Innovation highlights at Lund University

2025–2026

- The numbers tell the story: strong year for new ideas
- Innovation supports research goals
- Funding opportunities 2026
- \+ Supplement – Dive into news from research spin-outs

“Innovation: Integral to a globally ambitious leading university

Photo: Kennet Rouna

At Lund University, impactful research is central to our mission. Our innovation support mechanisms assist researchers and students in securing funding, expanding internationally, and translating important discoveries into new methods, products, and services with the potential to benefit society. This established approach has contributed significantly to our global reputation and supports our pursuit of ambitious sustainability objectives.

Through the university's innovation office, LU Innovation, and our venture-builder, LU Ventures, we are committed to addressing key challenges – ranging from advanced cell and gene therapies such as ATMP to globally relevant sustainable technologies. By facilitating the transformation of ideas into societal value, we attract top-tier talent and maximise the impact of our research. In 2025, LU Innovation provided support to nearly 850 researchers and students across the university, resulting in the initiation of just under 350 innovation projects. Concurrently, LU Ventures launched a strong new cohort of research-driven startups ready to contribute meaningfully to society. Lund University's strong legacy of converting discoveries into tangible innovations has positioned us among Europe's foremost innovation ecosystems through the Lund Innovation District. This ongoing commitment is foundational to our vision of advancing the human condition and shaping a better world. As we look towards 2026, fostering innovation and the spin-out of new startups remain critical elements of our strategy as a leading global university.

Erik Renström
Vice-Chancellor, Lund University

AT LUND UNIVERSITY, WE ARE PLEASED TO HIGHLIGHT THE FOLLOWING ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Lund University ranks #1 in the EU in terms of patents from our spin-outs by the European Patent Office
- Lund University is now ranked in the top 20 in 'The European University Spinout Ranking' for deep tech and life science research
- Innovations and research originating from Lund University are making significant contributions to society by addressing both societal and environmental challenges

THREE EXAMPLES OF IMPACT FROM LUND UNIVERSITY INNOVATIONS 2025

▶ TECHNOLOGY

Spin-out Acconeer's radar sensors are now integrated into Lighthouse Tech's smart eyewear for blind and visually impaired users. The sensors scan the environment, alerting wearers through haptic vibrations that indicate obstacle location and distance.

▶ MEDICINE

Bacterial vaginosis affects up to 1 in 4 women yearly. Conventional antibiotics can disrupt the vaginal microbiome, leading to recurrence. In 2025, Gedea Biotech's antibiotic-free treatment was approved for sale in Europe.

▶ SOCIAL

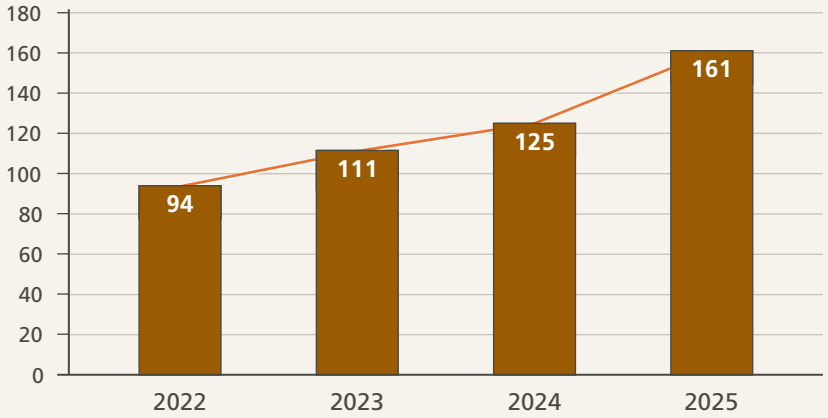
Researchers developed Shared Reading 2.0 – a group reading method adapted for the Swedish context that promotes literacy and social inclusion. For example, in schools approximately 150 reading leaders have been trained, around 100 in Skåne. Pilot programmes in Eslöv and Lund showed strong results.

INNOVATION IN NUMBERS

Around 850 students and researchers supported in innovation projects in 2025:

Students **398**
Researchers (includes doctoral students) **434**

Steady growth in the number of new innovation projects started by researchers at LU Innovation

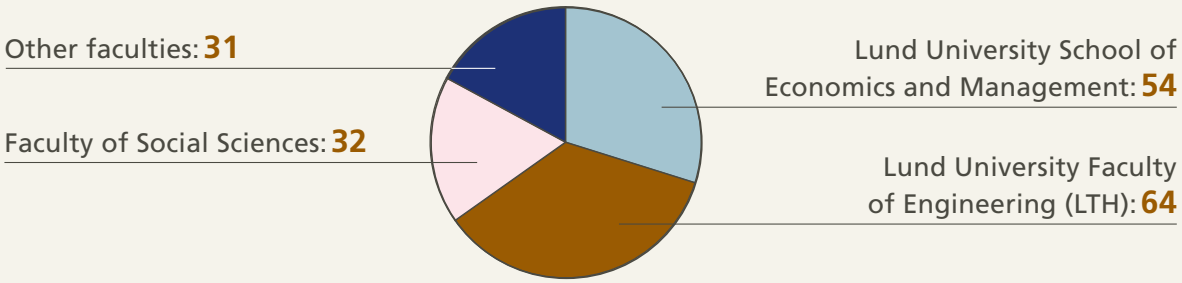


New innovation projects per faculty (researchers)

	2024	2025	% change
Lund University Faculty of Engineering (LTH)	38	52	**+ 36.8%**
Faculty of Medicine	43	47	**+ 9.3%**
Faculty of Science	20	22	**+ 10%**
Faculty of Social Sciences	5	22	**+ 340%**
Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology	9	9	No change
Additional faculties and parts of the university	10	9	- 10%

