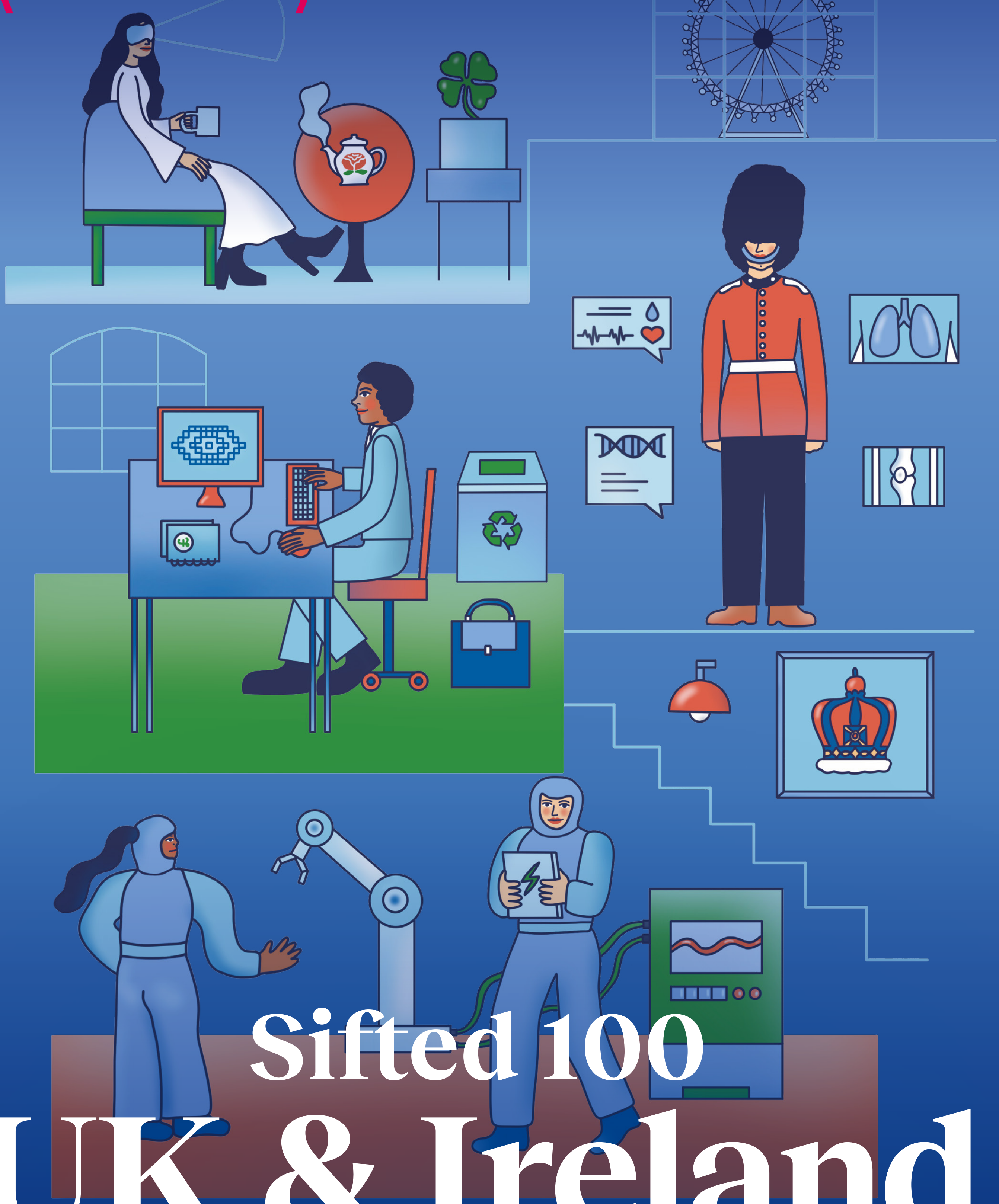
sifted / Leaderboards



Sifted 100
UK & Ireland

The fastest-growing startups in 2026

sifted

In partnership with MARRIOTT HARRISON

Sifted 100
UK & Ireland
The fastest-growing startups in 2026

The third annual Sifted 100: UK & Ireland Leaderboard celebrates the 100 fastest-growing startups in the region, ranking them by revenue growth over the last three financial years.

Get in touch

Interested in partnering with Sifted on a report? Contact us via **commercial@sifted.eu**.

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Foreword

It's our third year of Marriott Harrison partnering with Sifted on this UK & Ireland leaderboard report, which means it's my third year penning this foreword, and it has been interesting to look back over that period as we take stock and try to predict what might come next.

Since 2023, the market has evolved from cautious optimism, after a period of post-pandemic pain and recovery, to a focus on profitability, and now towards an AI-dominated funding landscape. This past year has seen both a continuation and an acceleration of that trend.

AI increasingly sucks up all the oxygen in the startup and funding conversation, and the numbers reflect this: 24% of the companies listed this year are AI-native, including six of the top 15.

These companies are growing faster, earlier, and with smaller teams. There is a sense of great urgency — even more intense than during the pandemic years — to build as quickly as possible given the competitive and rapidly moving landscape. Founders tell us that even a week or two of lost time in product development could be fatal to their chances of success.

This narrative of a race for domination is also reflected in the level of funding flowing to these companies. Investment processes are moving extremely quickly, often at frothy valuations, prompting some to question whether we are seeing the emergence of an AI bubble. While many investors remember past experiences with unsustainable valuations, many of our VC clients simply tell us: in this market, sometimes, you just have to invest.

There is, however, a flipside to the heat of the AI funding market: what happens to everyone else. Many sound, high-growth businesses that are performing well against historic metrics, but are not part of the AI story, are finding it a challenging market in which to fundraise. While unit economics may be scrutinised less for early-stage AI companies with limited historical performance to measure, more mature startups must contend with — and explain — the reality of their journeys, which may not always include sustained sky-high growth over the past year. It will be fascinating to see how AI companies fare in later rounds, when increased attention will inevitably be placed on the numbers.

Both within AI and beyond it, we are increasingly seeing alternative paths for companies to grow and for founders to exit. Acquihires are on the rise, alongside increased venture debt capacity across the market. Startup boards also appear to be considering earlier what the next strategic event might be if not a fundraise, leading to increased early-stage M&A.

One major disappointment in the data is the continued lack of progress in diversifying the UK & Ireland ecosystem: only one startup had more founders who identified as women than men, and London continues to dominate geographically. While these long-term trends will not change overnight, a more mature and developed ecosystem would benefit from greater balance.

Finally, one of the most encouraging trends of the past year has been an increase in European confidence. Perhaps partly in reaction to geopolitical developments, and certainly supported by some high profile success stories (in the UK & Ireland, think Revolut, Wayve and ElevenLabs), the European ecosystem is increasingly asserting itself as both a place to start and a place to scale an industry-defining business — particularly in sectors where we have unique capabilities. There is also renewed emphasis on investing in hardware, long a major funding gap in developing the industry of tomorrow.

Let's hope that we can build on that confidence and that some of the companies on today's leaderboard will go on to become global leaders in the years to come.

David Strong
Partner and head of venture capital, Marriott Harrison

Introduction

Things in techland have never felt this crazy. “The best companies are getting funded — and category leaders are being minted — faster than ever,” says Northzone vice president Naseem Moumene.

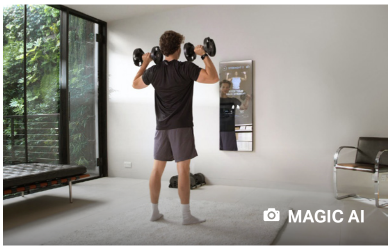
The 100 finalists on our third annual ranking of the UK and Ireland's fastest-growing tech companies are sprinting faster than most. Collectively, they've raised £18.53bn and hired over 10,000 people.

Applications poured in from Dublin, London, Galway, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Bristol, Cambridge, Glasgow, Cork and beyond, spanning AI, healthtech, pet tech, fintech and more.

The list spans everything from a law firm run by non-lawyers to solar panel subscriptions, rapid payments and wellbeing-obsessed products. There are familiar names, like Dublin unicorn Tines, and ambitious founders such as Alan Chang, who wants to build a company (Fuse Energy) to rival Tesla in scale. Others rising fast include MAGIC AI — creators of the AI-powered fitness coach that lives in your bedroom mirror — London fintech Apron and Dublin employee benefits platform Kota.

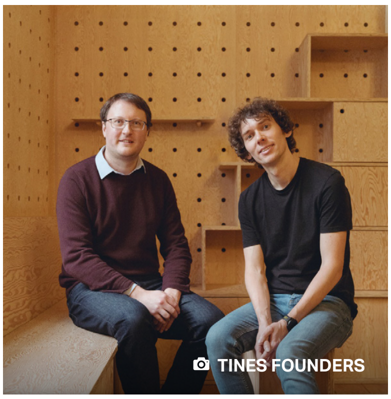
Behind every name is a story. Parcel delivery startup HIVED CEO Murvah Iqbal is so determined to win she’s hired a football coach to stay mentally and physically sharp. Chang has no energy industry background — just a string of bad experiences that convinced him he could do better. Brothers Max Clarke and Lestat McCree used to do yoga with their grandmother before school; today they run a thriving health products marketplace.

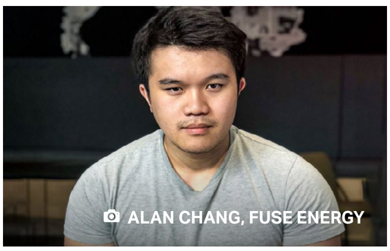
You’ll find plenty of inspiration here. Read on to discover the class of 2026.


MAGIC AI


KOTA TEAM


APRON TEAM


TINES FOUNDERS


ALAN CHANG, FUSE ENERGY

HIVED

The class of 2026

Drumroll please… The UK & Ireland's 100 fastest-growing startups, standout stats and top investors

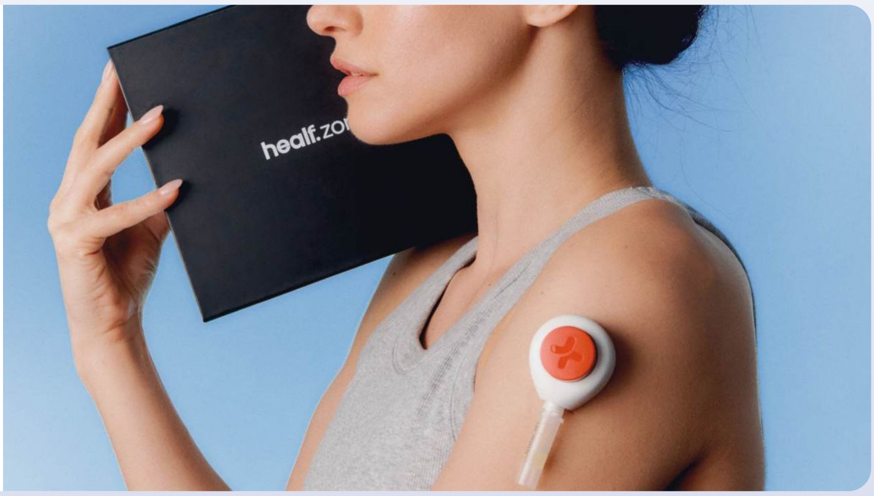
healf. 1

CONSUMER WELLBEING

Marketplace for high-end wellbeing products

London · 2020 · 90

FYE: **Mar 25**	PROFITABLE: **Yes**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£5.5m**	LATEST REVENUE: **£40m**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£2.5m Series A (Apr 2025)**	2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **1403.29%**



