BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

INNOVATION AND ENTERPRISE STRATEGY (2020 – 2025)

AND WORK PLAN

INTRODUCTION

THE RESEARCH, INNOVATION, ENTERPRISE AND EMPLOYABILITY (RIEE) DIRECTORATE DELIVERS SPECIALIST SERVICES TO OPTIMISE RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK (REF), TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK (TEF), AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE FRAMEWORK (KEF) OUTCOMES IN SUPPORT OF BCU'S MISSION TO BE THE UNIVERSITY FOR BIRMINGHAM, AND TO TRANSFORM STUDENT'S LIVES.

The work of the Directorate is underpinned by two separate but interlinked strategy documents covering the period 2020-2025 – this Innovation and Enterprise Strategy, which encompasses careers and employability, STEAM, enterprise and IEE partnership activity; and the Research Strategy, which covers research excellence, doctoral research, and pre and post-award through the Research and Innovation Gateway.

The goals and ambitions of both strategies are delivered through a unified annual RIEE Business Plan, which contains a comprehensive set of strategic actions against each focus area, as well as associated key performance indicators and success measures. A copy of the 2021/22 RIEE Business Plan may be found here.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

THE INNOVATION AND ENTERPRISE STRATEGY AND WORK PLAN UNDERPINS THE MISSION AND AMBITIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY'S 2025 STRATEGY.

- **The University _for_ Birmingham** mission is a key driver for our activity. The IEE Directorate energises our role as an anchor institution facilitating growth, innovation and productivity in our regional businesses, and by promoting a position of thought leadership through working in partnership with local and regional political, commercial and civic stakeholders to understand and respond to socio-economic needs.

- **Enabling personal transformation** is also a key cornerstone of our Strategy, through the provision of high quality, accessible services to all students and graduates to facilitate entry into highly skilled employment and positive destinations.

More specifically, this Strategy is responsible for driving the following core measures of success:

- **Graduate Outcomes:** Ensuring that all students have access to high quality, impactful integrated careers support and skills development; delivering effective and targeted employer engagement activities; and support for students to engage with enterprise and entrepreneurship.

- **The STEAM Agenda:** Underpinning new interdisciplinary and collaborative research partnerships and engaging our academic network; driving the innovative capacity of the region through the provision of approaches, space, technical know-how and guidance to support open innovation with regional and national businesses and entrepreneurs; driving income generation to underpin future STEAM development; and facilitating considerable levels of public and community engagement (PCE) to position BCU as an exemplar in STEAM.

- **Enterprise:** Driving HEIF income streams to secure KEF outcomes in the upper quartile of our cluster group; leading on income diversification through BCU Enterprise trading vehicle; driving start-ups to support regional growth; and supporting our academic community to actively engage in knowledge exchange (KE) activity.

- **Community Presence and Engagement:** Driving the University's Public and Community Engagement Strategy; and underpinning enhanced and meaningful engagement with the regional business community through the University's online platform for business start-ups, growth and innovation – BCU Advantage.

Further, this Strategy jointly drives the following measure of success:

- **International Partnerships:** Maximising the benefits of STEAM to realise new market opportunities on an international stage that will deliver value for teaching and learning, research, innovation and enterprise; and through underpinning the University's enterprise engagement in India.
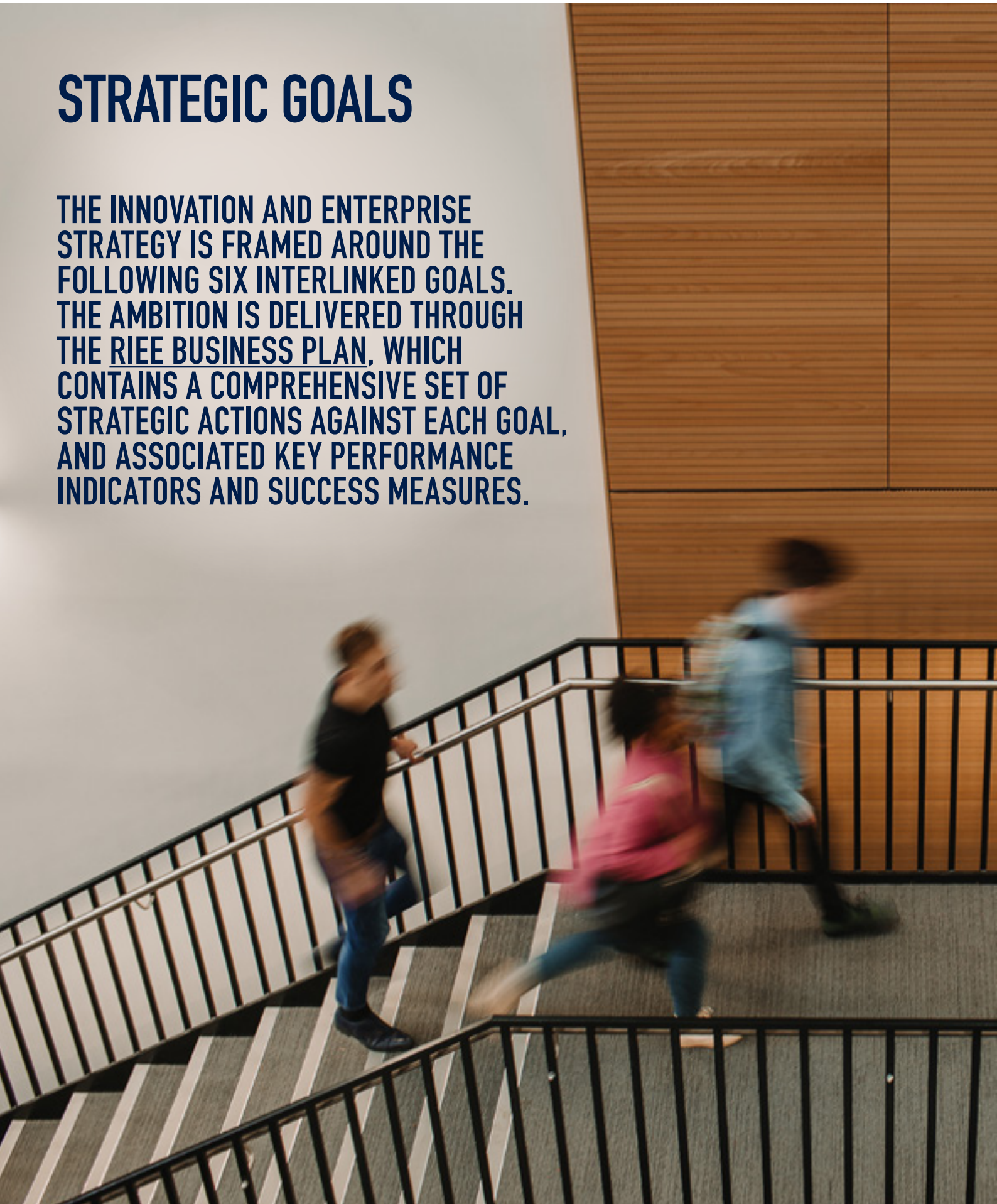
STRATEGIC AND POLICY DRIVERS

IN ADDITION TO UNDERPINNING THE UNIVERSITY'S 2025 MISSION AND AMBITIONS, BCU'S INNOVATION AND ENTERPRISE STRATEGY IS ALSO GUIDED BY A NUMBER OF KEY STRATEGIC DRIVERS THAT HAVE SHAPED OUR GOALS:

- **Income diversification:** Through the University's commercial trading arm BCU Enterprise, this Strategy will harness the potential of commercial income with a focus on increasing the volume and return on existing revenue generating activities; and diversify income through the identification of realistic and sustainable new revenue opportunities.

- **Reputational impact:** The goals with this Strategy continue our existing work to position BCU as the partner of choice for industry, cultural organisations and public service providers, based on distinctive partnerships of mutual value. Further, activity will drive our place-based mission and civic university commitment to understand and respond to regional socio-economic need and drive a position of thought leadership.

- **Regional economic growth:** This Strategy underpins the commitment from the 2025 Strategy to work closely with all parts of our city and region, its corporates, policy makers and its communities, to ensure that the University plays an active role in facilitating growth, innovation and productivity. This includes our ongoing focus to work with regional leaders in response to COVID-19 through, for example, targeted support for business resilience and recovery.

STRATEGIC GOALS

THE INNOVATION AND ENTERPRISE STRATEGY IS FRAMED AROUND THE FOLLOWING SIX INTERLINKED GOALS. THE AMBITION IS DELIVERED THROUGH THE RIEE BUSINESS PLAN, WHICH CONTAINS A COMPREHENSIVE SET OF STRATEGIC ACTIONS AGAINST EACH GOAL, AND ASSOCIATED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND SUCCESS MEASURES.

