

Tech Nation appoints new Board Directors to power UK tech scaleups for the Digital Age

- Annette Wilson, Eric Collins, Hussein Kanji and Trecilla Lobo join Tech Nation's Board of Directors
- New members bring extensive experience and knowledge to the Board as Tech Nation ramps up its work to bolster the UK's tech sector to aid economic recovery in the wake of Covid-19
- The NEDs bring experience across business, academia, and government, with roles as founders, investors and leaders

Sunday 27th September: [Tech Nation](#), the growth platform for tech companies, today announces [four new Directors](#) joining the Board, including the Audit Committee and Remuneration Committee Chairs.

UK tech is worth £186bn to the UK economy (2019) and was growing 6 times faster than the rest of the economy before Covid-19. UK tech is generating highly paid and skilled jobs amid rising unemployment. Advertised roles in the sector have grown 36% since June, with over 90,000 jobs advertised a week in August. This announcement comes as Tech Nation works to deliver ambitious plans to unlock the growth potential of 1,000 scaling tech leadership teams across the UK, generating an additional \$1Bn to the UK economy by March 2022, and ensuring that the UK remains the best place in the world to start, and scale a tech business. In the economic fall-out of Covid-19, the UK tech sector is more critical than ever to economic recovery.

Tech Nation has supported the leadership teams of 2,000 tech companies and 30% of all the 82 UK tech unicorns, including Monzo, Checkout.com, Skyscanner, Darktrace and Swoon. New members to the board will have the opportunity to help shape and guide the next stage of development in accomplishing Tech Nation's mission for the UK tech sector. New members bring knowledge of business, academia, and government, with considerable experience as founders, investors and leaders within the tech & wider ecosystems. New appointments also bring extensive links and ties to tech hubs within the UK and globally, including Silicon Valley and Asia.

Tech Nation received applications from just under 300 candidates for the non-Executive Director roles, showcasing unprecedented demand, the strength of the field and the maturity of the UK tech sector. Tech Nation appointments are based on merit and with full regard to the benefits of diversity.

Annette Wilson

Annette has extensive operational and strategic management experience having spent the last twenty years in leadership roles in growth and venture capital firms, which were focused on scaling founder-led businesses. She was founding CFO of Palamon Capital, a European growth investor, and most recently she was Partner and COO of Finch Capital, a fintech firm investing in Europe and South East Asia. She served on the investment and valuations committees and was also actively involved in portfolio management, fundraising and investor relations.

Prior to joining the VC industry, Annette held management roles with LSE listed companies in the insurance industry, having started her career at PricewaterhouseCoopers. Today she is also Chair of Europe and Adviser to Antler, an early stage global VC and is an Adviser to Finch Capital. She is a former member of the VC Council of Invest Europe and is a former Board member of the British Venture Capital Association.

Eric Collins

Eric is a technology executive who has spent a career building digital companies through innovative strategies. He has done this at public and private companies including AOL, TimeWarner, Tegic/Nuance Communications, MobilePosse, SwiftKey/Microsoft and most recently, Touch Surgery, where he was COO.

In 2018, Eric was part of a prominent group of black European and US serial entrepreneurs, institutional investors, investment bankers, corporate leaders and entertainers to found Impact X Capital Partners. The company is a double bottom-line venture capital firm that invests in under-represented innovators in Europe, focusing on growth stage companies in three distinct sectors: digital and technology, health, education and lifestyle; and media and entertainment.

Eric sits on the board of companies in San Francisco and London and acts as an advisor to companies in the US, India and the UK. He supports civic activities. In London, he serves on the board of Autograph ABP and Southwark Cathedral's Council and, in the US, he has been a board member of Washington Performing Arts.

Hussein Kanji

Hussein is a partner at Hoxton Ventures. He currently represents Hoxton on the boards of Biotx, Giraffe360, Kbox Global, Skin Analytics, SOC.OS, TourRadar, XYZ Reality and Yieldify, and serves as a board observer on Behavox, Darktrace, Fy!, Karakuri, Loveshark and Panakeia. He previously served on the boards of Babylon Health, bd4travel (acquired by Dnata), Campanja (acquired by 24/7 Media) and Deliveroo. Prior to forming Hoxton, Hussein was an associate with Accel Partners in London. He joined Accel from Microsoft Corporation in Redmond, WA. Earlier in his career, Hussein worked with startups, Safe-View (acquired by L-3), Radiance Technologies (acquired by Comcast) and Studio Verso (acquired by KPMG), all in the Bay Area.

Hussein has also helped the UK government with policy initiatives to develop the local tech industry.