Fuse 2

CLIMATE ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Renewable energy subscriptions for homes

London · 2022 · 250

FYE: **Dec 25**	PROFITABLE: **PND**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£157.1m**	LATEST REVENUE: **PND**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£54.9m Series B (Dec 2025)**	2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **900.55%**

apron. 3

FINTECH PAYMENTS

Simplified invoice processing for SMBs

London · 2021 · 93

FYE: **Dec 25**	PROFITABLE: **PND**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£42.7m**	LATEST REVENUE: **PND**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£22m Series B (Sep 2024)**	2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **733.97%**

yaspa 4

FINTECH PAYMENTS

Stripe-like payment processing platform

London · 2017 · 76

FYE: **Sep 25**	PROFITABLE: **PND**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£14m**	LATEST REVENUE: **PND**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£7.9m Series A (Aug 2025)**	2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **732.55%**

Capi 5

FINTECH PAYMENTS

Helps business pay foreign suppliers

London · 2023 · 85

FYE: **Dec 25**	PROFITABLE: **PND**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£25.6m**	LATEST REVENUE: **PND**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£11.4m Series A (Oct 2024)**	2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **695.14%**

Lawhive 6

B2B SAAS LEGALTECH

Uses AI to reimagine the law firm

London · 2021 · 243

FYE: **Dec 25**	PROFITABLE: **PND**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£86.8m**	LATEST REVENUE: **PND**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£47m Series B (Feb 2026)**	2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **660.34%**

__CAGR:__ Compound Annual Growth Rate; __PND:__ Prefers Not to Disclose; __FYE:__ Financial Year End
Profitability, number of employees and latest revenue relate to each company's listed financial year

huzzle 7

B2B SAAS | HR TECH

Platform to hire global tech talent

London · 2021 · 25

FYE: **Mar 26** | PROFITABLE: **PND**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£3.8m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£2.4m Pre-seed (Apr 2024)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **657.90%**

Omnea 8

B2B SAAS | PROCUREMENT

Simplifies procurement with AI

London · 2022 · 123

FYE: **Dec 25** | PROFITABLE: **PND**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£57.7m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£38.5m Series B (Sep 2025)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **644.83%**

Kota 9

B2B SAAS | HR TECH

Employee benefits in a single unifed platform

Dublin · 2022 · 50

FYE: **Dec 25** | PROFITABLE: **No**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£18.6m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£10.3m Series A (May 2025)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **640.35%**

nuclera +37 10

HEALTHTECH | BIOTECH

Automated protein screening

Cambridge · 2013 · 114

FYE: **Dec 25** | PROFITABLE: **PND**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£126.4m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£63.7m Series C (Jan 2026)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **580.27%**

Fluidstack 11

DEEPTECH | AI INFRASTRUCTURE

AI cloud operator

London · 2017 · 132

FYE: **Dec 24** | PROFITABLE: **No**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£10.2bn** | LATEST REVENUE: **£52.7m**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£10bn Debt (Jun 2025)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **479.96%**

UNRAVEL 12

B2B SAAS | TRAVEL

Engaging travel video content

London · 2021 · 45

FYE: **Dec 25** | PROFITABLE: **PND**
TOTAL FUNDING: **£7.2m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**
LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£5.9m Series A (Apr 2025)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **447.72%**

__CAGR:__ Compound Annual Growth Rate; __PND:__ Prefers Not to Disclose; __FYE:__ Financial Year End
Profitability, number of employees and latest revenue relate to each company's listed financial year

MAGIC
-7 13

CONSUMER | SPORTS

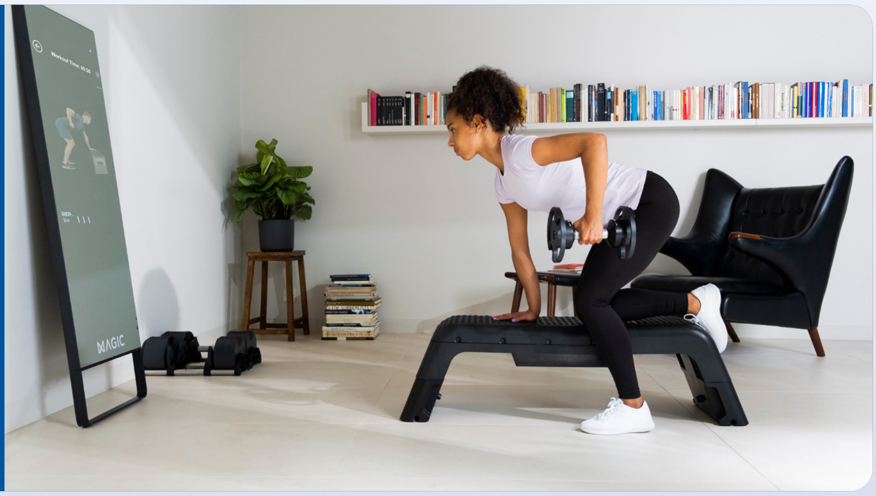
Personalised AI fitness coach

London · 2021 · 17

FYE: **Dec 25** | PROFITABLE: **PND**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£7.2m** | LATEST REVENUE: **£10.9m**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£3.9m Seed (Nov 2024)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **411.68%**



scan.com
-1 14

HEALTHTECH | DIGITAL HEALTH

Finds clinics that run affordable MRI scans

London · 2017 · 197

FYE: **Dec 24** | PROFITABLE: **PND**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£75.1m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£33.7m Series B (Dec 2023)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **374.05%**

autifony THERAPEUTICS
15

HEALTHTECH | DRUG DISCOVERY

Biotech targeting central nervous system diseases

Stevenage · 2011 · 26

FYE: **Sep 24** | PROFITABLE: **Yes**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£21.2m** | LATEST REVENUE: **£19.3m**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£1.3m Series A (Mar 2017)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **336.50%**

Curvestone AI
16

B2B SAAS | LEGALTECH

Helps regulated firms automate compliance

London · 2023 · 21

FYE: **Dec 25** | PROFITABLE: **PND**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£3m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£3m Seed (Dec 2025)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **334.77%**

abound
-6 17

FINTECH | DIGITAL LENDING

Offers loans based on alt-credit score data

London · 2020 · 150

FYE: **Feb 25** | PROFITABLE: **Yes**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£2.2bn** | LATEST REVENUE: **£66.8m**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£250m Debt (Mar 2025)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **324.90%**

sightline climate
18

CLIMATE | CLIMATE INTELLIGENCE

Climate investment intelligence platform

London · 2022 · 28

FYE: **Dec 25** | PROFITABLE: **PND**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£6.8m** | LATEST REVENUE: **£2.7m**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£4.3m Seed (Jan 2025)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **321.13%**

***CAGR:** Compound Annual Growth Rate; **PND:** Prefers Not to Disclose; **FYE:** Financial Year End*
Profitability, number of employees and latest revenue relate to each company's listed financial year

Sunsave 19

-5

CLIMATE | SOLAR ENERGY

Solar panel subscriptions

London | 2022 | 47

FYE: **Dec 24** | PROFITABLE: **PND**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£125.7m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£13m Series A (May 2025)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **319.58%**

checkboard 20

B2B SAAS | REGTECH

Client onboarding/payments for regulated businesses

London | 2019 | 46

FYE: **Dec 25** | PROFITABLE: **PND**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£3.2m** | LATEST REVENUE: **£4.2m**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£1.3m Seed (Mar 2024)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **318.33%**

Protex AI 21

B2B SAAS | SECURITY & SAFETY

Adds AI to cameras to boost warehouse safety

Dublin | 2021 | 80

FYE: **Dec 25** | PROFITABLE: **PND**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£41m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£28.2m Series B (Feb 2025)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **313.69%**

PocDoc 22

HEALTHTECH | DIGITAL HEALTH

Rapid health screening diagnostics

Cambridge | 2020 | 35

FYE: **Dec 24** | PROFITABLE: **PND**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£15.5m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£10m Seed (Nov 2024)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **307.89%**

Data Literacy Academy 23

B2B SAAS | EDTECH

Corporate data skills training

Birmingham | 2022 | 61

FYE: **Dec 25** | PROFITABLE: **Yes**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£1.3m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£900k Seed (Mar 2024)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **291.10%**

RiskSmart 24

B2B SAAS | REGTECH

Insurance risk modelling platform

Manchester | 2020 | 46

FYE: **Dec 25** | PROFITABLE: **PND**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£4.3m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£1.5m Series A (Dec 2025)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **289.72%**

FORGE GENETICS 25

HEALTHTECH | BIOTECH

Next-gen gene editing tools

Nottingham | 2023 | 9

FYE: **Jan 26** | PROFITABLE: **Yes**

TOTAL FUNDING: **£2.3m** | LATEST REVENUE: **PND**

LATEST FUNDRAISE: **£2m Seed (Aug 2025)** | 2-YR REVENUE CAGR: **287.54%**

__CAGR:__ Compound Annual Growth Rate; __PND:__ Prefers Not to Disclose; __FYE:__ Financial Year End
Profitability, number of employees and latest revenue relate to each company's listed financial year

Change	Rank	Company	Sector	Subsector	HQ	Launch year	Employees	Total funding (£m)	FYE	Profitable	Latest revenue (£m)	2-yr revenue CAGR (%)
	1	Healf	CONSUMER	WELLBEING	London	2020	90	5.5	Mar 25	✓	40	1,403.29
	2	Fuse Energy	CLIMATE	ENERGY MANAGEMENT	London	2022	250	157.1	Dec 25	PND	PND	900.55
	3	Apron	FINTECH	PAYMENTS	London	2021	93	42.7	Dec 25	PND	PND	733.97
	4	Yaspa	FINTECH	PAYMENTS	London	2017	76	14	Sep 25	PND	PND	732.55
	5	Capi Money	FINTECH	PAYMENTS	London	2023	85	25.6	Dec 25	PND	PND	695.14
	6	Lawhive ✦	B2B SAAS	LEGALTECH	London	2021	243	86.8	Dec 25	PND	PND	660.34
	7	Huzzle.com ✦	B2B SAAS	HR TECH	London	2021	25	3.8	Mar 26	PND	PND	657.90
	8	Omnea	B2B SAAS	PROCUREMENT	London	2022	123	57.7	Dec 25	PND	PND	644.83
	9	Kota	B2B SAAS	HR TECH	Dublin	2022	50	18.6	Dec 25	✗	PND	640.35
▲ +37	10	Nuclera	HEALTHTECH	BIOTECH	Cambridge	2013	114	126.4	Dec 25	PND	PND	580.27
	11	Fluidstack ✦	DEEPTECH	AI INFRASTRUCTURE	London	2017	132	10,195	Dec 24	✓	52.7	479.96
	12	Unravel ✦	B2B SAAS	TRAVEL	London	2021	45	7.2	Dec 25	PND	PND	447.72
-7 ▼	13	MAGIC AI ✦	CONSUMER	SPORTS	London	2021	17	7.2	Dec 25	PND	10.9	411.68
-1 ▼	14	Scan.com	HEALTHTECH	DIGITAL HEALTH	London	2017	197	75.1	Dec 24	PND	PND	374.05
	15	Autifony Therapeutics	HEALTHTECH	DRUG DISCOVERY	Stevenage	2011	26	21	Sep 24	✓	19.3	336.50
	16	Curvestone AI ✦	B2B SAAS	LEGALTECH	London	2023	21	3	Dec 25	PND	PND	334.77
-6 ▼	17	Abound	FINTECH	DIGITAL LENDING	London	2020	150	2,155	Feb 25	✓	66.8	324.90
	18	Sightline	CLIMATE	CLIMATE INTELLIGENCE	London	2022	28	6.8	Dec 25	PND	2.7	321.13
-5 ▼	19	Sunsave	CLIMATE	SOLAR ENERGY	London	2022	47	125.7	Dec 24	PND	PND	319.58
	20	Checkboard	B2B SAAS	REGTECH	London	2019	46	3.2	Dec 25	PND	4.2	318.33
	21	Protex AI ✦	B2B SAAS	SECURITY & SAFETY	Dublin	2021	80	41	Dec 25	PND	PND	313.69
	22	PocDoc	HEALTHTECH	DIGITAL HEALTH	Cambridge	2020	35	15.5	Dec 24	PND	PND	307.89
	23	Data Literacy Academy	B2B SAAS	EDTECH	Birmingham	2022	61	1.3	Dec 25	✓	PND	291.10
	24	RiskSmart	B2B SAAS	REGTECH	Manchester	2020	46	4.3	Dec 25	PND	PND	289.72
	25	Forge Genetics	HEALTHTECH	BIOTECH	Nottingham	2023	9	2.3	Jan 26	✓	PND	287.54

