

Venture Builder Programme 2024/2025

Terms and Conditions

Please read these terms and conditions in full before submitting your application. By submitting an entry into The Venture Builder 2025, you are agreeing to comply with the rules and regulations detailed below. We reserve the right to amend these terms and conditions at any point.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Venture Builder programme, applicants must:

1. Be a current University of Manchester (UoM) student (UG, PGT, PGR, PhD) or a recent graduate (within the last two years).
2. Be actively working on a business idea or early-stage business/social enterprise, with a basic understanding of the market, customers, and the industry. It is not a requirement to have a registered business or be trading.
3. Be willing and able to commit at least 15 hours per week to actively developing your venture.
4. Be able to attend in-person sessions scheduled over a 12-week duration at the UoM campus, including the two-day kick-off sprint, followed by weekly sessions.
5. International students are eligible to participate in this programme but must ensure that they do not breach any visa restrictions on engaging in business activity, such as trading.
6. Any employees of MEC or professionally connected colleagues may not apply.

Funding Eligibility

7. Selected individuals/teams (“startups”) may receive equity-free funding to support business development.
8. Funding levels will be up to £5,000 per startup, based on business progress, milestones, and commitment demonstrated through participation in the programme.
9. Participants may be required to submit periodic reports on their business progress and financial expenditure.
10. Participants who have previously received funding from Venture Further (VFA), Eli & Britt Harari Graphene Enterprise Award, Research to Innovator (R2I), or Accelerate ME are eligible to participate in the programme but are not eligible for

additional grant funding through Venture Builder that would exceed the combined £5,000 threshold.

11. Kickstarter funding recipients may still be eligible for some financial support but not the full amount available to new applicants.
12. MEC reserves the right to adjust or withhold funding if participants do not demonstrate adequate commitment or progress.
13. Funds must be used for business-related expenses such as product development, customer validation, marketing, and operational costs.

Participation Expectations

14. Engage actively in all programme activities, including workshops, mentoring meetings, and peer discussions.
15. Demonstrate measurable business progress, such as validating and refining the venture idea, throughout the programme.
16. Attend the Demo Day and pitch the startup to key stakeholders.
17. Respect programme deadlines, which are intended to encourage action, and participate professionally in all activities.
18. Leverage programme resources responsibly, including mentorship, AI tools, and community platforms.
19. Failure to meet these expectations, including missing key sessions without prior notice, may result in removal from the programme.

Media & Publicity

20. By participating, applicants agree to be photographed and filmed for MEC marketing and promotional materials unless they have opted-out in their application.
21. MEC may feature selected startups in press releases, social media, and case studies to showcase programme impact.

Intellectual Property (IP) and Confidentiality

22. All IP will be managed according to the University's policy/code of conduct related to research. This is set out in [The University of Manchester Intellectual Property Policy](#).
23. If any University linked IP is identified, the applicant should discuss their IP with a representative from the University's technology transfer office - The University of Manchester Innovation Factory - prior to submitting an application. The

outcomes of this meeting should be summarised within the IP section of the application.

24. The University of Manchester staff, authorised administrative staff, and the judges, are the only individuals who will have access to the application materials. These individuals regularly deal with sensitive information in the course of their work and will treat all information with the same care and respect for confidentiality. To assure participants as to the confidentiality of their proposal, all external judges will be asked to sign NDAs (non-disclosure agreements). University staff will be covered by their existing employment contracts.