



Sustainability in Business

ASPIRE – Business Start-Up Journey

Ideas Hack

Students participating in the 15-week business start-up journey through ASPIRE (Accelerator Space for Innovation and Enterprise) are supported through all areas of starting a business, teaching students skills that are required to be a successful entrepreneur through interactive workshops and classes delivered by ASPIRE’s entrepreneurs in residence.



The Business Start-Up Journey has sustainability at its heart. It seeks to create awareness in student entrepreneurs not just of the responsibility of business to be sustainable, but of the opportunities which sustainability offers business. The Sustainable Development Goals are used as the foundation for the programme, from idea development sessions – inspiring students to build business around solving these global challenges – to understanding how finance and investment impact on communities.

On Saturday 29 October, student took part in an ideas hack to help them think about sustainability in their business ideas.

A huge number of everyday items and solutions around us have been adopted from nature. From pens, fabrics, microprocessors to trains, planes, principals of graphic design and entire ecosystems are mapped by businesses to make or improve their products and services.



To fully understand this amazing potential, we went to the wood! Not just some wood but, The Ancient Brotherhood Wood surrounding The University campus. The ancient woodland is a unique and irreplaceable habitat which covers less than 2% of the land area of the UK. Here students heard from a member of the sustainability team talk about the problems of product obsolescence, unsustainable materials and circular economy. They were than asked to take a walk in the woods and reflect on their ideas to ask does this product or idea help or is it part of the problem. Is there anything I can change to reduce the impact?