*✦: AI-native; **CAGR:** Compound Annual Growth Rate; **PND:** Prefers Not to Disclose; **FYE:** Financial Year End*
Profitability, number of employees and latest revenue relate to each company's listed financial year

Change	Rank	Company	Sector	Subsector	HQ	Launch year	Employees	Total funding (£m)	FYE	Profitable	Latest revenue (£m)	2-yr revenue CAGR (%)
+13	26	Chip	FINTECH	WEALTHTECH	London	2016	211	68.6	Dec 24	✗	23.8	276.70
	27	Yonder	FINTECH	DIGITAL BANKING	London	2021	64	185	Mar 25	✗	PND	270.31
	28	Trumpet Software	B2B SAAS	SALES & CUSTOMER SERVICE	London	2021	30	6.7	Dec 25	PND	PND	262.53
	29	Fanvue ✦	B2B SAAS	CREATOR ECONOMY	London	2020	72	23.4	Jul 25	PND	PND	259.33
	30	Pinwheel	CLIMATE	BIODIVERSITY & CONSERVATION	Bristol	2021	10	2.3	Sep 25	PND	PND	257.93
	31	Phlo	HEALTHTECH	DIGITAL HEALTH	Glasgow	2019	130	28.9	Mar 25	✗	23.1	250.55
	32	Finexer	FINTECH	DIGITAL BANKING	London	2023	9	0.6	Sep 25	PND	0.7	250.00
	33	Bank of London	FINTECH	DIGITAL BANKING	London	2021	78	150	Dec 24	✗	2.7	248.70
	34	Oxa ✦	DEEPTECH	AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES	Oxford	2014	428	262.0	Dec 24	✗	3.1	240.87
	35	Biomodal	HEALTHTECH	BIOTECH	Cambridge	2012	110	143.6	Dec 24	✗	3.3	240.53
	36	Signaloid ✦	DEEPTECH	AI INFRASTRUCTURE	Cambridge	2021	17	3.6	Jun 25	PND	PND	221.99
	37	Griffin	FINTECH	DIGITAL BANKING	London	2017	77	63.5	Sep 25	PND	PND	215.89
	38	Augmentive	HEALTHTECH	DIGITAL HEALTH	London	2020	5	2.8	Feb 25	PND	PND	215.58
	39	InvestEngine	FINTECH	WEALTHTECH	London	2019	33	4.4	Mar 25	✗	0.7	211.04
	40	Ascendx	B2B SAAS	SALES & CUSTOMER SERVICE	London	2023	87	75.9	Dec 25	✓	18.1	208.49
	41	Altra	HEALTHTECH	CARETECH	Dublin	2019	10	0.1	Dec 24	✓	PND	208.31
	42	Coadjute	B2B SAAS	PROPTECH	London	2018	38	23	Dec 25	✗	PND	206.18
	43	Mimica ✦	B2B SAAS	AI AGENTS	London	2018	277	41.7	Dec 25	PND	PND	195.52
-7	44	Nory	B2B SAAS	HOSPITALITY	Dublin	2019	76	44.3	Dec 25	PND	PND	182.84
	45	Aveni ✦	FINTECH	FINTECH-AS-A-SERVICE	Edinburgh	2018	68	20.7	Jun 25	PND	PND	180.47
	46	Kernel ✦	B2B SAAS	SALES & CUSTOMER SERVICE	London	2023	21	10.6	Jan 26	PND	PND	179.87
-46	47	Vertice ✦	B2B SAAS	PROCUREMENT	London	2021	254	79	Dec 25	✗	27	178.74
	48	Finalrentals	CONSUMER	MOBILITY	Cardiff	2022	24	0.9	Mar 25	PND	PND	177.17
	49	Hokodo	FINTECH	PAYMENTS	London	2018	59	129.5	May 24	✗	2.4	175.79
	50	Timeline	FINTECH	WEALTHTECH	London	2018	72	17.3	Dec 24	✓	5.5	174.48

*✦: AI-native; **CAGR:** Compound Annual Growth Rate; **PND:** Prefers Not to Disclose; **FYE:** Financial Year End*
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Change	Rank	Company	Sector	Subsector	HQ	Launch year	Employees	Total funding (£m)	FYE	Profitable	Latest revenue (£m)	2-yr revenue CAGR (%)
	51	Fundment	FINTECH	WEALTHTECH	London	2014	30	48.3	Jul 24	✗	5.8	173.96
	52	Native Teams	FINTECH	PAYMENTS	London	2020	322	14.9	Dec 25	PND	PND	170.29
	53	Attio ✦	B2B SAAS	SALES & CUSTOMER SERVICE	London	2019	135	88	Jan 26	PND	PND	168.95
-27	54	CleverCards	FINTECH	INSURTECH	Dublin	2019	115	23.1	Jun 25	PND	PND	168.33
-50	55	Monument	FINTECH	WEALTHTECH	London	2017	102	184	Dec 25	✓	23.2	164.86
	56	Barespace	B2B SAAS	BEAUTY TECH	Dublin	2022	32	4.1	Dec 25	PND	PND	158.62
	57	Wamo	FINTECH	DIGITAL BANKING	London	2018	89	9.3	Dec 25	✗	6.4	158.30
	58	Barbr	B2B SAAS	BEAUTY TECH	London	2020	7	0.2	Dec 25	PND	PND	158.20
+21	59	Open Cosmos	DEEPTECH	SPACETECH	Didcot	2015	250	111.9	Dec 25	✓	43.4	157.66
	60	Lottie	HEALTHTECH	CARETECH	London	2021	65	25.4	Dec 24	✗	PND	155.64
	61	OneDome	CONSUMER	PROPTECH	London	2016	250	30	Dec 25	✓	20.7	148.96
-14	62	Tembo Money	FINTECH	DIGITAL LENDING	London	2021	156	36	Dec 25	✗	11.7	148.35
-35	63	Health-AI	HEALTHTECH	DIGITAL HEALTH	Ipswich	2021	7	0.2	Jun 25	✓	PND	145.22
-55	64	HIVED	B2B SAAS	SUPPLY CHAIN & LOGISTICS	London	2021	119	45.0	Dec 25	✗	13.2	144.67
-34	65	Sessions	B2B SAAS	FOOD DELIVERY	London	2019	65	18.3	Dec 25	✗	15.8	143.44
-43	66	Carmoola	FINTECH	DIGITAL LENDING	London	2020	62	445	Dec 25	PND	16	140.53
-60	67	Flagright ✦	FINTECH	FINANCIAL CRIME	London	2021	35	5.8	Dec 25	PND	PND	139.05
	68	GetGround	FINTECH	PROPTECH	London	2020	72	39.3	Dec 25	PND	PND	138.81
	69	Bound ✦	FINTECH	CFO TECH STACK	London	2021	11	4.9	Dec 24	✗	1.7	137.49
+12	70	Tines ✦	B2B SAAS	DEV TOOLS	Dublin	2018	400	189.9	Jan 25	PND	PND	136.61
	71	Companion Group	CONSUMER	GAMING	London	2022	70	0.1	Dec 25	✓	PND	135.89
	72	Oxbury	FINTECH	DIGITAL BANKING	Chester	2021	233	310	Dec 24	✓	31.4	135.19
	73	Field	CLIMATE	ENERGY STORAGE	London	2020	91	329	Mar 25	✗	2.4	133.46
	74	Numan	HEALTHTECH	DIGITAL HEALTH	London	2018	428	88	Dec 25	✓	157.8	129.82
	75	BeZero Carbon	CLIMATE	CARBON ACCOUNTING & ESG	London	2020	185	76.7	Mar 25	✗	4.7	128.69

*✦: AI-native; **CAGR:** Compound Annual Growth Rate; **PND:** Prefers Not to Disclose; **FYE:** Financial Year End*
Profitability, number of employees and latest revenue relate to each company's listed financial year

Rank change	Rank	Company	Sector	Subsector	HQ	Launch year	Employees	Total funding (£m)	FYE	Profitable	Latest revenue (£m)	2-yr revenue CAGR (%)
	76	Eunice ✦	FINTECH	CRYPTO & DEFI	London	2022	10	6	Dec 25	PND	PND	128.04
	77	Pockit	FINTECH	DIGITAL BANKING	London	2014	129	48.5	Dec 25	PND	PND	126.87
	78	Xapien	B2B SAAS	BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE	London	2018	70	16	Dec 24	PND	PND	124.21
-40	79	Forest	CONSUMER	MOBILITY	London	2019	75	44.9	Dec 25	✓	22.5	122.74
-5	80	Charac	HEALTHTECH	DIGITAL HEALTH	London	2020	14	6.7	Mar 25	PND	PND	122.61
	81	Primer	FINTECH	PAYMENTS	London	2019	150	71.3	Dec 25	PND	14.4	118.70
	82	Gemba	FINTECH	DIGITAL BANKING	London	2017	14	4.2	Dec 25	✗	3	117.38
	83	Flo Health	HEALTHTECH	DIGITAL HEALTH	London	2015	681	209.5	Dec 24	✗	127.7	116.23
-71	84	Definely ✦	B2B SAAS	LEGALTECH	London	2017	103	33.7	Dec 25	PND	PND	114.73
-25	85	9fin ✦	FINTECH	DIGITAL LENDING	London	2016	445	63.9	Dec 24	✗	14.7	113.29
	86	Tymit	FINTECH	PAYMENTS	London	2017	134	58.3	Jun 24	✗	6	109.57
	87	Natcap	CLIMATE	CLIMATE INTELLIGENCE	London	2018	29	15	Sep 25	PND	PND	108.50
	88	Summize ✦	B2B SAAS	LEGALTECH	Manchester	2018	91	47.6	Jun 25	PND	PND	108.15
-33	89	Roam	CLIMATE	ELECTRIC VEHICLES	Crawley	2020	93	65	Dec 24	✗	1.9	107.93
	90	Titanbay	FINTECH	WEALTHTECH	London	2019	77	53.8	Dec 25	PND	PND	106.62
	91	Teya	FINTECH	PAYMENTS	London	2019	208	811.4	Dec 24	✗	19	104.53
	92	51toCarbonZero	CLIMATE	CARBON ACCOUNTING & ESG	London	2021	18	3.9	Jul 25	PND	PND	104.11
-57	93	Zero Gravity	B2B SAAS	EDTECH	London	2019	23	7.6	Dec 25	PND	PND	103.98
	94	Untamed	CONSUMER	PET TECH	London	2019	42	25	Dec 25	PND	PND	103.87
	95	Duel Tech	B2B SAAS	MARKETING & ADTECH	London	2012	56	16.9	Dec 24	PND	PND	103.45
-2	96	Emma	FINTECH	WEALTHTECH	London	2017	21	5.6	Dec 25	✓	PND	103.21
-47	97	Moneybox	FINTECH	WEALTHTECH	London	2016	444	104.5	May 25	✓	115.9	100.84
-55	98	Connectd	B2B SAAS	HR TECH	London	2019	89	12.8	Mar 25	PND	PND	100.31
-57	99	Procure AI ✦	B2B SAAS	PROCUREMENT	London	2020	42	9.9	Apr 25	PND	PND	100.00
	100	Honest Mobile	CONSUMER	TELECOMS	London	2019	24	6.8	Dec 25	✗	2.8	99.95

