MIDLANDS ENGINE

MIDLANDS SPINOUTS & INNOVATION INVESTMENT

Contents

This report was commissioned by the **Invest in UK University - Midlands Campaign** and draws primarily on analysis of Dealroom data, accurate as of January 2025.

Executive summary

This report seeks to understand and map the spinout and alumni-founded business networks of universities in the Midlands - their scale, significance and investors.

"Since 2010, these Midlands universities have spun out 169 companies – 1.8% of all spinouts globally, and 14.5% of spinouts in the UK.

"The majority of the spinout productivity occurs outside of the region, with only 19.7% of the estimated GVA generated in the Midlands

85 UK universities have generated spinouts, including 15 universities in the Midlands. Since 2010, these Midlands universities have spun out 169 companies – 1.8% of all spinouts globally, and 14.5% of spinouts in the UK.

However, the Midlands has a challenge in retaining this commercialisation in the region: **only 62% of Midlands university spinouts are actually founded in the region**, representing a possible 'loss' of $1.7bn in company valuation and approximately 1,800 jobs.

Although there are a number of factors that drive location decisions (including, notably, when the business has spun out of collaboration between multiple universities), the Midlands suffers the greatest lost growth of any UK region - with 78.4% of Northern and 88.8% of Scottish university spinouts founded in their respective region/country.

Midlands university spinouts generate in excess of £768m GVA annually, and significantly higher GVA per employee (£129,271) than the Midlands average (£59,829).

However, for roles actually based in Midlands, this figure is lower at £88,345. In fact, the majority of the spinout productivity occurs outside of the region, with only 19.7% of the estimated GVA generated in the Midlands.

These spinouts operate in a number of sectors, with life sciences and pharmaceuticals the most common industries, although there is also a significant presence of energy-related spinouts based within the Midlands.

With regards to the Invest in UK R&D Campaign perspective, the Midlands has a particularly strong commercial offer across five major sectors: health and life sciences; zero carbon energy; creative and digital industries spaces, and some business activity in agri-tech. There is also limited transport technology enterprises which have transferability from several energy businesses.

The commercial innovation impact of Midlands universities goes well beyond their academic base to the alumni community. **Midlands alumni have founded 3,593 tech start-ups globally since 2010**, collectively worth $113.5bn and employing an estimated 114,000 people. These include 23 unicorns including major brands such as Monzo, Shopify, DFINITY, Darktrace, Starling Bank, Clubhouse, and Calm Health.

While just over half (1,846 – 51.3%) of these businesses are headquartered in the UK (valued at more than $46.9bn and employing ~53,700 people), **only 214 (5.9%) of these companies were founded in the Midlands**, and 213 are currently headquartered in the region, employing ~4,600 people, with collective valuation in excess of $2.3bn.

Note: all data correct as of January 2025

Note on methodology

This report has been compiled using analysis of Dealroom's proprietary data portal which tracks 3,205,190 start-ups (primarily tech companies and those that fundraise) around the world.

The Data City platform, which partners with Dealroom, has also been used to enable further interrogation of the data.

For comparison, Dealroom identifies 955 active UK spinouts, whilst Beauhurst report 1,317 active spinouts founded since 2011. Dealroom presents 42.7% of UK spinouts as at seed stage in Jan 25, while Beauhurst reported 52.7% at seed stage in Jan 24.

To compare counts by institution – founded since 2011:

	Jan-25	Jan-24
HEI	Dealroom	Beahurst
University of Warwick	45	47
University of Nottingham	40	39
University of Birmingham	29	34
Loughborough University	6	17
Aston University	7	11
Cranfield University	7	9

The majority of the analysis in this report focuses on businesses founded since 2010 due to more reliable insights and tracking across platforms for these enterprises. Estimate valuations are provided based on Dealroom estimates, which where provided draw on more recent valuations or estimations calculated from last funding round performance.

This exercise looks at business populations in the ITL 1 West and East Midlands regions, which includes Northamptonshire (but notably not Cranfield in Bedfordshire, which is considered East Anglia).

Start-ups & spinouts in the Midlands

Since 2010, 5,550 tech companies and start-ups, with a collective valuation in excess of $15.9bn, employing an estimated 109,000 people have been founded in the Midlands[1] and tracked by Dealroom.

5,429 are still operational - worth $15.7bn and employing an estimated 94,000 people - whilst 209 have been acquired (employing 13.7k and worth £3.9bn). Of these, 121 (2%) were spinouts, of which 111 remain operational (2 have been acquired and 8 closed). They are valued at $558m, employing approximately 700 people.

However, only 95 of these spinouts founded in the region are from Midlands universities, collectively valued at $455m and employing 624 people. Of Midlands start-ups, 35 companies have gone on to raise more than £15m in funding rounds - 791 have self-funded their growth entirely.

Only 4 of these successful fundraisers are considered full spinouts: (Nanosyrinx, Creavo Medical Technologies, and Impression Technologies in Coventry, and Cheesecake Energy in Nottingham).

Some of the most successful, such as Hungry Panda ($500m valuation, now based in London but launched in Nottingham), were founded by students at Midlands universities and utilised incubator programmes.

Others, such as Nourish3d (valued at $72m), have specifically cited the university ecosystem in the region as deciding factors in where they were founded.

