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Welcome

Swinburne Elevate (Accelerator) Program

June 2025



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Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation, who are the Traditional Owners of the land on which Swinburne's Australian campuses are located in Melbourne's east and outer-east, and pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We are honoured to recognise our connection to Wurundjeri Country, history, culture, and spirituality through these locations, and strive to ensure that we operate in a manner that respects and honours the Elders and Ancestors of these lands.

We also respectfully acknowledge Swinburne's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, alumni, partners and visitors.

We also acknowledge and respect the Traditional Owners of lands across Australia, their Elders, Ancestors, cultures, and heritage, and recognise the continuing sovereignties of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations.

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Who is the Swinburne Innovation Studio?

The Swinburne Innovation Studio is the University's hub for entrepreneurship, innovation and venture **creation**. We connect founders, researchers, students and industry to build and grow high potential ventures that solve real-world problems.

What we do

- Provides a platform for founders to develop and scale their ventures through structured programs (like Elevate)
- Offer mentoring, coaching and founder-first support
- Connect startups to Swinburne's research, talent, capital, infrastructure and partners
- Champion innovation that's scalable, sustainable and impact-driven



Website

swi.nu/innovation

Email

innovationstudio@swin.edu.au



Meet our Swinburne Commercial Innovation Team



Dr Werner van der Merwe

Vice President (Innovation and Enterprise)



Abhay Seth

Director, Commercial Innovation



Dr Caroline Herd

Head of Commercialisation – Health and MedTech



Roni Habbal

Head of Commercialisation – Innovative Planet



Tom Forbes

Head of Commercialisation – Space and Aerospace



Tathagath Mariswamy

Commercialisation Manager - Space and Aerospace



Zahra Shahbazian

Expert in Residence



David Kay

Intellectual Property Commercialisation Manager



Anu Mavilakandy

Intellectual Property Commercialisation Manager



Audrey Jean-Baptiste

Head of Commercial Programs & Operations



Dr Naveen Jason

Commercialisation Analyst



Jenny Bevis

Senior Coordinator, Innovations Program (External)



Sarah Barter

Senior Coordinator, Events and Partnerships



Ge Li

Marketing and Communications Coordinator



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Swinburne Elevate Program Overview

12-week Accelerator program

As a Swinburne Elevate Venture, you receive*:

- **Balanced & Tailored Support:** A mix of immersive workshops, dedicated time to work on your business, personalized mentoring, coaching, and ongoing accountability to drive real progress
- **Supportive Founder Community:** Be surrounded by a like-minded, ambitious cohort of up to 8 startups going through the journey with you
- **Equity-Free Funding:** A\$10,000 distributed in instalments to fuel your startup journey
- **Professional Services Support:** Up to A\$10,000 for essential legal and financial services
- **Rent-Free Workspace:** Three months of co-working space at Swinburne's Hawthorn campus
- **Innovation Ecosystem Access:** Full support and resources from Swinburne's extensive innovation network
- **Powerful Connections:** Direct access to world-leading industry experts, entrepreneurs, mentors, and investors
- **Pitch Opportunity:** Unique chance to present at the flagship Venture Cup Pitch Night in front of investors and partners

*Conditions apply – visit the website for more information.

Program period: 5 August –28 October



Elevate Program Eligibility

Who the program is built for

We're looking for ambitious, early-stage ventures with market-ready solutions that are ready to grow.

- **Stage of venture**
Seed or pre-seed with a MVP, validated problem and early customer traction
- **Venture focus**
Technology-based and innovation-driven
- **Business model**
Scalable with commercial potential
- **Incorporation**
Need to be an Australian registered business
- **Connection to Swinburne**
Open to both Swinburne-affiliated ventures led by students, alumni, researchers and staff as well as external ventures that align with Swinburne's strengths (e.g. medtech, spacetech, sustainability tech, advanced manufacturing)
- **Purpose & impact**
Focussed on solving a real validated problem.

Other considerations:

- We welcome companies that have already taken investment.
- We understand that deep tech and hardware-based ventures often have longer commercialisation timelines – we still encourage you to apply!
- We welcome founding teams and solo founders.