*✦: AI-native; **CAGR:** Compound Annual Growth Rate; **PND:** Prefers Not to Disclose; **FYE:** Financial Year End*
Profitability, number of employees and latest revenue relate to each company's listed financial year

Sifted 100 highlights

Wellbeing marketplace **Healf** tops the 2026 ranking with a 1,403% two-year revenue CAGR; energy provider **Fuse Energy** is at #2 with a 900% CAGR. **Apron**, a payments and bookkeeping platform for small businesses, places third with a 733% two-year CAGR.

The average two-year CAGR has increased to **248%**, up from 171% and 204% in 2024 and 2025 respectively. 11 startups boast a two-year CAGR of above **500%**, with a further 22 in the **250-500%** range. All but one of the featured startups achieved a CAGR of at least **100%**.

24 startups feature for a second consecutive year, and 3 (**Tembo Money**, **Forest** and **Emma**) for the third year in a row. The biggest climber was Cambridge-based protein screening system **Nuclera** — rising 37 places to #10 on this year's ranking.

For the third year in a row, **fintech** is the top-performing vertical with 36 companies, slightly down from 39 in 2025. Despite the **climate tech** downturn, a record 9 companies made the cut.

London remains the dominant hub with 75 startups — 2 more than last year. **Dublin** is home to all 7 of the Irish startups featured, and **Cambridge** follows with 4.

Nearly a quarter (24) of companies on the ranking are **AI-native**, up from 16 last year. None feature in the top five, but the top-ranked AI-native startup **Lawhive** isn't far behind at #6.

7 companies in the top 100 have already raised funding in 2026. Of those, Oxford-based self-driving software firm **Oxa** has raised the biggest sum: a £77.5m Series D, followed by **Nuclera** (£63.7m Series C) and legaltech **Lawhive** (£47m Series B).

4 of the companies have achieved revenues of over £100m, including **Flo Health**, men's health scaleup **Numan** and **Moneybox**, with a further 12 sitting between in the £25-100m range.

The average number of employees of the 100 companies has dropped by a third to 102. Average employee growth in the latest financial year is up marginally on the 2025 edition, from 30% to 34.5%. Menstrual cycle tracking app **Flo Health** takes top spot for the most employees (681), followed by debt market intelligence platform **9fin** (445) and savings app **Moneybox** (444).

21 of the 100 ranked startups report they're profitable — 4 fewer than last year. They include 7 fintechs and 5 healthtech companies, including **Healf** and men's health scaleup **Numan**.

6 startups feature that were founded as recently as 2023, including CRM software builder **Ascendx**, which has already recorded turnover of £23.8m in 2025.

57 of the 100 companies generated at least £100k per employee in their latest financial year. AI cloud platform **Fluidstack** has the highest revenue-to-employee ratio: £5.3m per employee.

4 unicorns feature, down from 9 last year. They are **Fuse Energy** (2025), **Flo Health** (2024), Irish security automation firm **Tines** (2025) and business payments terminal **Teya** (2021).

What's changed this year?

	2024	2025	2026
AVERAGE AGE	8 YEARS OLD	▼ 7 YEARS OLD	= 7 YEARS OLD
AVERAGE 2-YEAR REVENUE CAGR	171.6%	▲ 204.3%	▲ 249.6%
AVERAGE REVENUE	£33.3M	▼ £27.9M	▼ £15.8M
AVERAGE NO. OF EMPLOYEES	165	▼ 153	▼ 102
AVERAGE EMPLOYEE GROWTH IN LATEST YEAR	+48.6%	▼ +30%	▲ +34.5%
MEDIAN TOTAL FUNDING	£53.7M	▼ £37M	▼ £27.6M

	2024	2025	2026
MEDIAN SIZE OF LATEST FUNDING ROUND	£24M	▲ £14M	▲ £12M
AI-NATIVE	4%	▲ 16%	▲ 24%
FINTECH	31%	▲ 39%	▼ 36%
B2B SAAS	25%	▲ 26%	▲ 29%
HEALTHTECH	17%	▼ 13%	▲ 14%
CONSUMER	16%	▼ 11%	▼ 8%
CLIMATE TECH	4%	▲ 7%	▲ 9%
DEEPTECH	7%	▼ 4%	= 4%

	2024	2025	2026
UK-BASED	97%	▼ 92%	▲ 93%
IRELAND-BASED	3%	▲ 8%	▼ 7%
NO. OF UNICORNS	7%	▲ 9%	▼ 4%
NO. OF THOROUGHBREDS ($100M+ REVENUE)	6%	= 6%	▼ 4%
LONDON-BASED	78%	▼ 72%	▲ 75%
DUBLIN-BASED	3%	▲ 7%	= 7%
CAMBRIDGE-BASED	4%	= 4%	= 4%
PROFITABLE	12%	▲ 25%	▼ 21%
TIME-TO-REVENUE: PRE-SERIES B	40%	▲ 51%	▲ 56%
TIME-TO-REVENUE: SERIES B-C	46%	▼ 38%	▼ 37%
TIME-TO-REVENUE: SERIES D+	14%	▼ 11%	▼ 07%

Top 50 investors & lenders

Investors and lenders were ranked by the number of portfolio companies that feature on the Sifted 100: UK & Ireland 2026 in the first instance, followed by the average two-year revenue CAGR of those companies.

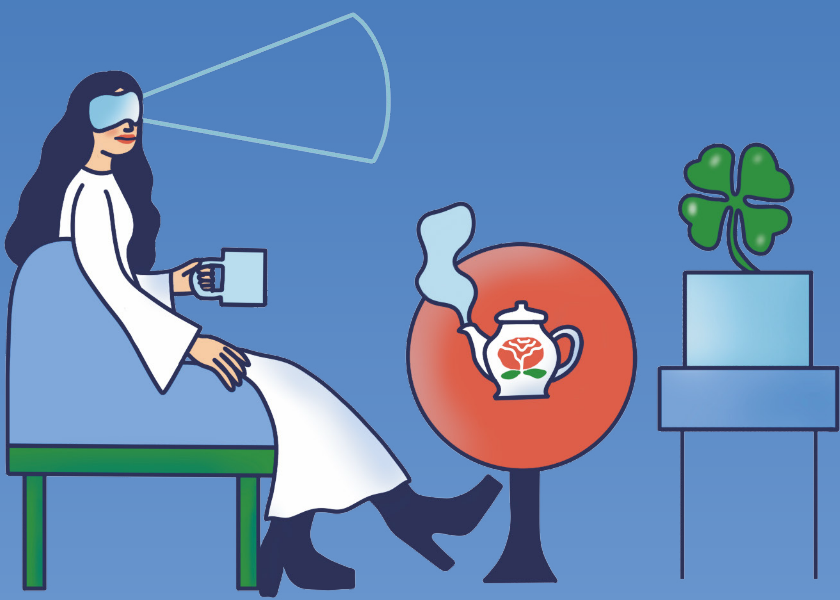
The **full ranking** is available online to **Sifted Pro** subscribers.

