

For those who dare to innovate and  
care enough to make it happen.

● Are you  
**inc?**

# inc.ubator

*noun:*

an organisation that helps people to start new companies



Why choose **inc?**

ASTER  
FOUNDATION

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## Be inc.

*define*

A social incubator for emerging entrepreneurs who want to transform the world we live in.

*adjective:*

combined in one body;  
made part of

Our unique programme draws on the benefits, resources and expertise of a highly successful and established social organisation and its people:

- 1 A strong core syllabus** covering all areas of business, development, growth and ethics
- 2 Personal and team development** through psychometric profiling and DISC, to help you improve productivity, teamwork and communication
- 3 Mentoring and coaching** to support personal growth from successful social entrepreneurs who know your journey
- 4 Offices/ digital spaces** offering shared workspaces for you to work with others
- 5 Access to funding and investment**
- 6 Opportunities to gain insight** to shape your business through pilot projects within Aster communities
- 7 Access to our diverse 93,000 customers** to help develop your ideas
- 8 Expert advice and support** from the **inc.** team
- 9 An entrepreneurial community** of peers to collaborate with and provide support
- 10 Alignment** to the Aster Group brand
- 11 Access to Aster partners and networks**
- 12 Promotion of your social business** through communication channels
- 13 Mental wellness support** keeping you happy, healthy and resilient.



**"inc.** has provided us with actionable insights into the development of Padlock through expert-led workshops, market-leading mentoring and a vast community of bespoke support that has accelerated our progress as a social business."

**Eoin Heffernan,**  
founder of Padlock

We are opening the programme to social enterprises which focus on addressing and supporting one or more of the following areas across our communities:



## Homelessness:

We believe everybody should have a home

Through the Aster Foundation we work with those who are homeless to support them to have and keep a home. We aim to have housed 136 long term homeless people by 2030 and are keen to work with those who have ideas around eradicating homelessness and supporting those facing this challenge.

## Independence in later life:

Enabling independence and reducing social exclusion

By 2040 nearly a quarter of the UK's population will be aged 65+ and over. Roughly 30% currently fall within this age group, with many having some level of disability or health condition. With loneliness and isolation increasing in this age group it's never been more important to tackle these issues through innovation and diversity of thought.



## Into work:

Removing barriers to work - creating careers and growth

For many, finding work can be hard, especially after long periods away or through a lack of formal qualifications. We work with our communities to remove the barriers many face so that they find secure and meaningful work. We're looking for social enterprises who will work with us to find sustainable solutions.



## Financial inclusion:

Financial wellbeing and independence for all

Those at highest risk of financial exclusion are on low incomes; claiming means-tested benefits; in rented accommodation; or leave school before the age of sixteen. Nearly 50% of Aster communities experience some form of financial exclusion, which is why finding innovative solutions to inclusion is a priority for us. We want to work with innovators committed to removing the barriers faced by many.





## **Mental wellness and resilience:**

Improving the mental health of our communities

Every week, one in six adults experience a common mental health problem, such as anxiety or depression. We provide mental wellness training, support and coaching to approximately 2,000 people every year. The impact of this means we touch the lives of an extra 4,000 people a year in a positive way. We are keen to work with social entrepreneurs who have innovative ideas to address mental health in this space.

## **Sustainability:**

Driving environmental change for a sustainable and renewable future

We are committed to the green agenda and are excited to work with social entrepreneurs making waves in this area! It could be helping people to change their practices, developing a new innovative green technology or a way to reduce CO2 emissions – whatever it is, we want to work with you. We are part of the social housing sector and are committed to making change for our communities now and in the future.



## **Community safety:**

Keeping our communities safe

With violent crime increasing, and extensive challenges faced by county lines, knife crime, and cyber bullying, particularly for those of a younger age, we are keen to work with those who have thought of innovative ways to address such challenges and have access to some great professionals and networks to support your journey.

