

Research & Knowledge Exchange

Strategic Plan 2027



**AMBITION
DELIVERED
TODAY**



60%

OF TU RESEARCH CONSIDERED
'WORLD-LEADING' OR
'INTERNATIONALLY EXCELLENT'

£21.6m

QUALITY RELATED FUNDING
INVESTED TO ENHANCE TU
RESEARCH BASE



ATHENA SWAN
BRONZE AWARD

HR

EXCELLENCE
AWARD

OVER HALF

OUR STAFF HAVE
SIGNIFICANT
RESPONSIBILITY
FOR RESEARCH

OVER 14,000
HOURS

OF STUDENT
VOLUNTEERING
SERVICE

60
NEW

GRADUATE START-UPS
CREATED IN 2023-24

7TH

IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR
FOR START-UPS

£148m

GVA – OUR ANNUAL
CONTRIBUTION TO
THE REGION

OVER
520

COMPANIES BENEFITTED
FROM OUR BUSINESS
SUPPORT PROVISION

15

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER
PARTNERSHIPS 2023-24:
HIGHEST NUMBER IN
THE REGION

1 INTRODUCTION

This strategic plan details how we will grow research and knowledge exchange activity at Teesside University that makes a difference to individuals, organisations, and society.

Over the last few years, we have focused our research and knowledge exchange activities to address the economic, health and environmental challenges faced by our region and beyond, and have invested in staff, facilities, equipment, and infrastructure, improving the quality and impact of our work.

Three institutional interdisciplinary themes of Net Zero, People & Place, and Health & Wellbeing, enabled by our strength in digital technologies, frame our research and drive our mission to transform lives and economies. Aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and local priorities these core themes will deliver a regionally engaged approach that is of global relevance, to support recovery, regeneration, and renewal.

As an anchor institution, we engage the public and collaborate with industry around these themes to ensure our work is shaped by society and drives economic growth and productivity.

We embrace the challenges ahead and will continue to work with local and global partners, to maximise the positive impact that Teesside University has on the Tees Valley and beyond.



2 CONTEXT

The UK is facing some of its greatest challenges, including a sustained period of low productivity, the effects of which are felt more sharply in the Tees Valley region than other parts of the country. This makes the anchor role of Teesside University, driving regional regeneration through research and innovation, more vital than ever.

Supporting the recovery and growth of the nation, we work closely with local authorities, businesses, and communities to address regional socio-economic disparities, and drive growth and productivity across priority areas, enabling the Tees Valley and the wider north-east to recover and thrive.



DIGITALISATION

The Tees Valley is set to become the UK's first smart region* addressing social inclusion, structural infrastructure, and digital innovation. We will build on our reputation for digital and gaming expertise, and our strategic partnerships with the tech giants, to create a smart campus, a new Digital Life building at its heart, powering engagement through teaching, research, and business support on campus and across the virtual world.



GREEN ENERGY

One of the first regions to be recognised for its net zero ambitions, the Tees Valley is working to create the country's first decarbonised industrial cluster. Through the University's Net Zero Industry Innovation Centre, we will work with industry partners to tackle decarbonisation and engage communities to explore what a just transition to a hydrogen economy means for them.



PLACE

The Tees Valley region has substantial structural economic and societal challenges that require targeted local and government support. Government support to drive inward investment and create new jobs. We will work with stakeholders to co-create solutions that bring our aspiration for 'transforming lives and economies' to life and share these outcomes across the globe.



CONNECTIVITY

Our students and staff are valued champions with the confidence and capability to inspire others, drive innovation and deliver transformation in the region, UK and internationally. We will cultivate opportunities for our students and staff to collaborate with communities, businesses, and other external organisations to make a difference to society, culture, and the economy.

Our global outlook and strategic approach enable us to develop and retain capacity to support the regional innovation ecosystem, sharing knowledge and expertise to enact positive change across the Tees Valley and beyond.

*<https://www.economicsobservatory.com/how-has-brex-it-affected-business-investment-in-the-uk>

3 RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Many of today’s challenges require the combination of expertise from different disciplines and perspectives through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary working.

To support this, we have created three broad themes where we can bring together researchers with industry experts, business leaders, health care practitioners and community representatives to tackle these complex questions through the integration of disciplines, expertise, and experience.



NET ZERO



Our net zero research is shaping a cleaner, greener future which will be transformative for our region, the UK, and beyond.

Our pioneering research operates at the intersection of diverse disciplines, bringing together the brightest minds to co-creating research and innovation that has significant global impact across the green industry, empowering industry and society to achieve their net zero ambitions.

HEALTH & WELLBEING



Our research in health and wellbeing addresses the medical challenges of the future, driving positive change in healthcare across regions.

Our health-focussed research convenes academic and industry expertise from health, medical, engineering, digital, and social science sources to improve the health of the nation and prepare for the challenges of the future.

PEOPLE & PLACE



Our people and place research is transforming the lives of individuals and communities powering a sense of pride, place, and cohesion.

Drawing on our cross-disciplinary research strengths, we work alongside community partners and industry to foster democratic, creative, and vibrant visions for the future.

Through our place-based research, we are connecting communities, industry, and education, driving engagement with environmental sustainability and regional green energy goals.