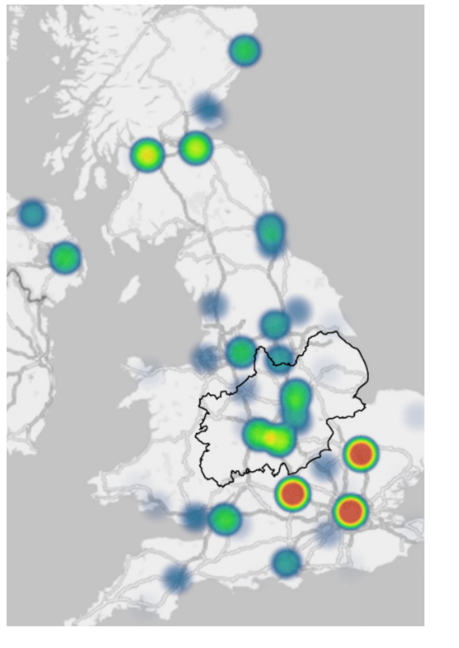
University spinouts

Nationwide, 85 universities have produced spinouts, whilst in the Midlands, 15 universities have produced spinouts.

1,151 spinouts from UK universities have been founded since 2010 (12.4% of the worldwide total). **1,078 remain active, representing 12.2% of global spinouts.**

Midlands universities have generated 169 of these - 14.5% of all UK spinouts and 1.8% of global spinouts - with 160 active (14.8% of active in the UK, 1.8% of global total).

As the map on the right shows, there is a significant cluster of spinout-generating institutions in the Midlands, demonstrating the region's vibrant commercialisation ecosystem.



1. ITL 1 – East and West Midlands including Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire
2. The Midlands population is approximately 0.13% of the world population, but responsible for 1.8% of spinouts

UK spinout geography

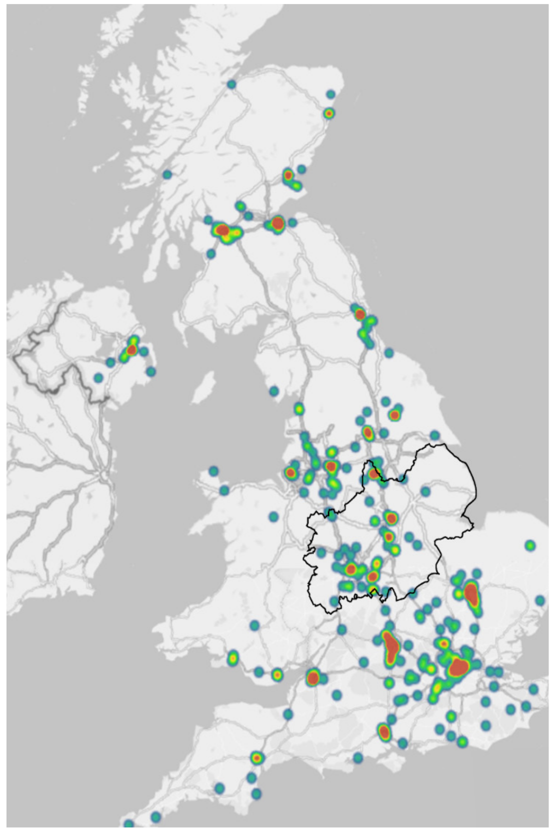
The map on the right shows spinout locations by registered address. Although business retention is a challenge in the Midlands, there is a clear concentration or 'clustering' of spinouts in the region, similar to the likes of the the Golden Triangle, Manchester-Leeds-Sheffield belt, and the central belt of Scotland.

When considering the geography of spinouts and the impact of universities within an area, it is important to recognise that, whilst spinouts may register and launch near (or in) their source institution(s), they may also launch in a different location.

This can be due to a variety of factors, such as the company resulting from collaboration between multiple institutions; market access; proximity to supply chain or beneficial assets, or access to talent. As such, it is important to consider spinouts by institution, as well as founding and current headquarter location.

The table opposite highlights the locations of UK spinouts, including the top 3 highest-valued spinout by valuation founded since 2010 for each region and devolved administration.

It also shows the number of spinouts currently headquartered in that area (note these companies were not necessarily founded in the region or even if they were, may not have been founded by universities in that region).



Spinout count by university, with the Midlands highlighted

UK regional analysis

There are three Midlands universities in the top 15 spinout-generating universities: Warwick (6th), Birmingham (10th) and Nottingham (12th – notably just behind Manchester). The number of Dealroom tracked spinouts by university is listed in the Appendix.