Trecilla Lobo

Trecilla is the SVP, People at BenevolentAI. She is responsible for all things people, including Talent acquisition, people experience and culture, people analytics, as well as office and facilities. Trecilla has over 20 years experience in senior HR roles in digital media, pharmaceutical and technology companies, including Trader Media Group (which was part of the Guardian Media Group), Johnson & Johnson and Receipt Bank, with experience of scaling fast growth companies to create an engaging culture. Trecilla was also the Chief People Officer at Swiftkey, which was acquired by Microsoft (in 2016) and took on the role of HR Lead for Artificial Intelligence at Microsoft (UK) post acquisition.

Quotes

Stephen Kelly, Chair, Tech Nation, comments: "The UK tech sector has demonstrated resilience throughout this crisis, and is key to unlocking future growth, job creation and prosperity in the Digital Age. I'm looking forward to working with Annette, Eric, Hussein and Trecilla, who bring their invaluable experience to the Tech Nation board. The stakes are high for the UK given the Covid-19 economic fall-out and it was imperative to build an exceptional, world-class board to lead Tech Nation's delivery of a key aspect of Britain's vision for the future in taking the UK's tech companies to global market leadership."

Gerard Grech, Chief Executive, Tech Nation comments: "I'm pleased to welcome Hussein Kanji, Annette Wilson, Eric Collins and Trecilla Lobo onto the Tech Nation board. Together they bring decades of experience and leadership from both within and outside of the tech ecosystem in the UK, and internationally."

"Now, more than ever, a thriving tech sector is vital to the health of the UK economy. Being key to the economic recovery, the tech sector generates well-paid, highly skilled jobs, and attracts investment from all around the world. The skills and expertise brought to the board by our new members will continue to ensure we deliver on our ambitious mission and more, to unlock the growth potential of 1,000 scaling tech leadership teams and generate \$1bn for the UK economy by March 2022."

Annette Wilson comments: "I am delighted to join the Board of Tech Nation and also take on the role of Chair of the Audit Committee. The UK has held one of the leading positions in innovation globally and Tech Nation has an important role to play in supporting and nurturing innovation-led tech businesses as they scale. The innovative technological developments are creating significant business opportunities which should play an important part in the future economic growth domestically and globally. I look forward to serving on the Board and also working with the Tech Nation team."

Eric Collins comments: "Tech Nation has an unmatched set of resources that have been deployed to build a robust tech ecosystem. All the UK businesses with which I have had the privilege to be affiliated have benefitted from Tech Nation's programmes as well as visa endorsements. I look forward to applying those resources very deliberately to help accelerate the growth of tech businesses founded by under-represented entrepreneurs. This is a real opportunity for the UK economy."

Hussein Kanji comments: "It's been great to see the UK develop a vibrant, thriving technology cluster in the past decade. Our fund has benefitted from the UK's transformation into a major player in the global tech ecosystem. I've been fortunate to be able to help from the sidelines, and I am now looking forward to being able to work closely with the board and executive team of Tech Nation to help build the UK into one of the absolute best places in the world for tech."

Trecilla Lobo comments: "Tech employs more than a fifth of the workforce in the UK's biggest cities, and over the coming years Tech Nation will play a significant part in continuing to create an ecosystem for growth in the UK economy."

"People are at the heart of any scaling and growing tech company, bringing innovation and creativity to build the products and services to drive growth. By joining the Tech Nation team as a

Non-executive director, I am looking forward to using my experience of leading people functions within high-growth tech companies, to make a positive impact and contributing to the UK's tech ecosystem, particularly during these challenging times.”

Notes to the Editor

Tech Nation board responsibility

The Board of Tech Nation is responsible for the long-term strategy and success of the organisation. The Board maintains prudent and effective controls to assess and manage risk, ensures that resources are in place for the company to meet its objectives, and reviews management performance. The Board also sets Tech Nation's values and culture, and ensures that its obligations to its stakeholders and others are understood and met.

Existing Board composition

Stephen Kelly, Chair, former CEO of Sage, Micro Focus, Chordiant and COO of UK Government

Tim Luke, Vice Chairman Barclays Investment Bank

Sarah Wood, Co-Founder of Unruly

David Richards, Co-Founder and CEO of Wandisco

Lesley Eccles, Founder & CEO HelloRelish

Gerard Grech, Executive Director, Chief Executive of Tech Nation

About Tech Nation

Tech Nation is the growth platform for tech companies and leaders. Tech Nation fuels the growth of game-changing founders, leaders, and scaling companies so they can positively transform societies and economies. We provide them with the coaching, content, and community they need for their journey in designing the future. Tech Nation has years of experience facilitating and helping UK tech companies scale, both at home and abroad. Over 20 cohorts and 600 companies have successfully graduated from Tech Nation's growth programmes. Alumni include Skyscanner, Darktrace, and Monzo.