnerships with Young Enterprise Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, Demola Global and Converge extend support beyond UWS, providing access to funding, mentorship, and industry expertise
Inspire young people to engage in entrepreneurial thinking through social and impact-led activities	We will expand our Kickstart Programme, which develops and supports student entrepreneurs
Establish institutional leadership and policies that support the development of an entrepreneurial mindset in students and staff	We will design and deliver a KE&I leadership programme to expand our institutional capacity for KE&I
All students undertake credit-bearing courses in support of entrepreneurial development including set and optional, cross faculty, practical entrepreneurial learning opportunities during their student journey	We will continue to roll out our ASPIRE programme which embeds entrepreneurship, creative thinking and other meta-skills into every undergraduate programme
Provide a systematic approach to extra-curricular support for student start-ups	Our Kickstart Programme will be expanded which includes stages from early stage ideation, all the way through to company formation and seed funding
Develop (and engage with) an active alumni network and your local entrepreneurial community	We will launch the UWS Founders’ Club : This network of alumni entrepreneurs will provide mentorship to staff, new graduates and student entrepreneurs, fostering industry connections and guidance that bolster start-up resilience

Theme	UWS strategy
Develop support for academic/staff spin-outs	Our strategy is to launch a new IP based spin-out company every 12-18 months and we will continue to invest in the expertise needed to support this goal
Provide access to funding for student and staff-led enterprises	We will continue to use KEIF funding to provide seed funding at each stage of the process from 'Lightbulb' grants at the early stage through to seed funding for start-ups.
Create a vibrant and developing pre-16 talent pipeline as well as attracting entrepreneurial students from around the world	We will grow our partnership with Young Enterprise Scotland and invest in hosting events on campus for local school pupils with them
Establish a framework for change and a robust quality assurance approach	We will embed the principles of the Knowledge Exchange Concordat into our monitoring and reporting process at UWS

With sustained KEIF support, UWS anticipates increased student engagement in entrepreneurial activities, leading to higher start-up and spin-out survival rates and broader student success. By focusing on widening access, fostering early entrepreneurial engagement, and aligning with Scotland's inclusive economic ambitions, UWS is well-positioned to make significant contributions to Scotland's goal of becoming a world-leading entrepreneurial nation.

Section D: Collaboration and Regional Engagement

8. Wider Societal Impact

UWS will invest some of the KEIF funding to help grow our regional engagement specifically in the Glasgow City Region, Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway. We will build on the success of our leadership within the Ayrshire Regional Economic Partnership as it relates to both growth deal projects and regional economic strategy delivery. We will look to emulate our contributions in Ayrshire to areas such as skills development, digital economy and clean growth across our other regions by engaging in entrepreneurial ecosystem partnerships with Chambers of Commerce and other bodies such as local authorities and industry groups and sectors to align our KE&I activities with business needs. We will help in the development of an improved entrepreneurial ecosystem to provide local entrepreneurs and businesses (including UWS students and staff) access to resources for starting and scaling businesses. We will invest time and capacity in engagement with national economic agents such as Scottish Enterprise and Converge and thereby offer local entrepreneurs and businesses (including UWS students and staff) access to funding, mentorship, and opportunities for visibility through national programmes - Barclays Eagle Labs, Techscaler and Young Enterprise Scotland - partnering to provide mentorship and technical support to UWS start-ups.

9. Collaboration

KE&I Collaboration Manager

UWS hosts a Knowledge Exchange & Innovation Collaboration Manager on behalf of the sector. Funding for the role comes annually from SFC, but we have underwritten the role, ensuring much-needed stability within the role, and cementing our leadership in driving collaborative activity and culture.

Converge

UWS financially supports Converge through annual fees. In addition to encouraging our entrepreneurial students and researchers to engage in training workshops and the annual competition, we also strategically support Converge by sitting on Advisory Board / Steering Committee.

Interface

In 2024, UWS has played an active role in the process of Interface's transition towards infrastructure investment. We will continue to work with Interface as they evolve their model of delivery, e.g. particularly when it comes to exploring stronger partnerships with HE.

Innovation Centres

UWS supports the KE&I Collaboration Manager's ambition to create a more collaborative culture between Innovation Centres, Interface, universities, and colleges. Particularly around capacity building, focusing on driving innovation in SMEs, and skills for future industries, within the context of Scottish Government's industry clusters. Improved relationships will pave the way for more strategic developments, towards constructive partnerships and leveraging funding. In 2025, this will involve UWS contributing to capacity building activities.

