Innovate UK

Driving agrifood innovation:

The impact of Investor Partnerships





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Introduction

The Innovate UK Investor Partnerships programme offers a unique opportunity for high-growth, innovative UK companies to access the funding they need to thrive, succeed and scale.

Designed to support micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the programme targets those developing cutting-edge technologies in the Innovate UK Future Economy areas: Net Zero, Healthy Living and Agriculture, Digital and Technologies and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

This brochure specifically showcases how the programme is unlocking transformative growth, accelerating innovation, and driving impact across the UK's agrifood sector.

How Investor Partnerships work

The Investor Partnership model is a scheme where Innovate UK deploys grant funding to projects by sole SME applicants which have been assessed as eligible and above a quality threshold. The project identifies their innovative solution to a specific challenge, at a suitable stage of development, within the scope of the competition. The grant is only awarded if an aligned private investment into the business is simultaneously achieved. This provides support during and beyond the project delivery, ensuring maximum opportunity for exploitation and business growth.

For this investment to be ratified the lead or a member of the investor syndicate must be a recognised Innovate UK Investor Partner. Each investor in this group has shown a clear alignment with the objectives of our Investor Partnership programme and a strong appetite to invest in innovative, technology-led businesses in the UK. Initially this cohort was formed with specific agrifood investors but latterly has become a comprehensive and growing list of over 190 investors representing all aspects of the UK innovation ecosystem. The Innovate UK impact across all Investor Partnership competitions has been considerable with 390 SMEs supported with £156m grant and £420m aligned investment which has led to over £1bn of follow-on investment, since inception in 2017.



Investor Partnerships impact within the agrifood sector

The recently published **Advanced Manufacturing Sector Plan** highlights the scale of opportunity, with the UK agrifood chain contributing £147bn in Gross Value Added, underscoring its vital role in driving economic growth and innovation.

The number of agritech start-ups in the UK has increased approximately 40-fold in the last decade with global demand increasing for the technologies that support economic resilience in agriculture.

Despite a strong early-stage investment ecosystem, companies face significant challenges beyond early seed.

Agrifood Investor Partnerships, such as Transforming Food Production, Defra Farming Innovation, and Novel Low Emission Food Production, have focused on late seed and early Series A rounds, requiring aligned investment at twice the grant level, with solutions that are close to market. In addition, Innovate UK's Future Economy intervention supports earlier-stage investment with matched funding, easing access for emerging ventures.

The sector presents a major economic opportunity and is central to tackling sustainability challenges in climate, biodiversity, and health. Innovate UK is committed to scaling these companies through public and private investment, with a long-standing focus on building an engaged agrifood investor ecosystem and preparing SMEs for investment. Since 2017, the Innovate UK Business Connect Agrifood team has provided pitch training and sectoral support, connecting businesses with investors through showcase events. Innovate UK Business Growth continues to support individual companies in becoming investment ready and making informed funding decisions.

This brochure is showcasing a selection of agrifood companies supported through the programme.

"The Investor Partnership programme has been transformational for us. We are a high-tech business developing something unique – a real breakthrough for agriculture, but one which is very tech-heavy, requiring patient capital to unlock the incredible potential this technology has. The Investor Partnership helped us secure one of Europe's biggest investors in the field, giving us the strong base we need for success."

Zayndu Page 31

"The Investor Partnership programme has brought in our biggest investor, The Yield Lab, who have been extremely supportive in helping us grow as a business. The programme has also brought in an amount of money that would have been very difficult for a company of our size to raise on our own. We owe the success of the exciting market we are developing now to Innovate UK's support through the Investor Partnership programme. We believe this will pay dividends in exports for the UK."

Spotta Page 28

"The Investor Partnership programme has been catalytic in delivering new technologies and new business models that will secure the financial sustainability of UK broccoli farmers. This will help improve the resilience of UK farming and food supplies, and will deliver new, highly nutritious, hypoallergenic and sustainable foods to UK consumers that have the taste and mouthfeel of the products they love, and that are made in the UK."

Upcycled Plant Power ('UPP') Page 30

"The Investor Partnership programme has been transformational in the development of our technology so that it is a commercially viable option for raspberry growers internationally."

Field Robotics Page 17

"The Investor Partnership programme has been a pivotal catalyst for Concert Bio, both in unlocking new investors and in accelerating our progress. The programme has enabled us to launch our first product which has already demonstrated groundbreaking improvements for early customers, and with Innovate UK support we are now rapidly expanding internationally."

