



**Durham**  
University

Careers & Enterprise

# Inspiring and supporting the creation of high- growth startups

**Marek Tokarski, Senior  
Enterprise Manager**



[www.dur.ac.uk/venturelab/](http://www.dur.ac.uk/venturelab/)



[marek.tokarski@durham.ac.uk](mailto:marek.tokarski@durham.ac.uk)



[@careersatdurham](https://www.instagram.com/careersatdurham)

# Today's Session

- To share best practice around supporting high-growth entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneur perspectives - their journey from student founder towards scalable impact
- Connection, discussion and support to help overcome challenges

# Today's Session

10am: Welcome and introductions

10.15am: Marek Tokarski, Durham University – The journey to support the launch of more innovative, purpose driven ventures

11am: Natasha Boulding, Co-Founder and CEO of Low Carbon Materials – launching a high growth venture

12pm: Lunch

12.45pm: Group Discussion – Inspiring the next generation of growth-oriented entrepreneurs

1.30pm: Victoria Nichol, Imperial College London – Imperial Venture Mentoring Service

2.30pm: break

2.45pm: Polly Groves, Conception X – engaging and developing PhD students to launch deep tech startups

3.45pm: Closing remarks

# Durham's journey to support the launch of more innovative, purpose driven ventures

Marek Tokarski

A black and white photograph of a weathered wooden sign mounted on a post. The sign is rectangular and made of several planks of wood, showing significant wear and tear. The word "NOTHING" is painted in large, bold, black letters across the top portion of the sign. The sign is supported by a single vertical wooden post. The background is a plain, light-colored sky. The overall mood is one of desolation and abandonment.



# Is Durham University failing its entrepreneurs?



Ichor Tech  
July 19, 2018

0 Comments



The rise of self-employment has been a key characteristic of western economies since the turn of the century. In the United Kingdom, the number of self-employed people rose from 3.3 million in 2001 to 4.8 million in 2017.

Entrepreneurship is key to the growth of the economy as a whole. Entrepreneurs inherently start new businesses adding to the national income, innovation and growth of a nation. They



**11 Startups**

**8 FTE jobs created**

**£0 investment raised**





IF YOU CAN'T  
WIN THE GAME,  
CHANGE  
THE RULES

Founder, Venture for America

**ANDREW YANG**

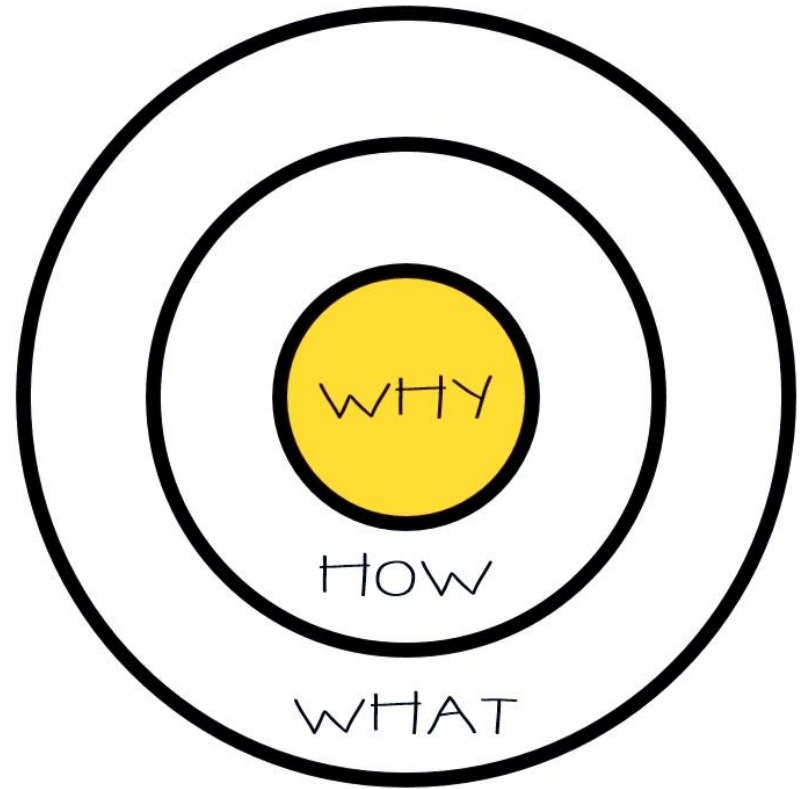
# **Smart People Should Build Things.**

**How to Restore Our Culture of Achievement,  
Build a Path for Entrepreneurs, and  
Create New Jobs in America**

We need our brightest talent to drive innovation, create jobs, stimulate economic growth, address social challenges, and foster a dynamic and adaptable society