Swinburne Strengths

Driving research and innovation across key strategic domains

1. Space and Aerospace

Our global reputation in astrophysics, supercomputing and space aligns with expertise in space technology, aerospace, advanced materials, optical and quantum communications, engineering and instrumentation, visualisation and satellite data analysis, and future air mobility.

2. Medical Technology and Health Innovation

Our skills in mental health and brain science, combined with our expertise in co-design and clinical translation of medical technologies (MedTech) contributes to impactful outcomes in digital health, mental health, assistive technology, medical devices, biomedical science and engineering, clinical and allied health, and MedTech manufacturing.

3. Innovative Planet

We have a passion for sustainability and are dedicated to achieving a carbon neutral world by 2050 or earlier. Our research brings together sustainable materials, clean energy and hydrogen, the circular economy, and smart energy management, with social sciences and humanities, contributing to the creation of a sustainable future.

4. Innovative Society

We lead social innovation in the digital economy by combining the wealth of social sciences and behavioural sciences with our expertise in cutting-edge design, technology development, data analytics, business and communications. We drive innovative social practice through novel methods, data, and people networks. We work at the intersection of social challenges and technological potential, striving for greater social equity and digital inclusion.

5. Manufacturing Futures

We position ourselves at the junction of design, business, engineering and information systems. By integrating advanced manufacturing and design into the global value chain to capture the benefits of advanced manufacturing, Industry 4.0 and digital twins, we are securing Australia's industrial future.

6. Digital Capability

We develop and utilise digital research technologies that push above and beyond traditional business and industry boundaries – secure communications, artificial intelligence, data science and analytics, and quantum computing. We aim to be an international leader in digital research technology solutions with a focus on significant partnerships that have strong social and economic impact.

Elevate Program Structure

What to expect, and why it works

In person commitment

High-impact, in-person Tuesdays from August 5 to October 28 (9:30 am – 4:30 pm) at Swinburne's Hawthorn campus. Each Tuesday blends interactive expert-led sessions, 1:1 mentoring, focused cohort collaboration, and dedicated time to work on your venture, designed to maximise traction and build a strong founder community.

Milestone-Driven Progress

Each week is designed to keep you accountable and on track. You'll work toward clearly defined milestones tied to key "trajectory changing moments", unlocking connections, capital, and real growth. This is a working accelerator, not a classroom.

Founder presence

At least one founder is expected to attend each week to stay aligned and maintain program momentum

Tailored support

1:1 mentoring and deep dives with our mentors and team to address your startup's specific challenges and opportunities.

Monthly masterclasses

Online sessions with national experts to extend your learning across key topics.

Final showcase

Participation in Swinburne's Venture Cup on 28 October, where you'll pitch your venture and gain exposure to further investors, mentors and industry partners.



Elevate Program Focus Areas

What we'll tackle, and how it drives growth

Weeks 1-6 | Commercial Model & Customer Focus

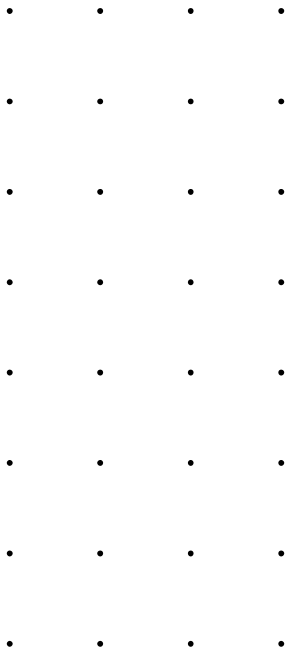
Focus: sharpen your value proposition, deepen customer understanding & strengthen your market position

- Refining value proposition and commercial model
- Deepening customer insights and segmentation
- Strengthening revenue model/s and pricing
- Brand positioning and strategic marketing
- Competitive advantage and differentiation
- Solidifying traction and market delivery

Weeks 7-12 | Operationalising & Investor Readiness

Focus: Build operational capability, prepare investor materials, and develop a strategy for capital and growth

- Legal, IP and governance readiness
- Accounting system, budgeting, financial operations
- Team and culture building
- Investor documents: pitch deck, IM, term sheets
- Fundraising strategy, negotiation, capital planning



Note: Subject to change. Additional topics to be added that specifically address the needs of the companies in the cohort.



