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# Swinburne Luminate Program Info Night

Wednesday, 25 February 2026



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STUDIO



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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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# Housekeeping

 During the presentation we ask that you please mute your microphones.

 This session is being recorded and will be shared with participants.

 Put questions in the chat. We will work through the list during the Q&A session.

 If you would like to ask the question at the end of session, please raise your hand. I will ask you to unmute your mic and ask your question.



We connect founders, researchers, students, and industry partners to support the development and growth of high-potential ventures focused on solving real-world challenges.



# How We Deliver Value



Enable founders to build and scale ventures through structured, founder-first programs



Deliver hands-on mentoring, coaching, and founder-first support



Connect startups to Swinburne's research, talent, capital, infrastructure, and industry partners



Champion scalable, sustainable, and impact-driven innovation



# Meet the Programs team

**Audrey Jean-Baptiste**

Head of Commercial  
Programs & Operations



**Sarah Barter**

Senior Coordinator  
Innovation Programs



**Ge Li**

Marketing & Communications  
Coordinator



**Jenny Bevis**

Senior Coordinator  
Innovations Program (External)



## And our broader Commercial Innovation Team

**Dr Werner van der Merwe**

Vice President  
Innovation and Enterprise



**Abhay Seth**

Director  
Commercial Innovation



**Tom Forbes**

Head of Commercialisation  
Space, Aerospace and AI



**Tathagath Mariswamy**

Commercialisation Manager  
Space, Aerospace and AI



**Jeremy Yang**

Commercialisation Manager  
Health and MedTech



**Liya Ma**

Commercialisation Manager  
Innovative Planet



**Zahra Shahbazian**

Expert in Residence



**Dr Naveen Jason**

Commercialisation Analyst



**Anu Mavilakandy**

Intellectual Property  
Commercialisation Manager



*parental leave*

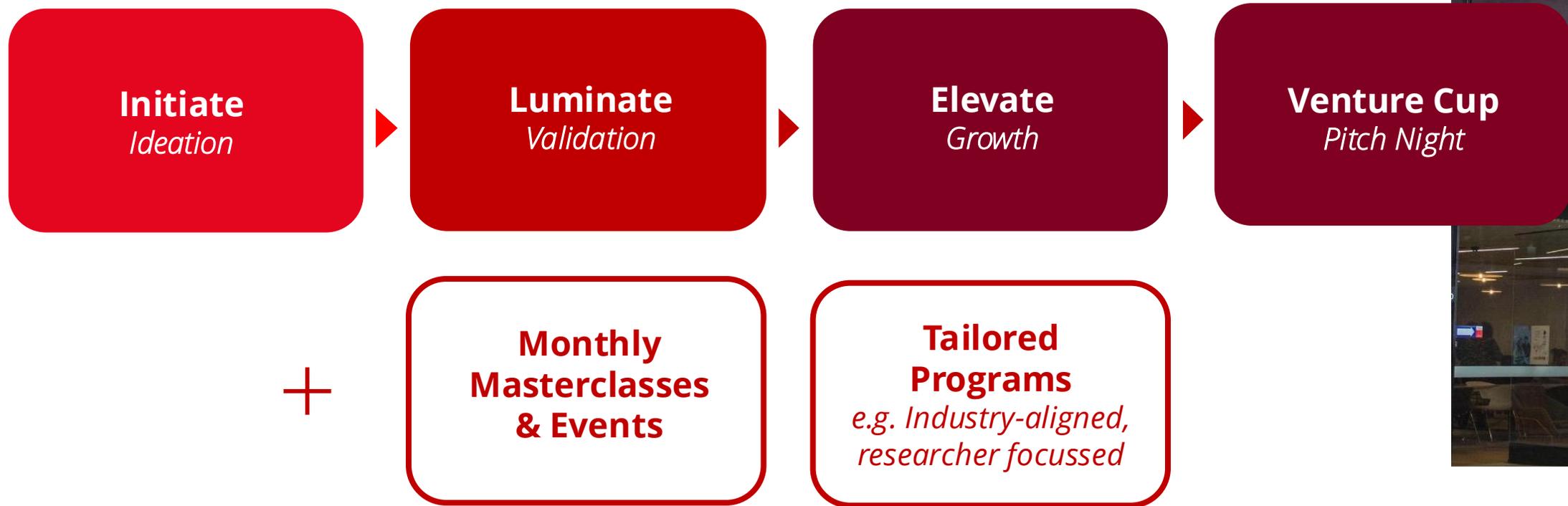
# Luminate is Delivered in Partnership with the Product Bus



# Innovation Studio programs

## Turning ideas into impact through structured support

Supporting Swinburne's staff, students, researchers, alumni, and partners through every stage of the entrepreneurial journey.