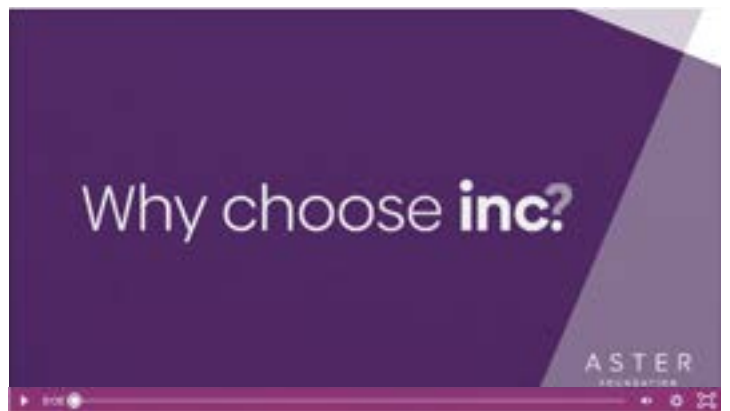
# Why inc?

Because there are people across our communities who want to see change and **you** could be the person that makes the difference.

**We** can provide **you** with the knowledge, skills and confidence to take your ideas to the next level.

**Together**, we can transform your vision into a social enterprise that can have a real impact on the things that really matter.

**Don't just take our word for it**



# The class of 20/21

## Predicting mental health care with AI

Using state of the art, Artificial Intelligence technology, Well Good, founded by Dan Willis and Adam McNichol aims to provide tailored predictive mental health care designed to help organisations support employee wellbeing.

Well Good is a unique tool that looks at employee engagement through data collected across an organisation. By using preventative algorithms, it can provide insights, signposting and recommendations where additional support may be needed around issues such as anxiety, stress, and inclusivity.

With Aster's mental wellness programme a success, Dan and Adam have plenty of examples of a colleague wellbeing strategy working well. As part of the **inc.** cohort, the duo is well on their way to realising their dream of transforming the way we deal with our mental health before it becomes a problem.

To find out more about all of our entrepreneurs visit [www.aster.co.uk/foundation/inc](http://www.aster.co.uk/foundation/inc)

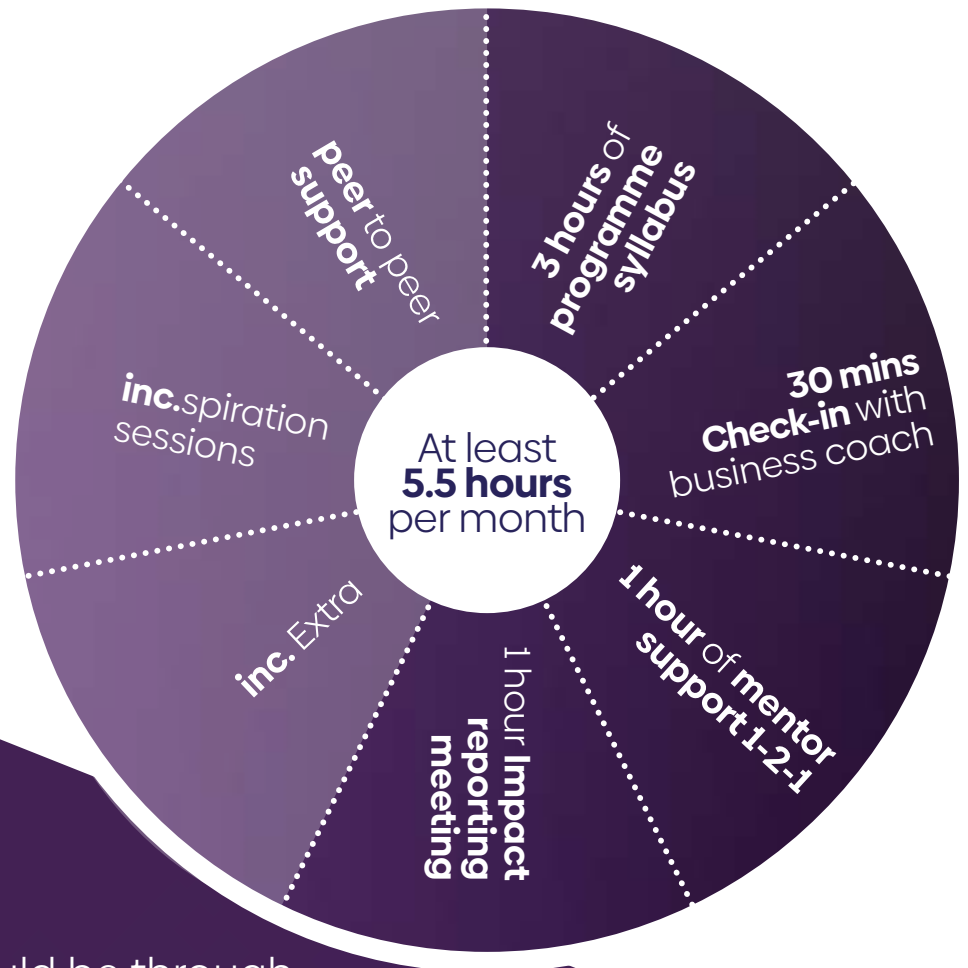
“We feel incredibly privileged to be a part of the **inc.** story. We love the fact that they truly believe in helping sustainable businesses ‘for good’ become successful. The support network and programme content cannot be faulted. I would strongly recommend any social enterprise to consider this programme to accelerate their growth.”