Student innovation projects started in 2025: **181**

New projects (per faculty)



Utilisation and commercialisation in 2025:

Number of research spin-outs started through LU Ventures **6**
Number of (limited) companies started by students and researchers with support from LU Innovation **26**
Other forms of utlisation (new methods, tools, non-commercial entities) **5**

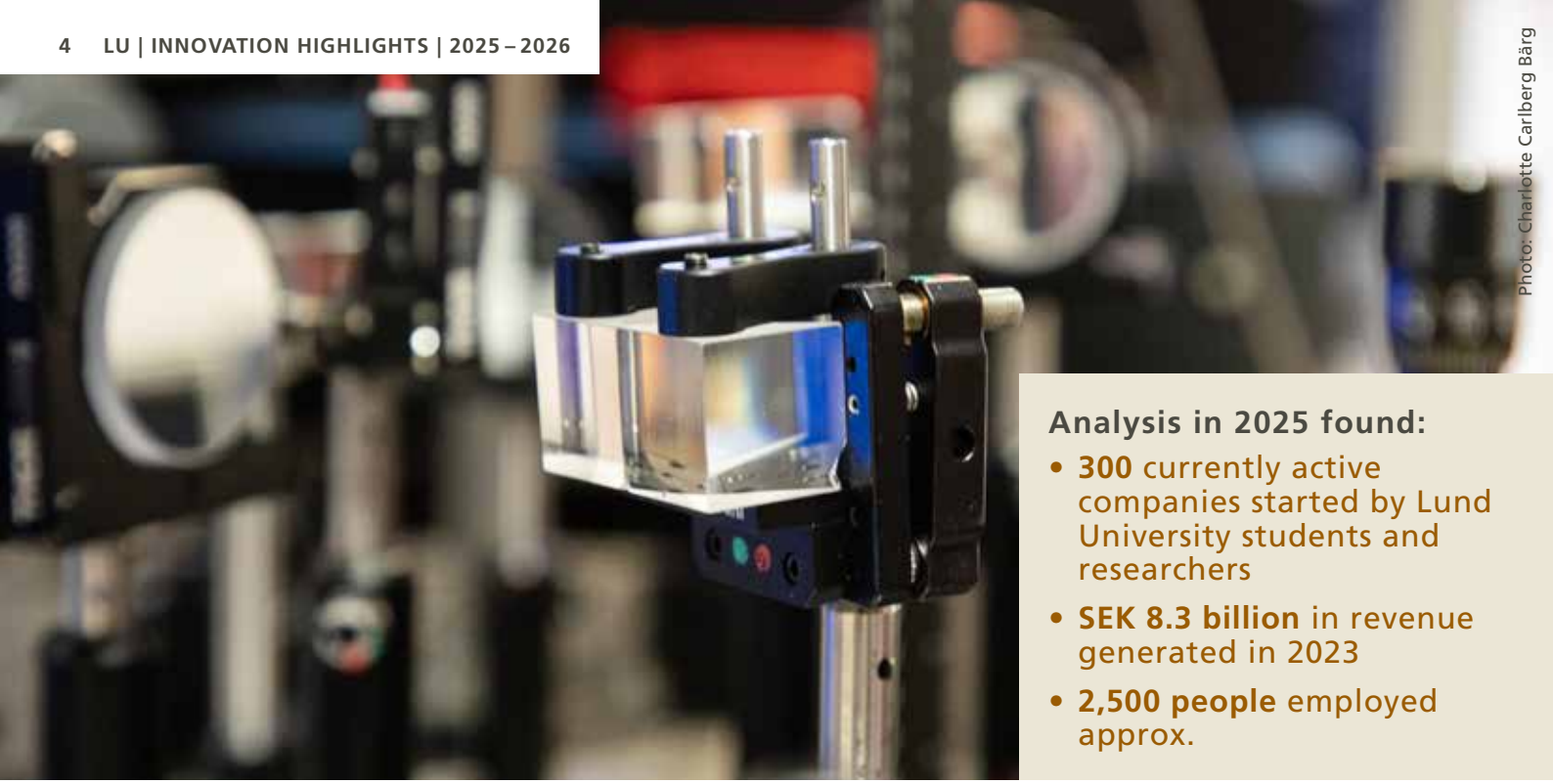


Photo: Charlotte Carlberg Bärg

Analysis in 2025 found:

- **300** currently active companies started by Lund University students and researchers
- **SEK 8.3 billion** in revenue generated in 2023
- **2,500 people** employed approx.

Swedish universities create billions in impact through innovation

Swedish universities create billions in value through innovation. Analysis in 2025 gave preliminary figures: over 2,500 companies were registered through innovation offices since 2010.

A 2025 report from 14 Swedish university innovation offices provides preliminary figures showing universities are a powerful innovation engine.

Between 2010 and 2023, approximately 2,500 companies were registered through Sweden's innovation offices. By 2023, these companies employed 9,376 people, generated 17.7 billion SEK in revenue and 4.4 billion in tax revenue – employment more than doubled since 2019, revenue increased 220% in four years.

"Every day, researchers and students transform promising ideas into groundbreaking solutions that drive Sweden forward – from life-saving cancer treatments to climate technology," says Niclas Nilsson, Director of Innovation at Lund University and report co-author.

Many companies represent deep tech – advanced technology based on breakthroughs in quantum technology, biotech, AI, and advanced materials with potential to transform industries and strengthen Sweden's and Europe's strategic competitiveness.