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Swinburne Venture Cup 2025

Your stage to pitch to investors, partners and the community

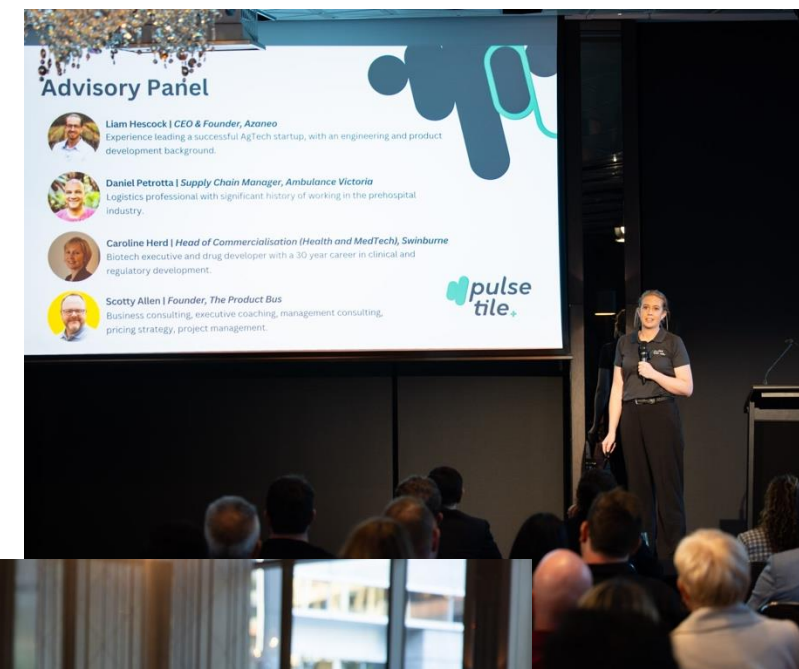
The Swinburne Venture Cup is Elevate's pitch night event and end of year celebration. It is your opportunity to pitch your venture live to an audience of investors, industry leaders, ecosystem partners and the broader Swinburne innovation community.

It is more than just a pitch. It's a platform to:

- Showcase your progress and potential
- Build traction through visibility and momentum
- Share your story with purpose, clarity and confidence
- Gain exposure to active investors and potential collaborators
- Practice pitching in a high impact, real-world setting
- Win prizes awarded to the best startups and pitches
- Position your venture for future opportunities beyond the program
- Network, network, network!



28 October 2025 + More to be announced!



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Swinburne Ventures Limited

Backing high potential ventures through research, capability and capital

Swinburne Ventures Limited (SVL) is Swinburne's in-house investment fund, supporting both Swinburne-affiliated and external ventures to scale through access to research expertise, strategic partnerships and capital. SVL often co-invests and collaborates with aligned investors and venture funds to amplify impact and growth.

SVL supports ventures by

- Partnering with founders to accelerator commercial outcomes
- Providing access to Swinburne's world-class research and talent
- Supporting the development and commercialisation of IP
- Offering investment pathways:
 - For Swinburne-affiliated companies through direct Equity Investment
 - For external companies through Research for Equity Investment

Note: Participation in the Elevate program does not guarantee a funding or partnership deal with SVL, but opportunities can be explored throughout and after the program based on fit and potential alignment.



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Important dates

Event	Date
Applications open	Wednesday 4 June 2025
Applications close	11.59pm, Sunday 6 July 2025
Interviews	Monday 21 July– Friday 25 July 2025
Application outcome	Tuesday 29 July 2025
Program starts	Tuesday 5 August 2025
Last session	Tuesday 21 October 2025
Pitch night	28 October 2025



How to apply

1. Apply via the online application form by scanning the QR code
2. Please ensure to read the questions carefully and **provide responses to all questions**. Do not leave boxes blank. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
3. You will need to record a **3-minute** pitch video introducing your startup and provide us with your pitch deck.
4. If you have any questions regarding your application, please don't hesitate to contact the team via email:
at innovationstudio@swin.edu.au



Applications close 11.59pm (AEST) 6 July 2025.