GOAL 1

To be recognised as the University *for* Birmingham through our role and impact:

Overview of Goal

We will build an effective plan to implement and embed our Public and Community Engagement Strategy, such that BCU is a recognised, proactive partner in social, cultural and economic development.

We will prioritise a voice for all and build trust to bring about change that addresses identified social need, working closely with all parts of our city and region.

We will establish appropriate governance and review our impact, monitoring our results.

Link to 2025 Strategy

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.
• Community presence and engagement.

GOAL 2

To facilitate global reach, driving horizontal working to underpin disruptive innovation:

Overview of Goal

We will encourage, support and grow global STEAM practice for all our communities to enhance our student experience, knowledge exchange and knowledge generation, cementing our distinct position with evidence.

We will maximise the benefits of STEAM multidisciplinary working to realise new international market opportunities that will deliver value for teaching and learning, research, innovation and enterprise.

Link to 2025 Strategy

University *for* Birmingham:
• The STEAM agenda.

Partnerships:
• International partnerships.

GOAL 3

To drive the growth, quality and ambition of knowledge exchange, embedded across all schools:

Overview of Goal

We will support, engage and inspire our academic community to deliver the best outcomes for our students, our research and our impact on the local economy, providing a clear roadmap of opportunity, leveraging partnerships and insight to support action.

We will ensure that our staff and students are developed and trained appropriately to understand and undertake their roles and responsibilities in the delivery of successful knowledge exchange.

We will recognise and reward the achievements of staff and students who perform high quality knowledge exchange activities.

We will drive continuous improvement, securing accreditation for our work and facilitate the sharing of best practice with our peers to ensure we always strive for quality.

Link to 2025 Strategy

Academic Excellence:
• Excellence in research.

Partnerships:
• Graduate outcomes.

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.

Academic Excellence:
• Student experience.

People and Values:
• Staff satisfaction.

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.
• Community presence and engagement.

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.

GOAL 4

To foster employment outcomes and inspire student enterprise, encouraging our student community to engage with enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Overview of Goal

We will provide high quality, accessible services to all students and graduates to facilitate entry into highly skilled employment and positive destinations.

We will actively drive and shape the skills agenda contributing to award-winning new approaches to address employer needs.

We actively engage with partners to drive innovation through our students, encouraging entrepreneurship as a key employment outcome.

We will cement BCU as a leading Institution for engaging with employers and partners to meet their organisational needs through tailored and easy access support infrastructure, and by securing innovative funding routes to drive reform and impact.

Link to 2025 Strategy

Partnerships:
• Graduate outcomes.

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.

University *for* Birmingham:
• The STEAM agenda.

Academic Excellence:
• Student experience.

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.
• Graduate outcomes.

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.

GOAL 5

To support regional economic growth, driving compelling valuable partnerships with an integrated communications and account management approach.

Overview of Goal

We will develop, maintain, and broaden partnerships through BCU Advantage and STEAMhouse platforms, and infrastructure.

We will support Corporates and SMEs to access new talent, expertise, facilities and enhanced networks, using our expertise and assets to create robust cases of success, and a clear roadmap of impact with a specific focus on Digital, Creativity, Health/ Wellbeing, Life Sciences and Environment.

We will provide clear access points and engagement mechanisms, which suit the needs of our stakeholders, partners and business.

Link to 2025 Strategy

University *for* Birmingham:
• The STEAM agenda.

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.

Academic Excellence:
• Excellence in research.

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.
• Graduate outcomes.

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.

GOAL 6

To inspire commercialisation and start-ups.

Overview of Goal

We will grow sustainable and generative funding which diversifies our income streams and facilitates knowledge exchange (KE) and knowledge generation.

We will create a framework which inspires a new generation of KE outcomes, rolling out BCU's commercialisation policies, training and infrastructure (space) to support more students and entrepreneurs to set up and establish their own businesses.

We will create the infrastructure to drive a robust revenue stream realised from the academic community, connecting with business to drive new knowledge through IP, consultancy and contract research, supported by the STEAMhouse Phase 2 building and staffing.

Link to 2025 Strategy

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.
• International partnerships.

University *for* Birmingham:
• The STEAM agenda.

Academic Excellence:
• Student experience.

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.
• Graduate outcomes.

University *for* Birmingham:
• The STEAM agenda.

Academic Excellence:
• Excellence in research.

