



Amelia Wright

Dec 14, 2022 11:38 GMT

Lockdown hobby inspires award-winning business launch for Northumbria student

Northumbria student Amelia has just been named 'Most Inspirational Business Woman of the Year 2022' at a regional awards ceremony following the success of her fast-growing embroidery brand.

The 21-year-old business student from Crossgates won the award at Inspire, an annual Leeds-based initiative celebrating inspirational women in Yorkshire. She also came second in the Young Achiever of the Year Award.

Amelia set up her business [Mila Clothing Ltd](#) during lockdown after seeing a Tik Tok clip of someone setting up a tote bag business and realising that providing personalised embroidery for items of clothing offered a viable start-up opportunity. Investing her savings to buy an embroidery machine and working with the Graduate Futures team and entrepreneurial experts at Northumbria, she quickly established a marketing plan and pipeline of orders.

Amelia explained: “It really started as a hobby during the pandemic when we were all stuck at home and I was searching online and seeing Highstreet brands charging £30 for adding tiny bits of embroidery to sweatshirts. I thought why can’t I do that, so I learnt how to embroider, used my £300 of savings to buy a machine and set up a website in January last year. I came up with some basic personalised and non-personalised designs that could be embroidered on hoodies and sweatshirts, the most popular being roman numerals embroidered on hoodies displaying the date when couples got together. The idea took off in time for Valentine’s Day and I suddenly had over 25,000 views on Tik Tok. I went from 30 orders to 300 in a weekend.”

Awareness of Amelia’s designs grew, and she was soon attracting wedding customers, both here in the UK and internationally, looking for something to commemorate their big day. In August this year her website attracted more than 2 million views. Turnover in the first year was £78,000 and is predicted to reach six figures in year two.

To balance university studies with her entrepreneurial ambitions, Amelia decided to use her placement year to develop her own business. She was able to access business support services from Northumbria for guidance, expert advice and mentoring from academics, and use of the University’s on campus Incubator hub.

Amelia added: “I have had so much help from Northumbria. From my tutors to the professional support teams, everyone has been incredibly helpful and encouraging and I have learnt so much about marketing, website development and through workshops and professional development courses. I have now acquired a small unit in Darlington, bought three new commercial embroidery machines and I have even recruited my boyfriend’s mum as an employee to work with me. I have a lot of ideas going forward to develop the business further, but this has been an amazing year – capped off with

winning the Inspire award.”

Inspire was set up by freelance project manager Rachael Kennedy in 2017 as an opportunity to bring like-minded women together. She explained: “Inspire has grown rapidly into a glamorous black-tie event for women, each year, celebrating and recognising those ladies who go above and beyond in life, in business or selflessly support others.”

For more information on business and career support from Northumbria please visit our [website](#).

Northumbria is a research-intensive modern university with a global reputation for academic excellence. Find out more about us at www.northumbria.ac.uk --- Please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk with any media enquiries or interview requests ---

Contacts



Rik Kendall

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences

rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk

07923 382339



Andrea Slowey

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences

andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk

07708 509436



Rachael Barwick

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk

07377422415



James Fox

Press Contact

Student Communications Manager

james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk



Kelly Elliott

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk



Gemma Brown

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk