

START UP VISA FAQS



WHEN CAN I APPLY?

We have two application windows per year. Check our website for the exact dates, but these usually run between April-May and October-November. All applications will be reviewed after the application window has closed. We will not accept any applications outside of these dates.

I AM A KING'S STAFF MEMBER. CAN I APPLY FOR A START-UP VISA?

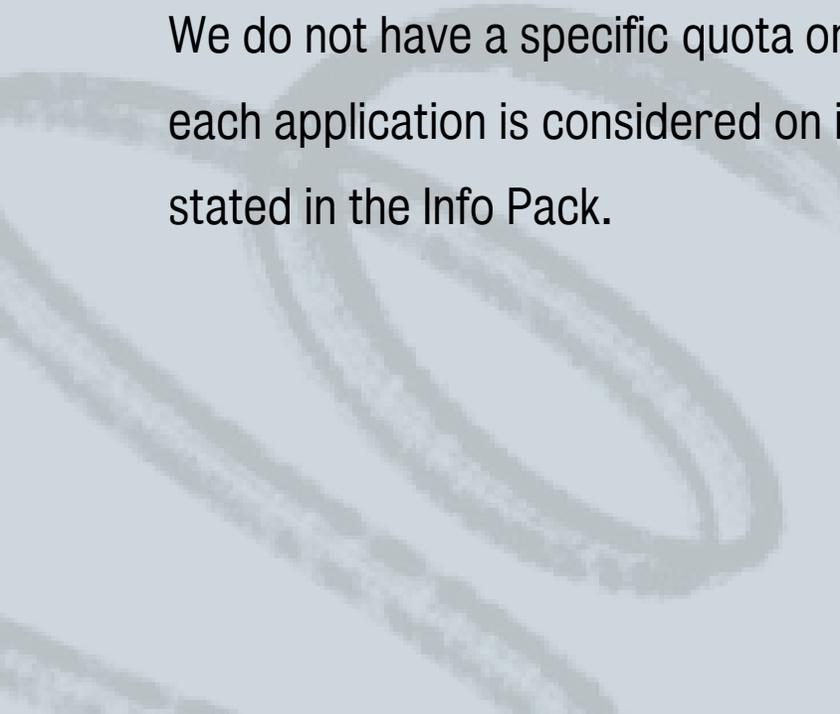
If you have completed degree-level study at King's and are now a staff member, then yes you can apply for a Start-Up visa endorsement.

I graduated from King's [X] years ago. Can I still apply for endorsement for a Start-Up visa?

Yes! Whether you graduated 5, 10 or 15 years ago (or more!), you can apply for endorsement for a Start-Up visa from King's. We have no upper time-limit for alumni in which to apply.



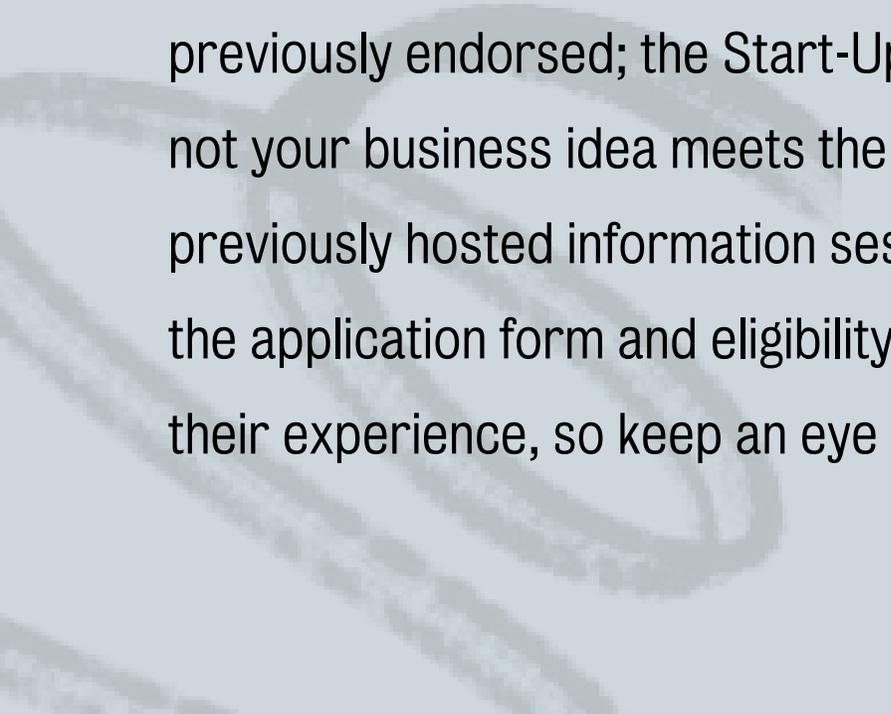
HOW MANY APPLICATIONS DOES KING'S ENDORSE EACH YEAR? WHAT IS THE LIKELIHOOD OF GETTING ENDORSED?