Table 1: UK regional analysis

Region/country	Active	Acquired	Closed	Total	Top spinouts by valuation founded since 2010
South East	241	27	17	285	Oxa (b. 2014, $580m, Oxford) OMass Therapeutics (b. 2016, $498m, Oxford) Base Genomics (b. 2019, $410m, Oxford)
Greater London	215	33	13	261	Gyroscope Therapeutics (b. 2016, $1.5bn, London) Synthesia (b. 2017, $1bn, London) NightStar Therapeutics (b. 2014, $877m, London)
Scotland	180	28	16	224	Resolution Therapeutics (b. 2017, $503m, Edinburgh) Enough (b.2015, $231m, Glasgow) Chemify (b. 2019, $285m, Glasgow)
East Anglia	181	27	15	223	Darktrace (b. 2013, $5.8bn, Cambridge) Centessa Pharmaceuticals (b. 2021, $1.9bn, Cambridge) Apollo Therapeutics (b. 2016, $1.1bn, Stevenage)
West Midlands	120	3	12	135	NanoSyrinx (b. 2019, $79m, Coventry) Aston EyeTech (b. 2014, $33m, Birmingham) Medherant (b. 2015, $25m, Coventry)
North West	84	4	4	92	RedX Pharma (b. 2010, $129m, Macclesfield) Econic Technologies (b. 2011, $69m, Macclesfield) TropiCell (b. 2024, $59m, Manchester)
East Midlands	76	4	5	85	Isomab (b. 2022, $59m, Nottingham) Cheesecake Energy (b. 2016, $28m, Nottingham) 4D Biomaterials (b. 2018, $27m, Nottingham)
Yorkshire Humber	70	8	6	84	Optalysys (b. 2013, $166m, Wakefield) The Floow (b. 2012, $69m, Sheffield) Rinri Therapeutics (b. 2018, $79m, Sheffield)
South West	72	4	7	83	Ziylo (b. 2014, $822m, Bristol) Ultraleap (b. 2013, $475m, Bristol) ICOMAT (b. 2019, $135, Bristol)
Northern Ireland	50	1	11	62	Axial3D (b. 2014, $109m, Belfast) Re-Vana Therapeutics (b. 2015, $71m, Belfast) Cirdan (b. 2010, $59m, Lisburn)
North East	47	2	6	55	Advanced Electric Machines (b. 2016, $182m, Sunderland) Low Carbon Materials (b. 2019, $24m, Seaham) Changing Health (b. 2015, $24m, Newcastle)
North America	36	14	2	52	Pretzel (b.2019, $435m, Boston) Transition Bio (b. 2020, $250m, Cambridge) Inivata (b. 2014, $210m, Morrisville)
Wales	26	3	6	35	Nanotether Discovery Services (b.2012, $17m, Cardiff) Optimise AI (b. 2023, $6m, Cardiff) Kaydiar (b. 2018, $4m, Swansea)
UK (exact location unknown)	26	1	1	28	
Europe	17	4	3	24	Carrick Therapeutics (b. 2015, $475m, Dublin) Veo (b.2015, $484m, Copenhagen) Scenic Biotech (b.2017, $185m, Amsterdam)
Asia	7	1	0	8	Neu Edge (b. 2021, Pune, India) Epeius Pharma (b.2019, Israel) Syai Health (b.2019, Singapore)

Midlands university spinouts

Midlands universities have produced at least 321 spinouts over time. However, for accurate insight, this section focuses on the 160 active spinouts incorporated since 2010.

Table 2: Midlands university spinouts

University	Spinouts	Region
University of Oxford	260	South East
University of Cambridge	255	East
Imperial College London	118	London
University of Edinburgh	94	Scotland
University College London	94	London
University of Warwick	87	West Midlands
University of Strathclyde	69	Scotland
University of Bristol	67	South West
Queen's University Belfast	66	Northern Ireland
The University of Birmingham	62	West Midlands
University of Manchester	58	North West
University of Nottingham	56	East Midlands
Robert Gordon University	50	Scotland
University of Glasgow	47	Scotland
University of Leeds	39	Yorkshire

Economic impact

Midlands spinouts are highly productive, intellectual property-rich businesses, with those founded since 2010 generating an estimated annual Gross Value Add (GVA[1]) in excess of £768m. Midlands University spinouts employees are more than twice as productive as average UK workers, with an estimated GVA of £129,271 per employee compared to £59,829 average across the Midlands[2].

However, the GVA of Midlands spinouts actually headquartered in the region is estimated to be significantly lower, generating only 19.7% of the total GVA (£151m), and £88,345[3] per employee. This is still well above average per-employee GVA, but far below the estimated £145,894 GVA per employee of Midlands spinouts based outside of the region.

Whilst the majority of Midlands spinouts' productive output appears to be outside the Midlands (DataCity), those businesses based in the region have attracted the lion's share of the £93m in Innovate UK funding secured, accounting for 65 grants worth £71m.

The majority of Midlands university spinouts founded since 2010 are micro-businesses, employing fewer than ten people, with the remainder all being small and medium-sized (fewer than 250 staff), except for University of Nottingham 2019 spinout Nurture Fertility (now 'TFP Fertility'), based in Oxford and employing approximately 2,600 staff, and an estimated GVA of £473m as one of the UK's largest providers of IVF treatment.

These businesses are fast-growing with an estimated[6] employee growth rate of 24.8% annually. However, much of this growth is outside of the Midlands itself- of those businesses headquartered within the region[7], the employee growth rate is 12.3%, compared to 35.6% for those based elsewhere in the UK.

Figure 1: Dealroom estimated employees - Midlands spinouts

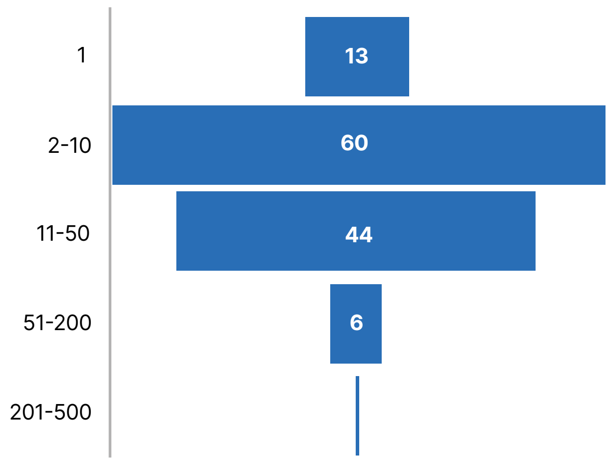
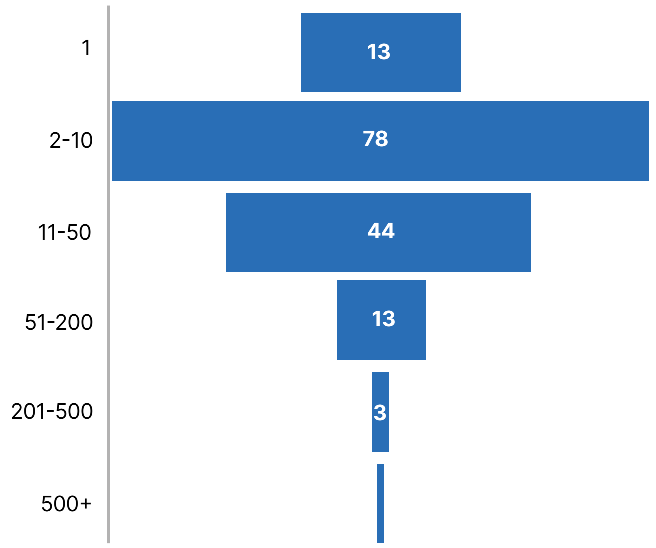