Concert Bio Page 14

"The developments achieved within this project have allowed the company to gain a foothold in the US wine market and to secure further funding towards increasing the area in the UK at a fast pace year on year. Jobs have been retained and a market for outsourced work is also emerging as Saga pass work to regional partners."

Saga Robotics Page 26

"The Investor Partnership programme has been a catalyst for our growth, allowing us to advance from lab to pilot scale, grow our team, and apply our technology to additional crops and proteins."

Kyomei Page 21

"The Investor Partnership programme enabled us to expand into maize and soybean, grow our technical team, and generate the critical data that attracted VC investment and global industry interest, accelerating our path to market."

SugaROx
Page 29

"The Investor Partnership programme accelerated our regulatory readiness, unlocked follow-on investment, and enabled us to scale our team and technology to meet growing industry demand."

Roslin Technologies Page 25

The impact of agrifood Investor Partnerships



38
Projects

£24m
Grant awarded*

£65m
Aligned investment**

2.7
Multiplier

£112m
Follow on investment

7.5
Overall multiplier

These figures reflect only investor partnership projects within the agrifood sector and do not represent the full Innovate UK portfolio.

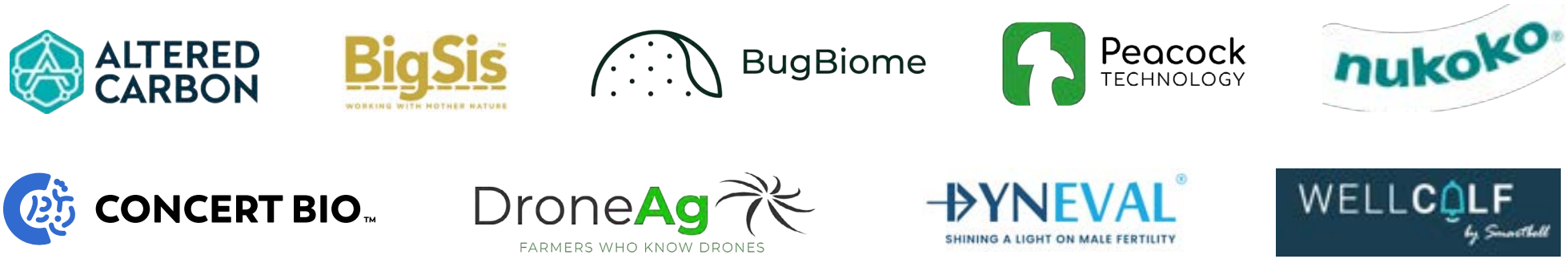
* Grant and aligned investment are based on data submitted at application, which includes £4m grant support from Defra.

** Post project investment and overall multiplier based on investment according to Beauhurst published data accessed 26/08/2025

35

Companies supported











Adamo Foods

Company overview

Adamo Foods is a foodtech company developing healthy, sustainable, and delicious alternatives to meat whole-cuts, using fungal fermentation. The company is launching their first ultra-realistic steak alternative, which requires 93% less CO2e than conventional beef.

Project overview

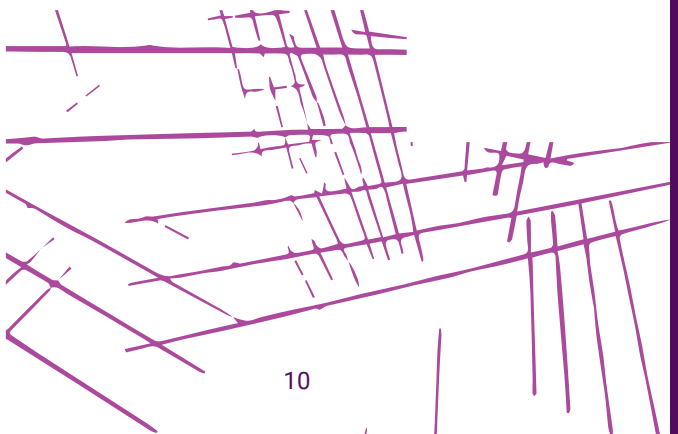
Adamo Foods has developed an ultra-realistic, clean-label mycelium steak, with a uniquely fibrous muscle-texture. In this project, Adamo will implement a scaled-up production process and establish a pilot production line ready for commercialisation. The company will be launching a pilot at a foodservice location, supplying product from a new production facility.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership grant has been instrumental in helping the company close its £2m Seed round and attract additional private investment. It enabled the company to hire more staff, expand the team, file two further patents, and rapidly scale up production.

The future

Adamo will continue to scale-up throughout 2025 and 2026, starting with an exclusive pilot later this year.





