



Startup Awards winners 2022

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Entrepreneurial talent shines at awards

Students and graduates from Northumbria University, Newcastle, were among the winners of a high-profile awards ceremony championing entrepreneurial talent in the North East.

Organised and hosted by learning and development agency [FIRST](#), the Startup Awards North East celebrates early stage entrepreneurs and also facilitates significant business support, mentoring and investment opportunities. Among the winners were Northumbria graduate Rosie Bath, founder of *Cera Cotton*, a sustainable homeware brand selling plastic free, water resistant, wax cotton textile, and Northumbria student Imogen Russell,

founder of *The Little Sleep Company* – a sleep consultancy for families with babies and young children.

Along with another 35 finalists, Rosie and Imogen were competing in categories demonstrating social impact and high growth potential. All spoke passionately about their businesses and entrepreneurial ambitions to a judging panel and audience made up of members of the North East business community. Prizes for the winners included a tailored package of business support around coaching sessions, networking events, business workshops, IT and marketing support and environmental sustainability plans.

Both Rosie and Imogen have worked closely with Northumbria's [Student and Graduate Enterprise](#) team throughout the launch and development of their businesses. They also continue to receive help from the Northumbria Enterprise and Business Support 2 ([NEBS 2](#)) programme which provides European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) support for graduate start-ups and enterprise. Other finalists supported by NEBS2 included Northumbria graduates Alos Jose, founder of Cricketcube, and Justine Carrion-Weiss, founder of The Blooming Platypus.

Commenting on the win Rosie said: "I am absolutely thrilled to have won the 'High Growth Award' for Cera Cotton. I am passionate about providing consumers with plastic free, practical, and beautifully sustainable products, it is great to see this recognised by the judges. With help from Northumbria's Student and Graduate Enterprise team, I feel confident and supported with building the company from inside the North-East region"

Imogen added: "Northumbria continues to be a massive support to my business venture, and I can't wait to see where the future takes me."

Graham Baty, Head of Student and Graduate Enterprise at Northumbria, said: "We are justifiably proud of our entrepreneurial students and graduates, and of the contribution they make to the regional economy. Seeing their businesses flourish is incredibly rewarding, and I congratulate Rosie and Imogen on their latest success in the Startup Awards.

"The ERDF NEBS2 Project has also enhanced the support we can offer, both to our graduate enterprises and to local businesses with, for example, financial support to SMEs through funding for internships. I would encourage any businesses interested in this and other areas of support to contact us."

Charlotte Windebank, MD of FIRST and organisers of the awards said:" Startup Awards was created to give every early-stage founders in the region the springboard they need into the entrepreneurial ecosystem to build their brand, customers and connections. With a combined effort, we can empower more early-stage founders to build resilient North East businesses, employing local people and contributing to an inclusive economy. Working with the university and seeing the benefits the competition can bring to graduate businesses is exactly why we do what we do".

For more information, please visit [NEBS2](#).

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