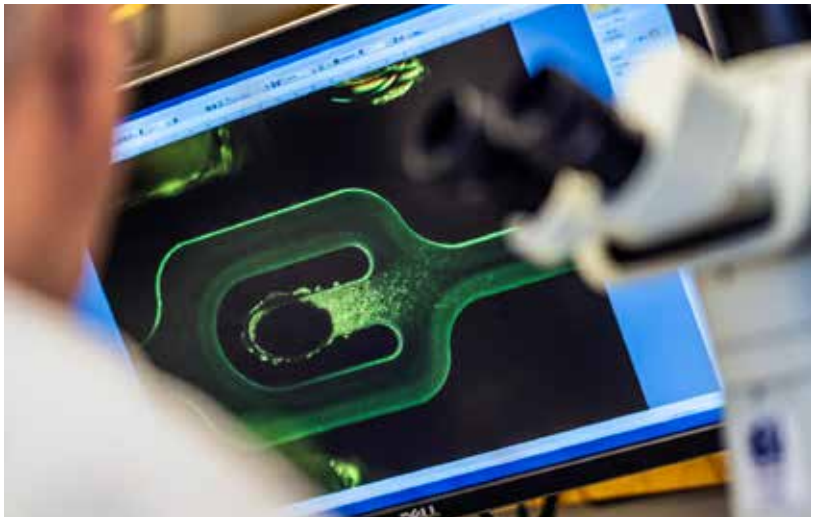
Published June 2025, this first coordinated data collection from all Swedish innovation offices was spearheaded by Lund University. As the dataset expands, figures are expected to increase. The preliminary analysis shows potential is far from exhausted, and with the right support and dialogue between academia, investors, industry and policymakers, universities can create even more value.

WHY ARE WE LOOKING AT THE STATISTICS FROM ALL SWEDISH UNIVERSITIES?

"Universities play a key role in improving society through innovation, yet we've lacked national statistics on that value. Many of Sweden's largest companies have their roots in university research and received critical support in their early stages. But this has never been measured systematically at a national level – until now. We launched this work in 2025. Better analysis will improve our understanding and help us provide better support at the right time. Commercialisation enables scalable impact through company growth."

– Niclas Nilsson, Director of Innovation, Lund University

Photo: Johan Persson



36 MILLION SEK TO ACCELERATE ATMP TREATMENTS TO PATIENTS

With 36 million SEK, partners in Skåne aim to accelerate the delivery of Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMP) to patients in a three-year project. ATMPs include cell and gene therapies with potential to treat and cure serious diseases that conventional medicines cannot treat.


Photo: Johan Persson

The ATMP Path2Patient project provides specialised business support and infrastructure needed to bridge research and commercialisation. Led by LU Innovation with SmiLe Venture Hub, Medicon Village Innovation, LU-ATMP, and Region Skåne's ATMP Centre, it is co-funded by EU via Tillväxtverket, and Region Skåne.

"Through an integrated ecosystem approach, we aim to ensure that promising ATMP research reaches patients," says Cecilia Jädert, Life Science Team Lead, LU Innovation.

THREE LUND STARTUPS CONNECT WITH KOREAN MARKET

LU Innovation brought three Lund healthtech startups to South Korea to connect with partners and investors in one of the world's leading precision medicine markets. MEDQUS (stroke risk assessment), Capillon Analytics (early cancer diagnostics), and Sorbus Biomedical (advanced cell therapy) pitched as part of a Sweden-Korea university collaboration. The visit gives these startups access to strategic partnerships and market insights in one of Asia's most advanced healthcare sectors.

LU INNOVATION AND SCILIFELAB DEEPEN COLLABORATION TO STRENGTHEN SUPPORT FOR LIFE SCIENCE RESEARCHERS

LU Innovation has strengthened its collaboration with SciLifeLab to help Lund University life science researchers access support. SciLifeLab, a national government-funded organisation, offers cutting-edge infrastructure, technologies and resources across disciplines – from precision medicine to evolutionary biology.

LU Innovation is ensuring that researchers are informed and better understand their right to access to SciLifeLab's support which includes technology platforms, expert guidance, and data analysis support, to strengthen the research-to-impact pipeline at Lund University.


Photo: Johan Persson

"We want to ensure researchers are fully informed about the support available," says Lars Svensson, Innovation Developer, LU Innovation.

Mattias Borg presents breakthrough room-temperature sensor technology targeting methane detection at the Future Innovations Award. The innovation enables cost-effective monitoring of methane which has 84 times more global warming potential than CO^2 over 20 years, making reduction critical for reaching global climate goals.

Professor Thoas Fioretos received the first Lunds Innovatörspris (Lund Innovator Award) for pioneering blood cancer research with tangible impact on diagnosis and treatment globally. "Perceptions have changed. Today, researchers are actively encouraged to contribute to society through innovation," says Thoas Fioretos.

Feiyu Wu (right) presents at the Future Innovation Awards, held by Lund University and Sparbanken Skåne since 2017. Inspired by her grandfather's hospital stay, she developed a fan mimicking natural wind. The fan is being trialled at gyms including Gerdahallen in Lund, helping people – including the elderly – stay cool during workouts.

Photos: Johan Persson

From test tubes to tech twins: Innovative solutions from Lund University celebrated

A genetic test that could increase IVF success. A room-temperature sensor that detects methane leaks. An AI platform that creates digital twins for autonomous vehicles. These are among the innovative solutions from Lund University recognised at the Future Innovation Awards 2025.

Professor Yvonne Lundberg Giwercman has spent years studying why some women respond better to IVF hormone treatments than others. The answer lies in their genes.

From her research she developed a point-of-care test – a simple oral swab that delivers results within an hour – identifying which hormone therapy will work best. "Research shows that women who receive hormone therapy customised to their genes have a 38 percent higher chance of having children," Lundberg Giwercman said. Globally, this could mean 200,000 additional births annually.