Project lead: Adamo Foods

adamofoods.com

Total project cost: £1.67m

Grant funding: £0.75m

Aligned investment: £1.5m

Investor partner: Future Planet Capital

Altered Carbon

Company overview

Altered Carbon has developed a compact sensor technology that mimics biological olfaction and harnesses the power of AI, enabling digital devices to detect and interpret scent. The company is focused on high-impact applications across healthcare, agriculture, and the built environment.

Project overview

Their HarvestShield project aimed to develop and validate 'FreshDetect', a graphene-based AI-powered digital nose sensor for early detection of berry spoilage. This involved designing, printing, and testing chemical sensors, integrating into Internet of Things (IoT) devices, and deploying in field trials with partners like BerryWorld. The project also advanced 'ScentStudio', an AI modelling platform that converts sensor data into actionable insights, showcasing major savings for growers.

Impact of the programme

The programme enabled sensor prototyping, pilot trials with BerryWorld, and engagements with RealmFive and Agrofresh. As a result, the company achieved industry recognition, secured a DHL partnership, and was featured in FoodTech500 and XTC Podcast.

The future

Altered Carbon is scaling up commercial deployment with pilot trials underway at BerryWorld and RealmFive. Future phases involve expanding into broader agricultural markets and exploring international partners. The company is also exploring diversification into adjacent industries like pharmaceuticals and cosmetics. The company is looking to raise £900k in Angel and VC Seed investment.



Project lead: Altered Carbon

altered-carbon.com

Total project cost: £0.71m

Grant funding: £0.5m

Aligned investment: £0.75m

Investor partner: SetSquared

BigSis

Company overview

BigSis provides biological insect management solutions that outperform chemical insecticides. Using robotics and AI, the company's proprietary platform transforms the economics of the sterile insect technique (SIT) without using genetically modified organisms (GMOs), delivering scalable, cost-effective solutions for several insect pests.

Project overview

Over 18 months, the project enabled the company to significantly advance its end-to-end automated system for sterile male insect production using an individualised rearing process. Starting with the completion and review of the V3.0 system, the company developed the enhanced V3.1, achieving over tenfold output improvement. The project concludes with analysis for further optimisation and the design of a V4 concept.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership grant made a material difference to the company's first-of-a-kind automation project, providing the investment needed to overcome early challenges in reliability and efficiency. It enabled delivery of a scalable, replicable system, accelerating progress toward commercial readiness.

The future

BigSis is currently raising approximately £5m to build a new production unit, with plans to target a £20m raise in 2026 to support further scale-up and commercial expansion.



Project lead: BigSis

bigsis.tech

Total project cost: £2.52m

Grant funding: £1.13m

Aligned investment: £2.5m

Investor partner: Regenerate Ventures

BugBiome

BugBiome

Company overview

BugBiome is on a mission to transform crop protection by harnessing the power of microbes. The company discovers and develops next-generation microbial bioinsecticides that are effective and sustainable.

Project overview

Their project will advance BugBiome's lead bioinsecticide through formulation development and greenhouse trials. It will optimise product stability, rain fastness, and delivery, generating key performance data to de-risk the technology and accelerate field readiness and regulatory approval.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership grant enabled progression to TRL 5 with successful greenhouse validation, de-risking the product and attracting new investors. It also supported key scientific hires, strengthened IP, and laid the foundation for regulatory and commercial partnerships.

The future

The company is focused on field validation of its lead bioinsecticide and expanding its pipeline by leveraging its proprietary platform.



Project lead: BugBiome

bugbiome.com

Total project cost: £0.3m

Grant funding: £0.21m

Aligned investment: £2m

Investor partner: Cambridge Enterprise

Concert Bio



Company overview

Concert Bio enables growers to harness the potential of the plant microbiome. Working with growers, the company has collected the world's largest database of soilless agriculture microbiome data and developed a microbiome monitoring service, enabling growers to open their microbiome 'black box' and understand what is happening in their crop microbiome. Overture™ is the first beneficial microbe product designed specifically for soilless agriculture.

Project overview

This project has helped Concert Bio accelerate commercialisation of its first product. It will advance the company's microbiome monitoring service, refine its database and models, and enable productisation of Overture™, including US scale-up, microbial shelf-life formulation, and regulatory approval.

Impact of the programme

The company secured substantial private capital – both to match the grant and to accelerate growth. Funding enabled the recruitment of three new team members, with further expansion planned. The company successfully launched Overture™ in the UK, gained regulatory approval in multiple US states, and now has over 80% of US hydroponic lettuce production on its waiting list. The programme also supported applications for additional funding, including the EIC Horizon Europe grant and ADOPT.