Dan Willis, founder of Well Good



# The inc. commitment

As an **inc.** entrepreneur, how much time do you need to invest?



Although your commitment to **inc.** is a minimum of 5.5 hours per month, you may wish to **invest more to accelerate your business impact.**

This could be through:

- Accessing the suite of support on offer through **inc. extra** (insight and customer feedback / impact support). These will be organised by your business coach and agreed by you.
  - Getting involved in the 7pm **inc.spiration** sessions. These will be sociable and exciting opportunities to enable you to ask questions and build your network.
- Your business coach will support you in planning and getting the most from your **inc.** experience, ensuring you are supported throughout your journey.



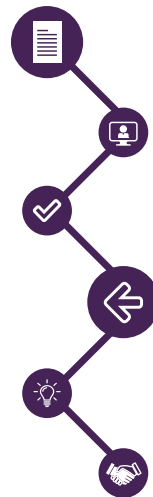
# The need to knows

The application process has been designed to enable our team to gain an understanding of your social enterprise and values, how they align to Aster's mission, and your aspirations for being part of the cohort.

## How to apply

Applications will be shortlisted.

If successful you will be asked to attend selection interviews and digitally deliver a pitch about your social enterprise to the **inc.** panel on Wednesday 15 September.



Click **here** to complete the application form. Our deadline is Friday 23 July.

## What happens next

Your journey begins, Wednesday 13 October.

The **inc.** team are here to help you confidently share your vision and make the most of this incredible opportunity.

We are on hand to support you at each stage and will also support those who don't make it onto the first cohort through giving advice and feedback on the next steps of your journey.

## Just starting out?

Our pre-incubator might be more suitable for you. Register your interest in **inc.academy** launching January 2022 by emailing [asterfoundation@aster.co.uk](mailto:asterfoundation@aster.co.uk)

# Let's talk

 [www.aster.co.uk/foundation](http://www.aster.co.uk/foundation)

 07525 133 270  [inc@aster.co.uk](mailto:inc@aster.co.uk)



ASTER  
GROUP

## We're driven by our vision of ensuring everyone has a home

As a not-for-dividend business, we reinvest our profits back into our homes, communities and services so that we can continue to provide our customers with reliable, safe and modern customer services, build more homes in response to the housing crisis and invest in community projects that help make a real difference in our neighbourhoods. We own and maintain over 32,000 homes, provide services to around 93,000 customers and employ more than 1,450 people.

**inc.** is part of the Aster Foundation, driving innovation and supporting our wider transformation.

**To find out more visit our website: [www.aster.co.uk/foundation](http://www.aster.co.uk/foundation)**