Figure 2: Data City estimated employees - Midlands spinouts



3. GVA is a measure of productivity considering the value of goods and services produced in an economy
4. 2022. The lowest GVA per employee in the Midlands is in the Wyre Forest district, at £38,916, and the highest is in South Derbyshire at £82,715. Subregional productivity: labour productivity indices by local authority district - Office for National Statistics
5. This is based on a sample of 109 spinouts in the Midlands using DataCity
6. Available data (for 130 midlands spinouts) from DataCity
7. Available data for 76 companies

Note: the above two charts show the number of Midlands university spinouts by estimated employees in the company. Both platforms have been utilised for comparison and validation.

Attrition or growth elsewhere?

The retention of successful spinouts has been identified as an issue in the Midlands. This is supported by the data (looking at all time identified spinouts – 321), which shows that of all active spinouts from Midlands universities, only 62% are headquartered in the Midlands. However none of the 38% (114) of spinouts headquartered outside of the region were initially incorporated in the Midlands, suggesting the challenge isn't so much of attrition of existing stock but in encouraging Midlands spinouts to establish themselves in the region to begin with.

These out-of-region spinouts (excluding 7 acquired by other businesses) collectively represent an estimated 72% ($1.6bn) of the valuation of all Midlands university spinouts, and employ 48% of Midlands spinout staff (1,600 people) – a big loss for the regional economy.

Of all regions, Midlands university spinouts are the most likely to establish themselves outside of the home region, as figure 3 demonstrates below.

Only London and East Anglia (driven by Cambridge) experience similar levels of lost growth from spinout locations, but for London and Cambridge, higher real estate and rental costs will likely play a bigger role on decision-making than in the Midlands.

There are many factors that can affect this, such as spinouts being a result of collaboration between multi-institution groups, locating close to required expertise and talent, or even directives from investors. However, looking across the 114 Midlands spinouts there appear to be no specific trends highlighting any of these factors as a leading cause for their decision to grow elsewhere.

Anecdotal evidence previously suggested that there is a high rate of acquisition, particularly from the US. This is not supported by the data but may be occurring (and not reflected in the findings) if IP is being acquired at very early stages, before initial seed investment from home universities.

Figure 3: Proportion of spinouts established outside of home university region

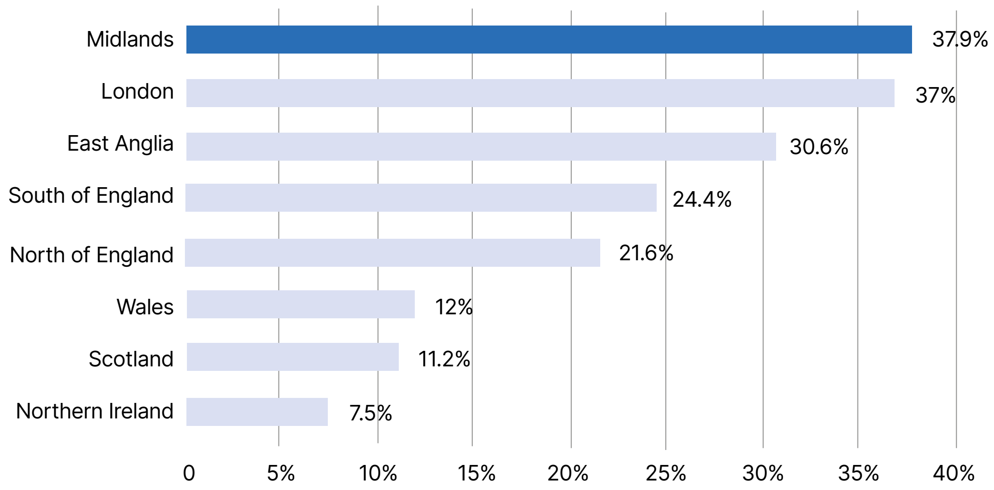
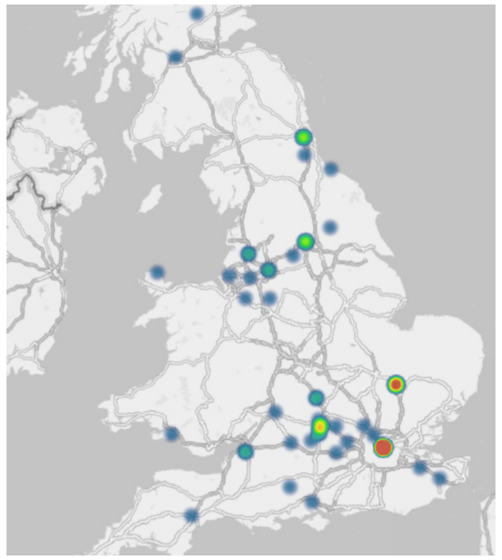