Sector networks

UWS will continue to engage with sector colleagues through formal and informal networks, such as Research Commercialisation Directors' Group, Enterprise Support Group, Challenge Fund Network, and the Modern Universities' Group. National and regional groupings of peers contribute to a connected and more effective Scotland, where we can identify opportunities for collaboration, pool resources, and share responsibility for more coherent policy engagement.

To support the talented people that work in our professional services teams to grow in their roles, and help ensure talent stays within the system, colleagues at UWS will continue to take on Mentor and Mentee opportunities as part of SKEIM (Scottish Knowledge Exchange & Innovation Mentoring), or other similar programmes.

Other collaboration

UWS already has a proactive approach to collaboration in our region; for example, UWS has opened the Demola programme to students at University of Strathclyde and City of Glasgow College and has sought out additional funding from Scottish Enterprise to further enhance this collaborative offering. We will expand on this programme, to increase reach and the number of participants in coming years. We will seek out other opportunities for sharing resource and leveraging funding for mutual benefit across HE/FE, regionally and nationally.

10. Regional Approaches

UWS will lead place-making activities in all of our campus locations. In Paisley we will further develop the University/Town initiative which will align with the Scottish Government's Capital Investment strategy to attract inward investment into the town on the back of UWS campus development plans. In Ayrshire we will further invest in the development of their Digital Economy by using our newly formed Digital Connectivity Innovation Centre to drive economic value in the region using advanced networks and AI. Our work in Dumfries and Galloway has been to lead elements of the Digital Dairy Chain programme which we will build upon in the next five years to help develop new skills in the workforce. In Lanarkshire we will further grow our strategic partnerships with the NHS and New College Lanarkshire to innovate for skills provision to build and retain talent in the region.

Section E: Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

11. Embedding and Promoting EDI

UWS recognises that certain groups, including women, ethnic minorities, individuals from low-income backgrounds, rural and remote communities, individuals with disabilities, and first-generation university students, are often underrepresented in KEIF activities. The University's strategy is designed to address these gaps and advance equality of opportunity through targeted initiatives and collaborative efforts.

To support women in leadership and entrepreneurship, UWS offers mentorship programmes, tailored skills training, and partnerships with organisations like Scottish Enterprise and Converge. Programmes such as Graduate Apprenticeships provide equal opportunities for women in high-demand industries, breaking gender barriers and fostering greater participation in entrepreneurial ecosystems.

UWS promotes diversity through initiatives like 'Bring the Buzz' breakfast sessions, which provide informal networking opportunities and targeted support for ethnic minorities, single parents, and women. Workshops focused on practical entrepreneurial skills, leadership development, and innovation management, such as Entrepreneurial Mindset Workshops, Women in Leadership Programmes, and Inclusive Innovation Workshops, equip participants with resilience, creativity, and problem-solving abilities, fostering confidence and inclusivity.

Financial and structural barriers faced by socio-economically disadvantaged individuals are addressed through scholarships, micro-grants, and accessible resources, equipping them with tools for success and improving socio-economic mobility.

Rural and remote communities benefit from regional placemaking initiatives, such as extending KEIF programmes to areas like Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway, bridging geographical disparities and fostering active participation. Individuals with disabilities are empowered through inclusive programme design, ensuring that resources and infrastructure are accessible. First-generation university students receive mentoring and tailored guidance to build confidence and foster equality of opportunity.

Collaboration with industry stakeholders and private sector accelerators provides co-funding and mentorship opportunities, while partnerships with Chambers of Commerce and Local Authorities leverage regional resources for inclusive economic development. Shared physical and virtual resources, such as incubation spaces and online platforms, maximise accessibility, and regional innovation hubs enhance participation. Programmes like Demola and Graduate Apprenticeships are expanded to partner institutions, broadening their reach and inclusivity.

Finally, shared metrics and transparent reporting are integral to assessing the success of these initiatives, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement in advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion. Together, these efforts create a more inclusive and equitable KE&I environment, positively impacting participants and society.

The strategy will advance work-based learning, including adapting apprenticeship systems to support start-ups and underrepresented groups by running dedicated programmes for these groups.

13. Promoting Positive KE&I Culture

UWS is committed to developing an inclusive and positive KE&I culture where excellence thrives and staff, students and partners feel valued and supported. A priority over the coming years is to bring together various commitments and action plans into an overarching “living” KE&I culture action plan that is dynamic and agile and belongs to the whole University community. This work is underpinned by several priorities including:

Delivery of an enhanced leadership development programme to support and empower staff and students with training and resources is a priority for this year. It has been developed across thematic areas including ideation, business planning, mentoring, investment and finance and pitching/presentation skills. This includes an entrepreneurial discussion series, the first of which was led by Mark Logan.

