

# IDEA FACTORY INFO PACK & FAQs 24/25



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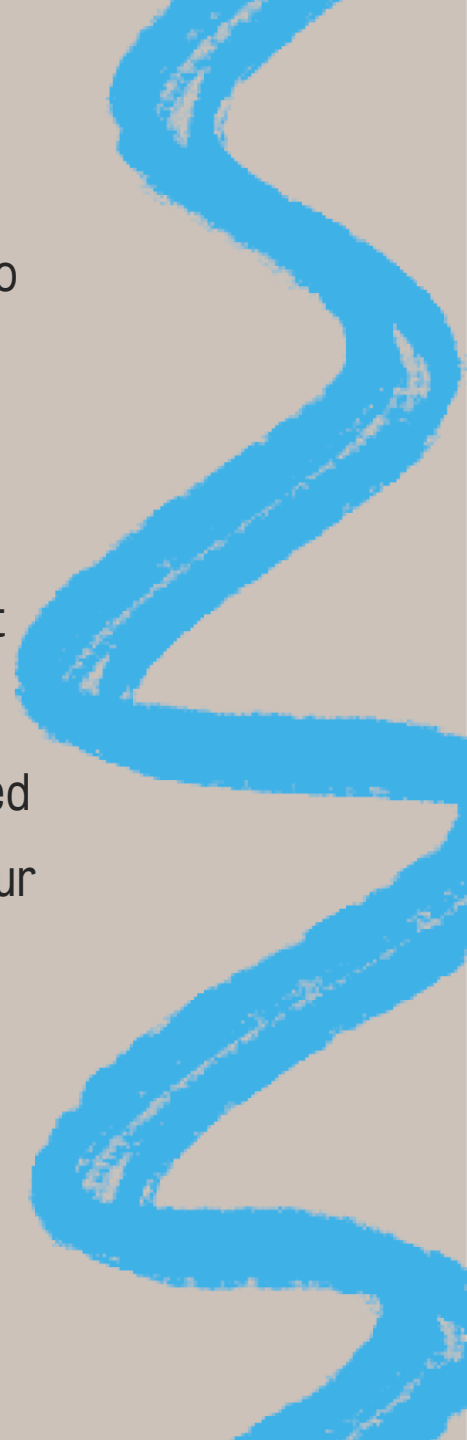
Make sure you receive all news and updates about the 2025 competition by signing up for the [dedicated mailing list here](#).



## WHAT IS IDEA FACTORY?

Idea Factory is King's College London's flagship idea generation competition. The competition aims to nurture the **biggest and best ideas** from across the university that have the **potential to grow into viable businesses**.

Participating in Idea Factory is a great way to win support to help make an idea a reality. Taking part in supporting workshops will give you skills in sustainably disrupting your idea, conducting thorough validation and pitching ideas with clarity and enthusiasm; you'll also gain confidence, meet like-minded people and have fun! Whatever your interest or passion, we want you to get creative and submit your ideas for new innovations, products or services.



## AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

To be eligible to apply for Idea Factory, you, your team and your idea must fulfil the following criteria:

- One team member is a King's **student, staff or alumnus** (the 'Lead Applicant')
- Open to solo-founders and teams
- Open to **all faculties and departments**
- The Lead Applicant **must** be available to attend the Bootcamp series and Pitch Off
- Your idea must be 'early-stage', i.e. **pre-revenue** and must not have won a previous grant
- Previous applicants and Semi-Finalists **CAN** apply again with the same idea



## WHAT CAN I WIN?

**Semi-Finalists:** 2x 1:1 coaching session with our Experts-in-Residence

**Finalists:** 3x 1:1 coaching session with our Experts-in-Residence based on your team's needs, limited access to our office space in Bush House

### Judges' winners:

- A share of a £8,000 prize pot
- 3x 1:1 mentoring sessions with our Experts-in-Residence
- Limited access to our office space in Bush House for 1 year

### People's choice winner

- £1,000
- Limited access to our office space in Bush House for 1 year



# WHAT DOES THE IDEA FACTORY PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

## STAGE 1: ATTEND OUR WORKSHOPS & SUPPORT SESSIONS (NOVEMBER 2024 – DECEMBER 2024)

Have an idea for a business already, or want to apply but don't know where to start?