Table 3: Midlands university spinouts and their locations:

University	Spinouts	HQ'd in Midlands	HQ'd rest of UK	HQ'd overseas	Overseas location	Closed
University of Warwick	87	57	28	2		0
University of Birmingham	62	40	19	3	USA	0
University of Nottingham	56	32	21	3	2 US, 1 Italy	4
Loughborough University	26	15	10	0		1
Aston University	19	13	3	2	USA	1
Coventry University	15	9	5	1	USA	0
Cranfield University	13	11	2	0		0
University of Leicester	12	5	6	1	USA	0
De Montfort University	9	6	3	0		0
Nottingham Trent University	8	6	2	0		0
Staffordshire University	7	4	1	0		2
University of Wolverhampton	6	6	0	0		0
Keele University	5	3	1	0		1
University of Lincoln	3	3	0	0		0
Derby University	1	1	0	0		0
Birmingham City University	0	0	1	0		0
Harper Adams University	0	0	0	0		0
University of Worcester	0	0	0	0		0

Note that some spinouts will be counted against multiple institutions as they have spun out from multiple universities due to collaborative research and co-investment.



These two maps show the headquarter locations of Midlands university spinouts based outside the Midlands. London is by far the largest host (26 spinouts), followed by Cambridge (9), Oxford (5), and Leeds and Newcastle (with 4 each).

Note, the Belgium-based business (Ams Sense) has been acquired, and the Dutch HALO has recently dissolved.

Spin-ins

22 spinouts from non-Midlands universities have established their headquarters in the region. They have an estimated collective valuation of $113m and employ ~187 people. Some of these, such as Covatic Limited, Fertility Focus, and Impression Technologies have received growth equity from the **Midlands Engine Investment Fund** and other Midlands-based funds, demonstrating the value of such place-based funds in encouraging business growth in their geographies.

Sectors

The most common sector for Midlands university spinouts since 2010 is life sciences, with DataCity identifying 22 spinouts as life sciences enterprises.

Looking at the industries these Midlands university spinouts operate in (below) reveals interesting trends on sector and location.

While the largest single sector for spinouts based both within and outside of the region is life sciences, pharmaceutical spinouts are predominantly based elsewhere (most commonly Cambridge, Oxford, and London). For life sciences spinouts based in the Midlands the largest employee concentration appears to be in Charnwood, Leicestershire.

Also notable is the zero-carbon energy sector. All of the spinouts identified as 'net zero', 'cleantech', 'energy generation' and 'energy storage', are based in the Midlands, reaffirming perceptions of the region as a leading energy hub, benefitting from key assets such as the Energy Research Accelerator.

RTIC0078 | Life Sciences	14
RTIC0062 | Pharma	11
RTIC0085 | Engineering Biology Application	10
RTIC0083 | Biopharmaceutical	10
RTIC0065 | Advanced Manufacturing	5
RTIC0034 | Advanced Materials	4
RTIC0007 | Data Infrastructure	3
RTIC0008 | Geospatial Economy	3
RTIC0026 | Omics	3
RTIC0030 | Sensors	3
RTIC0004 | Artificial Intelligence	2
RTIC0095 | Artificial Intelligence - DSIT	2
RTIC0070 | Research and Consulting - Physical Sc...	2
RTIC0051 | Quantum Economy	2
RTIC0005 | Computer Hardware	2
RTIC0033 | Wearables and Quantified Self	1
RTIC0090 | Neurotechnology	1
RTIC0087 | Quantum Technology	1
RTIC0018 | Immersive Technologies	1
RTIC0080 | Autonomy and Robotics	1
RTIC0091 | Robotics and Autonomous systems	1
RTIC0003 | AgriTech	1
RTIC0027 | Photonics	1
RTIC0086 | Engineering Biology Supply Chain	1
RTIC0067 | Electronics Manufacturing	1
RTIC0052 | FinTech	1
RTIC0058 | MedTech	1
RTIC0047 | CleanTech	1
RTIC0081 | In-Orbit Servicing and Manufacturing	1

DataCity sectoral classifications of Midlands spinouts based outside the region

RTIC0078 | Life Sciences	18
RTIC0055 | Net Zero	8
RTIC0085 | Engineering Biology Application	7
RTIC0034 | Advanced Materials	6
RTIC0062 | Pharma	6
RTIC0067 | Electronics Manufacturing	5
RTIC0083 | Biopharmaceutical	5
RTIC0091 | Robotics and Autonomous systems	4
RTIC0086 | Engineering Biology Supply Chain	4
RTIC0047 | CleanTech	3
RTIC0004 | Artificial Intelligence	3
RTIC0095 | Artificial Intelligence - DSIT	3
RTIC0058 | MedTech	3
RTIC0027 | Photonics	3
RTIC0070 | Research and Consulting - Physical Sc...	2
RTIC0030 | Sensors	2
RTIC0051 | Quantum Economy	2
RTIC0065 | Advanced Manufacturing	2
RTIC0080 | Autonomy and Robotics	2
RTIC0018 | Immersive Technologies	2
RTIC0011 | Energy Generation	2
RTIC0013 | Energy Storage	2
RTIC0057 | FoodTech	1
RTIC0003 | AgriTech	1
RTIC0079 | Software Development	1
RTIC0084 | Marine and Maritime	1
RTIC0006 | Cyber	1
RTIC0081 | In-Orbit Servicing and Manufacturing	1
RTIC0066 | Space Economy	1
RTIC0008 | Geospatial Economy	1
RTIC0010 | EdTech	1
RTIC0026 | Omics	1
RTIC0069 | Business Support Services	1
RTIC0082 | Space Energy	1
RTIC0012 | Energy Management	1
RTIC0005 | Computer Hardware	1

DataCity sectoral classifications of Midlands spinouts based within the Midlands

Agri-tech

There are 20 agri-tech spinouts in the UK that are active and have not been acquired, worth a collective $1.3bn and employing ~500 people. Among these is one Midlands spinout: Fruitcast was founded in 2021 at the University of Lincoln. It was valued at $15-22m at seed stage, and employs 14 people.

