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Northumbria creates fund for next generation of student entrepreneurs

Student start-ups will be given a new boost after the launch of an enterprise and innovation fund at the UK's number one university for graduate businesses.

Northumbria launched the initiative at a fundraising dinner at its city campus, attended by a host of prestigious guests, including one of the institution's most well-known alumnus Sir Jonathan Ive, Senior Vice President, Design at Apple Inc.

ir Jonathan was joined at the dinner by more than 150 guests and alumni including Scotland's decorated rugby international Scott Hastings and fashion designer Scott Henshall. The fundraising programme included a lively auction of lots, each with a special Northumbria connection, such as an original artwork by the last pitman painter Norman Cornish.

Every penny raised at the dinner will go towards a new Enterprise and Innovation Fund to create and support more entrepreneurial students and graduate businesses. The fund will build on Northumbria's outstanding status as the UK's leading university for graduate start-ups based on estimated turnover. In the last five years' alone, the University has created more than 100 new companies, which employ 800 staff.

Vice-Chancellor of Northumbria University, Professor Andrew Wathey said: "The dinner was a special opportunity for Northumbria University to share its commitment to enterprise and innovation and we were delighted to be joined by our guest of honour and alumnus, Sir Jonathan Ive.

"There is no better demonstration of an entrepreneurial culture in our programmes than the role the University has played over the last few years in supporting the creation of new graduate businesses. Providing support for more students and alumni to engage in this activity is the purpose of our new fund.

"It will give more of our students access to seed-funding to establish and grow their business ideas, undertake enterprise-focused work placements, and access proof-of-concept funding. Northumbria has set itself the challenge of becoming a new kind of excellent university. One way we can do that is to continue investing in Enterprise and Innovation."

Sir Jonathan, a graduate of Northumbria's Design for Industry course, spent time on campus before the dinner meeting with students at the University's School of Design with Executive Dean for Arts, Design and Social Sciences, Professor Steven Kyffin. "Our workshops and studios help students integrate strategic thinking and new ideas with making, prototyping and testing their designs in real time," said Professor Kyffin. "This is one of our core strengths as a leading School of Design and it is vital to the future of enterprise and innovation."

The Enterprise and Innovation Dinner was sponsored by brand development

agency Xanobia and Yorkshire Bank.

Northumbria offers a range of courses for the next generation of entrepreneurs, including our innovative Entrepreneurial Business Management degree. To find out more about this course click [here](#). For more information about enterprise at Northumbria click [here](#)

The Enterprise and Innovation Fund is still open to donations. For more information about the dinner visit [here](#) or if you would like to donate to the fund, please click [here](#).

Northumbria is a research-rich, business-focussed, professional university with a global reputation for academic excellence. To find out more about our courses go to www.northumbria.ac.uk

If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk or call [0191 227 4571](tel:01912274571).

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