Our dedicated [series of workshops](#) will help you to find, develop and communicate your idea effectively. All workshops will be online and recorded. **Book your place now** (further links will be added to our website):

- [Launch event](#) – Friday 1st November (online)
- [Sustainable and Ethical Disruption workshop](#) – Wednesday 6 November (online)
- [Validating Your Idea: The Theory workshop](#) – Wednesday 13 November (online)
- [Validating Your Idea: Theory into Practice workshop](#) – Wednesday 20 November (online)
- London University Startup Mixer — Monday, 18 November (in-person)
- Women Entrepreneur's Network Q&A panel – Tuesday 26 November (online)
- Office Hours (1:1s) — w/c 9 December (online)



## **STAGE 2: SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION (deadline: 5 JANUARY 2025)**

Using everything you've learnt from the workshops you've attended, **complete the application form by 23:59 on 5th January 2025** (live from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2024). The [application questions](#) are available to view in advance on our website.

Want some support on your Idea Factory application or validation process? [Book a 1:1 session here](#) – w/c 9th December

Note, this is *not* an Idea Feedback sessions, so come prepared with **specific questions** around your validation to date and your responses to the application questions, rather than questions about your idea more generally.

## **STAGE 3 – SEMI-FINAL BOOTCAMP & PITCH OFF PREPARATION (JANUARY 2025)**

20 teams progress to the Semi-Final Bootcamp. The King's-affiliated member of your team (the Lead Applicant) MUST be available to attend all elements of the Semi-Final Bootcamp, otherwise your team forfeits your Semi-Final place.

- Wednesday 29th January (12-7pm) – Semi-Final Bootcamp & networking and social (in-person)
- Friday 31st January – Group Crits (online, 1 hour timeslot)
- Sunday 2nd February, 23:59 – Deadline: submit your 3-minute Pitch video

The Entrepreneurship Institute team announces the 10 Finalist teams on Monday 3rd February

- w/c 3rd February – Pitching 1:1s (online, 1 hour timeslot)
- Monday 10th February 5-7pm – Q&A workshop for Finalist teams (in-person)
- Tuesday 11th February 6-9pm – Pitch Off (in-person)





## **STAGE 4: PITCH OFF (11<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2025)**

Using everything they've learnt in the Semi-Final Bootcamp, the 10 finalist teams will submit a 3-minute pitch video in advance, which will be used to shortlist the finalists by 3<sup>rd</sup> February.

On the evening of 11<sup>th</sup> February, the Finalist teams will deliver their pitches live, in-person, and have 5 minutes of Q&A from the judging panel. Judges TBC.

The 2025 Idea Factory winner(s) will be announced on the night!