Create a  
strategy  
and  
compelling  
narrative









Create  
partnerships  
and know your  
value

Top prize from  
£750 to £5k





# Grew the Team

\*Asked for 8, got 2



# Early Success!





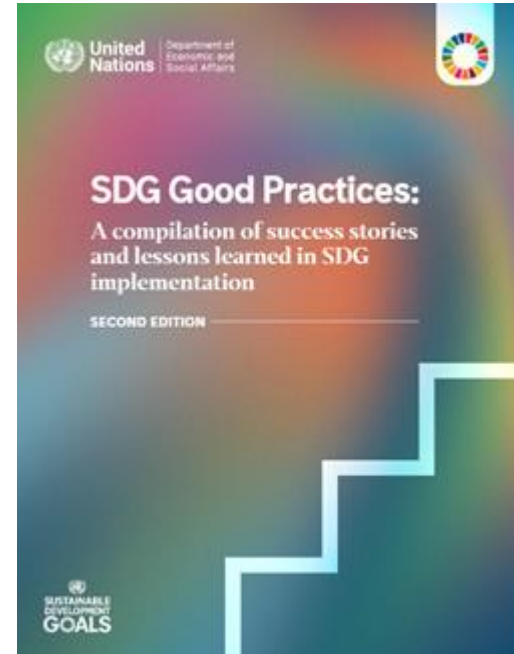




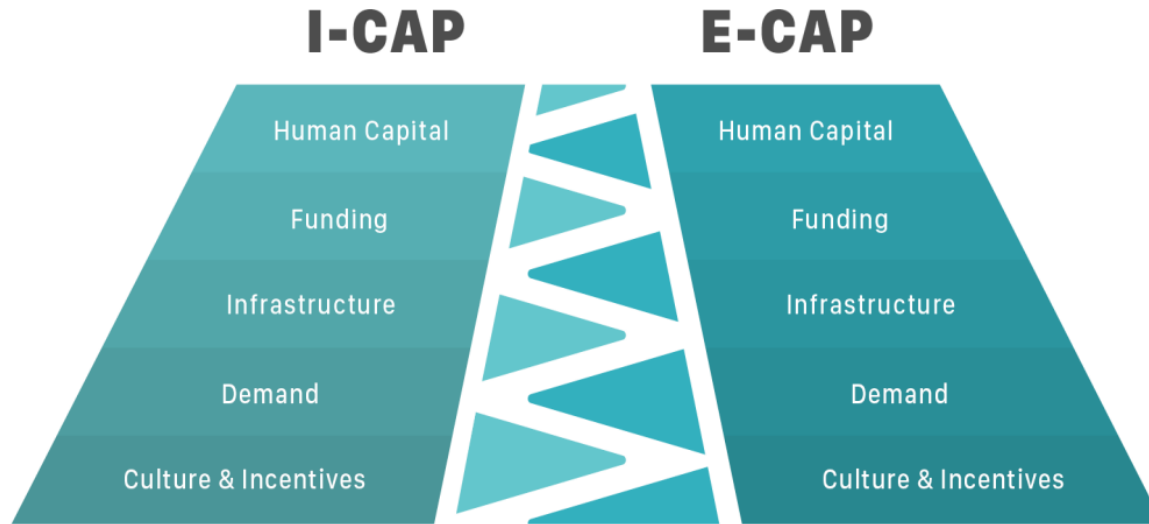
# Inspiring Innovation



# SDG GOOD PRACTICES



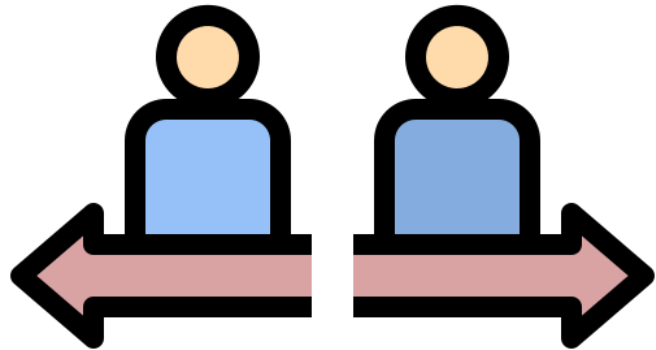
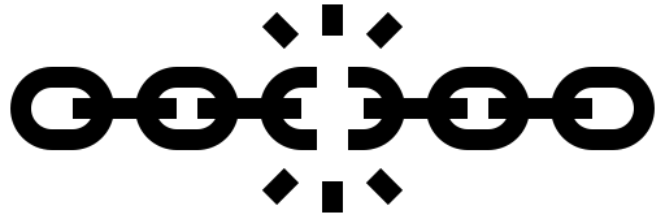
# MIT approach demonstrates the need to develop innovation capacity alongside entrepreneurial capacity