The runner-up projects addressed equally pressing challenges. One team developed infrared sensor technology operating at room temperature – eliminating expensive cryogenic cooling. The innovation enables large-scale monitoring of methane emissions, which carry 84 times more global warming potential than carbon dioxide over 20 years.

Another runner-up team created an AI-powered simulation platform that converts camera and sensor data into digital twins, allowing developers to test robots and autonomous vehicles in dangerous scenarios virtually.

Student innovations included lightweight panels for green roofs without soil, a nature-inspired airflow system for indoor fitness, and a digital platform automating sustainability tracking for wine producers.

The awards are organised by LU Innovation and presented by Lund University in partnership with Sparbanken Skåne, which provided 800,000 Swedish kronor distributed across six projects.

WINNING PROJECTS

Employee category:

- Winner: Yvonne Lundberg Giwercman – Genetic test for personalised IVF treatment
- Runner-up: Mattias Borg, Johannes Svensson, Johan Lundgren – Room-temperature sensors for methane detection
- Runner-up: Adam Tonderski, Christoffer Petersson, Georg Hess – AI simulation platform for robotics and vehicles

Student category:

- Winner: Enzo Tessitore, Arend de Waal, Phillip Stelzer – Soil-free panels for urban green roofs
- Runner-up: Feiyu Wu, Xingda Li, Xiaoyue Zhang – Nature-inspired airflow for indoor cycling
- Runner-up: Maja Sonesson, Markus Bielaszka – Digital platform for wine supply chain transparency

THOAS FIORETOS FIRST WINNER OF "LUNDS INNOVATÖRSPRIS"

Photo: Tove Smeds

When Thoas Fioretos co-founded his first company in 2007, academic entrepreneurship was unusual – sometimes even questioned. Today, he exemplifies how research excellence can drive innovation. "My motivation has always been the same: to improve the diagnosis and treatment of patients suffering from cancer," says Fioretos, who has published over 160 scientific papers on blood cancers.

His first company, Qlucore AB, develops software for analysing biological datasets – now publicly listed and used in over 20 countries. Cantargia AB conducts clinical studies with antibody therapies for cancer and inflammation. Lead Biologics focuses on immunotherapies for leukaemia and cancer. Together, the three Lund-based companies employ over 40 people.

"Perceptions have changed drastically," Fioretos notes. "Today, researchers are actively encouraged to contribute to society through innovation. Stronger support functions such as LU Innovation enable research to be transformed more quickly into solutions that reach wider society."

Lunds Innovatörspris (the Lund Innovator Award), established by Lund University and Sparbanken Skåne and worth 250,000 SEK, was awarded in September 2025 at the Future Innovation Awards, recognising Thoas Fioretos as a researcher at Lund University who combines academic excellence with entrepreneurship.

Photo: Petra Francke

INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Lund University ranked number one globally for sustainability in the 2026 QS rankings. The innovation office contributes to this mission through three key initiatives: sustainability analysis of innovation projects (examining positive and negative impacts); funding early-stage ideas through the university's Sustainability Fund; and the Future Innovations Awards, recognising ideas with sustainability potential in partnership with Sparbanken Skåne. "Innovation is an integral part of a sustainable future – and we're proud that Lund University integrates sustainability in all its work including utilisation of ideas and research," says Peter Franck, Innovation Developer, Green Tech.

Photo: Johan Persson

Peter Franck is an Innovation Developer focused on Green Tech at LU Innovation.

THREE PROJECTS THAT RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE SUSTAINABILITY FUND

Lund University's Sustainability Fund, managed by LU Innovation, Sustainability Forum and LU Estates, supports early-stage sustainability ideas. Here are three projects that received funding in 2025:

BACTERIA DON'T LIE – A sustainable solution for public safety

Eran Elhaik, Department of Biology

The researchers developed Microbiome Geographic Population Structure (mGPS), an AI tool that determines the geographical origin of microbial samples – 92% accuracy for cities, 82% for local scale (subway stations in Hong Kong). With Malmö police, mGPS will be tested for forensic use. The tool could link individuals, objects and places to support criminal investigations.

INNER COMPASS – a well-being lesson in elementary school

Farida Rasulzada, Department of Psychology

Integrating well-being into elementary school can strengthen pupils' mental health. The project aims to produce course material providing tools for greater happiness, reduced stress and resilience. Hopefully, it can also reduce bullying and conflicts, leading to higher attendance and a better school environment.

Sustainable food innovation through novel perennial grain

Stefan Schüller, LUCSUS

Agricultural land is dominated by annual crops like wheat and maize, which must be resown yearly, depleting soil and contributing to emissions. Perennial crops – planted once, harvested for years – offer a solution. Kernza®, a grain with deep roots, can bind carbon, reduce erosion and improve soil health. With local food innovators, the project examines how the crop can be used if launched commercially in the EU.

Photo: The Land Institute

Photo: Johan Persson

“Innovation helped my research

Heiner Linke's journey has moved from viewing commercialisation as obligation to embracing it with enthusiasm. The nanophysics professor and Royal Academy member shares his experience.

Can innovation strengthen research? Heiner Linke, professor of nanophysics, believes so.

"Twenty years ago, people talked about a contradiction between basic research on one hand, and applied research and innovation on the other – I think we've moved beyond that. Along with many others, I move daily between basic research and utilisation. Today, I'd say it's seen as enriching rather than contradictory."

