



Surrey Venture Studio – Comprehensive Q&A

Programme Overview

What is the Surrey Venture Studio programme?

A new initiative focused on the pre-incubation phase, supporting academics, students, and entrepreneurs in Surrey to shape business models and assess market potential.

Who is eligible to apply?

Academics with potential spin-out inventions, students with entrepreneurial ideas, and regional entrepreneurs seeking to validate concepts.

Application Process

How do I apply and what's the deadline?

Applications are open now and close on 16 January. The form is simple and tailored for idea-stage applicants. Resubmissions are allowed.

What information is required in the application?

Seven questions covering your idea, R&D plans, business aspirations, time availability, learning ambitions, expected outcomes, and your definition of success.

When will applicants find out if they can attend the workshop?

Week commencing 19 January.

What happens if the programme isn't right for me?

Organisers will signpost you to other suitable support programmes.



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Programme Structure

What are the key stages of the programme?

Two-day ideation workshop in February, followed by a six-month accelerator for selected projects.

What are the confirmed dates of the Ideation Workshops?

University of Surrey Ideation Workshop – February 5 and 9, 2026

Royal Holloway, University of London Ideation Workshop – February 12 and 16, 2026

University for Creative Arts Ideation Workshop – February 19 and 23, 2026

Open Call Ideation Workshop at Surrey County Council – February 26 and March 2, 2026

What is the time commitment for the accelerator?

Estimated 2–4 days per month, including monthly one-to-one mentoring, cohort workshops, and networking events.

Can I defer if timing doesn't work for the first cohort?

Yes, you can join the second cohort starting around May.

Catalyst Grant

How much is the grant and how many will be awarded?

£25,000 per project, 16 grants total (8 per cohort).

What can the grant be used for?

Activities including market testing, professional services (legal, IP advice), software tools, travel for customer engagement, consultants or interns.



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What can't the grant be used for?

Activities including salaries, bonuses, pure R&D, office space, entertainment, gifts, or political activity.

Can the grant be used for teaching buyout?

Ideally not, but may be reviewed internally if it's a barrier for academics.

Can the grant be used for coaching?

Programme already provides one-to-one mentoring and coaching-style support, so additional coaching is generally unnecessary.

Confidentiality & IP

Will information shared during workshops be confidential?

Yes. Participants sign an offer letter covering confidentiality. Group work will avoid disclosure of sensitive details. One-to-one sessions are fully confidential.

How is IP handled?

You are not required to disclose technical details. Focus is on market need and commercial opportunity. IP strategy support is provided during the accelerator.

Facilities & Support

Where are the incubator facilities located?

Options include Set Squared Surrey (Guildford), UCA campuses (Farnham and Epsom), and business hubs in libraries via Surrey County Council.

What networking opportunities are available?

Access to Surrey's innovation ecosystem, including Set Squared, V-Hive, UCA Games Incubator, Royal Holloway incubators, and the S100 Angel Investment Club.



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Eligibility & Criteria

Are there specific sectors or technologies targeted?

No. The programme is technology agnostic to encourage diverse ideas. Main requirement is scalability and growth potential.

Is the programme suitable for businesses already raising external funds?

If you're at the stage of developing an investment pitch deck, the programme may be too early for you. However, apply if unsure - organizers can signpost you to other support.

Programme Goals

What is the end goal of the accelerator?

To help participants progress toward founding a scalable business in Surrey. Outcomes vary by project stage but include market validation, business model development and preparation for launch.

Important Dates & Links

Application Deadline

16 January

Notification of Workshop Attendance

Week commencing 19 January

Confirmed Ideation Dates

University of Surrey Ideation Workshop – February 5 and 9, 2026

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Second Cohort Workshops

Expected May (dates TBC)

Application Form Link

[Surrey Venture Studio Application Form - Airtable](#)