There are two further Midlands spinouts that operate in the agri-tech space:

- **Herotech8 Ltd. (Cranfield University)** provides automated drone services (including monitoring of crops)
- **Agaricus Robotics Ltd. (University of Lincoln)** has spun out of the university's Global Centre for Excellence in Agricultural Robotics, and provides robotic mushroom crop harvesting technology.

Artificial intelligence

There are 223 AI spinouts in the UK worth a collective $19.8bn. 3% (8) of these are Midlands spinouts, worth $38m but notably at early stages of growth. Examples include:

- **Grid Edge** Ltd. (Aston University), providing AI-informed smart energy solutions to businesses
- **Interactive Coventry** Ltd (Coventry University) with 9 patents and 6 products including flood monitoring and forecasting for urban development, AI co-pilot and large language models
- **Geospatial Ventures** Ltd (University of Nottingham) providing AI & geospatial monitoring products for aviation, autonomous vehicles, agriculture and more.

Creative & digital industries

Two notable spinouts in this sector are based in Nottingham.

- **Mission Room Ltd. (University of Nottingham)** develops 360° immersive media and interactive display systems for infrastructure projects and visitor experiences
- **Esitu Solutions Ltd. (Nottingham Trent University)** uses virtual reality to assess driver awareness and provide fleet training.

Health & life sciences

The majority of the Midlands spinout valuation and GVA comes from those with patents in life sciences - $1.2bn of valuation across 32 active businesses, and an estimated GVA of £570m. Midlands-based life science spinouts include:

- **Medherant (University of Warwick)** is developing patches to deliver drugs through patient's skin.
- **Phenotypeca ltd. (University of Nottingham) is** developing new protein therapeutics
- **Nanosyrinx Ltd. (University of Warwick)** - is developing new intracellular medicine.

Transport technology

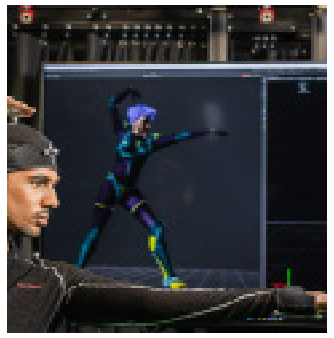
Whilst the Midlands boasts an internationally significant automotive, aerospace and rail industry base and research groups, there have not been many spinouts in this space since 2010.

One example is **Microcab (Coventry University)**, which is developing a new hydrogen fuel cell technology for vehicles.

Zero carbon energy

A cross-cutting concept, there are several distinct Midlands university spinouts commercialising technology to support renewable energy production and storage.

- **Cheesecake Energy (University of Nottingham)** - a flagship 'eTanker' thermal energy storage system with running costs 30-40% lower than competitor batteries.
- **Scintam Engineering (University of Nottingham)** is producing 'Fastnere Electrical Discharge Removal technology', enabling more effective maintenance and lowering risks for staff in aerospace, wind turbines and other such technologies.



Alumni founders

Alumni of Midlands universities have (co-)founded 3,593 start-ups globally since 2010, collectively worth $113.5bn and employing an estimated 114,000 people.

These include 23 unicorns with major brands such as Monzo, Shopify, DFINITY, Darktrace, Starling Bank, Clubhouse, and Calm Health.

Whilst just over half (1,846 – 51.3%) of these businesses are headquartered in the UK (valued at more than $46.9bn and employing ~53,700 people), only 214 (5.9%) of these companies were founded in the Midlands, and 213 are currently headquartered in the region, employing ~4,600 people with collective valuation in excess of $2.3bn.

In the campaign target markets of Australia, Germany, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and the USA, alumni have founded 659 tech companies since 2010.

Globally, there are significant alumni-founder counts in India (56), Spain (44), France (43), UAE (39) and the Netherlands (25).

Alumni-founded start ups (since 2010) counts by country (excluding the UK)

Figure 4: Alumni founded start-ups since 2010

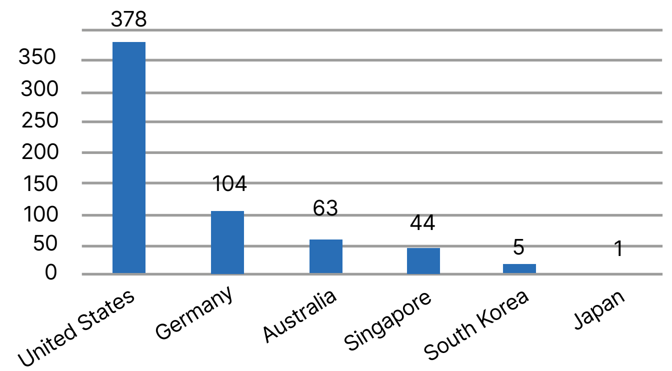
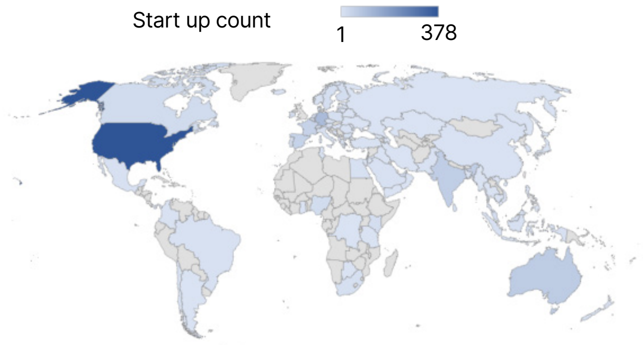