As co-founder of Aligned Bio, Linke sees how innovation work strengthens his academic career. "For me, the result has been better grant applications, better utilisation, and research that solves real problems. Through working with innovation, you learn the mindset – how can this be applied? It's often difficult to relate directly to industry challenges within research, but the connection to innovation makes us better at explaining why we do what we do."

On Sweden's professor's privilege, he is enthusiastic: "You get the best of both worlds – you can receive all the support, but you can also have the freedom to go your own way."

His advice to researchers considering innovation? "Get help from LU Innovation and LU Ventures! It pays to broaden your perspective and get feedback from people who have experience in the areas where your idea can be applied. You don't have to abandon your research career – you can do both!"

Photo: Kennet Rouna

Heiner Linke is a professor of nanophysics, member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering Sciences.

HOW INNOVATION CAN SUPPORT RESEARCH GOALS:

- Increases research funding and strengthens excellence through unique research that generates breakthrough ideas
- Improves international competitiveness and helps attract and retain talent
- Demonstrates how your research benefits society
- Offers additional career paths for doctoral students

Photo: Johan Persson

LU Ventures
LUND UNIVERSITY VENTURE BUILDER

Building a spin-out – together

LU Ventures is Lund University's venture builder. We work with researchers to build and finance spin-outs, enabling research to create global impact.

BUSINESS TRACK: BY LU INNOVATION AND LU VENTURES

Business Track is developed to accelerate research-based tech and life science projects with potential to become scalable startups that attract external capital.

The tailored track pairs innovative ideas with dedicated project teams from LU Innovation and LU Ventures, a structured approach, and financial support to evaluate and develop the commercial viability.

"Business Track is a really good fit for researchers with exciting results who want to see their findings applied, but who lack the time, interest or experience to build and finance a company on their own," says Thomas Rundquist at LU Innovation. "We look for projects with large global market potential and a sustainable competitive advantage. As it's not always easy to determine that at an early stage; we investigate those avenues together during Business Track," adds Eddie Thordarson at LU Ventures.

7 **In 2025, seven new research projects joined Business Track...**

...bringing the total to eighteen active projects end of year (EoY). **18**

The spin-outs launched through Business Track are compelling, high-quality companies. "The feedback we received from venture capitalists and other investors is that those backed by LU Ventures stand out. They are solid companies with good teams and structures in place, which creates the necessary trust to attract capital," says Christine Widstrand, CEO of LU Ventures.

New spin-outs 2025

Adonel Therapeutics
– Using electricity to fight cancer

Aventera Antibodies
– A new class of super antibodies

Microdentify
– A new era of forensic evidence

NodeX Cloud
– Decentralized cloud storage reimagined

Sitisolv
– Treating thirst without liquid

Voice Print
– Comparing speakers in the age of AI

Pontus Nordenfelt,
Associate Professor & founder
of Aventera Antibodies, founded in 2025:

"LU Ventures was invaluable in the initial stages of our startup. They were accessible, proactive, and supportive, and truly helped us get off to a flying start."

LU Ventures
LUND UNIVERSITY VENTURE BUILDER

PORTFOLIO OVERVIEW
Since LU Ventures' inception in 1999

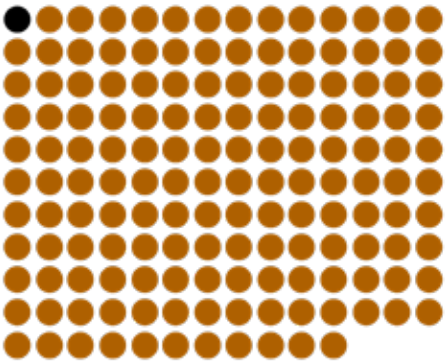
+140
total number of spin-outs founded

+300
number of researchers we have co-founded spin-outs with

15,3 BNSEK
Have been invested in our spin-outs

2025: THE YEAR THAT LU HOLDING BECAME LU VENTURES

On 11 February, LU Ventures celebrated its new name at Gamla Biskopshuset. The rebranding aimed to clarify what LU Ventures does: Building spin-outs (ventures) with researchers at Lund University. "Our end-game is enabling research to create global impact – in practise. Building spin-outs and attracting capital is our way of getting there," said Christine Widstrand, CEO of LU Ventures.



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For every krona invested by LU Ventures, 150 more were invested by external investors.

Vice-Chancellor Erik Renström and Professor Yvonne Lundberg Giwercman, founder of Dx4Life, at the LU Ventures rebranding celebration.

Photo: Johan Persson

LU Ventures
LUND UNIVERSITY VENTURE BUILDER

Different roles in a spin-out journey: Applying research while remaining in academia

At Lund University, the so-called "combo model" has become a pragmatic solution for some successful innovation teams. Research teams split, with senior academics staying in their university posts while younger colleagues take the leap to build a startup.

"Not every PhD can stay in academia, and increasingly, we're seeing talented researchers who are curious about the startup world. For those individuals, this model offers a real opportunity – you're able to continue to work on technology you already understand deeply, in a new setting," says Rickard Sjöström, Venture Builder at LU Ventures.

It's a formula that serves multiple purposes. Established researchers keep their laboratories running and continue publishing while getting the opportunity to see their work applied. At the same time, their colleagues gain a route to real-world impact with technology they already know well.

Two examples are Asgard Therapeutics and Gedea Biotech. In the case of Asgard, the senior researcher – Filipe Pereira – continued with the research, while other team members moved across to lead the spin-out companies. In other cases, like Gedea, all the researchers preferred to remain in academia.

"Connecting the right people with spin-outs is one of the most important aspects of our work, especially when the researchers choose to stay in academia. At Gedea Biotech, for example, we recruited Annette Säfholm as CEO early on. She has been invaluable," says Christine Widstrand, CEO LU Ventures.