# TIMELINE OVERVIEW

**NOV**

**DEC**

**JAN**

**FEB**

ALL



Launch event  
1/11/24



Application deadline:  
05/01/25



Pitch Off  
11/02/24



Workshops



Support sessions

SEMI-FINALISTS



Bootcamp + Group Crits

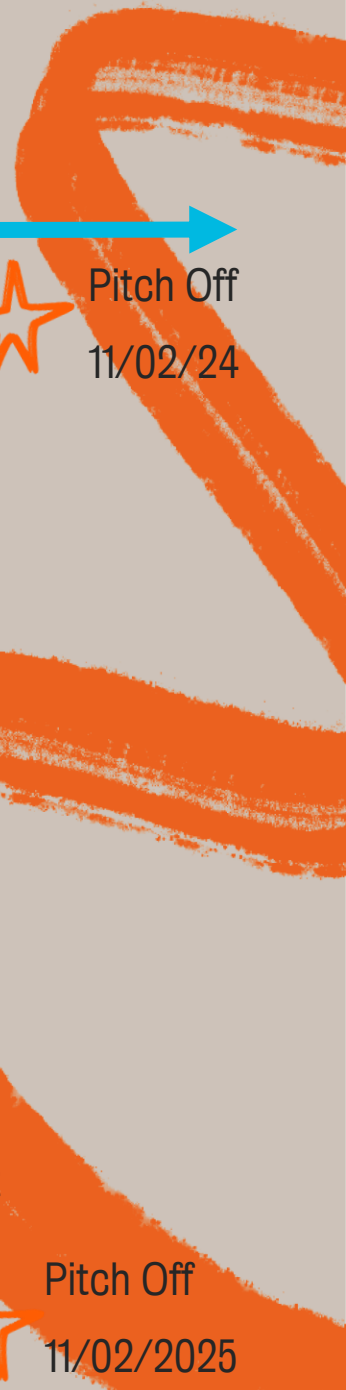
FINALISTS



Pitching Support



Pitch Off  
11/02/2025



# NOVEMBER

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	29/10 — IF Open Pitch Night			1/11 - IF Launch Event	2/11	6311
4/11	5/11	6/11	7/11 – IF Sustainable and Ethical Disruption	8/11	9/11	10/11
11/11	12/11	13/11 – IF Validation: The Theory	14/11	15/11	16/11	17/11
18/11 – Meet a Cofounder Event	19/11	20/11 – IF Validation: Theory into Practice	21/11	22/11	23/11	24/11
25/11	26/11— WEN: Q&A Panel	27/11		<b>Key:</b> <span style="background-color: #ff8c00;">Idea Factory event</span> <span style="background-color: #00bfff;">Idea Factory deadline/announcement</span> <span style="background-color: #ffff00;">Women Entrepreneurs Network event</span>		

# DECEMBER

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
						1/12 — Applications open
2/12	3/12	4/12	5/12	6/12	7/12	8/12
9/12 – Office Hours	10/12 – Office hours	11/12 – Office hours	12/12 — Office hours	13/12 — Office Hours	14/12	15/12
16/12	17/12	18/12	19/12	20/12	21/12	22/12

**Key:**

Idea Factory event

Idea Factory deadline/announcement

Women Entrepreneurs Network event

# JANUARY

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		1/1	2/1	3/1	4/1	5/1— Application deadline
6/1	7/1	8/1	9/1	10/1	11/1	12/1
13/1	14/1	15/1	16/1	17/1	18/1	19/1
20/1	21/1	22/1 — Semi Finalists announced	23/1	24/1	25/1	26/1
27/1	28/1	29/1 — Semi- Final Bootcamp	30/1	31/1 - Group Crits		

**Key:**

Idea Factory event

Idea Factory deadline/announcement

# FEBRUARY

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
					1/2	2/2
3/2 - Finalists announced	4/2 – Pitching 1:1s	5/2 – Pitching 1:1s	6/2 – Pitching 1:1s	7/2 – Pitching 1:1s	8/2	9/2
10/2 – Q&A Workshop	11/2– Idea Factory Pitch Off					

**Key:**

Idea Factory event

Idea Factory deadline/announcement

## CASE STUDIES

2024 saw three winning teams. Read more in the [press release](#).

- **Verified by Maudsley:** An AI-enabled platform providing NHS-backed quality assessments and verification for digital mental health tools, ensuring users can access safe, regulated apps and wearables.
- [anothermode](#): A search engine aggregator and universal shopping basket for second hand resale and clothing rental.
- [Rejazz](#): A marketplace for curated, preloved premium high-street and designer fashion.



The background features several thick, diagonal orange brushstrokes on a light gray background, creating a dynamic and textured effect.

# FAQs



## **CAN I ENTER ALONE OR ONLY AS A TEAM?**

You may enter the Idea Factory competition as a solo-founder, although teamwork is strongly encouraged! You won't be at a disadvantage if you apply alone.