# Supporting Startups



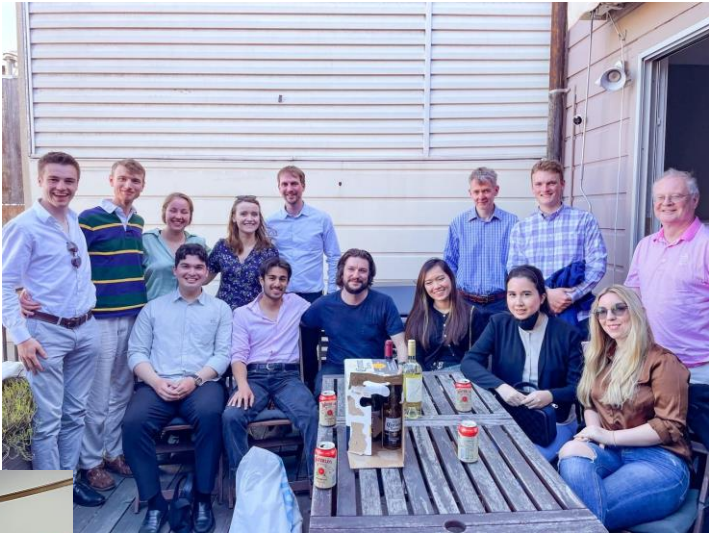


Separate  
your  
audience





# Durham Venture School









# Progress in numbers

Metric	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Number of students engaged in Venture Lab extra-curricular activity	370	551	770	982
Number of startups created with Venture Lab support	15	27	21	34
Combined External Investment Raised of Active Firms*	£252,500	£786,900	£6.6 million	£15.1 million
Combined Annual Turnover of Active Firms	£0	£564,000	£1.2 million	£2.1 million
Number of jobs created by Active Firms	10	22	75	106

# More high growth startups



tred



**IMPOSSIBREW®**  
MOOD ENHANCING ALCOHOL-FREE BEER

# Global and National Award Winners



**WOMEN IN INNOVATION**





## In the Media

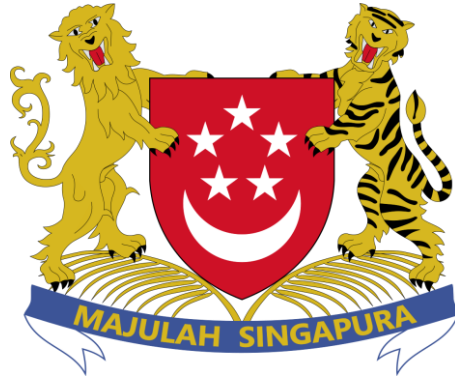
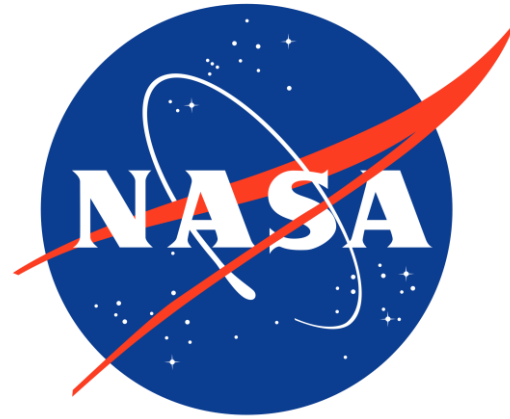
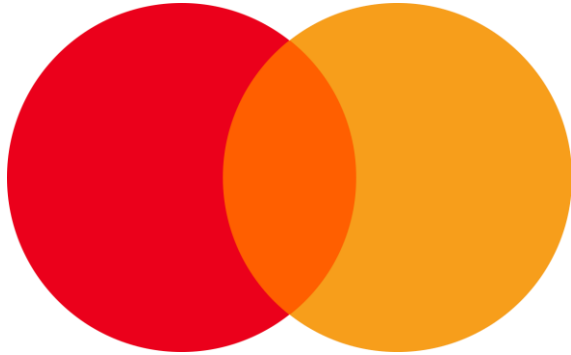


Forbes





# Commercial Deals



# World Leading Programmes

**techstars** 



Student & Graduate  
Enterprise Impact Report  
2019-22



Venture Lab is managed by

WHAT

NEXT ?



# 10 Tips

- Create a strategy and compelling narrative
- Peer over the fence
- Be bold
- Accumulate resources
- Growth focused programmes/services
- Measure everything
- Find ways to inspire – SDGs
- Engage alumni and staff
- Share your success
- Access support from friends in the network