

16th May 2022

Tech Nation urges the UK's most ambitious tech scaleups to apply to its seven world-leading growth programmes

- Tech Nation today opens applications for each of its 7 selective, free, government-backed growth programmes designed to accelerate the growth of tech scaleups from across the UK.
- Successful applicants will benefit from peer-to-peer learning, access to world-class scale coaches, brand exposure, and networking opportunities.
- To date, Tech Nation's programmes have supported 1,010 companies - including 30% of the UK's 122 tech 'unicorns', and 42% of the UK's 12 tech 'decacorns'.
- Tech Nation is launching a new growth programme for later-stage climate tech companies - [Net Zero X](#) - to help the UK drive down global emissions.
- The [Libra](#) programme has been extended to offer support to underrepresented founders from all ethnic minority groups.
- The [Fintech](#) programme is also evolving to support the fastest-growing areas of UK fintech; introducing a new stream for cryptocurrency companies.
- Applications for all programmes are open [here](#) from 16th May - 28th June.

16th May 2022: Tech Nation has today opened applications for its seven prestigious growth stage and sector programmes: [Upscale](#), [Future Fifty](#), [Libra](#), [Applied AI](#), [Fintech](#), [Net Zero](#) and, for the first time ever, [Net Zero X](#).

These free, government-backed programmes are designed to help scaling companies from all UK regions to overcome common growth challenges and scale faster by providing them with expert coaching, peer-to-peer learning and extensive networking opportunities.

Tech Nation is actively seeking to support a diverse range of ambitious firms - across region, gender and ethnicity - to ensure that anyone with an idea and drive in the UK can be supported to succeed.

World-leading growth programmes that demonstrate impact

In total, Tech Nation has supported 1,010 companies to thrive through its growth programmes since they began in 2014. The average length of time it takes for a company joining one of Tech Nation's programmes to receive investment is six months (182 days), demonstrating the strength of the programmes' insights, coaching and networks to accelerate the growth of UK tech scaleups.

To date, Tech Nation has supported 37 tech 'unicorns' (companies with valuations of \$1bn+) through its growth programmes - this represents 30% of the UK's total number of tech 'unicorns' (122). Tech Nation has also supported 42% of the UK's 12 tech 'decacorns' (companies with valuations of \$10bn+). These include [eToro](#), [Deliveroo](#), [Checkout.com](#), [Blockchain](#) and [Revolut](#).

Companies accepted into Tech Nation programmes represent the best of UK tech, with a majority (58%) of companies in last year's programmes coming from outside of London. Tech companies who

have been through Tech Nation's growth programmes include [Skyscanner](#) (from Edinburgh), [Darktrace](#) (from Cambridge) and [Monzo](#) (from London), who have received a combined £1.4bn in investment to date, demonstrating the potential of tech scaleups accepted into these programmes to become the UK's most valuable tech companies - and the jobs and capital they have the potential to create across the UK.

Tech Nation's growth programmes have been shaped to help address the most important issues of today

Following the launch of Tech Nation's Net Zero growth programme for early-stage climate tech scaleups in 2020, Tech Nation is expanding its offering for climate tech companies by launching a new growth programme for later-stage climate tech scaleups; [Net Zero X](#).

With only 25% of total funding raised in climate tech being channelled into the technologies that hold 81% of the total Emissions Reduction Potential (ERP), Net Zero X aims to help accelerate the UK's goal to drive down global emissions and 'futureproof' the climate tech industry, by reducing this carbon funding gap, countering the climate tech 'valley of death' and supporting the UK's most promising climate tech companies to scale and influence policy and the investment landscape.

Tech Nation is also on a mission to improve diversity and inclusion in the UK tech sector. Last year, Tech Nation debuted their Libra growth programme to support underrepresented founders and combat racial diversity challenges, after data from the [Tech Nation Report 2021](#) revealed that only 0.24% of the 1.7% of UK VC investment invested in ethnic minority founders in 2020 had gone to Black entrepreneurs. Following the launch of the first Libra programme, several of the companies in the first Libra cohort have raised Seed funding already (including [Framework](#), who raised over \$2mn in Seed funding this year).

In 2022, Tech Nation is expanding their Libra offering, with the second iteration not focussing exclusively on founders who self-identify as Black or Multiracial but also including all other ethnic minority groups.