	INVESTOR	TYPE	HQ	COUNT (+ CHANGE VS 2025)	AVERAGE CAGR (%)	AVERAGE RANK	TOP-RANKED COMPANIES
1	**Accel**	VC fund	🇺🇸	**7** (+3)	345.06	51	Fuse Energy (#2), Omnea (#8), Nory (#44)
2	**Crowdcube**	Retail investment platform	🇬🇧	**7** (-1)	170.28	64	Chip (#26), Phlo (#31), InvestEngine (#39)
3	**Founders Factory**	Accelerator	🇬🇧	**5** (+1)	276.90	39	Fluidstack (#11), Scan.com (#14), Pinwheel (#30)
4	**Seedcamp**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**5** (+1)	239.63	48	Fluidstack (#11), Yonder (#27), Griffin (#37)
5	**Balderton Capital**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**4** (-2)	462.13	36	Fuse Energy (#2), Lawhive (#6), Attio (#53)
6	**Phoenix Court**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**4** (-3)	365.49	40	Fuse Energy (#2), Yonder (#27), Open Cosmos (#59)
7	**Triple Point**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**4** (+1)	238.22	40	Scan.com (#14), Trumpet Software (#28), Nory (#44)
8	**Molten Ventures**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**4** (+4)	215.29	53	Sightline (#18), PocDoc (#22), BeZero Carbon (#75)
9	**Notion Capital**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**4** (+3)	210.72	44	Protex AI (#21), Griffin (#37), Hokodo (#49)
10	**NatWest**	Bank / CVC	🇬🇧	**4** (+1)	181.24	56	Yonder (#27), Coadjute (#42), Carmoola (#66)
11	**Salica Investments**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**4**	174.93	64	Abound (#17), GetGround (#68), Oxbury (#72)
12	**Unpopular Ventures**	VC fund	🇺🇸	**3** (+3)	535.27	14	Capi Money (#5), Kota (#9), Yonder (#27)
13	**Episode 1 Ventures**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**3** (+1)	445.27	20	Lawhive (#6), Fluidstack (#11), Mimica (#43)
14	**Plug and Play**	Accelerator	🇺🇸	**3** (-2)	444.66	14	Kota (#9), Scan.com (#14), Sunsave (#19)
15	**Y Combinator**	Accelerator	🇺🇸	**3** (-1)	382.62	31	Capi Money (#5), Protex AI (#21), Flagright (#67)
16	**GV**	CVC	🇺🇸	**3**	356.61	31	Lawhive (#6), Biomodal (#35), Attio (#53)
17	**Charlie Songhurst**	Angel	🇺🇸	**3** (-1)	339.46	35	Omnea (#8), Griffin (#37), Open Cosmos (#59)
18	**Entrepreneurs First**	Accelerator	🇬🇧	**3** (+1)	332.67	37	Omnea (#8), Mimica (#43), Open Cosmos (#59)
19	**Tiny VC**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**3** (+1)	310.83	52	Lawhive (#6), Attio (#53), Emma (#96)
20	**Stephen Henesy**	Angel	🇬🇧	**3** (+3)	245.51	47	Scan.com (#14), Trumpet Software (#28), Honest Mobile (#100)
21	**Haatch**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**3** (+3)	241.31	34	Data Literacy Academy (#23), Trumpet Software (#28), Native Teams (#52)
22	**PXN Group**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**3** (+3)	212.40	39	Phlo (#31), Coadjute (#42), Aveni (#45)
23	**Adam Perrin**	Angel	🇬🇧	**3** (+2)	205.74	53	Fanvue (#29), Pinwheel (#30), Honest Mobile (#100)
24	**Parkwalk Advisors**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**3** (+2)	188.77	55	Oxa (#34), Signaloid (#36), Duel Tech (#95)
25	**Cambridge Angels**	Angel network	🇬🇧	**3** (+2)	180.52	56	Signaloid (#36), Augmentive (#38), Zero Gravity (#93)
26	**Will Neale**	Angel	🇬🇧	**3**	176.51	58	Yonder (#27), Carmoola (#66), Primer (#81)
27	**Maven Capital Partners**	Private equity	🇬🇧	**3** (+2)	174.91	63	RiskSmart (#24), Pockit (#77), Summize (#88)
28	**Paul Forster**	Angel	🇬🇧	**3** (+2)	166.05	58	Griffin (#37), Attio (#53), 9fin (#85)
29	**Kintsugi**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**3** (+1)	164.40	69	Chip (#26), 9fin (#85), Emma (#96)
30	**Moonfire Ventures**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**3** (+1)	152.13	61	Kernel (#46), Flagright (#67), Bound (#69)
31	**Taavet Hinrikus**	Angel	🇬🇧	**3** (-1)	150.72	63	Hokodo (#49), Open Cosmos (#59), Primer (#81)
32	**Fuel Ventures**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**3** (+1)	146.49	66	Finalrentals (#48), Barbr (#58), 51toCarbonZero (#92)
33	**Creandum**	VC fund	🇸🇪	**2** (+1)	797.84	4	Fuse Energy (#2), Capi Money (#5)
34	**Cocoa VC**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**2** (+2)	770.45	6	Fuse Energy (#2), Kota (#9)
35	**David Clarke**	Angel	🇮🇪	**2** (+2)	642.59	9	Omnea (#8), Kota (#9)
36	**Lakestar**	VC fund	🇨🇭	**2** (+2)	539.65	25	Fuse Energy (#2), Vertice (#47)
37	**Firstminute Capital**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**2**	504.41	13	Capi Money (#5), Protex AI (#21)
38	**Ribbit Capital**	VC fund	🇺🇸	**2** (+1)	502.54	47	Fuse Energy (#2), Teya (#91)
39	**Techstars**	Accelerator	🇺🇸	**2** (-2)	501.43	16	Yaspa (#4), Yonder (#27)
40	**Repeat Ventures**	VC fund	🇺🇸	**2** (+2)	465.32	17	Lawhive (#6), Yonder (#27)
41	**Bessemer Venture Partners**	VC fund	🇺🇸	**2**	456.36	25	Apron (#3), Vertice (#47)
42	**Northzone**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**2** (-2)	455.33	18	Kota (#9), Yonder (#27)
43	**Gabriel Le Roux**	Angel	🇬🇧	**2** (+2)	438.11	22	Lawhive (#6), Griffin (#37)
44	**Paul Anthony**	Angel	🇬🇧	**2** (+2)	438.11	22	Lawhive (#6), Griffin (#37)
45	**Index Ventures**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**2** (-2)	435.29	37	Apron (#3), Tines (#70)
46	**EQT Ventures**	VC fund	🇸🇪	**2** (+1)	428.12	23	Kota (#9), Griffin (#37)
47	**Khosla Ventures**	VC fund	🇺🇸	**2** (+1)	420.18	26	Omnea (#8), Mimica (#43)
48	**Luca Ascani**	Angel	🇮🇹	**2** (+1)	418.59	50	Apron (#3), Emma (#96)
49	**Point Nine**	VC fund	🇩🇪	**2** (+1)	406.89	31	Omnea (#8), Attio (#53)
50	**TrueSight Ventures**	VC fund	🇬🇧	**2**	390.44	38	Kota (#9), Carmoola (#66)

CHAPTER I

Meet the Sifted 100

The top startups reinventing energy, procurement, logistics and more



NOT YOUR AVERAGE MANCUNIANS

Brothers Lestat McCree and Max Clarke are the founders behind top-ranked wellness company Healf, turning a lifelong love of sport and health into a fast-growing business.

"We used to do Iyengar yoga with our grandmother before school. We weren't your average young lads in Manchester," says McCree. Yoga was only the beginning. Over the years he has tried just about every sport imaginable, from Ironman races to jiu-jitsu.

HEALF FOUNDERS

> **We used to do yoga with our grandmother before school. We weren't your average young lads in Manchester."**
>
> ***Lestat McCree,*** *CEO and cofounder, Healf*

Today McCree lives the mission behind Healf: bringing high-quality wellbeing products to a wider audience. "I probably take about a dozen supplements a day — everything from magnesium to omegas," he says. His morning routine begins, he adds, with celery juice.

HEALF

The wellness industry is crowded with bold — and sometimes misleading — claims, alongside a near-endless stream of products. Healf's approach is to curate what appears on its marketplace, supported by panels of experts across different health categories.

Inside the company, customer feedback is treated as a constant source of insight. Every employee is plugged into a shared Slack channel where praise and complaints from customers are posted.

Left unresolved, small issues become what McCree calls "papercuts". "You have to obsess over it," he says. "All those little papercuts add up to the experience people have with your brand."

To keep the team close to the customer experience, every employee — regardless of role — spends a week working with the customer service team.

Hiring follows a similarly mission-driven philosophy. "We hire the most wellbeing-obsessed people we can find," McCree says. But enthusiasm alone isn't enough. The company looks for what he calls "big-hearted champions" — people who genuinely care about both the mission and the customers.

No one is forced to work long hours, though many choose to. The culture isn't built around the infamous "996" schedule — 9am to 9pm, six days a week — popularised by some tech companies.

Instead, McCree jokes that Healf runs on something closer to "8107".

EVERYONE'S GOING FASTER

Welcome to the new world of startups, where the pace is relentless. AI has raised expectations across the industry about what teams can build — and how quickly they can build it.

"Our product team is using AI to automate internal processes and it's made the speed of development so much quicker," says Varun Bhanot, CEO of MAGIC AI, an AI-powered fitness coach that lives in your bedroom mirror. "We're releasing an app and in the past something like this would've taken months to build, now it takes a few weeks."

That acceleration is reshaping startup economics. Sifted's data reveals a decline in profitability across this year's cohort — a trend with a plausible explanation: AI enthusiasm, amplified by more freely available capital, is pushing startups to prioritise growth and market share over early-stage returns. Unit economics still matter, of course. Just not yet, for some.

There are exceptions. Some founders in the ranking take a more sceptical view on AI hype. Phillip Stanley-Marbell, CEO and founder of Cambridge-based computer hardware manufacturer Signaloid, has worked at some of the world's largest technology companies, including Bell Labs, IBM and Apple. Yet he argues that venture funding is often overrated.

"It's more important to be generating £1m in revenue, then receiving £10m in VC investment," he says. His aim is steady, controlled growth. His instinct, as he puts it, is to move more like Apple has in the AI race: no sudden movements, no massive splurges.

At the same time, AI is allowing companies to achieve more with smaller teams and less funding. Median funding levels across the cohort are down compared with previous years, while average team sizes and the rate of hiring have also fallen. Yet both average and median revenue growth have increased.

"We're definitely doing more with less — we almost enforce AI use," says Ben Foster, CEO of procurement startup Omnea. "Well, we're still hiring one new person a day, but we probably have a few hundred less than we would have without AI."

Startups are increasingly encouraging employees to experiment with AI tools. At Irish benefits platform Kota, the company even runs an internal leaderboard tracking how employees use AI in their work.

Steven Hunter, CEO of credit-data platform 9fin, says the company has built one of the largest AI engineering teams operating in its corner of the financial sector. Every employee at 9fin also receives a £1,000 experimentation budget and explicit permission to test new software. The thinking is straightforward: the best tool today may not be the best one next quarter.

The constant flow of new models, tools and announcements can make it difficult for founders to stay focused. But Nicolas Sharp, CEO of CRM startup Attio, argues that some distraction is necessary. He deliberately sets aside time in his calendar to follow AI developments and test new tools. "We have to stay on top of all new developments," he says.

Still, for all the discussion about automation, few founders believe AI will replace human teams altogether. When Sifted asked ranked companies whether they could imagine relying more on AI than people to get work done, no one said yes.

Alan Chang, CEO of energy startup Fuse Energy, says he has no plans to shrink his workforce. "If I had a magic wand, I'd quadruple our team," he says. Instead, he imagines a future where humans and AI work side by side, tackling what he calls an "infinite roadmap" of products and markets.

MAGIC AI FOUNDERS

OMNEA LEADERSHIP TEAM

AI CAN'T EAT THESE STARTUPS' LUNCHES

AI startups are rapidly gaining ground on incumbents, and the idea of a "defensible moat" — long prized in tech — looks weaker than it once did. AI tools make imitation easier and catching up faster. But founders say the reality is more complicated.

Anyone can "vibe-code" software now, says Omnea cofounder Foster — but building the first version is only part of the challenge. "Who's going to maintain it?"

> **AI is wonderful because it has taken over a lot of our mundane tasks. But you still need a lot of other components to run a successful business."**

***Murvah Iqbal,** CEO and cofounder, Hived*

Several companies on this year's leaderboard believe their businesses are less vulnerable to AI disruption than the current hype cycle suggests. "AI is not going to eat our lunch," says Luke Mackey, CEO of employee benefits platform Kota. "We're in a regulated industry. We need to be diligent in everything we do. So it's not about how fast your product is but also how careful and precise it is."

Others point out that many startups operate in the physical world as much as the digital one. "Software is just one part of it," says Murvah Iqbal, CEO of parcel delivery company Hived. "We deal in atoms too: trucks, scooters, parcels, customers who want to know where their deliveries are."

AI has still had a meaningful impact inside the company, she adds — just not in the way some might expect. "AI is wonderful because it has taken over a lot of our mundane tasks, leaving us with more time to think. But you still need a lot of other components to run a successful business."

James Neville, CEO of fintech Yaspa, is similarly sceptical of the current wave of predictions about a coming "SaaSpocalypse".

"A lot of people are making a lot of noise about being better and faster because of AI," he says. "But if things were really moving at the pace people suggested, we would be seeing SaaS companies reproduced overnight."

"SaaS is down, but it doesn't mean SaaS is dead," he adds. "Yes, the pace has increased but you'd think the pace is a lot faster based on the Twitter-verse."

MURVAH IQBAL

POWER OF SIMPLE IDEAS

There is plenty of wild ambition across this year's ranking. But there are also reminders that some of the most successful startups begin with deceptively simple ideas, executed well.

