

Tech Nation Launches Net Zero Growth Programme to Support UK Climate Change Goals

- Tech Nation's new Net Zero growth programme will support scaleups to build a cleaner, greener and more sustainable future
- The Net Zero programme is open to companies who help to reduce emissions directly or indirectly
- Up to 30 tech scaleups will be selected with judges who include sustainable tech founders, investors, and academics, including representatives from Bulb, Cervest, Zero Carbon Capital, the Oxford Sustainable Finance Programme, and The Climate Group
- Covid-19 highlights the key role played by technology in aiding a green recovery to the crisis and the importance of building a sustainable future

Tech Nation, the growth platform for tech companies and leaders, today announces the new Net Zero growth programme. The programme is designed to support tech companies that are building a greener, cleaner, and more sustainable future, and helping the UK reach its goal of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The government-backed initiative is the first of its kind to contribute towards the UK achieving its net zero goals. The programme is supported by leading experts, investors, and founders. The judges selecting companies to join the programme include Hayden Wood, CEO, Bulb, Pippa Gawley, Founder and Director, Zero Carbon Capital, Mark Hodgson, Chief Business Officer, Cervest, Tom Adeyoola, NED, Verco, Dr Ben Caldecott, Director of the Oxford Sustainable Finance Programme at the University of Oxford, Helen Clarkson, CEO, The Climate Group and Jeff Eneberi, Director, Sustainable Seaweed.

The Net Zero programme is open to any companies who help to reduce emissions directly or indirectly, with one of the key sub-sectors contributing to net zero being Cleantech. Companies operating in this high-growth sector range from converting footfall into off-grid power and data, delivering advanced solutions to reduce tailpipe emissions, and using nanotechnology to harness visible light into electrical energy.

Worldwide, Cleantech companies completed a record breaking 777 deals raising a total of £8.5bn in 2019. Tech Nation has identified 251 VC backed Cleantech companies in the UK and the sector is growing. In 2019, UK cleantech companies completed 76 deals, raising £264mn, a 26% rise on 2018. Bristol-based Ovo Energy has raised the most in the UK, raising £255mn in total.

The programme comes at a crucial time for the UK tech sector. The deployment of green technologies must be accelerated in order to achieve the 2050 net zero target, and Covid-19 has highlighted the role played by technology in aiding a green recovery in both the short and long term.

The 6-month Net Zero Growth Programme will be free to join, and the programme has been tailor-made to tackle the specific challenges of companies operating in this space. It will create a peer-to-peer network of companies on their scaleup journey, and sessions will be led by some of the UK's most successful tech entrepreneurs.

Digital Minister, Caroline Dinenage said: "The UK is at the forefront of the cleantech revolution and we are committed to making sure the sector has the right conditions to grow and help us achieve our climate change goals."

"I know how dynamic and effective our tech firms can be at tackling global challenges. So I encourage any entrepreneur with a vision for a greener world to apply and help to build a cleaner and more sustainable future."

Gerard Grech, Chief Executive, Tech Nation, the growth platform for tech companies, comments: "Climate change should not be tackled by international governments alone. Technology and entrepreneurship have a huge role to play in dealing with such a global environmental issue. The green tech sector has grown substantially and is well-positioned to take on this challenge, making a significant difference to our future. We want to ensure UK tech companies have the tools to be able to drive and scale this innovation, helping the UK meet its net zero targets by 2050 or sooner."

Zheela Qaiser, Programme Lead, Net Zero growth programme, Tech Nation, adds: "This is an important opportunity for Tech Nation to support meaningful and mission-driven work in the pursuit of climate change goals in the UK and globally. We are seeking scaling tech businesses that demonstrate entrepreneurship and dynamism to tackle the biggest challenge that we face to our future. We've opened up applications to a broad range of sectors so encourage any tech businesses that are contributing toward this mission to apply."

