



# BRIDGE 5

*Partnering to build an entrepreneurial ecosystem that drives innovation*



*Case Study:*  
***Barclays***

*“Together with our friends and partners at Barclays, we’ve become an R&D engine, helping entrepreneurs worldwide scale ventures that create jobs and tackle pressing global challenges.”*

*DANIEL EPSTEIN, founder of Unreasonable Group.*

*In 2016, Barclays and Unreasonable Group co-created Unreasonable Impact to address a critical challenge: how to rapidly scale entrepreneurial ventures that positively impact society, so as they grow they can add new jobs into the economy. Markets are rich in breakthrough ideas but poor in mechanisms to help those solutions grow. ([Unreasonable Impact](#))*

“Barclays and Unreasonable Group established a partnership in 2016 to launch Unreasonable Impact. Since then we’ve worked with over 370 ventures and their founders and CEOs to help them create opportunities for growth, said Deborah Goldfarb, Global Head of Citizenship at Barclays.

As a global platform, the partnership connects high-growth ventures and the entrepreneurs leading them to bespoke support across three regions, Asia Pacific, UK and Europe, and the Americas. What makes the model distinctive is the strategic integration of Barclays’ financial expertise and global networks. The goal isn’t just acceleration, but long-term resilience: helping ventures that tackle global problems become scalable, investable, and profitable.

## Impacts and Activities

Since launch, over 370 ventures from 47 countries have participated in Unreasonable Impact. Since inception these companies have collectively raised \$16.2 billion in capital, generated \$14.4 billion in revenue, and employed over 33,000 people. ([Scaling What Works: Our Impact in 2025](#)).

Barclays senior leaders contribute as mentors, advisors, and connectors, bringing real-world banking insight to early-stage entrepreneurs. Since the start of the program, over 2,000 Barclays colleagues have volunteered their time to collaborate with other members of the Unreasonable community in curated deep dive sessions with the ventures and to nurture one on one mentor relationships.

Ventures form cohorts that come together for week-long gatherings that blend peer learning with deep mentorship. During these sessions, mentors make dozens of strategic commitments that help them access introductions and advice to address their key needs. The cohorts are encouraged to stay connected after the programme to help maintain a long-term network of support around each venture.

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## Partnering with Barclays

This long-term relationship building means that ventures that have gone through Unreasonable Impact can later integrate into other parts of Barclays' business. E.g.

**Naked Energy (UK)** - Through Barclays' partnership with The Championships, Wimbledon, Naked Energy's thermal solar thermal technology is now installed on the roof of the Aorangi Pavilion in The Championship's grounds, supporting the building's heating and hot water systems. Naked Energy has also received investment from Barclays Climate Ventures, which has a mandate to invest up to £500 million of Barclays' capital in climate tech startups by the end of 2027 to help address the funding gap facing early and growth-stage climate technology companies.

**Re:Dish (US)** After connecting with Barclays' operations team during their programme, Re:Dish has gone on to become a supplier to Barclays. Colleagues now use Re:Dish's reusable dishware in cafés across multiple offices. Since 2023 through Re:Dish, over 1 million single use food containers and cups have been avoided.

**Lithium Urban Technologies (India)** Barclays is utilising Lithium's electric vehicle fleet to transport colleagues to its offices in Chennai, Pune, and Noida, India. Since 2015, Lithium has supported a reduction of 50,000 metric tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

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## Future Outlook and Challenges

Startups and fast-growing ventures require on-going support. Unreasonable Impact forms part of Barclays' Climate Tech Escalator, which provides a connected pathway dedicated to growing climate tech companies, supporting them from first idea to initial public offering (IPO). The Escalator connects teams across Barclays UK Business Bank, UK Corporate Bank and Investment Bank. It works closely with climate tech companies from startups, through to successfully scaling companies, to those looking for project finance, capital markets solutions and structured finance and M&A and IPO advice in the Investment Bank. It also links to partners who provide mentorship and non-financial support to help innovators and clients to scale adoption of new technologies. ([Barclays – Scaling climate tech](#))

In 2023, Barclays renewed its backing for the Unreasonable Impact programme with a goal to support an additional 200 entrepreneurs over the subsequent five years.

## Conclusion

Unreasonable Impact shows what's possible when entrepreneurial innovation meets institutional reach, expertise, and capability. By combining a global community of carefully designed gatherings and resources with dedicated corporate commitment and strategic mentorship, Barclays and Unreasonable Group have created more than a programme - through sustained commitment they have begun to build an ecosystem.

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