What to include in your pitch video

Your video should feature your face, ensuring clarity and good audio quality throughout. If there are multiple founders, one representative can present on behalf of the team, or you can feature multiple speakers. The video does not need to be a presentation of the pitch deck. It does not need to follow the same format and does not need to include slides or visual aids.

Please cover the following points:

1. Introduce yourself and your **team**.
2. Describe the **problem** your startup is addressing.
3. Present your **solution** and explain how it works.
4. Highlight the **impact** your solution will have on the market.
5. Explain **why** you want to participate in our program.



What to include in your pitch deck

Problem

- Clearly define the problem your startup is addressing.
- Provide context and any relevant data to highlight the significance of the problem.

Target Market and Market Analysis

- Identify your target market
- Include market size, growth potential, key trends.
- Provide insights from your market research.

Solution

- Explain your product or service and how it works.
- Highlight the unique value proposition and how it solves the problem.
- Indicate current tech readiness level (If applicable) and projected TRL milestones.

Business Model

- Describe your business model and how you plan to generate revenue.
- Include any key partnerships, channels, and go to market strategy.

Financial Modelling

- If available, provide an overview of your financial projections (include revenue forecasts, profit margins, key financial metrics).

Traction to Date

- Showcase any progress or milestones achieved so far.
- Include metrics like user growth, proof of concept trials, sales, partnerships, or any other achievements.

Team

- Introduce your team members and their roles.
- Highlight relevant experience and expertise.

Plan

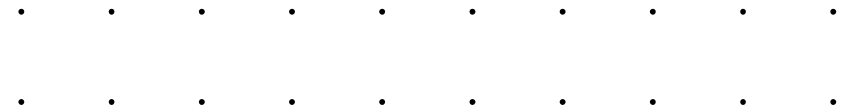
- Provide next steps in your business plan, including product development and go-to-market strategy.

Utilisation of Funds

- Outline how you will use the \$10k equity-free funding, and up to \$10K service provider funding provided as part of the program.
- Provide your plans for future fundraising rounds, including the amount and anticipated valuation (if known), and high-level use of funds.

Stay up to date

Follow us on LinkedIn



Website: swi.nu/innovation
Contact us via email: innovationstudio@swin.edu.au



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Success Stories

Here are just a few of the many successful graduates from the Elevate (Accelerator) program:



Nexobot - 2024

Founded by Swinburne alum Dominic Lindsay. Following their participation in Swinburne's 2023 Venture Cup and the 2024 Elevate Program, Nexobot has used the insights gained from these programs to develop their product further and steadily expand their market presence. By leveraging 3D-printed components, [Nexobot](#) is helping small warehouses reduce the barriers to entry for warehouse automation.

"I feel that our business is in a much better position to take on the next stage of our growth after participating in the Elevate Program, Spending time with other founders working on businesses at similar stages has given me a great network of peers to draw on as I continue to build this business" says Dominic Lindsay, Nexobot co-founder.



Pulsatile Innovations - 2024

Founded by [Elleesha King](#), a former participant of Swinburne Innovation Studio's [Initiate Program](#). [Pulsatile Innovations](#)' flagship product Pulse Tile is a cutting-edge MedTech device designed to aid in suspected cardiac arrest cases. It quickly detects the presence – or absence – of a pulse, providing rescuers with immediate feedback on whether CPR is necessary.

"I found the Elevate Program extremely beneficial to my early stage start up journey. The team at Swinburne's Innovation Studio were incredibly approachable, supportive and shared a wealth of relevant knowledge and advice," says Elleesha, Pulsatile Innovations founder.



Fluency - 2023

Founded by then Swinburne student Oliver Farnill and co-founder Finnlay Morcombe, Fluency's business idea was an automated way to document processes which they brought into the 2023 Elevate program. Fluency used the funding, mentoring and connections they received in Swinburne's Pre-Accelerator and Accelerator programs to gain customers and scale their business. Fluency is now valued at \$3 million, has received SVL funding and has clients in Australia, Singapore and Japan with 50 more in the pipeline

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Q&A



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Thank you



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