We do not have a specific quota or percentage of applications we endorse from each application window; each application is considered on its own merits against the innovation, viability and scalability criteria as stated in the Info Pack.



CAN YOU SHARE EXAMPLES OF PREVIOUSLY SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS AS A REFERENCE? OR CAN I CONTACT PEOPLE WHO HAVE PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED A START-UP VISA ENDORSEMENT FROM KING'S TO HEAR ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE?



Unfortunately we cannot share details of past applications or contact details of people who we have previously endorsed; the Start-Up Visa is an individual assessment, and is determined by whether or not your business idea meets the government's innovation, viability and scalability criteria. We have previously hosted information sessions in the run-up to a visa window opening, where we talk through the application form and eligibility, as well as invite a former Start-Up Visa endorsee to talk through their experience, so keep an eye out for these events nearer the time.

****ONLY APPLICABLE FOR SPRING/SUMMER APPLICATION WINDOW****

I AM ALSO APPLYING FOR THE KING'S20 ACCELERATOR PROGRAMME, AND WILL REQUIRE A VISA IF I AM ACCEPTED ONTO THE PROGRAMME? DO I NEED TO MAKE A SEPARATE APPLICATION FOR A START-UP VISA ENDORSEMENT?

This will depend on whether you have completed your studies at King's or not.

If you are a King's alumnus OR have completed your course's exams/coursework/dissertation requirements, then you should complete applications for both the King's20 and a Start-Up Visa endorsement.

Please bear in mind that you might be endorsed for a Start-Up Visa, but not get a place on the King's20 Accelerator.

If you are still a student, i.e. haven't completed your course's exams/coursework/dissertation requirements yet, then only submit an application for the King's20, as our Start-Up Visa process requires that you have completed all the requirements of your degree. If you are accepted onto the King's20 programme, then we will automatically provide you with a Start-Up Visa endorsement letter once your degree is completed. If you are not offered a place on the King's20, then you are still able to apply for a Start-Up Visa endorsement in the next application window after you have graduated from King's.

CAN I APPLY FOR A START-UP VISA AS PART OF A TEAM?

The Start-Up visa is an individual application and assessment, and so each member of your team will need to submit their own application if they also require endorsement for a Start-Up visa. If you are all shortlisted for interview, then you will have separate interviews and cannot attend each other's interview (unless specified otherwise). There is no guarantee that every member of the team would be endorsed. See the question below if your other team members are not affiliated to King's.

OTHER MEMBERS OF MY TEAM ARE NOT KING'S COLLEGE LONDON STUDENTS OR ALUMNI, IS THIS OKAY?

Yes this is fine, the other members of your founding team do not need to be affiliated to King's College London. However, they are unable to apply for endorsement from us if they also require a Start-Up visa. Check out the full list of [UK endorsing bodies](#).

I HAVE MULTIPLE BUSINESS IDEAS THAT I'M WORKING ON. CAN I SUBMIT THEM IN THE SAME APPLICATION?

Please limit your application to one business idea only; if you have multiple business ideas you'd like to submit, please do this in a separate application. We will consider each application on an individual basis against the stated criteria.

WHAT WORK DO I NEED TO HAVE COMPLETED ON MY BUSINESS IDEA SO FAR?

So long as you remain compliant with your current visa requirements, you may test out your business idea before making an application to ensure that your idea satisfies the innovation, viability and scalability requirements. This may include writing a business plan, negotiating contracts, initial research/testing, speaking to potential customers and incurring pre-trading costs with a view to deciding whether to start the business.

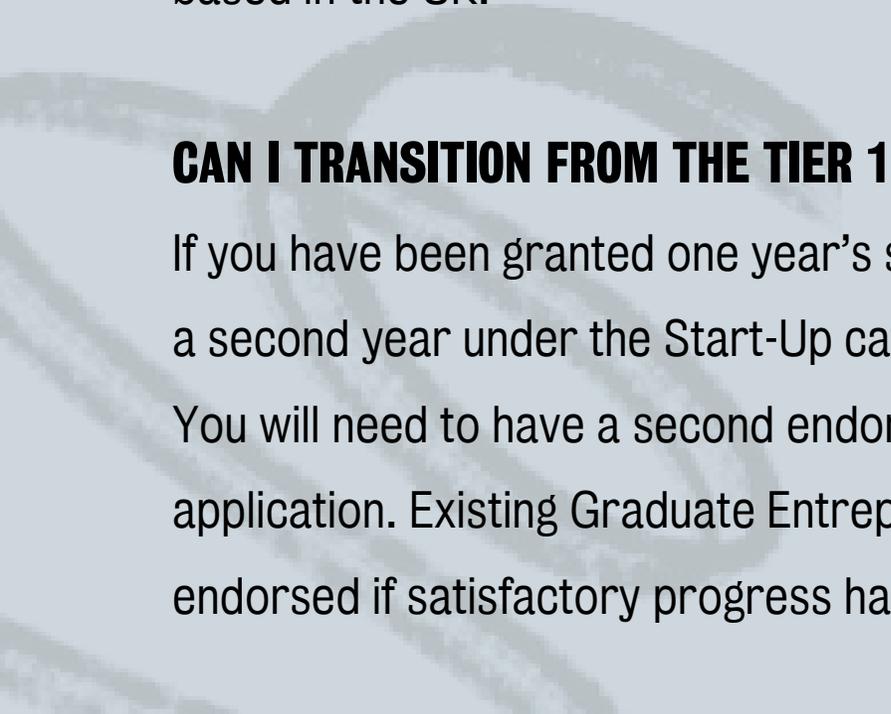
If you require further advice, the International Advice Team will be able to discuss and advise on your individual circumstances. [Book a meeting](#) with them to discuss your situation.