The Research Impact and Engagement Festival will, moving forward, include dedicated KE&I sessions to showcase where high-impact research, that takes place across the University, has driven economic benefit through CPD, KTP, Spin-outs etc.

By integrating these approaches to support high-quality KE&I, the University aims to nurture positive, inclusive cultures.

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Decision, Policy or Practice - new or changed	New UWS 5-year Strategy for Knowledge Exchange and Innovation
Owner	Head of Business and Innovation
Who is affected?	Staff (Academic and Professional services), Students and External Partners
Purpose of the Decision, Policy or Practice It will help to ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are the policy or decisions needed? • What do we hope to achieve by it? • How will we ensure that it works as intended? 	An approved strategy is a requirement of the Scottish Funding Council's KEI Grant award to UWS. So, we hope to grow the level of funding we receive by meeting the objectives of the grant in the strategy and thus make progress against the proposed metrics
Consultation and Evidence What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this decision, policy or procedure and what were the results? Identify what evidence is available and set it out a summary here. This includes data and evidence from involvement and consultation.	The consultees have been UWS Vice-Chancellor's Executive team, Strategic Planning, Research Services, Business Innovation, Research and Innovation Committee and the School Senior Leadership Teams. All of the results of the consultation have been incorporated into the strategy document.

Does, or could, the decision, policy or practice have an adverse effect on people sharing the following protected characteristics? (Please tick relevant box)			
Protected Characteristic and/or equality priority	Yes	No	Unknown
Age	Yes		
Disability	Yes		
Gender Reassignment		No	
Marriage or Civil Partnership		No	
Pregnancy and Maternity		No	
Race	Yes		
Religion or Belief		No	
Sex	Yes		
Sexual Orientation		No	
Others which may include:- care experienced students, BSL users, military veterans' asylum seekers, those living in poverty, those with caring responsibilities, those estranged from family.	Yes		

Details of the adverse effect, including additional challenges faced by staff and students with intersecting identities, for example, sex and ethnicity (a women from a Black and Minority Ethnic background). and how this will be mitigated:

Women: Often face barriers to participation in entrepreneurial activities, especially in sectors like technology and engineering. UWS has noted the need for initiatives to increase women representation in entrepreneurial programmes and start-ups.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Individuals: BME individuals may face systemic barriers in accessing opportunities and resources for entrepreneurial and KE&I activities.

Individuals from Low-Income or Socio-Economic Disadvantaged Backgrounds: Financial constraints, lack of access to mentorship, and limited networks can hinder their participation in KE&I activities.

Does, or could, the decision, policy or practice promote or advance equality of opportunity for people sharing the following protected characteristics? (Please tick relevant box)			
Protected Characteristic	Yes	No	Unknown
Age	Yes		
Disability	Yes		
Gender Reassignment		No	
Marriage or Civil Partnership		No	
Pregnancy or Maternity		No	
Race	Yes		
Religion or Belief		No	
Sex	Yes		
Sexual Orientation		No	
Others which may include:- care experienced students, BSL users, military veterans' asylum seekers, those living in poverty, those with caring responsibilities, those estranged from family.	Yes		

Details of the positive effect:

UWS recognises that certain groups, including women, ethnic minorities, individuals from low-income backgrounds, rural and remote communities, individuals with disabilities, and first-generation university students, are often underrepresented in KEIF activities. UWS also recognises the additional challenges faced by staff and students with intersecting identities across the protected characteristics, for example, sex and ethnicity (a woman from a Black and Minority Ethnic background). The university's strategy is designed to address these gaps and advance equality of opportunity through targeted initiatives and collaborative efforts.

To support women in leadership and entrepreneurship, UWS offers mentorship programmes, tailored skills training, and partnerships with organisations like Scottish Enterprise and Converge. Programs such as Graduate Apprenticeships provide equal opportunities for women in high-demand industries, breaking gender barriers and fostering greater participation in entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Financial and structural barriers faced by socio-economically disadvantaged individuals are addressed through scholarships, micro-grants, and accessible resources, equipping them with tools for success and improving socio-economic mobility.

Rural and remote communities benefit from regional place-making initiatives, such as extending KEIF programmes to areas like Ayrshire and Dumfries & Galloway, bridging geographical disparities and fostering active participation. Individuals with disabilities are empowered through inclusive programme design, ensuring that resources and infrastructure are accessible. First-generation university students receive mentoring and tailored guidance to build confidence and foster equality of opportunity.