"If you are a researcher with questions regarding these matters, I wouldn't hesitate to contact LU Innovation, the first point of contact when it comes to applying your research. You are never too early - the only thing you can be is too late," continues Christine.

ASGARD THERAPEUTICS
Off-the-shelf gene therapy for cancer immunotherapy. In 2025, Asgard was awarded the EIC Transition Grant. Researchers: Filipe Pereira, Cristiana Pires and Fábio Rosa.

GEDEA BIOTECH
Antibiotic-free treatment for bacterial vaginosis. In 2025, Gedea announced that its lead product, pHyph, had received a CE marking. Researchers: Ulf Ellervik, Sophie Manner, Helena Strevens and Olov Sterner.

LU Ventures
LUND UNIVERSITY VENTURE BUILDER

Edouard and his team developed a new optical technique for accurately analysing cloudy liquids

From novel findings to groundbreaking products: Learn about how Edouard is combining his academic career with his role as the founder of Spec-Imaging AB.

You knew you wanted to stay in academia. How was starting a company while remaining in academia possible?

"Long story short – I got the chance from LU Innovation and LU Ventures, that make up Lund University's innovation support, to apply my ideas without leaving the university. When you create a company, it takes a lot of work. LU Ventures has been really helpful in the startup, and LU Innovation with working on the patent.

Without this structure, I would never have done it because for me, it's nicer to stay in academia. Putting together a strong operational team in our startup has been essential. There are a lot of difficult challenges in creating a product instead of a prototype in the lab. We need people who can take it all the way."

What has starting Spec-Imaging meant for your research?

"It has helped us in a number of ways:

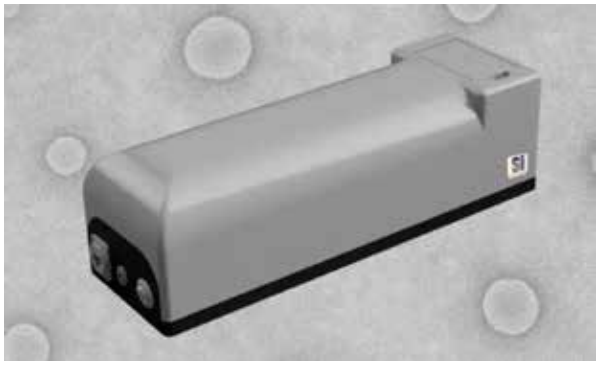
- It enabled us to study a new area: It shifted our research from studying scattered light in the air to studying its behavior in liquids.
- It helped us with patents and grants: including a Proof of Concept grant from the European Research Council and more.
- It opened up new ideas: Spec-Imaging has helped us identify applications that are important in waste-water industry, medicine, and food processing. We have been guided in fields we don't know, which opens up a lot of new ideas."

2025: Spec-Imaging Launched IC-PARTICLE ►►
Enables real-time measurement of particle size and concentration.

EDOUARD BERROCAL
Associate Professor at the Department of Physics. Main founder of Spec-Imaging.

SPEC-IMAGING
Analysing turbid liquids on site using spectrophotometry. Founded 2020.

CO-FOUNDERS
William Chaze, Jeremias Püls and Elias Kristensson



Supporting the next generation of entrepreneurs

FoundHer: REWRITING THE ENTREPREUNERIAL NARRATIVE

With funding from Region Skåne and the city of Lund, LU Innovation launched FoundHer Bootcamp in 2025 to address the gender gap in entrepreneurship. The initiative supports female students and doctoral students to transform their ideas into viable ventures.

Two intensive 12-hour events brought together participants for networking workshops, expert insights, and activities. With about 100 applications for 25 spots per event, demand far exceeded capacity.

Leading industry experts participated as speakers and discussion leaders during the event.

"I've been amazed by the level of engagement from students, speakers, and workshop leaders. Many remember the importance of mentors and role models who opened doors and helped shape their path. Now they want to offer the same support to the next generation," said Savannah Gillblad, Project Manager for Events at LU Innovation.

At the current pace, it will take 100 years before entrepreneurship in Skåne is gender equal. FoundHer accelerates change by helping female students and doctoral students access startup knowledge and mentorship.

STARTUP AHOJ!

Can you build a startup in a weekend? LU Innovation's Helsingborg team co-organised Techstars Startup Weekend Øresund, bringing together over 30 tech-interested students and entrepreneurs for 54 hours of pitching, building, and working to launch startups. The event took place in Helsingborg and aboard ferries between Sweden and Denmark.

"We wanted to show what's unique about Helsingborg," said co-organiser Julaina Jaffar, a student worker at LU Innovation.

The idea behind the event was for participants to build real projects in one weekend, connecting with mentors, co-founders, and investors while developing entrepreneurial skills.

You can get far in a weekend! During 54 hours around 30 students and entrepreneurs worked together on projects that could become startups.

Photo: Unsplash

The city of Helsingborg, where 50 students and entrepreneurs visited startups during the first ever Startup Crawl.

STARTUP CRAWL

Around 50 people joined the LU Innovation's first Startup Crawl in Helsingborg, moving from one startup to the next across the city. The idea was to allow participants to discover the entrepreneurial spirit of Helsingborg in a social setting – like a pub crawl, but for innovation. "The idea came from one of our student workers – what about making a pub crawl but for startups?" says Karsten Depart from LU Innovation. "We've noticed people with contact to the startup ecosystem are more likely to start their own venture. Sometimes meeting people or working at a startup is enough for someone to say 'hey, I could do that!'" The next Startup Crawl is planned for April 2026 in Lund.

Photo: Charlotte Carlberg Bärg

THINGS ARE HAPPENING AT X-Lab!