# Monthly Masterclasses

February masterclass: 2pm, Thursday 26 Feb

## Big Ideas Start Small: Masterclass with Dr Emily Cook and Georgie Aiuto



Start 2026 with our first Masterclass

## Big Ideas Start Small

2pm, Thursday 26 February 2026



Dr Emily Cook  
Swinburne Senior Lecturer in STEM Education



Georgie Aiuto  
Science Educator and Researcher, Science Outreach and Freelance Artist

### What you'll gain

- Hard-won insights
- Practical connections
- Clear guidance
- Tangible takeaways

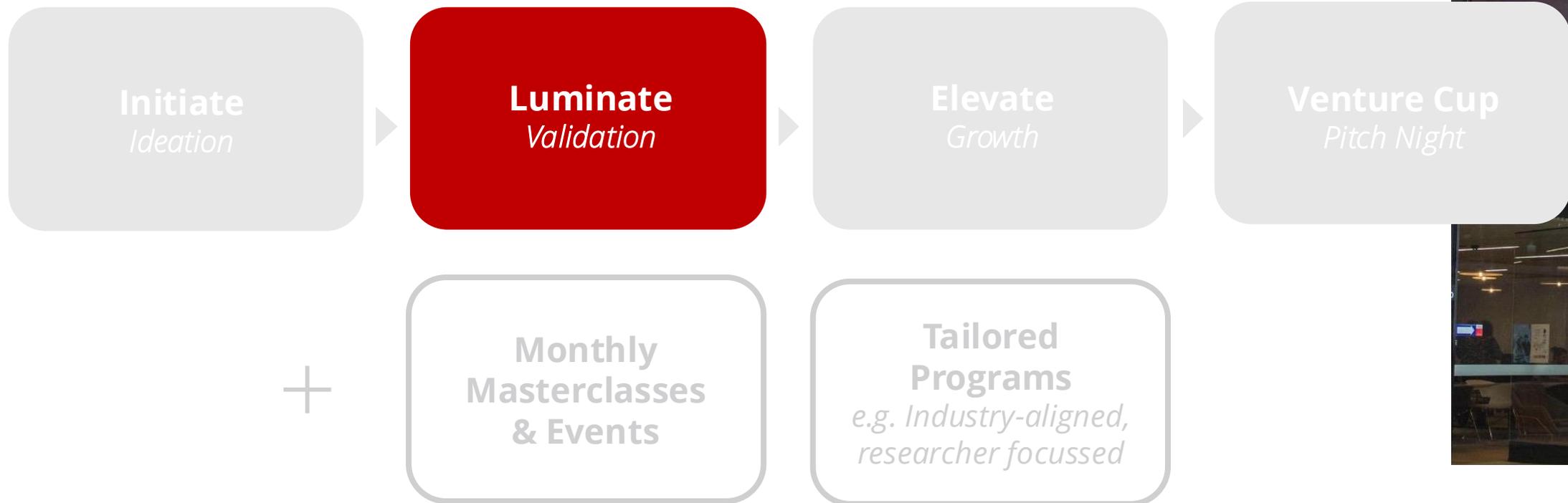


Secure your spot!

# Innovation Studio programs

## Turning ideas into impact through structured support

Supporting Swinburne's staff, students, researchers, alumni, and partners through every stage of the entrepreneurial journey.



# What You'll Achieve in 6 Weeks with Luminate

**Luminate is a 6-week program designed for early-stage founders who are actively moving – testing ideas, speaking to customers, and building MVPs.**

## What can you expect?

-  **Sharpen your validation strategy**  
Master proven customer discovery and lean experimentation frameworks to rigorously test assumptions and reduce risk.
-  **Strengthen your MVP with real feedback**  
Apply practical methodologies to build what customers actually want.
-  **Structured accountability to maintain momentum**  
Weekly workshops, expert mentoring and peer accountability.
-  **Access to a high-value startup network**
-  **Showcase your progress**  
Present your refined value proposition and validated insights to mentors and peers, building credibility and confidence.



Applications open: 18 February – 18 March

# Luminate Program Focus Areas

## ■ **Market Discovery**

Define the problem, customer segments, and market opportunity.

## ■ **Market Validation**

Test assumptions with real customers and generate evidence of demand.

## ■ **Business Model Development**

Adapt and refine the business model in line with validation progress.

## ■ **Solution Development**

Develop and iterate your MVP, incorporating technical and customer feedback.

## ■ **Funding Pathways**

Identify appropriate capital options based on stage and traction (grants, equity, partnerships).

## ■ **Business Structuring**

Establish legal and governance structures aligned to your growth stage.

## ■ **Pitching**

Learn how to craft and deliver a compelling story around your venture.



# Luminate Program Structure & Key Dates

Everything you need to know to plan your participation.

How it works

## Program Schedule

Tuesdays | 9:30am – 4:30pm

14 April – 19 May 2026

## Delivery Format

- All workshops are delivered in person
- Pre-session recordings may be required
- Attendance at all sessions is required

## Final Showcase

Tuesday, 26 May 2026



# Luminate Program Eligibility

Is Luminate right for you?

Luminate is for entrepreneurs turning **innovative** ideas into **businesses** that can **scale** and create real **impact**.