Partnerships:
• Enterprise.
• International partnerships.

ALIGNMENT BETWEEN 2025 STRATEGY TARGETS AND INNOVATION AND ENTERPRISE STRATEGY ACTIVITY

The following table summarises how the Innovation and Enterprise Strategy will underpin the delivery of BCU's 2025 Strategy targets. More specifically, it presents the components of the 2025 Strategy that are either owned by or aligned with the Innovation and Enterprise Strategy, details the associated annual KPI (where applicable in the case of Enterprise income) or enabling activities, and summarises the targeted impact and/or outcomes to be realised by 2025.

2025 Strategy Mission/ Pillar	Aligned 2025 Targets	Target Owned by Innovation and Enterprise Strategy?	Innovation and Enterprise Strategy Annual KPI (where applicable) or Enabling Activity	Impact/ Outcome
University *for* Birmingham	STEAM: By 2025, all our students will have the opportunity to work across discipline boundaries.	✗	• Development of new toolkits, which include the application of STEAM principles. • Annual programme of academic STEAM engagement events held. • Support for growth in global STEAM practice to enhance our student experience.	• STEAM tools embedded in academic community to support interdisciplinary curriculum.
Academic Excellence	Research: £40m external grant capture.	✗	• Increased reach and impact through BCU Advantage and Partnership team brokering academic expertise to support industrial priorities including Health Wellbeing/ Life Sciences, Environment and Advanced Manufacturing.	• Clear view of academic knowledge base against calls and opportunities for collaboration. • Enhanced levels of contract and collaborative research, as measured by HE-BCI.
Partnerships	Enterprise: KEF outcomes in the upper quartile of our cluster group in at least 80% of measures.	✓	• Annual uplift in the volume of regional businesses formally assisted to start, grow or innovate through BCU Advantage products or services. • A fully implemented Public and Community Engagement Strategy. • Annual uplift in community start-ups attributed to BCU incubation, or entrepreneurship support. • Demonstrable impact evidenced through 100 case studies of activities and projects.	• Ranked as a top five KTP provider by UKRI. • Improved access to skilled talent to support economic productivity. • Award-winning impact for public and community engagement. • Improved stakeholder understanding of the role BCU plays economically, building on our Socio-economic Impact Study. • Enhanced breadth and depth of partnerships with businesses and city leaders to drive socio-economic growth, innovation and regional prosperity.
Partnerships	Enterprise: £80m enterprise income, as recorded through HE-BCI.	✓	• 20/21 Target: £13.3m • 21/22 Target: £13.0m • 22/23 Target: £15.7m • 23/24 Target: £18.5m • 24/25 Target: £19.5m	• Sustainable innovation campus, driving diversified income streams. • Award-winning Innovation - Addressing capacity to innovate, growing / addressing business survival and expanding the innovative capacity of the region. • Generation of new knowledge through IP, consultancy and contract research, driving robust and diversified revenue streams. • Highly skilled academic community attuned to commercialisation. • Delivery of Institutional income targets, with improved diversification of income specifically driving consultancy, IP, and collaborative and contract research, whilst maintaining regeneration and skills.
Partnerships	Enterprise: Innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship support and opportunities embedded in each undergraduate programme.	✗	• Annual uplift in new business registrations from students and graduates, resulting from STEAM Incubator and entrepreneurship support. • Build the capacity needed to ensure innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship support and opportunities are embedded in our undergraduate programmes.	• University of choice for driving start-ups and business support. • Enhanced opportunities for enterprise participation through BCU's STEAM programme, Incubator and STEAMhouse.
Partnerships	International Partnerships: Grow on campus international student recruitment to over 3,000 students.	✗	• Furthering brand awareness and profile raising on BCU in India through key existing and new strategic partnerships.	• International reach through commercial partnerships.
Partnerships	Community: Each university student supported to undertake voluntary work in the community, recognised through Graduate+.	✓	• Delivery of embedded volunteering programme to support student access to professional development opportunities and increase community engagement.	• Embedded public and community engagement approach that provides tangible impact on our local communities.
Partnerships	Graduate Outcomes: BCU is ranked in the top quartile amongst comparator institutions in relation to overall employment.	✓	• New programmes and targeted interventions to address higher-level skills gaps and reflect local labour market demands. • Delivery of strong employer engagement to drive graduate outcomes.	• Improved student experience and employability prospects, working with partners to address youth unemployment.