The future

The company is expanding into the US market following strong grower interest, and into new crops, particularly vine crops. Successful trials have been conducted in-house and independently, with commercial testing underway across Europe. Partnerships with industry leaders, including Jiffy, Van der Knaap, Grodan, Enza Zaden, Rijk Zwaan, and Incotec, are exploring integration of the company's microbes into seed coatings and substrates, opening new delivery methods and sales channels.

Project lead: Concert Bio

concert.bio

Total project cost: £2.26m

Grant funding: £1.02m

Aligned investment: £4m

Investor partner: Conduit Connect

Drone Ag

DroneAg
FARMERS WHO KNOW DRONES

Company overview

Drone Ag combines the expertise of farmers, agronomists, drone pilots and software engineers to develop affordable and accessible drone and AI technologies to benefit farmers and the environment.

Project overview

The company has developed a trial plot imaging and analysis system using its Skippy Scout drone/AI platform, delivering per-plot analytics that upskill the workforce, accelerate chemical and breeding trials, and provide scalable, low-cost data for AI model development.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership programme enabled Drone Ag to launch a powerful new crop trials/R&D solution through grant and matched investment, an opportunity that wouldn't have been possible otherwise. It unlocked follow-on funding, attracted new clients, created jobs, and positioned the company for the next phase of commercialisation.

The future

The company is commercialising its newly developed crop R&D technology, with plans to expand into broader agricultural applications. A future equity investment of £500–750k is targeted within the next six months to support this growth.



Project lead: Drone Ag

droneag.farm

Total project cost: £0.87m

Grant funding: £0.61m

Aligned investment: £0.61m

Investor partner: Northern Gritstone

Dyneval

Company overview

Dyneval's measurement technology measures semen quality with precision enabling bull studs, farm vets and bovine IVF companies to raise production efficiencies.

Project overview

This project has enabled them to bring the Dynescan semen analyser to market (including hardware and software development) and generate first data to show semen that is able to maintain motility for longer than two hours yields conception rates 8% higher.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership programme was critical for enabling Dyneval to bring to market the Dynescan semen analyser which is now providing unique data insights into semen quality and longevity and is used by bull studs, farm vets and bovine IVF clinics globally to improve production efficiencies.

Dyneval has secured £1.15m investment, around £400k in grants and £415k in revenue since the Investor Partnership grant, and continues to run trials to validate their technology and build global trust.

The future

The company is focused on the delivery of their first prototype of a high-throughput Dynescan, engineered for the rigorous demands of bull studs, paving the way for global sales expansion. Dyneval is actively developing a pocket-sized Dynescan to empower AI technicians worldwide with portable, precision diagnostics.



Project lead: Dyneval Ltd

dyneval.com

Total project cost: £1.28m

Grant funding: £0.58m

Aligned investment: £1.43m

Investor partner: Cottagequinn Enterprises

Fieldwork Robotics

Company overview

In response to rising labour costs and picker shortages, Fieldwork Robotics' technology works alongside pickers to reduce waste, lower harvesting costs, ensure labour reliability, and improve margins and affordability with predictable per-berry pick costs.

Project overview

The BerryAI project underpinned the development of Fieldwork's autonomous model and had two aims: To enhance the AI-powered vision of the robot, and to improve its decision-making capabilities. The BerryBot project enabled the development of their robot's hardware, software and control/vision to enable picking at an enhanced rate.

Impact of the programme

The grants from Innovate UK have been transformative for the development of the technology and have ultimately led to the creation of Fieldworker 1. Building on advancements facilitated through the BerryBot and BerryAI projects, the new robot provides growers with a predictable cost per berry, enabling them to augment human labour while better managing their operating costs and overall profit margins. The Fieldworker 1 has been deployed for trials at Costa Group's farms in Australia as well as Place UK's farms in Norfolk.

The future

Fieldwork Robotics has secured a healthy pipeline of contracts with some of the world's largest berry growers operating in our target markets. The company is currently operational in the UK and Portugal and is aiming to establish a strong presence in Australia and California.



Project lead: Fieldwork Robotics

fieldworkrobotics.com

Total project cost: £0.85m

Grant funding: £0.6m

Aligned investment: £0.6m

Investor partner: Elbow Beach

Fotenix

Company overview

Fotenix is an ability provider, enabling smart agricultural machinery. By combining cameras that use coloured light with machine learning, they monitor crop status, like disease, in real time. Their core technology, protected 3D multispectral imaging, delivers lab-level analysis at low cost. A Fotenix-enabled sprayer or harvester brings data-driven farming to producers, while their cloud platform builds agronomic insights with every use. Fotenix has operated across the seed breeding and controlled environment agriculture sectors and has been showcased by Nvidia, Sony, BASF, Tesco and Bayer as one to watch in the food industry.