## You're eligible if:

- You are a Swinburne student, staff member or alum
- At least one founder is affiliated with Swinburne
- You're building a scalable, venture-style startup with growth ambition
- You have an MVP, prototype, or are actively testing with customers
- You can attend all sessions in person (at least one founder required)

Note: you can apply as a solo founder or team. Up to 15 early-stage startups will be accepted.



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# Luminate Program Schedule

Week	Themes Covered	Date & Time
1	<b>Business Model Canvas &amp; Customer Validation</b>	14 April 9.30am-4.30pm
2	<b>Solution Fit &amp; Prototyping</b>	21 April 9.30am-4.30pm
3	<b>Understanding Funding Presenting Evidence</b>	28 April 9.30am-4.30pm
4	<b>Agentic AI &amp; Can this scale? Structuring a Business</b>	5 May 9.30am-4.30pm
5	<b>What Comes Next? Develop Showcase Content</b>	12 May 9.30am-4.30pm
6	<b>Presentation Skills, Showcase Practice &amp; Program Reflections</b>	19 May 9.30am-4.30pm
7	<b>Showcase</b>	<b>26 May 5pm-8pm</b>



# Luminate Showcase Structure

**3 minutes to present your progress**

Tuesday 26 May 2026, 5pm-8.30pm, Fire Station

## 1. Introduction (30 seconds)

- Brief introduction of the founder(s) and startup name
- Compelling one-sentence description of what you're building
- The big question that drove your exploration during the cohort

## 2. Discovery Journey (60 seconds)

- The key supporting questions you explored
- Most significant insights or pivots that occurred
- Surprising learnings that changed your direction/confirmed your hypothesis
- Brief mention of your validation methods

## 3. Current Solution & Market Opportunity (45 seconds)

- Clear articulation of the problem you're solving
- Your current solution approach based on your learnings
- Target customer definition (refined through your discovery)
- Brief market size or opportunity statement

## 4. Progress & Next Steps (45 seconds)

- Key traction points achieved during the program
- Clear next milestone you're working toward
- Specific request or call to action for the audience
- How you plan to apply your biggest learning going forward

Showcase prizes\* include:

- **\$2,500** for the winner
- **\$1,000** for the runner-up
- **\$500** for the best pitch

\* Conditions apply. Prizes in AUD.



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# How to Apply

Applications are currently open, and close **18 March 2026**.

## Step 1

Complete the online application form before the deadline.

## Step 2

Clearly articulate your problem, solution, traction and growth ambition. Luminare is competitive. We select high-potential startups tackling meaningful problems, who are ready to validate at pace.

## Step 3

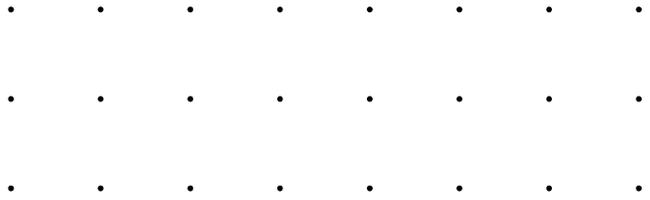
Shortlisted teams will be invited to a 30-minute interview.

That's it.

You'll hear from us shortly after applications close!

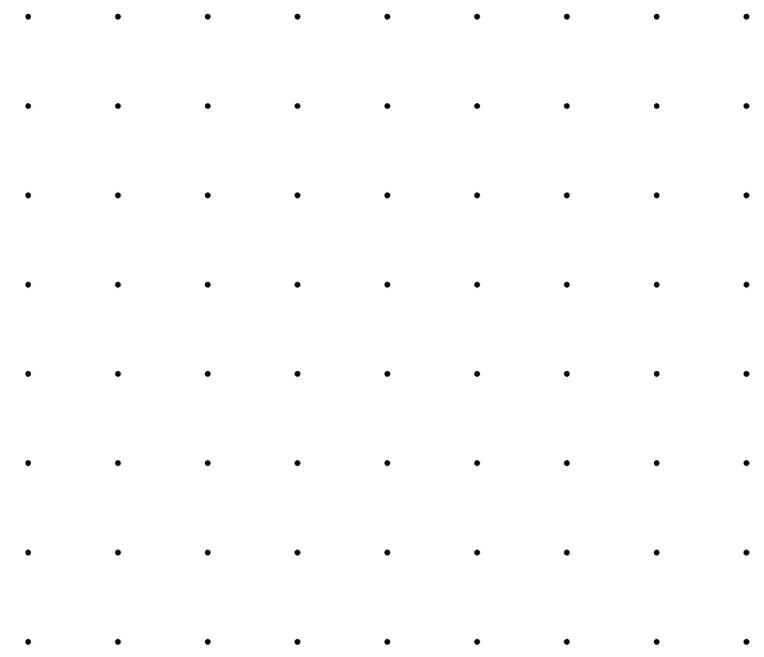


Scan the QR code to apply



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# QUESTIONS?



METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE

# Turn your ideas into reality

[swi.nu/innovation](https://swi.nu/innovation)



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