The Lead Applicant will submit 1 application for the whole team.

## **IF I WANT TO ENTER AS A TEAM, HOW CAN I FIND TEAM MEMBERS?**

- We're excited to pilot our first London University Startup Mixer – a speed networking event for early-stage founders and interested collaborators, in partnership with UCL, Imperial, Queen Mary University of London, and LSE on November 18 — more details coming soon!

In the meantime, here are other great ways to meet potential team members:

- Attend our workshops & networking events
- Attend other events hosted by the Entrepreneurship Institute
- Speak to your classmates or members of societies you're involved in



## **OTHER MEMBERS OF MY TEAM ARE NOT KING'S COLLEGE LONDON STUDENTS, STAFF OR ALUMNI, IS THIS ALLOWED?**

Yes! Your team may include other team members who have no affiliation to King's, so long as one member of your team (the Lead Applicant) has a King's affiliation as outlined above.

## **CAN I ENTER IDEA FACTORY MORE THAN ONCE?**

If you are eligible, technically you can submit multiple applications with different ideas. However, we would advise you to focus on one idea to ensure you can dedicate enough time to conducting your customer research and validation to submit the strongest possible application.

## **CAN I BE PART OF MULTIPLE TEAMS?**

Again, technically yes, though we would advise that you focus your time on one team and one idea to ensure you are submitting the strongest possible application.

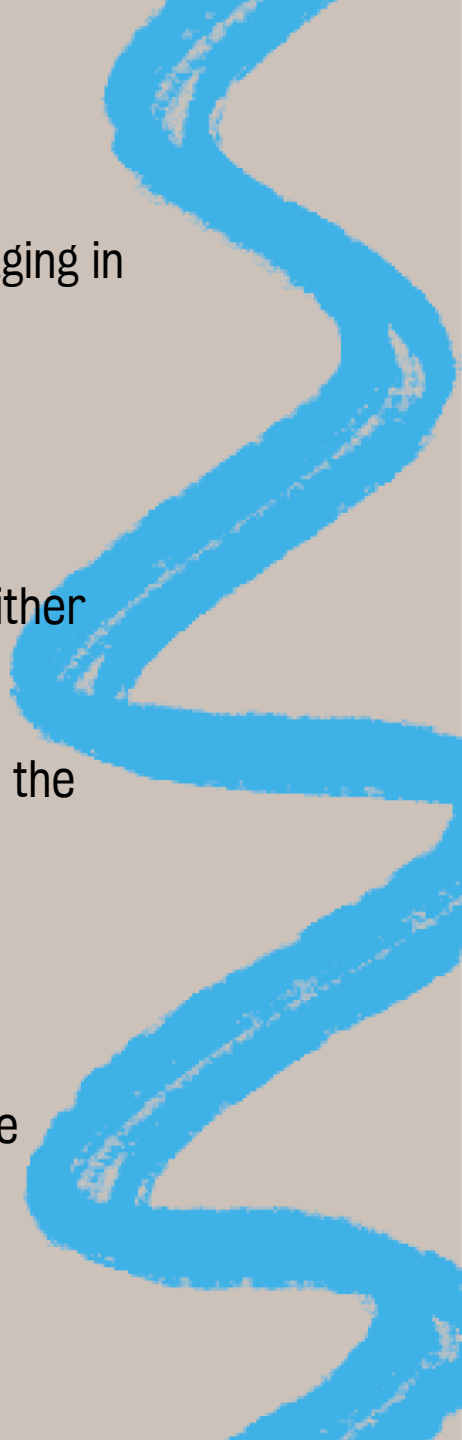
## **I'M AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ON A STUDENT VISA – CAN I APPLY?**

Technically yes, but the restrictions on a Student visa prevent you from being self-employed or engaging in business activity.