Building on these core themes, we have constructed an operating environment that supports this approach; building a culture that drives high quality, sustainable activity. We have developed a suite of impactful projects, playing a key role in the regional research and innovation ecosystem, and delivering positive outcomes for our communities.

Meaningful public, civic and business engagement facilitates our commitment to deliver on regional, national, and global priorities through vital knowledge exchange, translational research, and innovation activity.



4 STRATEGIC AIM AND PRIORITIES

OUR AIM:

To invest in staff and facilities to create a vibrant research culture, and engage local and global partners. Through delivery of these aspirations, we will improve our research quality, ensure our sustainability, drive innovation, and expand the impact of our work.

We will deliver this by focussing on five strategic priorities:



Culture

We will transform the behaviours, values, and expectations, of our staff to support them to succeed in their careers.



Engagement

We will strengthen partnerships to amplify the local and global impact of our work.



Quality

We will improve the quality and reputation of our research and knowledge exchange through interdisciplinary, international, and industrial collaboration.



Sustainability

We will ensure the vital infrastructure and funds to deliver our research and knowledge exchange ambitions.



Innovation

We will drive economic growth and productivity through entrepreneurship, commercialisation, and business support.

5 DELIVERY

The success of this Research & Knowledge Exchange Strategic Plan will be achieved through collaborative working across the University and with our external networks.

Key strategic assets of the Teesside University Group will drive the University's ambition in this space, including:



National Horizons Centre

A centre of excellence for health and biosciences, at our Darlington campus, the facility houses a world class research community that supports the full research lifecycle, from early diagnosis of diseases to delivering treatments to patients faster.

Institute for Collective Place Leadership

Based on the principles of regional empowerment, partnership and collaboration, the Institute gathers insights on the lived experiences of people within the Tees Valley and similar regions to develop and deliver evidence-based solutions to socio-economic challenges and transformational action-orientated research.

Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (MIMA)

MIMA is the University's gateway to community and civic engagement through the creative industries. Bringing to life our university mission of transforming lives, MIMA works with individuals, businesses, and charities across the Tees Valley on a range of imaginative projects that deliver real impact to the communities we serve.



Net Zero Industry Innovation Centre

At the Net Zero Industry Innovation Centre, we are spearheading the transition towards a sustainable and prosperous future. Embracing our rich industrial heritage, we are igniting a new era of innovation that will redefine industries and propel Teesside and beyond towards a net zero future.



Digital Life

Digital Life, due for completion in 2025, will provide an innovative hub for research and teaching, demonstrating our commitment to a responsible and sustainable digital future.

Launchpad

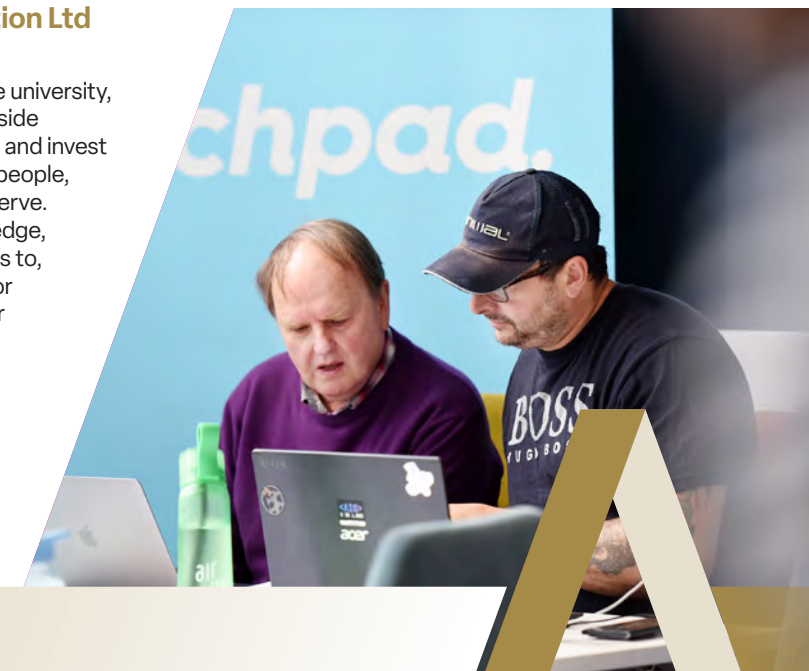
The University's start-up hub powers the generation and growth of new businesses led by our graduates. Part of a £5.6m University Enterprise Zone, Launchpad supports students and graduates to identify opportunities and develop them into new businesses with the potential for growth. The space offers a thriving community for new and existing start-ups, providing co-working and business start-up accommodation working alongside other new businesses.

Teesside University Global

Through TU Global, we will continue to leverage our growing reputation for research to expand our expertise and impact across the world. Building upon the foundations of institutional and regional strengths and expertise in net zero, health and wellbeing, and people and place, we will develop networks across the world that facilitate knowledge exchange and collaborative research.

TU Enterprise and Innovation Ltd (TUEI)

TUEI is a subsidiary company of the university, established to commercialise Teesside University's products and services, and invest in new business ideas that benefit people, businesses, and communities we serve. It leverages the University's knowledge, expertise, and professional services to, support new ideas with potential for significant growth and enhance our business interface.



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