Project overview

Fotenix is driving precision agriculture forward as an ability provider to leading UK agrirobotics firms. Its targeted vision technology enhances equipment with environmental and operational benefits, gaining market traction since 2020. With robust monitoring and automation, Fotenix offers an integrated solution for sustainable, high-performance horticulture, with strong export potential to major markets like the Netherlands and the US.

Impact of the programme

The programme has helped transition Fotenix from a spin-out to the UK market leader in agritech diagnostics, unlocking VC investment and supporting the de-risking of enterprise investment scheme (EIS) funding in the sector.



Project lead: Fotenix

fotenix.tech

Total project cost: £1.17m

Grant funding: £0.52m

Aligned investment: £1.1m

Investor partner: Maven

Glaia

Company overview

Glaia develops innovative solutions for sustainable agriculture to help food security and fight climate change.

Project overview

The project's goal is to work towards the commercial viability of Glaia's photosynthetic enhancement technology that improves the productivity and sustainability of controlled environment agriculture (CEA), improving the financial viability of this sector while reducing emissions per tonne of produce.

Glaia's unique technology has the potential to revolutionise agricultural productivity and effectively improve the profitability of CEA, enabling the advancement of this sector in the UK as well as worldwide. The increase in productivity means a reduction in CO_2 by 65,000t annually, contributing to the decarbonisation of agriculture and helping the UK reach its net zero target.

Impact of the programme

The programme enabled Glaia to secure £1.7m in investment. The company is currently filing a patent application, and thanks to strong market response and early project success, has created a new strategic role: Chief Business Officer, marking a key hire in its growth journey.

The future

Glaia is working to regulate and roll out its product across the EU and US markets.



Project lead: Glaia

glaia.co.uk

Total project cost: £2.15m

Grant funding: £0.97m

Aligned investment: £2.5m

Investor partner: Yield Lab

Harvest London

harvestlondon

Company overview

Harvest London aims to transform the sustainability and resilience of the food system by producing food locally and sustainably through controlled environment agriculture, including vertical farms.

Project overview

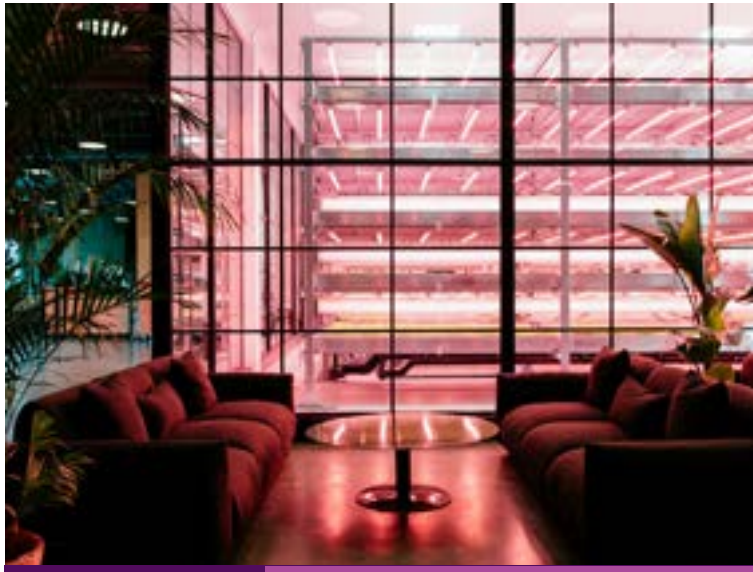
The grant supported development of the software and data architecture behind the Ani platform. Crucially, it enabled a computer vision and machine learning layer that allowed Harvest London to dramatically accelerate crop learning cycles and build predictive growth models across all crop varieties.

Impact of the programme

Harvest London has developed a new vertical farm as part of the redevelopment of Canada Water. Their Corner Corner project redefines how the public engages with sustainable agriculture.

The future

The company is actively developing a pipeline of investment opportunities to support future vertical farm rollouts.



Project lead: Harvest London

harvest.london

Total project cost: £1.67m

Grant funding: £0.75m

Aligned investment: £3.87m

Investor partner: Foresight

Kyomei

Company overview

Kyomei is using biotechnology to transform inefficient and unsustainable crop waste into healthy food ingredients for nutritious, clean label foods.