Sarah Wood, Tech Nation Board member, and Co-founder and Chair, Unruly, comments: "Tech Nation's Net Zero Growth programme is an opportunity to accelerate the tangible and meaningful action already being taken by the tech sector in tackling climate change. The tech sector has already stepped up to the challenge in many ways, and I look forward to seeing the companies chosen scale as they contribute to efforts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions."

Hayden Wood, Co-founder and CEO, Bulb, comments: "The climate crisis remains the largest and most concerning issue of our time, and we're running out of time to act. At Bulb, we've seen firsthand how technology can play an essential role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and in building a sustainable future for our planet. This is why I am delighted to support Tech Nation's Net Zero programme, which will accelerate the growth of some of the most innovative technological solutions to climate change in the UK."

Helen Clarkson, CEO, The Climate Group, comments: "We know that halving emissions in the next decade and getting to net zero by 2050 is going to require new solutions and approaches. I'm excited to support the Tech Nation Net Zero programme as it works to identify some of the start-ups that will help the UK achieve its climate goals."

Pippa Gawley, Founder and Director of Zero Carbon Capital, comments: "Investing in new technologies is a crucial part of the fight against climate change - making alternative solutions cheaper and better than the incumbents will accelerate the zero-carbon transition. I'm excited to bring my experience as a climate technology investor to help the Tech Nation Net Zero programme."

Dr Ben Caldecott, Director of the Oxford Sustainable Finance Programme and an Associate Professor at the University of Oxford, comments: "We need a new generation of UK companies to help design and deliver the products and services to ensure net zero across every sector of the global economy."

"The transition to a net zero carbon economy will be the most capital intensive phase of human history and this is a massive opportunity for UK startups."

Mark Hodgson, Chief Business Officer, Cervest, comments: "Improving the long-term resilience of our planet is the most important issue of our time. I am delighted to be supporting Tech Nation with this new initiative for Net Zero startups that helps create a more secure future for everyone."

Cansu Deniz Bayrak, Head of Fundraising at Bethnal Green Ventures, comments: "We need more awareness of interconnectedness, which presents an opportunity from a wide range of businesses to join the fight against the climate crisis. This goes from deep tech innovation and green transportation, from sharing economy and conscious consumption to food security and biodiversity."

Michael Langguth, Co-Founder & COO, POQ, comments: "There isn't a silver bullet for tackling climate change - we need to try many things in areas like mobility, green energy, food production, water preservation (and many more), all of those initiatives together will get us there. Start-ups are best poised to take this approach and I am very happy to be a part of the Net Zero initiative from Tech Nation."

Tom Adeyoola, Non-Executive Director, Verco, comments: "Climate change is the existential threat facing us all. Tech Nation's Net Zero initiative is just the boost the emerging and exciting sector of potential solutions needs to drive awareness, investment and growth"

Mahima Sukhdev, Director, Xynteo Methods, comments: "Achieving net zero emissions may seem like an insurmountable challenge, but the reality is that many of the solutions required already exist -- they just need to be supported and scaled. This is why the Net Zero accelerator is so pivotal."

Notes to the Editor

Net Zero criteria for applicants:

Companies are eligible across key sectors including electricity & energy, transport & mobility, agriculture, food systems, manufacturing, and building technology. Companies may directly contribute to net zero, with emission-reducing and carbon capture technologies, or may contribute indirectly by changing consumer behaviour, or increasing efficiencies.

Applications open today and close on the 20th of July. Successful applicants will be notified at the end of August. The programme will start in October.

Read more about the programme and apply: <https://technation.io/net-zero/>

Tech Nation's Fintech and Applied AI Sector programmes

Fintech and Applied AI Sector programmes also open for applications today. For more information see [here](#) for Applied AI and [here](#) for Fintech.

Other links:

Check for eligibility: <https://technation.io/apply-now/>

Guidance and FAQs for applicants: <https://technation.io/application-guide/>

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 includes tech luminaries like Skyscanner, Darktrace, and Monzo.