Since moving into X-Lab makerspace, LU Innovation's incubator has become home to over 27 early stage startups and innovation projects during 2025. The incubator hosts countless events – ideation sessions, funding meetings, Connect Syds investor networking meetings, and After Science gatherings. With free 24/7 office space, makerspace access, and vibrant community supporting early-stage projects, the incubator continues its 20+ year legacy as Lund University's innovation hub.

THREE PROJECTS STARTED BY STUDENTS THAT ARE ALREADY MAKING WAVES:


Photo: Simon Aatig

Level Up Lund!
Level Up LUND! is a festival that connects gaming, esports, and education. The three-day festival bring together students, gamers, and companies looking to recruit talent. In March 2026, 2,500 attendees will gather at Sparbanken Arena.

Another Kind
Another Kind designs and makes multifunctional furniture that serve multiple functions and is designed to fit everyday needs in homes. They now sell in the EU and Switzerland, and have received design protection for their sofa bed.


Photo: Nikita Lourenco-Calling

Solstice Storage
Solstice Storage develops affordable energy storage using sand batteries with solar power. Graduated from Ideon's incubator and received grants from Swedish Energy Agency and Vinnova. Building a prototype at X-Lab during 2026.

OUR STARTUPS WENT TO STOCKHOLM, BERLIN AND COPENHAGEN


© Beto Ruiz Alonzo

At the Stage Two Final in Berlin, Europe's largest competition for university research spin-outs, Lund University was recognised as one of Europe's top Innovation Enablers for guiding research to market. Meanwhile, Lund University spin-out NodeX Cloud won the Accelerate Prize for their blockchain-based ransomware solution.

In Copenhagen, 25 founders attended TechBBQ to validate markets, connect with investors, and secure pilot partnerships – the final showcase for the Leapfrogs summer programme.

At TechArena Stockholm, 11 startups participated in back-to-back investor meetings and industry networking sessions.

"From Berlin to Copenhagen to Stockholm, our startups are proving their solutions work beyond the university. National and international exposure is about building the partnerships and market knowledge essential for growth," says Niclas Nilsson, Director of Innovation at LU Innovation.


Photo: Johan Persson

WE SUPPORT ALL FACULTIES

Innovation can be a new tool, method or product that benefits society. At Lund University, students and researchers across all disciplines bring diverse skills to create real-world solutions – from improving how pre-school children learn maths, to better method to transport hearts during transplantation, to making physics experiments run more efficiently. (All are Lund University innovations!)

Moving ideas forward – new initiatives to inspire and accelerate

LU Innovation continually develops programmes and initiatives to help research and ideas progress. Here are highlights from our efforts to support utilisation across the university.

Bringing an insight to impact isn't always straightforward. We support students and researchers across all faculties at different stages – from early-stage exploration to startup validation.

INSIGHTS

Through INSIGHTS we dive into the four keys to innovation: Need, Approach, Benefit, Competition (NABC). Over four seminars, you'll explore how your research or idea can make a real difference in society. New to this? No prior experience needed. Includes independent work with personalised feedback from LU Innovation advisors – designed for master's students, doctoral students and researcher who are interested in exploring innovation.


INSIGHTS: Four seminars on the key factors Need, Approach, Benefit, and Competition – with personalised feedback.


VALIDATE: Interactive sessions to take innovation projects to the next stage, with stakeholder mapping, business hypotheses, customer journeys, and storytelling.

VALIDATE

A new programm designed to help students and researchers develop further develop their early-stage projects and startups. Four interactive sessions cover stakeholder mapping, business hypotheses, customer journey, and storytelling.

AFTER SCIENCE NETWORK

The After Science Network connects PhD students and postdocs interested learning from each other and exploring opportunities beyond academia. The initiative helps early career researchers turn their research into real-world impact through innovation and entrepreneurship, offering practical tools and expert insights.

Social Impact Lab starting up in 2026

In collaboration with LU Innovation, the Faculty of Social Sciences is starting Social Impact Lab this spring – a programme to help social and behavioural scientists translate research into societal benefit. The initiative challenges the STEM-dominated innovation landscape by highlighting the importance of social innovations.

BACKGROUND

The programme offers five selected researchers three weeks of funded working time, joint workshops, and individual counselling to develop their innovation ideas.

"The goal is to give researchers time and support to bring their research closer to practical application," says Sophie Hydén Picasso, Innovation Developer at LU Innovation.

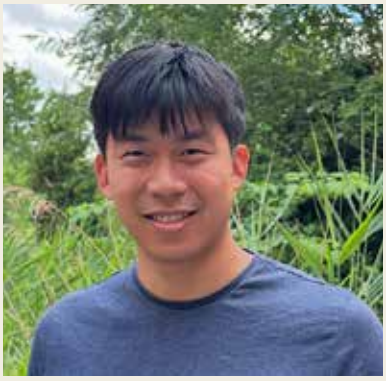
Participants will develop ideas for services, products, methods or processes with potential for implementation in the public sector or commercialisation. The programme runs through early autumn 2026, with approximately eight workshops focusing on stakeholder mapping, market analysis, financing plans and legal aspects.

VOICES OF INNOVATION CHANGING THE FUTURE


Photo: Henrik Lindblom

Emma Hammarlund,
Principal Investigator, LUCC
Emma Hammarlund has applied geological methods to detect cancer early via a simple hair test, starting with prostate and breast cancer. "Early detection reduces mortality and suffering – and saves society significant costs." The test is currently being developed by university spin-out Capillon Analytics/ Kreftect.