Project overview

This project delivers sustainably produced ingredients for healthier alternative proteins. The company grows animal-identical proteins within crop plant biomass using a molecular farming approach, producing prototypes that enhance the taste and quality of meat alternatives. Following a successful proof-of-concept, the technology platform has expanded to include sweet protein production, supporting climate and health goals.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership grant enabled the company's proof of concept, supporting validation of its technology at lab scale. This allowed expansion into other food ingredients (recombinant sweet proteins) and new crops, while scaling from lab to pilot. Building on the foundational R&D supported by the grant, the company secured IP for its molecular farming approach, obtained additional grant funding, created four new jobs, and initiated plans for an industrial pilot facility.

The future

Kyomei is in the process of establishing an industrial pilot facility in Cambridgeshire, close to the company's existing labs. This will enable consistent production of commercial quantities of proteins, support early sales, and initiate co-development with large corporates. The company is currently raising a £1.4m Pre-Series A round, unlocking £2.4m in total funding including non-dilutive support from two recent Innovate UK Investor Partnership grants. Plans are in place for a £15m Series A raise in late 2026/2027 to further scale operations.



Project lead: Kyomei

kyomei.co.uk

Total project cost: £0.71m

Grant funding: £0.5m

Aligned investment: £1.5m

Investor partner: SOSV

Mirico

Company overview

Mirico's mission is to provide state-of-the-art greenhouse gas emissions monitoring solutions to give end users the information and insights needed to reduce emissions and achieve net zero goals.

Project overview

The project aims to develop FARMS – a cost-effective, farmer-focused ammonia and methane measurement solution for agricultural sites. Building on Mirico's open path laser dispersion spectroscopy and cloud-based analytics, the system delivers reliable gas emission insights and visualisations.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership grant was essential to funding new product development at Mirico, enabling the transition of its technology toward wider market commercialisation. It also unlocked key opportunities: attracting new institutional and retail investors, creating several jobs and internships, and supporting the appointment of a COO – strengthening the company's leadership and growth trajectory.

The future

The company's focus is to complete pilot field deployments using engineering demonstrators of its new product, then scale up manufacturing and field services by engaging external partners.



Project lead: Mirico

mirico.com

Total project cost: £1.07m

Grant funding: £0.48m

Aligned investment: £1m

Investor partner: UKI2S Future Planet Capital

Nukoko

Company overview

Nukoko is on a mission to create a sustainable, healthier future for the chocolate industry that is significantly better for the planet.

The chocolate industry is in trouble, climate change will start to deplete the cocoa farming industry in the next 5-10 years, meaning supply will drop by as much as 28%.

Nukoko produces a cocoa alternative as a B2B ingredient that is more affordable, has a more secure supply chain and has 90% less CO_2 emissions that traditional cocoa.

That's right chocolate will start to run out!

Project overview

This project will advance the technology from its current stage of initial research and proof of concept (TRL3) to demonstration in a commercial chocolate environment (TRL6). Practically, this involves further taste and process testing to align the product as closely as possible with conventional chocolate, followed by collaboration with a leading UK chocolate maker to trial the product in a factory setting.

Impact of the programme

Alongside its Seed round, the company used the grant to progress from early prototype to pre-commercialisation. Nukoko has filed three patents, appointed three key hires, and secured additional investment from its existing investor group.



Project lead: Nukoko

nukoko.co.uk

Total project cost: £0.75m

Grant funding: £0.34m

Aligned investment: £0.87m

Investor partner: SOSV

PES Technologies

Company overview

PES Technologies has developed a revolutionary product that delivers key soil health indicators in-field within five minutes. By 'smelling' soil gases – metabolic by-products of soil life – the company provides industry-leading metrics for both biological and non-biological soil health. Addressing a major gap in affordable, high-quality biological data, the scalable solution supports agriculture's transition to regenerative and sustainable practices.

Project overview

Currently suitable for arable agriculture, the company has been developing datasets for pasture farming and peat-based soils. Additionally, it is creating metrics related to carbon sequestration and exploring product-market fit in this area.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership programme has enabled the company to deliver a significantly improved product offering to the market. Expanding applicability to pasture farming triples the potential agricultural land for deployment, while the development of carbon indicators opens new market opportunities and demonstrates the broader versatility of the technology.

The future

The company's next major milestone is a Series A raise, aimed at expanding market share, driving internationalisation, and accelerating product differentiation.