UKVI includes under 'business activity' (not an exhaustive list):

- setting up a business as a sole trader or under a partnership arrangement and that business is either trading or establishing a trading presence;
- being employed by a company in which the Student holds shares of 10% or more (including where the shares are held in a trust for the Student); or
- working for a company where they also hold a statutory role, such as a director.

You are permitted to engage in the customer research and the majority of the validation methods we discuss in our workshops, and this will not be considered business activity.



## **COULD I WIN IDEA FACTORY AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT??**

Whilst we want to support you and your idea, we also need to balance this with King's requirements as a Student Visa Sponsor and ensure that you stay within the restrictions of your Student Visa. As Idea Factory is an early-stage ideas competition, everything that we suggest within the workshops around validation and conducting customer research is permitted under your student visa.

In the event that the judging panel at the Pitch Off announces you as a winning team, we will have to consider on a case-by-case basis how to proceed with your prizes. This might involve, for example, allowing you to take up your mentoring opportunities, but not paying any prize money until you have finished your studies and moved onto a different visa category.

We cannot offer individual visa advice or guidance, so speak to King's Visa Advice team about your student visa ([advice@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:advice@kcl.ac.uk)) or seek your own independent legal advice.

## **HOW MANY TEAM MEMBERS CAN MY TEAM HAVE?**

There is no maximum number of team members, but only 3 team members can pitch. The Lead Applicant (i.e. the team member with the King's affiliation) must be available to attend all elements of the Bootcamp workshops and be available to pitch, otherwise the team forfeits their Semi-Final/Final place.

## **CAN I APPLY WITH AN IDEA FOR A CHARITY OR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE?**

Absolutely! Your idea doesn't have to be a for-profit business; we want to know that you understand the finances and business model behind the idea that you're proposing, as you'll have to get money from somewhere for your business to be viable.

## **DOES MY BUSINESS HAVE TO BE BASED IN THE UK/BE UK-CENTRIC?**

No, your business can be based anywhere in the world. We have previously had a winner of Idea Factory whose operations were in Malawi, for example.

## **DO I NEED TO ATTEND WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS IN-PERSON?**

The Idea Factory Launch event and ALL Idea Factory workshops will be online and recorded to watch after the event if you cannot attend 'live'. However, we would recommend attending workshops if you can, rather than relying on the recording, so you can get the benefit of the interaction with the facilitator and other attendees.

The Startup mixer, Bootcamp, Q&A workshop and Pitch-Off will be in-person.

## **IF I GET THROUGH TO THE SEMI-FINAL AND FINAL STAGES, HOW LONG ARE THE PITCHES?**

Pitches are 3 minutes long with a slide deck. You will submit a recording of your pitch by 2nd February for us to decide the 10 finalists. At the Pitch Off on 11th February, pitches will be delivered live.

## **HOW ARE THE WINNERS OF IDEA FACTORY DECIDED?**

We have an expert panel of judges during the Pitch Off, and through a 5-minute Question & Answer period after each pitch, are responsible for deciding the winners of Idea Factory and dividing up the £8,000 prize pot. Sitting on our judging panel in 2024 were:

- Dr Anna Rebmann, Lecturer in Social Entrepreneurship, King's Business School
- Farhan Lalji (Chief Value Adder at LTV Capital and Tech in Residence at the Entrepreneurship Institute)
- Hayley Collen (Director at Epiphron Limited)



## **I'VE MISSED IDEA FACTORY FOR THIS YEAR! HOW ELSE CAN THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP INSTITUTE SUPPORT ME?**

There's always next year to apply, but in the meantime, we are just about to launch our [Online Incubator](#) — a free, self-paced programme with essential tips and templates to help you bring your idea to life. Sign up [here](#) to stay updated!

Our workshop series is recorded, so catch up with the content from them to support your validation process too.

If you identify as a woman or non-binary, then our [Women Entrepreneurs Network](#) exists to increase your exposure to entrepreneurial skills, knowledge sharing and community building through events, workshops and a supportive community of 1000+ members to help you grow.






Any other questions, email [ei@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:ei@kcl.ac.uk)



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