The [Fintech](#) programme is also evolving to support the fastest-growing areas of UK fintech; introducing a new stream for cryptocurrency companies.

How to apply

Companies that are chosen to join the six-month programmes will benefit from over 60 hours of support, including access to tailored coaching sessions with industry experts, and extensive networking opportunities.

Applications for all of the growth programmes open today (Monday 16th May) and will close on the 28th June. Check your eligibility and apply [here](#) on the Tech Nation website. Successful applicants will be notified in June and onboarded in August. The programmes will commence in September.

Tech scaleups are encouraged to apply to one of the seven programmes, which include:

- [Future Fifty](#): Tech Nation's longest running programme, now in its 11th round, designed for late-stage tech companies
- [Upscale](#): Now in its 8th round, designed for mid-stage tech scaleups
- [Libra](#): Programme launched last year for early-stage tech companies with underrepresented founders
- [Applied AI](#): Designed for AI scaleups, now in its 4th round
- [Fintech](#): For fintech scaleups, now in its 5th round
- [Net Zero](#): For early-stage climate tech companies, now in its 3rd round
- [Net Zero X](#): Tech Nation's newly launched growth programme for later-stage climate tech companies

Quotes:

Gerard Grech, Founding Chief Executive at Tech Nation, said: "Tech Nation's mission is to enable the most innovative high growth companies from every part of the UK to scale, and to change the world for the better. We're proud to launch these latest growth programmes that help businesses drive capital and create jobs, while tackling some of the greatest social, economic and environmental challenges of our time. Our newest growth programmes, Net Zero X and Libra, are actively helping to decarbonise our nation and level the playing field for underrepresented founders in UK tech. We're privileged to have supported over 4000 tech businesses to scale and succeed, including 37 (30.3%) of the UK's tech 122 'unicorns' (companies with valuations of \$1bn+), who have collectively raised \$22 billion in venture capital investment, and 5 (41.7%) of the UK's tech 12 'decacorns' (with valuations of \$10bn+)."

Julian Mensah, Founder and CEO of Voltric (Libra 1.0 alumni), said: "For Voltric, Libra elevated our credibility. Within days of the announcement, people were writing about us that we had never met! Even more than that, Libra gave me the peace of mind I needed to carry on knowing that I wasn't the only Black founder facing the challenges I was facing. Today, we are a funded company with more education around leadership and management - and this would not have been possible without the Libra programme."

Jo Parker-Swift, CEO and Co-founder of Solivus (Net Zero 2.0 programme alumni), said: "Being part of Tech Nation's Net Zero 2.0 cohort not only gave us access to a community of like-minded peers, but it helped put us on the map. It was a huge moment of recognition and celebration for our team. We were part of a group of climate tech companies invited to Glasgow during COP26 and since joining the programme, we have successfully completed a crowdfunding campaign, securing £2.4 million to scale our thin-film solar solutions for both commercial and domestic customers. We have featured in many leading publications – and being selected for Tech Nation's Net Zero 2.0 absolutely contributed to establishing our credibility as an ambitious and innovative tech scaleup."

Franck Vialaron, CEO and Co-founder of Accelex (Fintech 4.0 programme alumni), said: "The webinar events were fantastic, covering an extremely diverse and helpful range of topics, with great speakers. We received access to a wealth of support and networking opportunities. I would highly recommend applying!"

Martin Balaam, CEO & Co-founder of Pimberly (Upscale 5.0 programme alumni), said: “The whole team at Pimberly found the Upscale programme to be extremely useful. Not only did we get some pragmatic, practical and necessary advice, but the programme also gave us the chance to network with other like-minded individuals in our cohort, which has created lasting relationships. We’d definitely recommend one of the Tech Nation programmes to anyone looking - it’s a no-brainer!”

Alice Newton-Rex, Head of Product at WorldRemit (Future Fifty 3.0 alumni), said: “What was most important to us was the access Tech Nation’s Future Fifty programme gave us to companies of a similar size, and the voice into Government, more than just the accolade of having ‘made it’.”

Murat Tunaboylu, CEO & Co-founder of Antiverse (Applied AI 1.0 alumni), said: “Tech Nation’s Applied AI growth programme has been one of the most impactful programmes we have been part of - and we have attended so many! All Tech Nation staff, speakers, content quality, communications and venues were top class. It pushed us forward on many fronts.”