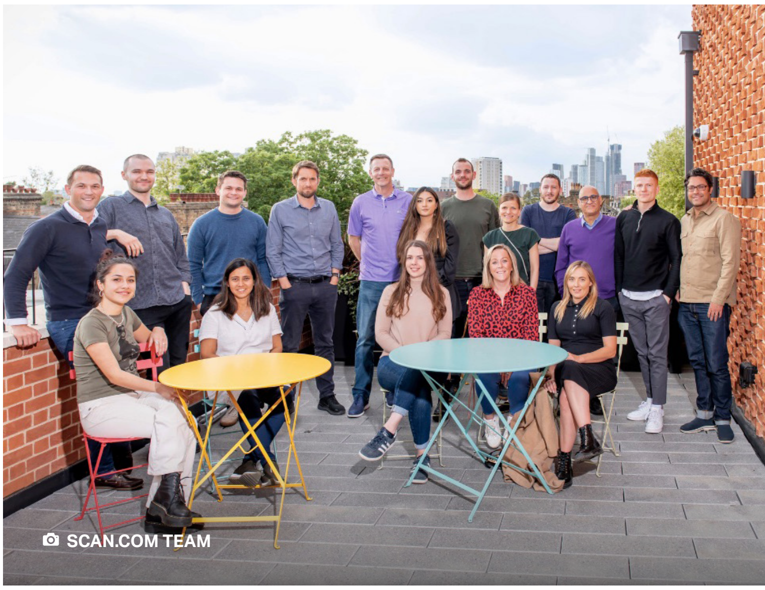
Fuse Energy boss Alan Chang has an unusual habit of dramatically overstating certain things while understating other things. For example, he told Sifted there are no impressive companies in Europe — bar fintech Revolut, which he previously worked at — but he also then said what his company Fuse is doing is "not that impressive, we're just trying to do 1000 things slightly better." Chang doesn't embellish when asked what's the secret of a successful company: "You hire great people and let them self-manage," he says.

Scan.com also keeps things relatively simple. True to its straightforward does what it says on the tin name, the company helps people find available and affordable MRI scans nearby.

> **[The secret of a successful company?] Hire great people and let them self-manage."**
>
> ***Alan Chang,*** *CEO and founder, Fuse*

On the surface, the concept almost sounds too obvious to build a thriving business around. But that simplicity only becomes clear when compared with how difficult the process used to be. "You would go on a website, fill out a contact form, then wait for a phone call to be given more information on prices and availability," says Scan CEO and cofounder Charlie Bullock. "There was no transparency; you didn't know what a good price looked like either."

By making that information visible and easy to access, Scan.com has turned a frustrating healthcare process into a more transparent marketplace, showing how far a simple idea can go when applied to a flawed system.



SCAN.COM TEAM

CRACKING THE US

For many European startups, success ultimately means breaking into the US market — and a growing number of companies in this year's leaderboard are trying to do exactly that.

Dan Hobbs, CEO and cofounder of Irish safety tech company Protex AI, recently relocated to Boston to lead the company's American expansion. "I was on 92 flights last year," he says. "So I decided I needed to come here full time." So far, the transition has been smooth. "The craic is the same as in Dublin," he adds.

For some startups, the US is already the core of the business. AI company Attio now generates around half of its revenue there; for healthcare marketplace Scan.com, the US is 90% of its revenue. "It helps to have a fragmented, privatised — not to mention massive — market," says Bullock.

Beyond market size, founders say the pace of business in the US can be strikingly different from Europe. Ingmar Klein, CEO of careers platform Huzzle, says American companies tend to move faster when it comes to new partnerships. "The great thing about the US is that you can contact a company and probably get meetings the next day with a key decision maker," he says. "They say yes to new things faster over there. In Europe, it takes a fair bit longer to build trust."

GENDER DIVIDE PERSISTS

Men remain overwhelmingly dominant among the founders behind the UK and Ireland's fastest-growing startups. Across the Top 100 cohort in 2026 there are 205 founders in total: 190 are men (92.2%) and just 15 are women (7.8%).

Just three of the Top 100 startups are led by female CEOs: Sightline's Kim Zou, Hived's Murvah Iqbal and Eunice's Yi Luo.

Iqbal represents a particularly modern archetype of founder, often describing company building in the same terms an athlete might use when preparing for competition. The Manchester-born CEO spends a lot of time thinking about personal performance.

"This is a marathon," she says. "You need to invest time in sleep and nutrition." For a while, she pushed herself hard — working a 996 schedule — before realising that sharper thinking required a different approach.

YI LUO   KIM ZOU

To help with that, she even works with a football coach every couple of months to think about how to sharpen her performance. That mindset increasingly extends to technology as well. Like many founders, Iqbal says AI tools are beginning to alleviate a lot of grunt work inside the company, leaving employees with more headspace to think about bigger problems.

> **When people talk about ARR, what's missing is the quality of the revenue. You have to look at ARR with the whole picture."**
>
> ***Murvah Iqbal,*** *CEO and cofounder, Hived*

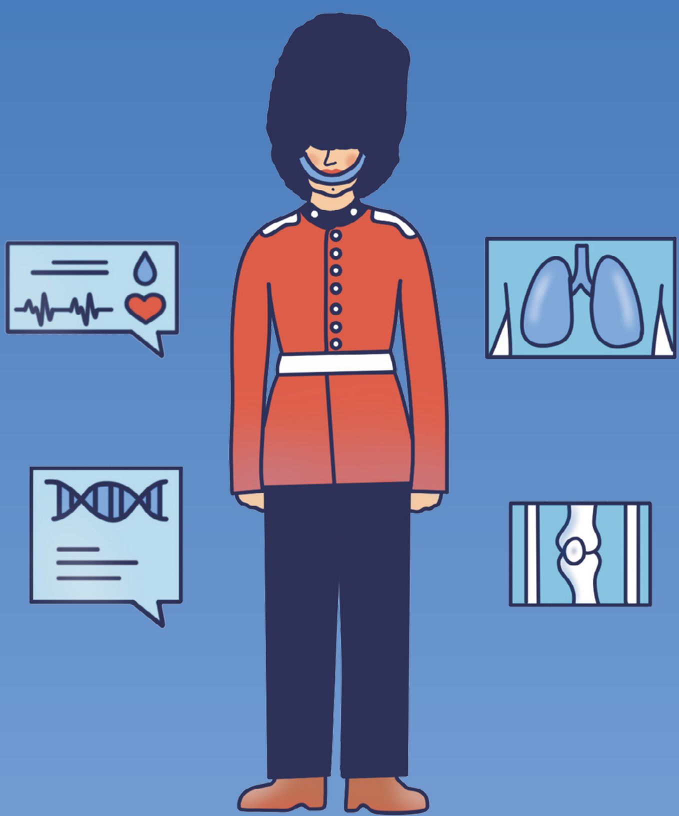
HIVED is on track to reach $50m in annual recurring revenue but Iqbal's wary of the startup world's obsession with revenue numbers in isolation. "When people talk about ARR, what's missing is the quality of the revenue," she says. "We've had 100% customer retention. You have to look at ARR with the whole picture. You could've paid a lot of money to get that ARR. So I look at it with a slightly cynical mindset."

Iqbal has developed her own small rituals for managing the psychological rollercoaster that comes with building a company. Like the bosses at Healf, she reads all of Hived's online reviews. "I get a Slack ping for every one of them," she says. "The negative ones we tackle straight away. I save positive comments for Friday evening or Sunday maybe," she says.

CHAPTER II

‘You can build a massive company here’

The UK has the world's third-largest tech scene. Can it hold on to it?



"It is deep in the British psyche to complain about things and talk down what we have," says Nicolas Sharp, with a grin that suggests he's guilty of the habit himself from time to time.

As CEO of Attio, an AI-native CRM company, Sharp is well-placed to assess the state of British tech. And today, he's in the mood to push back against the gloom.

"London is the best city in the world. The visa situation in the UK is honestly about 10 times better than in the US."

Incorporating a company here is probably the easiest in the world."

Nicolas Sharp, *CEO and cofounder, Attio*

Even the government's website, gov.uk, earns his praise. "It's world-class. Incorporating a company here is probably the easiest in the world. It takes about 10 minutes."

These are the kinds of observations that tend to get drowned out as founders pile on about the tax burden and brain drain.

On one level, the restlessness is understandable. The UK is now regularly producing huge funding rounds for tech companies — but the goalposts keep shifting. When companies like OpenAI can raise $110bn rounds, sums that feel almost cosmically removed from European norms, it becomes harder to stop and smell the roses.

But the bright spots are real, and they're worth mentioning too. The UK has achieved something only a handful of European ecosystems have managed: innovation clusters spread across the country rather than concentrated in a single city. Overall, the UK has built the world's third-largest technology ecosystem, valued at around $1.2tn.

At its centre sits London, Europe's undisputed leading tech city — startups in the capital raised nearly double the venture capital secured by their counterparts in Paris in 2025, according to Sifted data. London-based companies account for about 70% of all UK venture investment and a similar share of the country's unicorns.

But the story no longer begins and ends with London, or even the so-called Golden Triangle of London, Oxford and Cambridge. Manchester, now officially one of Europe's fastest-growing tech hubs, has quietly produced a string of notable companies: SafetyCulture, the workplace software firm now valued at £1.3bn, and Peak, the AI company snapped up by European automation giant UiPath in one of the continent's largest recent M&A deals.

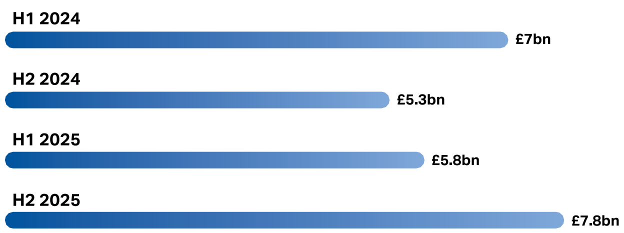
Smaller cities are getting in on the act too. Bristol has produced chipmaker Graphcore — spun out of local semiconductor startup Xmos, which raised $682m before being acquired in 2024 — and is the birthplace of PsiQuantum, now the world's most-funded quantum computing startup, which relocated to Silicon Valley and raised $1.6bn.

"The quality of dealflow around the country is genuinely excellent," says Jason Druker, chief commercial officer at VC firm SFC Capital. "We're seeing IP-rich businesses across sectors, including university spinouts from well beyond the Golden Triangle. Places like Loughborough University and the University of Strathclyde are producing highly investable companies."

"The regional story is real and improving all the time," he says.

H2 2025 was the best six months for UK startup funding since H1 2022

UK VC equity funding by half, H1 2024 - H2 2025



Source: *Sifted*

FUNDING BOTTLENECK

Britain's early-stage ecosystem is among the strongest in Europe. Seedcamp — an early backer of Revolut, Wise and UiPath — sits alongside LocalGlobe, Playfair and firstminute capital at the seed end. Further along the funnel, firms like Balderton Capital, Molten Ventures and Octopus Ventures provide growth capital, while accelerators including Entrepreneurs First and Founders Factory help founders find their footing.

> **“The bottleneck is scale capital and liquidity.”**
>
> ***Jason Druker,*** *chief commercial officer, SFC Capital*

Yet a structural problem lurks beneath this apparent depth. “Capital is there at the earliest stages, the talent base is strong and geographically broader than ever,” says Druker. “The bottleneck is scale capital and liquidity.”

Series A and beyond is where the cracks show. There simply aren't enough funds willing to price and lead rounds of meaningful size. Part of the reason is the hangover from the pandemic-era venture bubble: too few meaningful exits have returned capital to LPs, while a long tail of companies that raised at peak 2021 valuations are struggling to grow fast enough to justify them.

The result is more consolidation — all-share mergers and earn-out deals replacing the clean exits that would normally recycle capital back into the ecosystem.