Project lead: PES Technologies

pestechnologies.com

Total project cost: £0.9m

Grant funding: £0.63m

Aligned investment: £0.7m

Investor partner: TSPVest

Roslin Technologies

ROSLIN
Technologies



Company overview

Roslin Technologies is advancing the cultivated meat industry with high-quality stem cell lines across key livestock species: porcine, bovine, and ovine. With a unique pluripotent stem cell platform, deep scientific expertise, and a growing global customer base, the company is building the cellular foundations for a more sustainable, ethical, and secure food future.

Project overview

Their project focused on developing and scaling Roslin Technologies' pluripotent stem cell (PSC) platform for cultivated meat. The company established new bovine and ovine cell lines alongside existing porcine lines, optimised them for muscle and fat differentiation, and adapted them for suspension growth in scalable, serum-free systems. The work also included developing lower-cost, animal-free media formulations, scaling up in bioreactors, and introducing downstream protocols to preserve and analyse cell biomass for food prototype use.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership programme was a turning point for Roslin Technologies, accelerating regulatory readiness, strengthening food safety data, and boosting commercial appeal. It unlocked follow-on investment, supported a successful Series A, enabled team and technology scale-up, and expanded the cell line portfolio, cementing the company's leadership in cultivated meat and positioning it to meet growing industry demand.

The future

Roslin Technologies is launching a new fundraise to scale its PSC platform and expand commercially across Europe and beyond. With a clear roadmap from techno-economic analysis, the company is driving down cultivated meat costs, scaling bioprocessing, and refining media formulations. Regulatory progress includes collaboration with Intertek and UK FSA's sandbox, while strategic partnerships support global product development. Backed by strong IP and a validated platform, Roslin Technologies is positioned to lead in sustainable protein production.

Project lead: Roslin Technologies

roslintech.com

Total project cost: £1.09m

Grant funding: £0.45m

Aligned investment: £1m

Investor partner: Milltrust

Saga Robotics

Company overview

Saga Robotics are developing a market leading autonomous robotic platform employed initially in the UK strawberry polytunnels providing a ultraviolet C (UVC) treatment to 10% of strawberry plants in 2025 to reduce the use of chemical sprays and maximise yield.

Project overview

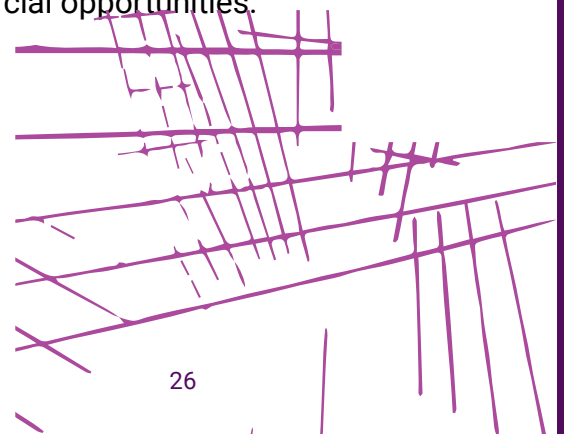
The aim of the ScaleForImpact project was to enhance the commerciality of autonomy software and establish effective methods for operating robotics within the farm environment. The commercial viability of robotics is closely tied to the level of human input required. This project shifted the model from an operator supervising one or two robots in close proximity to a more scalable approach - equivalent to a shepherd overseeing four or five robots from a single vantage point in the field.

Impact of the programme

The project enabled the company to establish a foothold in the US wine market and secure further funding to accelerate UK expansion year on year. It supported job retention and fostered a growing outsourced work model, with Saga engaging regional partners to scale delivery.

The future

The company is planning a rapid expansion of its market presence alongside continued development of its platform capabilities to meet growing industry demand and unlock new commercial opportunities.





Project lead: Saga Robotics

sagarobotics.com

Total project cost: £1.9m

Grant funding: £0.86m

Aligned investment: £5.1m

Investor partner: Rabobank

SOLASTA Bio

Company overview

SOLASTA Bio (SOLASTA) is a bioinsecticide company with an agile platform for uniquely disruptive crop protection solutions that solve business, technological and environmental challenges in the global agriculture market.

Project overview

The 18-month project integrated innovations in life sciences and chemistry with R&D and commercial team growth to validate SOLASTA's technology and advance its market and strategic positioning.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership programme enabled SOLASTA to validate its technology platform, implement commercial strategies, and enter initial markets. It supported the creation of nine jobs, 12 patent filings, global field trials, and the launch of SOLASTA Bio USA LLC. Backed by Scottish Enterprise funding, the company met all objectives and secured an oversubscribed $14m Series A in 2024.