Katja Palovaara, Fintech Scaling Expert at Tech Nation, said: “It’s going to be another huge year for Fintech. After growing sevenfold in terms of investment last year, we expect nothing less from 2022. The fifth iteration of Tech Nation’s Fintech programme will welcome more fintech companies than ever and continue to provide them unmatched opportunity and support. We’re really excited about the growing sectors such as Web3, blockchain and cryptocurrency, and wish to continue seeing companies who are serving the general public - including Gen Z and the financially excluded. If you are looking to take your fintech company to new heights in the next year, apply now!”

Abi Mohammed, Libra Scaling Expert at Tech Nation, said: “Diversity and inclusion must be at the heart of everything we do in UK tech, and that’s why I’m excited to create a supportive and enriching community for even more diverse founders this year with Libra 2.0. The results of last year’s inaugural programme were real and tangible, with several companies having raised funding already since joining, so I’m excited to help support more companies with founders from underrepresented groups to scale and succeed this year.”

Winnie Yan, Upscale Scaling Expert at Tech Nation, said: “Now in its 7th year, Upscale has a track record of helping the UK’s most promising tech companies to accelerate their growth and unlock the key to scaling successfully - at a critical stage of growth. Tech scaleups who have been through the Upscale programme have gone on to become household names - from Olio and BorrowMyDoggy to MyTutor and Cleo. I’m excited to welcome the UK’s tech ‘unicorns’ of the future to Upscale 8.0!”

Sammy Fry, Net Zero and Net Zero X Scaling Expert at Tech Nation, said: “As the need to address the climate crisis becomes ever-more apparent, I am extremely excited to be announcing the launch of Net Zero X this year. The new programme for the UK’s leading, high-impact climate tech companies will accelerate the UK’s goal to drive down global emissions and ‘futureproof’ the climate tech industry. We will be reducing the carbon funding gap, countering the climate tech ‘valley of death’ and supporting the UK’s most promising climate tech companies to scale, while educating the market, supporting the adoption of sustainable policies and creating a thriving climate tech landscape.”

Ria Khan, Deeptech Scaling Expert at Tech Nation, said: “With the UK now positioned as a global hub for AI and deep tech, I’m excited to be welcoming a new cohort of companies to the Applied AI programme; companies who are not just pushing the boundaries of innovation, but who are working to make the world a better place across industries - from improving the healthcare system, to fighting climate change, and so much more.”

Zac Garton, Future Fifty Scaling Expert at Tech Nation, said: “Since its launch, Tech Nation’s Future Fifty growth programme has been helping household names such as Monzo, Deliveroo and Skyscanner to address challenges unique to the most successful tech companies in the country - at a critical stage of growth, where the stakes are as high as the ambition. We are proud to have supported the best and brightest of the UK’s later stage tech companies to scale, succeed and cement the UK as a global powerhouse for tech. Last year, we were recognised by Beauhurst as the UK’s leading late-stage tech accelerator, and I’m excited to welcome the UK’s next wave of ‘unicorns’ and ‘futurecorns’ to the Future Fifty programme this year!”

Notes to the Editor:

About Tech Nation’s growth programmes (and eligibility criteria):

- [Upscale 8.0](#)
- [Future Fifty 11.0](#)
- [Applied AI 4.0](#)
- [Libra 2.0](#)
- [Fintech 5.0](#)
- [Net Zero 3.0](#)
- [Net Zero X 1.0](#)

Programme partners:

Tech Nation would like to thank its programme partners for sponsoring this year’s growth stage and sector programmes:

Upscale 8.0 - [Cooley](#) and [Cooper Parry](#)

Future Fifty 11.0 - [HSBC](#) and [Smith & Williamson](#) (soon to be Evelyn Partners)

Libra 2.0 - [Cooley](#)

Fintech 5.0 - [Cooper Parry](#)

Applied AI 4.0 - [Cooper Parry](#)

Net Zero 3.0 - [BNP Paribas](#)

Net Zero X 1.0 - [PwC](#)

About Tech Nation:

Tech Nation is the leading growth platform for UK tech scaleups. Tech Nation fuels the growth of game-changing founders, leaders, and scaling companies so they can positively transform societies and economies; providing 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 30 cohorts and 900 companies have successfully graduated from Tech Nation’s growth programmes. Alumni include Skyscanner, Darktrace, and Monzo, as well as 3 of the UK’s ‘decacorns’; Revolut, Wise, and Farfetch.