Figure 5: Midlands alumni founded start-ups since 2010



Country	Start-ups	Value ($m)	Staff	Key industries
USA	378	30,900	16,700	Health, media, FinTech, enterprise software, education, marketing, food, transportation, wellness beauty, sports, security, robotics, legal, gaming, hosting, travel, real estate, fashion, job recruitment, events, home living
Germany	104	10,000	5,400	Enterprise software, health, food, FinTech, energy, legal, marketing
Australia	63	400	560	Health, marketing, fintech, enterprise software, energy
Singapore	44	768	1,200	Fintech, marketing, media, health
South Korea	5	594	127	Food
Japan	1	7	15	Health

Table 4 : Midlands university alumni-founded (since 2010) companies by headquarter location

Alumni founders by university

The universities of Nottingham and Warwick are the only Midlands institutions in the top 20 UK institutions (#10 and #15 respectively) for the number of alumni-founded companies: 928 Nottingham alumni and 658 Warwick alumni have founded a start-up.

The next highest-ranking Midlands universities by number of alumni founders are Birmingham (23rd with 547 founders), Nottingham Trent (41st with 363 founders) and Leicester (48th with 306 founders).

There are 781 companies in the campaign target markets[8] founded or co-founded by Midlands alumni, of which 683 continue to operate independently. These include 12 unicorns founded alumni since 2010 (listed below).

Company	Location	Founded	Sector(s)	Valuation	Alma mater of (co)founder
Clubhouse	San Francisco, USA	March 2020	Creative & digital	$4bn	Coventry University
Headspace Health	Santa Monica, USA	April 2010	Health & lifesciences	$3bn	Nottingham Trent University
Aura	Burlington, USA	2019	Creative & digital	$2.5bn	Aston University
Sennder	Berlin, Germany	February 2015	Transport technology	$2.1bn	Staffordshire University
Forto	Berlin, Germany	2016	Creative & digital/ Transport technology	$2.1bn	University of Nottingham
Calm Health	San Francisco, USA	May 2012	Health & life sciences	$2bn	University of Nottingham; University of Birmingham
Razor	Berlin, Germany	August 2020	Creative & digital	$1.7bn	University of Warwick
Lusha	Boston, USA	March 2016	Creative & digital	$1.5bn	University of Leicester
Scalable Capital	Munich, Germany	December 2014	Creative & digital	$1.4bn	University of Warwick
Planet Labs	San Francisco, USA	December 2010	Agri-tech	$1.1.bn	University of Leicester
Rebellion Defense	Washington, USA	2019	Creative & digital	$1bn	University of Leicester
Enviria	Frankfurt, Germany	December 2017	Zero carbon energy	$1.2bn	Aston University

Table 5 : Alumni founders by university

8. USA, Germany, Australia, Singapore, South Korea, Japan

By university and market

University	USA	Germany	Australia	Singapore	South Korea	Japan	Total
University of Nottingham	115	20	8	7	2	0	152
University of Warwick	68	27	7	15	0	2	119
University of Birmingham	68	11	8	7	0	0	96
Loughborough University	47	6	14	3	1	0	71
Nottingham Trent University	36	6	7	3	0	0	52
University of Leicester	36	2	5	6	0	1	50
Staffordshire University	27	8	1	4	0	0	40
Aston University	22	9	2	1	0	1	36
De Montfort University	28	3	4	1	0	0	36
Coventry University	21	0	5	6	0	0	32
Derby University	21	1	3	1	0	0	26
University of Wolverhampton	14	2	0	1	1	0	18
Cranfield University	10	3	4	0	0	0	17
Keele University	9	2	3	2	0	0	16
University of Lincoln	7	7	0	0	1	0	15
University of Worcester	2	2	0	0	0	0	4
Harper Adams University	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Birmingham City University	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Note: A full list of these companies and their details is available in the accompanying dataset.

Table 6 : Alumni founders by university and market

*Alumni marked with asterisk are founders but no longer at the company.
**Dropped out of their course at a Midlands university.

Investors

The Midlands Engine is working with Dealroom to develop more granular insight into who invests in Midlands businesses and for what. Some headlines are provided below.

Existing investors in the Midlands

There are a number of existing equity investors that have invested in recent years in Midlands-based businesses (no necessarily university-associated) and given this experience in the area could be targets for further engagement. By headquarter location there are:

Potential investors

- 939 investors in the UK
- 505 investors in the USA
- 69 investors in Germany
- 27 investors in Australia
- 6 investors in Singapore
- 6 investors in Japan
- 3 investors in South Korea

Dealroom tracks all kinds of equity investors including limited partners (family offices, angels & high-net-worth, corporates) and direct investors in venture funds, corporate venture and equity etc.