UWS promotes diversity through initiatives like **'Bring the Buzz' breakfast sessions**, which provide informal networking opportunities and targeted support for ethnic minorities, single parents, and women. Workshops focused on practical entrepreneurial skills, leadership development, and innovation management, such as **Entrepreneurial Mindset Workshops**, **Women in Leadership Programmes**, and **Inclusive Innovation Workshops**, equip participants with resilience, creativity, and problem-solving abilities, fostering confidence and inclusivity.

Collaboration with industry stakeholders and private sector accelerators provides co-funding and mentorship opportunities, while partnerships with Chambers of Commerce and local authorities leverage regional resources for inclusive economic development. Shared physical and virtual resources, such as incubation spaces and online platforms, maximise accessibility, and regional innovation hubs enhance participation. Programmes like Demola and Graduate Apprenticeships are expanded to partner institutions, broadening their reach and inclusivity.

Finally, shared metrics and transparent reporting are integral to assessing the success of these initiatives, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement in advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion. Together, these efforts create a more inclusive and equitable KE&I environment, positively impacting participants and society.

The strategy will advance work-based learning, including adapting apprenticeship systems to support start-ups and underrepresented groups by running dedicated programmes for these groups.

<p>In what way does, or could, the decision, policy or practice foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not?</p>	
<p>The strategy will feed into the delivery of UWS' Place-Making strategy which will reach out to provide innovation and skills opportunities to our regional widening access partners</p>	
<p>Outcome</p> <p>Identify the range of options to address the impact. Remember to consider each of the general duties. There are three possible options:</p> <p>Identify the option(s) chosen and document the reasons for this</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adjust the decision/policy. 2. Continue with the decision/policy. 3. Withdraw the decision/policy. 	<p>For UWS to deliver the identified benefit we need to proceed with the strategy and move into annual operational delivery and reporting.</p>
<p>Actions</p> <p>Please detail the actions you have taken to mitigate the impact of your decision, policy or practice(s)</p>	
<p>No negative impacts are anticipated</p>	
<p>Monitoring and Review</p> <p>Set out the arrangements for reviewing the actual impact of a decision or policy once it has been implemented.</p>	
<p>Annual return to SFC will require detailed monitoring and reporting in partnership with UWS Strategic Planning.</p>	

APPENDIX 1

Protected Characteristics

Age	A person belonging to a particular age (for example 32 year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 to 30 year olds).
Disability	A person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
Gender Reassignment	The process of transitioning from one sex to another
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<p>Marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple.</p> <p>Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding
Race	Refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.
Religion and Belief	Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.
Sex	A man or a woman.
Sexual Orientation	Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.
Care-experienced Individual	<p>'Care-experienced' refers to anyone who has been or is currently in care or from a looked after background at any stage of their life, no matter how short, including adopted children who were previously looked after.</p> <p>Care may have been provided in one of many different settings, such as in residential care, foster care, kinship care or through being looked after at home with a supervision requirement.</p>

Military Veterans	A military veteran is a current or ex-service person who has served a minimum of one day in the Armed Forces: the Army, Royal Navy (Royal Marines) and Royal Air Force. This includes National Servicemen, Regulars and Reserves
British Sign Language User	British Sign Language users are individuals who use British Sign Language as their first language. British Sign Language (BSL) is a visual-gestural language, using hand gestures, movement, space and facial expression, to communicate in a three- dimensional way.
Asylum Seekers	An asylum-seeker is a person who has left their country and is seeking protection from persecution and serious human rights violations in another country, but who hasn't yet been legally recognised as a refugee and is waiting to receive a decision on their asylum claim. Seeking asylum is a human right.
Individuals living in poverty	Individuals are defined as in income poverty if their equivalised household income is below a specified threshold. The most commonly used poverty threshold is 60% of the median household income.
Individuals with caring responsibilities	A carer is anyone, who looks after a family member partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability (this can be either a physical disability or mental ill health), or a substance misuse and cannot cope without their support. The <i>care</i> they give is unpaid. This care can be short or longer term.
Individuals estranged from family	Family estrangement is the loss of a previously existing relationship between family members, through physical and/or emotional distancing, often to the extent that there is negligible or no communication between the individuals involved for a prolonged period.
Individuals with criminal convictions	An individual is considered to have a criminal conviction if they have plead guilty to or been found guilty of a crime. A criminal record has information about their contact with the police.



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