# NatWest offers £70,000 top prize to boost UK startups in AI-powered pitch competition



NatWest has announced a £70,000 prize for the winner of its Accelerator Pitch competition, part of a broader £1 million initiative to support UK startups and scaleups. In collaboration with Google Cloud, the scheme offers entrepreneurs access to AI tools, cloud technology and expert-led digital skills training.

Marking ten years of the NatWest Accelerator programme, the pitch competition invites UK entrepreneurs to submit 60-second videos outlining how funding would accelerate their business. Finalists will compete in live events, with the top three sharing a £100,000 prize pool. The overall winner will receive £70,000.

The initiative is designed not only to provide capital but also to reward businesses with clear, impactful growth strategies. Alongside funding, the partnership with Google Cloud delivers training on AI implementation and digital marketing. Startups also receive Google Cloud credits to help offset technical costs.

Darren Pirie, Head of the NatWest Group Accelerator, said the programme empowers businesses to navigate a fast-changing technological landscape. “Digital skills are critical to unlocking small business growth across the UK,” he said. Darren Mowry, Vice President of Global Startups at Google Cloud, echoed the sentiment, highlighting Google’s commitment to supporting UK innovation.

Since launching in 2015, the NatWest Accelerator has supported nearly 10,000 businesses, helped raise over £684 million in investment and contributed to the creation of more than 12,000 jobs. NatWest now plans to expand the programme, with a goal of supporting up to 10,000 entrepreneurs in 2025 and forming new university partnerships to extend its reach.

This competition coincides with Google Cloud’s launch of a 12-week, equity-free accelerator for AI startups. With over 60% of UK AI startups already using Google Cloud, the collaboration strengthens the UK's ecosystem for responsible, tech-led business growth.

Together, NatWest’s funding and Google’s digital infrastructure offer a powerful platform for entrepreneurs ready to lead in the AI economy. By combining financial support with hands-on expertise, the initiative positions the UK at the forefront of ethical and transformative innovation.

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/cost-of-living/natwest-set-hand-free-70000-32176910> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.natwestgroup.com/content/natwestgroup_com/en_uk/natwestgroup/news-and-insights/news-room/press-releases/enterprise/2025/jul/natwest-and-google-to-boost-uk-startups-with-ai-tools-and-traini.html> - NatWest Group has partnered with Google Cloud to support UK entrepreneurs by providing access to AI tools, cloud technology, and expert training. This collaboration aims to equip the next generation of UK innovators with the digital skills needed to drive business growth. The partnership includes practical training on AI implementation and digital marketing, delivered through events at NatWest’s Accelerator hubs and the NatWest Accelerator app. Eligible startups will also receive Google Cloud credits to build, test, and scale their operations on Google’s secure infrastructure, reducing the cost and technical barriers for businesses leveraging AI to scale their ventures.
3. <https://www.natwestacceleratorpitch.co.uk/> - The NatWest Accelerator Pitch is a £1 million competition launched by NatWest to celebrate the tenth anniversary of its Accelerator programme. The competition invites small business owners from across the UK to submit a 60-second video pitch explaining how funding would help them grow their business. The best submissions will be selected to compete in live final events, with the top three pitches at each final sharing a £100,000 prize pot, and the overall winner receiving £70,000 for their business.
4. <https://www.natwest.com/business/business-services/entrepreneur-accelerator/pitch.html> - The NatWest Accelerator Pitch is a £1 million competition launched by NatWest to celebrate the tenth anniversary of its Accelerator programme. The competition invites small business owners from across the UK to submit a 60-second video pitch explaining how funding would help them grow their business. The best submissions will be selected to compete in live final events, with the top three pitches at each final sharing a £100,000 prize pot, and the overall winner receiving £70,000 for their business.
5. <https://www.natwestgroup.com/news-and-insights/news-room/press-releases/enterprise/2025/mar/natwest-launches-1-million-competition-to-accelerate-small-busin.html> - NatWest has launched the NatWest Accelerator Pitch, a £1 million competition offering small business owners and entrepreneurs the chance to win a share of funding to fuel their growth. To participate, applicants are invited to submit a 60-second video pitch explaining how funding would help them grow their business. The best submissions will be selected to compete in live final events, with the top three pitches at each final sharing a £100,000 prize pot, and the overall winner receiving £70,000 for their business.
6. <https://www.natwestgroup.com/news-and-insights/news-room/press-releases/enterprise/2025/mar/natwest-accelerator-at-10-years-bank-announces-next-stage-of-acc.html> - NatWest is celebrating the tenth anniversary of its Accelerator programme by announcing plans to significantly expand its support to UK businesses. The bank aims to offer 10,000 entrepreneurs the chance to join its Accelerator community in 2025 and is targeting partnerships with up to 10 UK universities to open new business accelerators within the next three years. Since its inception in 2015, the NatWest Accelerator has supported nearly 10,000 businesses, helping them raise over £684 million in investment and create over 12,000 jobs.
7. <https://www.itpro.com/cloud/cloud-computing/google-cloud-announces-new-data-residency-flexibility-for-uk-firms-accelerator-for-regional-startups> - Google Cloud has announced new initiatives to support UK businesses, including a 12-week, equity-free accelerator program for AI-focused startups, conducted in collaboration with Tech London Advocates. The program offers strategic support, access to AI/ML tools, and Google Cloud's global partner network, along with up to £280,000 in cloud credits through the ‘Gemini for UK’ scheme. Over 60% of generative AI startups in the UK have become Google Cloud customers since 2023. At the Google Cloud Summit London 2025, the company also introduced enhanced data residency options, enabling businesses to process data locally in the UK using Gemini 2.5 Flash Machine Learning and Agentspace.