Varun Bhanot, CEO of AI-powered fitness mirror company MAGIC AI, puts it bluntly: "Frankly, I can count on two hands the funds that might back us. When you hit a certain level of growth, you're probably looking at the US. They have the dry powder and the sector expertise. We'll tap out the UK market."

For Bhanot, the contrast with the US isn't just financial. "Whatever you think about the leadership in the US, you can't deny they're rallying their tech CEOs to invest into the country. You don't see anything near that in the UK."

LONDON

UK BETS ON AI

Labour has essentially staked its industrial strategy on AI, placing technology at the core of the Modern Industrial Strategy, which has the explicit goal of turning Britain into an "AI superpower".

The results so far are mixed. Major technology companies — Microsoft, Nvidia, Google, OpenAI — have announced billions in UK AI investment, and the British Business Bank has become an increasingly important force in the ecosystem. "It's flying," says Druker. "It's backing funds across the spectrum and supporting direct scale stories like Kraken and Wayve."

But structural barriers remain, most visibly in the energy system. Developers of AI data centres are reportedly facing long grid connection waiting times, a bottleneck that could undermine the country's ambitions before they get off the ground. The government has designated AI Growth Zones to fast-track new infrastructure, but not everyone is convinced.

"My worry is that it becomes more of a problem than a solution," says George Windsor, a technology consultant and researcher. "That people in local areas end up reaping the negative consequences in the form of higher electricity costs."

On the capital side, there's more optimism. A proposed overhaul of pension fund investment rules could unlock a wave of new money into high-growth companies. "The scale of pension capital means you can't understate it," says Ben Wilkinson, CEO of Molten Ventures — backer of four companies on the leaderboard. "Pension members today are not really getting the benefit of the growth coming from venture-backed innovation."

Wilkinson remains broadly positive about the UK's trajectory, despite policy changes — including reforms to the non-dom tax regime that have reportedly prompted some wealthy individuals to leave. "In venture capital you always have to take the long-term view," he says. "The UK is still very good at producing great companies."

Talent is another widely praised strength of the UK ecosystem, though founders say competition for the very best engineers remains fierce.

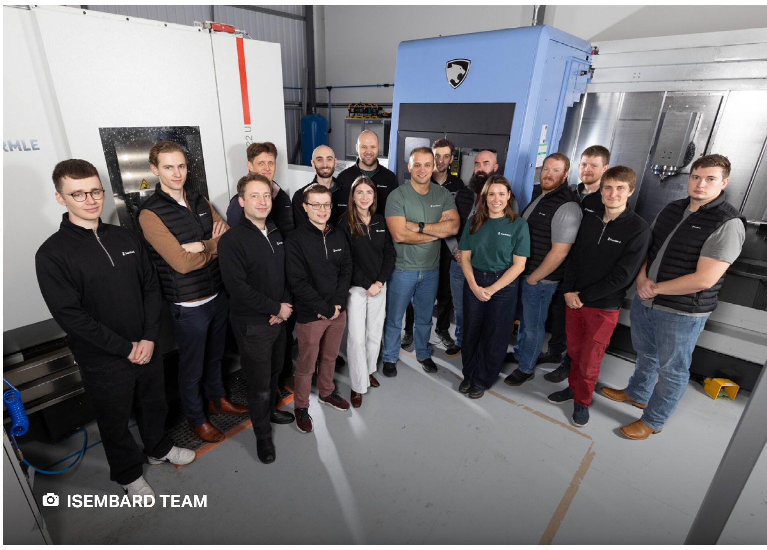
Bhanot says that "finding exceptional people has been very tricky" for the company. He speculates this may partly reflect the nature of his product. "It could be because we're developing a sexy B2C company rather than a B2B tool," he says, noting that Europe has traditionally excelled in enterprise software.

At the same time, technology is increasingly reshaping the physical economy. UK tech is "rematerialising", says Windsor, meaning that innovation is now driving real-world infrastructure and industrial investment.

AI will necessitate a construction boom in data centres, while companies such as Isembard are using software to redesign and automate factories producing components for drones and satellites. The company, which recently raised a $50m Series A, aims to open 25 factories in the UK in 2026 to help reshore manufacturing in strategically important industries.

"They're bringing back manufacturing to cities," Windsor says. Europe's growing focus on technological sovereignty could play to the strengths of certain British firms. The debate around sovereignty "is a very useful commercial play" for companies like Graphcore and Nscale — which recently raised $2bn from investors — Windsor adds.

"I think there's a feeling now that, while we may not lead all critical sectors, we'll still manage to get a strong foothold in all the important supply chains."



ISEMBARD TEAM

The question hanging over UK tech isn't whether the ecosystem is good — it clearly is. It's whether good is enough.

James Neville, CEO of fintech Yaspa, thinks the doom-scrollers should be ignored. "London is the best place in the world," he says. "Don't listen to the Twitter-verse, where there is a lot of money invested on 'doing a Cambridge Analytica' on you all over again" — a reference to the political consulting firm that harvested Facebook data to aid the Brexit campaign.

IS 'GOOD' ENOUGH?

Few founders embody the ambition of British tech quite like Alan Chang, the CEO of energy startup Fuse Energy and formerly the third employee at Revolut. His goal? To build the biggest energy company in the world.

Chang is not, it should be said, especially sentimental about the government's role in getting him there. "It's way too big. Taxes are at an all-time high. Basic public services are very bad." But he's equally unimpressed by founders who use government dysfunction as a cover for their own shortcomings. "The tech community can't point to government failures for lack of success," he says. "It's their own failing. You can build a massive company here."

On AI, he's characteristically contrarian. He's bearish on applied AI startups, convinced that the companies building the underlying models will eventually capture most of the value. And he believes AI will widen the gap between the very best and everyone else. "There will be more extremist outcomes," he says. "The most productive person will be a lot more productive."

> **London is the best place in the world. Don't listen to the Twitter-verse, where there is a lot of money invested on 'doing a Cambridge Analytica' on you all over again."**
>
> ***James Neville,*** *CEO and founder, Yaspa*

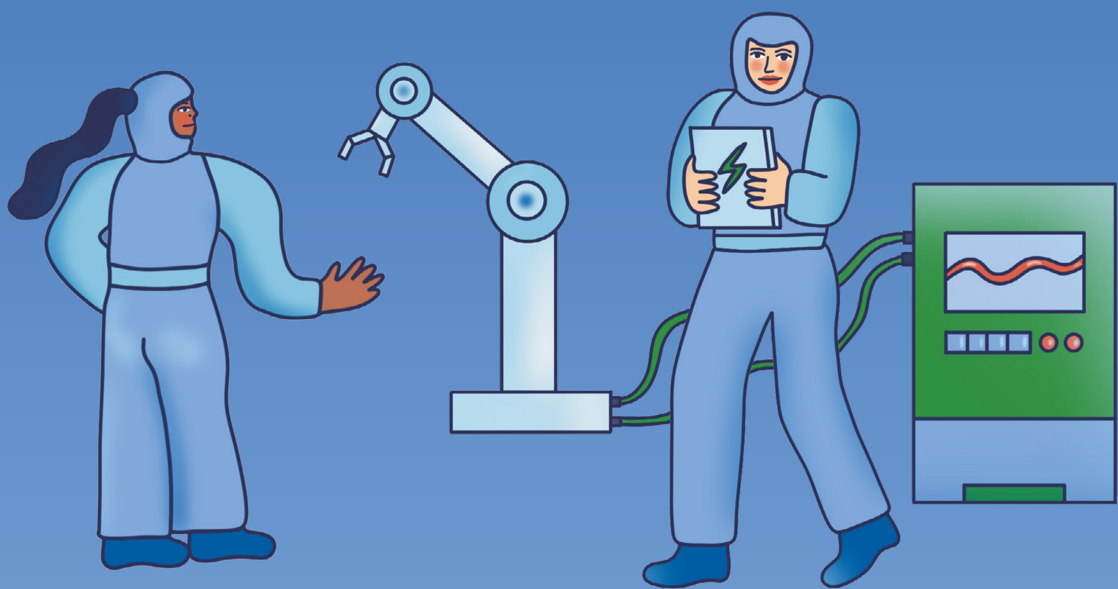
Ben Freeman, cofounder of procurement software company Omnea, frames it as a race against the clock. "The UK government has a serious job to do if it wants to keep AI companies here," he says. "Some billionaire investors have already left. If the UK doesn't get its act together, companies will start building elsewhere."

The gap between what the UK has and what it could become is, depending on your point of view, either deeply frustrating or enormously exciting. Nicolas Sharp, for one, seems to find it mostly the latter.

CHAPTER III

‘The rules have changed’

Irish founders are watching success stories multiply around them — and daring to dream big



"Ireland has always punched above its weight," says Nicola McClafferty, an investor at VC firm Molten Ventures. But the story is rarely smooth.

The Irish tech scene moves in cycles: one year things are up; the next year could be a dip. "There's a certain lumpiness to it," McClafferty says. "It's the law of small numbers, you get these boom-or-bust swings."

This was the case last year, when VC funding into Irish tech businesses fell during 2025 for the first time since 2018. Funding during the last three months of the year saw a significant drop off, falling by 46%, according to data from the Irish Venture Capital Association (IVCA). There were 186 deals completed in 2025, down from 217 the previous year, a fall of 14%.

What happened? Overseas funding fell off, though McClafferty is cautious about drawing big conclusions. The explanation, she believes, is geopolitical. "In the US, capital is really focused on building the local AI scene. On a macro level there's a real focus on domestic, sovereign capability."

That inward turn naturally hits smaller hubs harder than major ones. "Historically, Ireland has been a beacon touchpoint for US capital," she says. "When that capital travels less, it tends to hit us harder than somewhere like London."

The damage this causes is felt mostly by startups needing growth investment. This is a familiar complaint around Europe: there's never enough money for startups aiming to take the next step up the ladder.

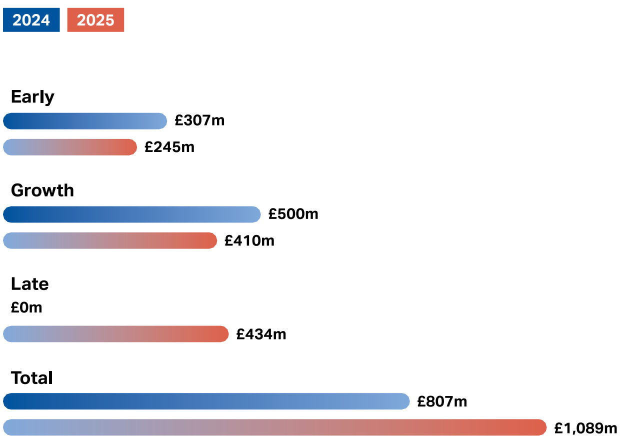
One of the healthiest parts of Ireland's venture landscape, by contrast, is the very beginning. "The Irish seed market has thrived," McClafferty says. The IVCA data suggests that transactions for smaller rounds held up reasonably well in 2025. Funding in the €3m to €5m category rose by 39% to €113.8m.

Government support and local funds have helped expand the availability of early-stage capital, with seed rounds now larger and more frequent than they were a decade ago.

From Series A onwards, however, Ireland still struggles. Compared with larger ecosystems like London, the “graduation rate” from seed to later-stage rounds remains stubbornly low, McClafferty says. "There's definitely a gap. The number of companies emerging and raising at that level is still relatively small."

Late-stage activity hints at a maturing Irish startup ecosystem

Irish VC equity funding by stage, 2024-25



Source: *Sifted*

'THE RULES HAVE CHANGED'

The funding dip is obviously frustrating, but less so for the fast-growing companies that made this ranking.