Note: the same organisation may be counted in each stage column if they invest at all stages of business growth.

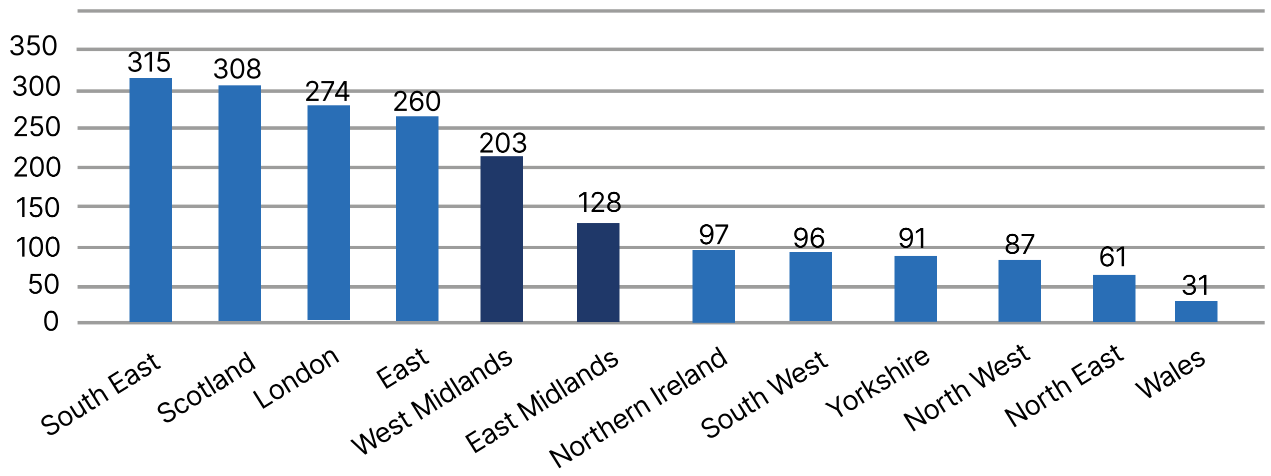
Market	Identified seed investors	Identified early-growth investors	Identified late-growth investors	Investors that have already invested in the Midlands
UK	578	672	524	939
USA	1,960	2,325	1,585	505
Germany	490	597	468	69
Australia	93	101	56	27
Singapore	69	92	48	6
Japan	114	149	136	6
South Korea	25	41	36	3

Table 7: Investors by stage and market

Appendix

Total spinout population by region

Total UK university spinouts (as of Jan 2025)



List of spinouts by UK university (Dealroom, Jan 2025)

University	Spinouts	Region
University of Oxford	260	South East
University of Cambridge	255	East
Imperial College London	118	London
University of Edinburgh	94	Scotland
University College London	94	London
University of Warwick	87	West Midlands
University of Strathclyde	69	Scotland
University of Bristol	67	South West
Queen's University Belfast	66	Northern Ireland
The University of Birmingham	62	West Midlands
University of Manchester	58	North West
University of Nottingham	56	East Midlands
Robert Gordon University	50	Scotland
University of Glasgow	47	Scotland
University of Leeds	39	Yorkshire
Newcastle University	37	North East
University of Southampton	36	South East
University of Sheffield	33	Yorkshire
University of Ulster	31	Northern Ireland
Loughborough University	26	East Midlands
Queen Mary University of London	24	London
Durham University	22	North East
Aston University	19	West Midlands
Cardiff University	18	Wales
University of Exeter	17	South West
King's College London	15	London
Coventry University	15	West Midlands
The University of Liverpool	15	North West
University of Dundee	14	Scotland
Lancaster University	14	North West
University of York	14	Yorkshire
Cranfield University	13	East Midlands
University of Leicester	12	East Midlands
University of Aberdeen	10	Scotland
University of Surrey	10	South East
De Montfort University	9	East Midlands
Nottingham Trent University	8	East Midlands
Staffordshire University	7	West Midlands
Heriot-Watt University	7	Scotland
University of Bath	7	South West
University of St. Andrews	7	Scotland
Royal College of Art	6	London
University of Wolverhampton	6	West Midlands
Swansea University	6	Wales
Keele University	5	West Midlands

University	Spinouts	Region
Edinburgh Napier University	5	Scotland
University of London	5	London
University of East Anglia	4	East
University of the West of Scotland	3	Scotland
City, University of London	3	London
Bangor University	3	Wales
University of Hull	3	Yorkshire
University of Lincoln	3	East Midlands
London South Bank University	3	London
University of Sussex	2	South East
Brunel University London	2	London
University of Plymouth	2	South West
University of Hertfordshire	2	South East
University of Kent	2	South East
Bournemouth University	1	South East
UHI Shetland	1	South West
University of Reading	1	South East
Abertay University	1	Scotland
Trinity University College	1	Wales
Cardiff Metropolitan University	1	Wales
Royal Agricultural University	1	South West
University of Essex	1	East
The Institute of Cancer Research, London	1	London
University of Wales Trinity Saint David	1	Wales
University of South Wales	1	Wales
Birmingham City University	1	West Midlands
Northumbria University	1	North East
Royal Holloway, U. of London	1	London
University of Sunderland	1	North East
University of Bradford	1	Yorkshire
University of Derby	1	East Midlands
University of Central Lancashire	1	West Midlands
Sheffield Hallam University	1	Yorkshire
Glasgow Caledonian University	1	Scotland
Oxford Brookes University	1	South East
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	1	London
University of the West of England	1	South West
London Business School	1	London

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