MY BUSINESS IDEA IS TO BRING A BUSINESS WHICH ALREADY EXISTS IN ANOTHER COUNTRY, AND TO START A BRANCH/FRANCHISE IN THE UK. IS THIS ALLOWED UNDER KING'S START-UP VISA ENDORSEMENT PROCESS?

The three government criteria of a business idea being innovative, viable and scalable still have to be met, whatever stage the business idea is at. We will not endorse any business ideas that appear to be solely franchises or UK offices of an existing business, without having a compelling reason for the company to be based in the UK.

CAN I TRANSITION FROM THE TIER 1 GRADUATE ENTREPRENEUR VISA TO A START-UP VISA?



If you have been granted one year's stay as a Graduate Entrepreneur, it is possible to extend your visa for a second year under the Start-Up category. The maximum total time available under both categories is 2 years. You will need to have a second endorsement from the University and make another visa application. Existing Graduate Entrepreneurs who do not fully meet the new Start-Up criteria may still be endorsed if satisfactory progress has been made with business development.

I AM NOT CURRENTLY IN THE UK. CAN I ATTEND MY INTERVIEW REMOTELY?

Yes; if you are invited to interview, you do not need to attend the interview in person. We are happy to conduct interviews remotely via a video conference.

CAN MY CO-FOUNDERS ATTEND MY INTERVIEW WITH ME?

The Start-Up visa is an individual assessment and application, and as such, you cannot bring your co-founders to your interview with you. If your co-founders are also applying for a Start-Up visa endorsement from King's and have been invited to interview, then your interviews will be conducted separately (unless specified otherwise).

CAN I APPLY AGAIN IF MY INITIAL APPLICATION IS UNSUCCESSFUL?

You are welcome to apply again for a Start-Up visa when the next application window opens. We will re-consider your application and review whether we think you have made sufficient progress and/or changes to your business idea to satisfy the criteria.

WHAT HAPPENS ONCE I HAVE MY VISA?

If your application is successful, your visa will be granted for two years. During this time you will need to spend the majority of your working time developing your business.

You will be allocated a business mentor from the Entrepreneurship Institute and will need to meet your mentor quarterly to report on the progress of your business, and they can also provide you with business advice. Monitoring begins from the date the visa recipient is awarded their visa. Failure to make reasonable progress with your business development or maintain contact as required can lead to the University withdrawing its endorsement. The University is obliged to report the following to the Home Office:

- If you fail to maintain contact as agreed
- There is evidence to suggest you are not complying with your conditions of stay
- You are no longer participating in the scheme
- A report can lead to your visa being curtailed.

CAN MY DEPENDANTS STAY WITH ME OR COME TO THE UK?

Details of any dependent family who plan to remain with you in the UK or who you intend to bring to the UK must be included in your endorsement letter. If you are in the UK and your spouse or partner and children are with you as your dependants they can apply to stay with you. If your spouse or partner and children are overseas they can submit an application for permission to join you as your dependants.

Candidates with dependants should seek individual advice about their endorsement, extra application procedures, additional maintenance requirements and application fees.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER MY 2-YEAR START-UP VISA EXPIRES?

Individual advice on switching into any other work category at the end of the Start-Up visa falls outside of the University's expertise. For specific help with applications for any other work-related visa you may need to seek advice from a specialist immigration adviser.

CAN YOU PROVIDE ME WITH ADVICE ON MY CURRENT VISA STATUS AND SWITCHING TO A START-UP VISA?

The Entrepreneurship Institute is not able to provide any advice relating to your visa status or personal circumstances. The International Advice Team will be able to discuss and advise on your individual circumstances.

They have lots of information online and run drop-in consultations which you can attend if you would like to talk to someone in-person; see [the International Advice website](#).

DOES KING'S ENDORSE APPLICATIONS FOR THE INNOVATOR VISA?

We currently only endorse applications for the Start-Up visa. If you think the Innovator visa is more appropriate for your business, see the [list of endorsing bodies for the Innovator visa](#).

If you have any other questions not answered here, you can email your query to innovation@kcl.ac.uk.



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