Far from feeling negative about it, Sifted heard from many founders who feel things are getting better and better.

What Ireland does have at the moment, we're told, is the mythical founder flywheel. There are now more examples of companies expanding globally — and a new generation of founders who have grown up watching them do it.

"For decades, Ireland's best left. They went to build careers in London, New York, San Francisco, places where the opportunities were bigger, the pay was better," says Eoin Delahunty, founder of AI company TSKR. But there have been a few high profile returnees like Seapoint CEO Sean Mullaney, who has Silicon Valley experience with Stripe and Google.

Few things have inspired Irish founders more than watching the Collison brothers turn Stripe into a global giant. And many Irish tech heads will still choose California over Dublin — "the Irish accent is a cheat code in the US", one founder told Sifted.

> **It doesn't matter where you start out: anyone can build anything now."**
>
> ***Luke Mackey,*** *CEO and cofounder, Kota*

But for the first time ever, it also feels like you don't have to go there to succeed big.

"It feels like the rules have changed," says Luke Mackey, cofounder and CEO of employee benefits platform Kota, the top ranked Irish startup. "It doesn't matter where you start out: anyone can build anything now." He points to Dublin-based cybersecurity unicorn Tines and restaurant software developer Nory as inspirations. "There are more examples now of what success actually looks like."

BARESPACE FOUNDERS

A HAIR-RAISING JOURNEY

Among the new wave is Conor Moules, founder of Barespace, a software platform built specifically for hairdressers and beauty salons. His path to entrepreneurship was atypical.

Raised in a small village in north Wexford, Moules left school early to pursue hairdressing. "I didn't grow up wanting to cut hair," he says. "But I met some great people early on who saw some promise in me." What began as a trade quickly became an education in business. By his early twenties, he was living in Australia — a rite of passage for many young Irish — managing staff and learning the realities of sales.

He returned to Ireland and founded Barespace in 2022, which replaces the tangle of tools most salons rely on — booking systems, CRM software, payments, operations — with a single integrated platform. From the start, Moules and his cofounder Glenn McGoldrick rejected the idea of building something broad.

"If you don't own the pipes, AI's coming to get you. A horizontal company won't get you out of the traps," he says. Instead, they went deep into one industry, learning it from the inside. "We had blinkers on. We haven't pivoted an inch."

That industry knowledge has proved to be an edge. Barespace has begun offering loans to salons structured around the seasonal rhythms. "You might pay back more in December, when you're really busy, than in January," Moules explains.

Today the company serves around 300 customers across the UK, Ireland, Spain and France. Moules sees wide-open territory ahead. "Nobody has won the market yet. There's no dominant player."

Looking back, Moules is grateful for one thing above all: timing. He's relieved he started when he did, before AI businesses arrived en masse to compete for the same verticals. "I get down on my hands and knees and thank that we hit the right place at the right time," he says.

BOOTSTRAPPED CAREGIVER

Meanwhile Dublin-based Altra, founded by Adam Keane, is another startup where the founder brings specialist knowledge to the table. Altra builds digital tools for care homes supporting tens of thousands of residents across Europe. Keane's connection to the industry runs deep: his family owned a care home, and he grew up working in it. "I learned it by osmosis," he says.

Unlike most startups on the ranking, Altra was self-funded from the start. "I wanted to control the destiny of the company," says Keane.

Today the platform works with more than 1,000 care services across Ireland, the UK, France, Belgium and Germany, supporting around 63k residents.

Altra's platform gives families visibility into their loved ones' lives. "They want daily updates on their wellbeing, what's on the menu for lunch and dinner, what activities they're doing," Keane says.

The CEO also believes that building a thriving company means investing in the people behind the technology. At Altra, that includes Fridays off during the summer and a full Christmas break for staff. "If we're building tools for care providers," he says, "we also need to make sure we're looking after our own people."

BIG TECH TENSION

Moules describes the Irish tech community as unusually tight-knit and generous. It's normal for founders to WhatsApp each other to get references on suppliers or ask for advice on a problem they face.

"On the whole, people want to see each other do well. I've got a lot of Irish angels on my list," says Moules. Dan Hobbs, CEO of warehouse safety company Protex AI, says it's normal for founders to get together for Christmas drinks: "There's two degrees of separation between all of us."

Hobbs, though, is candid about where Ireland falls short. "We don't incentivise people to work in startups. We don't make many scaleups. There should be some tax benefits, like in the UK, to invest in Irish startups."

Ireland's tech ambitions collide with other difficult realities. Data centres now consume around 20% of the country's electricity — above the EU average — and under high-demand scenarios are projected to consume more than the entire industrial sector within five years, effectively absorbing all the renewable energy Ireland produces and keeping the country dependent on fossil fuels.

> **“We don't incentivise people to work in startups.”**
>
> ***Dan Hobbs,*** *CEO and cofounder, Protex AI*

Dublin has already imposed a moratorium on new data centre connections to the grid, creating a tension with Ireland's aspirations as an AI hub.

The pressure from Big Tech companies, many of which have their European headquarters in Dublin, is palpable. Both Apple and Google have released reports criticising Ireland's lagging infrastructure, and Taoiseach Micheál Martin responded to threats from Apple by committing to "reducing the cost and regulatory burden" — a striking signal of how exposed Ireland feels to losing its biggest tenants.

OUT WEST

The Irish tech story doesn't begin and end in Dublin. Out in Galway, on the west coast, Rosemary Gallagher is a programme manager at the Portershed startup hub — and pushes back on the idea that Ireland lacks the infrastructure to match continental rivals.

"There's often a big call for something like [Paris startup hub] Station F in Ireland. I've been to Station F — it's fantastic — but in many ways we already have something similar," she says.

One local startup she highlights is MartEye, which has digitised the auctioneer's gavel used in livestock marts. Cattle auctions move at extraordinary speed, and when they moved online during Covid, the problem became: how do you end an auction online at the same time that it ends in real life? It's not easy to keep up with fast-talking auctioneers.

MartEye's answer was to embed a sensor in the physical gavel itself, so that when it strikes the block, the online auction closes automatically. "My dad's a farmer, and this is the only app he uses," Gallagher says.

For her, the sign of a healthy ecosystem isn't simply the number of companies it contains but also the number it loses. "One of the best parts of the ecosystem is that companies eventually leave — and that's a good thing. We lose members all the time because they grow so successful they outgrow the space. It's a celebration."

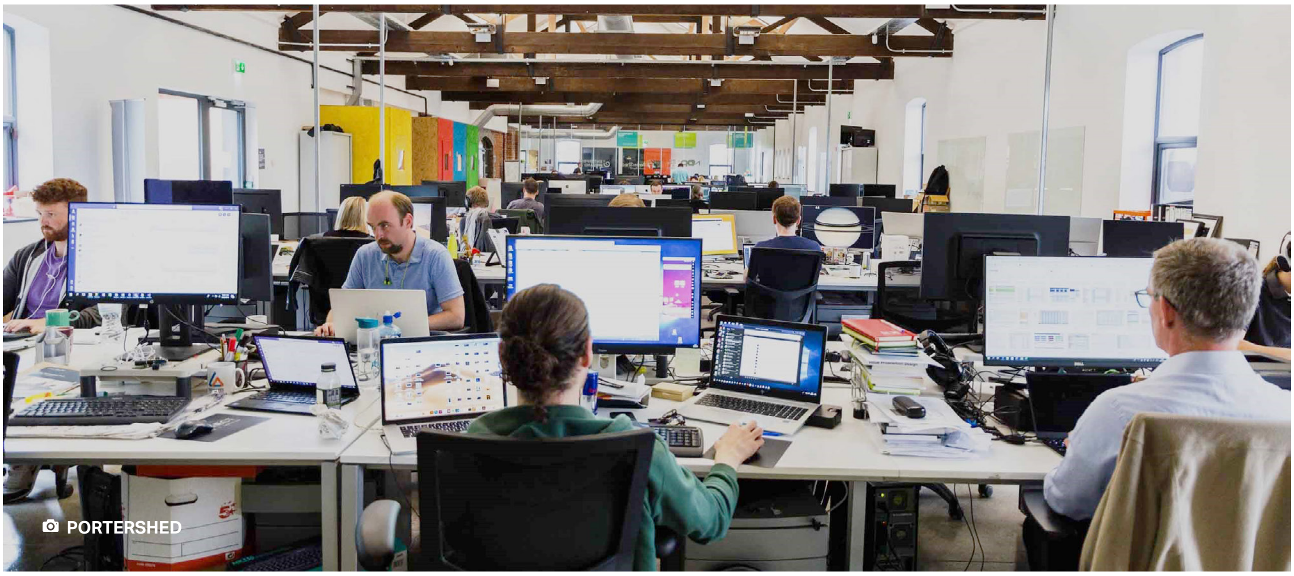
One of the Irish startups that has taken flight is Nory, which is developing software for running restaurants. CEO Conor Sheridan has recently moved to New York to run the business.

How does he feel about the pace of US tech? "You need to move faster than ever, there's more noise, it adds an extra oomph to your execution," he says.

AI, of course, is helping new challengers to step up every day. "Everyone feels the pressure and I'd be lying if I said it didn't. It's like that scene in This is Spinal Tap: the numbers have gone up to 11".

We lose members all the time because they grow so successful they outgrow the space. It's a celebration."

Rosemary Gallagher, programme manager, Portershed



PORTERSHED

Compiling the Sifted 100: UK & Ireland

DEFINITIONS AND METHODOLOGY

The Sifted 100: UK & Ireland Leaderboard ranks the top 100 startups and scaleups that have achieved the highest percentage revenue growth over the past three financial years, calculated using a two-year compound annual growth rate (CAGR):

CAGR (%) = (Latest year revenue / Base year revenue) ^ 1/2 - 1

QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

To be eligible, companies had to meet the following criteria:

- Private and independent
- Headquartered in the UK or Ireland
- Founded no earlier than 2010
- Majority of revenue must be generated by proprietary technology
- At least three years of revenue data, either between 2022-2024, 2023-2025 or 2024-2026 depending on filing dates, across comparable accounting periods of at least 26 weeks
- Revenue (annualised if necessary) of at least £42k in the base year (2022, 2023 or 2024) and at least £420k in the most recent financial year (2024, 2025 or 2026)

Companies were required to submit relevant, signed documentation to support financial information disclosed to Sifted. Some companies chose to keep some of this information private.

RESEARCH

Research was conducted by the Sifted Intelligence team to identify and contact relevant, high-growth startups. Applications were accepted on the Sifted website from January 1 to February 13, 2026 and Companies House was used to widen the search.

DISCLAIMER

Sifted Leaderboards do not claim to be exhaustive as private company data can be difficult to acquire. Leaderboards are based on historical financial data and are no guarantee of current or future company performance.

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Programme manager, Portershed

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Marketing manager, Dogpatch Labs

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Head of marketing, Dogpatch Labs

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CEO and cofounder, Protex AI

STEVEN HUNTER
CEO and cofounder, 9fin

MURVAH IQBAL
CEO and cofounder, HIVED

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CEO and founder, Altra

INGMAR KLEIN
CEO and cofounder, Huzzle

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Partner, Frontline

PIERRE PRONER
CEO and cofounder, Lawhive

NICOLAS SHARP
CEO and cofounder, Attio

CONOR SHERIDAN
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