Tobias Erlöv, Researcher,
Biomedical Technology, LTH
Tobias Erlöv is part of a cross-disciplinary team that developed an ultrasound method to improve risk assessment for heart attacks and strokes, now being developed through spin-out Medqus. "The journey with LU Innovation has been very valuable for our research. They offered a different perspective on what's important to highlight."



Hanbang Zou, Researcher,
Functional Ecology
Hanbang Zou leads an interdisciplinary team that are researching if it is possible to use fungi to repair concrete cracks, reducing waste and CO^2 emissions. Starting with a grant from the Sustainable Fund, the project has gone on to secure funding from several sources. "Interdisciplinary collaboration creates innovative solutions – this is the future."

WHAT OUR PROJECTS SAY

We recently asked our projects: "Would you recommend LU Innovation?" We're pleased that all 28 researchers surveyed said yes. One shared: "LU Innovation helped even at very early stages – planning ahead and finding grant sources was most useful for me." In 2026, we're planning a follow-up survey. If you're working with us, we're curious what you'll say.

100 % would recommend LU Innovation

Funding focus: Creating opportunities in 2026

In 2026, LU Innovation will step up its efforts to identify the right funding for innovative projects at the right time. There are many excellent funders and funding calls for different types of projects.

LU Innovation is working to strengthen collaboration with external funders that support impact and innovation. In 2026, the innovation office will deepen its collaboration with several funders and is providing support through information sessions and application guidance.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

"We want to make it easier for researchers at Lund University to find the right funding to develop their innovations and improve the quality of their applications. We're here to help," says Johan Alling, who is responsible for funding and financial tools at LU Innovation.

"Money makes the world go round – no doubt about it. But there's more to research and innovation than money alone," Johan notes. "Through the innovation office, you're not just applying for funding, but for empowerment, connections, and support."

During the first half of 2026, LU Innovation will focus on calls from the Sten K Johnson Foundation, the Novo Nordisk Foundation, and the upcoming Innovative Startups call from Vinnova.

"Together they serve as a smorgasbord that covers many needs for innovation funding, but we also intend to highlight futher opportunities from the EU and several Swedish sources taking place during the year," says Johan Alling.

Johan Alling is responsible for funding and financial tools at LU Innovation.

SOME OF JOHAN'S FAVOURITE GRANTS WITH A STRONG SUCCESS RATE AT LUND UNIVERSITY

▶ **The Sten K Johnson Foundation**
The scholarship supports individuals, organisations, and companies to develop projects in education, medicine, technology, entrepreneurship, literature and music, often with an interdisciplinary approach. Annual call.

▶ **The Novo Nordisk Foundation**
Substantial funding for research in life sciences and sustainability. Pioneer grants: twice yearly. Distinguished Innovator Award: yearly from 2027.

▶ **Innovative Startups – VINNOVA**
For startups solving global challenges with scalable business models and long-term sustainability impact. Annual call.

LU Innovation organises info meetings for many calls. See our website, socials, or subscribe to our newsletter for updates on coming events.

It's never too early to get in touch

The innovation journey begins in your research. Are you curious about how your results can make a difference or be utilised? It's never too early to contact the innovation office, LU Innovation.

THE PATH FROM INSIGHT TO IMPACT

1. EXPLORE

We explore your research or ideas, and together pinpoint the next steps.

2. VERIFY

Together, we verify market potential, tech, and IP. Apply for grants to test your idea.

3. REALISE

If you wish to pursue the idea, we help you identify the best path forward.

SERVICES

At Lund University you get free support through the innovation office, LU Innovation. For venture building, there's LU Ventures.

SUPPORT

Many researchers want their research to create value in society but don't know the way forward. We support you on how to navigate – from research to utlisation.

Services

- Personal coaching
- Seminar series & workshops
- Incubator
- Networks

VERIFICATION FUNDING AVAILABLE WITH SUPPORT FROM US:

Support from Vinnova

VFT – Verification for growth, including Proof of Concept (POC) verification funding

Support from LU Innovation

VFS – Verification for collaboration

Support from the university's Sustainability Fund

External funding sources (see page 18 for examples)

PATENTS AND IP

It's important to gain a clear understanding of patentability and ownership at an early stage. Our patent and legal advisors support you through the process.

Services

- Legal advice – e.g. mapping ownership
- Patent database searches
- Patent applications
- Advising on Intellectual Property (IP) strategy
- Licensing and agreements (e.g. MTA, NDA)

BUILD A SPIN-OUT, LICENSE, OR ESTABLISH A COLLABORATION?

There are many paths from research to society. We have experience with different utilisation routes.

LU Ventures is the university's vehicle to help build and finance research-based spin-outs.

Through LU Ventures, you'll get help to:

- Build a team and board
- Find investors
- Ensure key structures, agreements, finances, and communication are in place

INTERESTED? Book an online meeting with our innovation developers if you have an idea or research result to explore. Or email us if you would like us to present at your next meeting: **info@innovation.lu.se**

LU INNOVATION also offers complete support to students!
Read about the innovation support available at Lund University at innovation.lu.se.

> As we look towards 2026, fostering innovation and the spin-out of new startups remain critical elements of our strategy as a leading global university.

Erik Renström
Vice-Chancellor of Lund University

INNOVATION AT LUND UNIVERSITY

Innovation support at Lund University is designed to assist students and researchers from all faculties.

- LU Innovation is the university's innovation office, helping researchers and students explore and verify the potential of their ideas and research results.
- LU Ventures is Lund University's venture builder, working with researchers to build and finance spin-outs.

LUND UNIVERSITY

WWW.INNOVATION.LU.SE

LUND UNIVERSITY
Box 117
SE-221 00 Lund
Tel 046-222 00 00
www.lunduniversity.lu.se

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