The future

The company is focused on their scale up phase, meeting technical and commercial key milestones and company KPIs.



Project lead: Solasta Bio

solastabio.com

Total project cost: £2.53m

Grant funding: £1.13m

Aligned investment: £2.3m

Investor partner: Yield Lab

Spotta

Company overview

Spotta is a VC-backed start-up in Cambridge leading the way in pest management tech. Its vision is to revolutionise how the world addresses insect pests, moving away from using 4m tonnes of chemical pesticides. Founded on expertise in advanced sensing technologies, Spotta's monitoring systems use IoT hardware and smart algorithms, prioritising detection and prevention.

Project overview

The project has enabled the company to design, build, and test prototypes of a state-of-the-art flying insect monitoring system.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership programme brought in Spotta's largest investor, The Yield Lab, and enabled development of a product suited to a wide range of insect pests globally – unlocking major export opportunities. Since the project began, the company has doubled its team, secured ~£6m in equity investment, and filed patents across key target markets.

The future

The company is on track to raise a £4m–£5m Series A investment in 2026 and is currently focused on growing revenue and demonstrating the value of its technology across multiple domestic and international markets.



Project lead: Spotta

spotta.co

Total project cost: £1.97m

Grant funding: £0.89m

Aligned investment: £2m

Investor partner: Yield Lab

SugaROx

Company overview

SugaROx is a breakthrough agri-biotech spinout from Rothamsted Research and the University of Oxford, developing next-generation biostimulants that unlock hidden yield potential in crops.

Project overview

The project enabled the company to expand and accelerate its development pipeline, advancing its T6P-based active ingredient into global crops like soybean and maize. Key milestones, including field trials, formulation scale-up, regulatory dossiers, and carbon modelling with ADAS, position the company for global market entry with strong agronomic and environmental validation.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership programme was a turning point for the company, enabling expansion beyond wheat into maize and soybean. It provided critical data on performance, safety, and scalability, supported key hires, and helped secure follow-on VC investment. The project also attracted interest from major global growers and agrichemical companies, opening paths to market collaboration.

The future

The company is continuing product development of its first precision biostimulant based on T6P, bringing it to market while advancing the next generation of precision biostimulants through its technology platform.



Project lead: SugaROx

sugarox.co.uk

Total project cost: £0.56m

Grant funding: £0.25m

Aligned investment: £0.5m

Investor partner: UKI2S Future Planet Capital

UPP

Company overview

The company transforms broccoli harvesting through its patented automated selective harvester ('Harvesta'), which automates handpicking to reduce labour dependency and costs. Harvesta also captures the nutritious stalk, typically discarded, and converts it into high-value ingredients – Prota, Fiba, Necta, and Ova – via a patent-pending process. This approach enhances sustainability, unlocks new value from existing crops, and supports a more efficient and resilient food supply chain.

Project overview

The company is developing a pre-production prototype of its robotic harvesting system for broccoli, enhancing farm efficiency through automated picking, improved crop quality, reduced waste, and labour-free harvesting. A key differentiator of the UPP model is the conversion of off-cuts into a valuable vegetable protein, creating an additional revenue stream.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership programme stimulated R&D in UPP and unlocked the necessary finance to allow the company to grow and scale, specifically addressing key challenges in the agtech sector and better positioning UPP to attract further equity investment.

The future

The company will deliver annual multi-kiloton scale protein production, displacing less sustainable proteins and enabling new product categories. This impact will sequester or avoid CO_2 equivalents at megaton scale, driving meaningful progress toward climate and food system goals.



Project lead: Upcycled Plant Power (UPP)

upp.farm

Total project cost: £0.83m

Grant funding: £0.37m

Aligned investment: £0.75m

Investor partner: Elbow Beach

Zayndu

Company overview

Zayndu is revolutionising agricultural yield without using chemicals, pesticides, fertilisers or even water. By applying their patented 'ActivatedAir®' cold plasma technology to seeds the company's products boost crop yields – typically by around 20%.

The company achieves the holy trinity of an agritech startup; it is good for the environment, good for farm viability, and – with the potential of building a very significant global business – good for Zayndu and the UK economy.

Project overview

At project start, ActivatedAir® systems were early-stage and sub-optimal. The company improved maintainability, boosted productivity with faster, more powerful treatments, and developed scalable technology to increase batch size from 2.5kg to 10kg+. These upgrades enhanced performance, scalability, and global service efficiency.

Impact of the programme

The Investor Partnership programme was pivotal in unlocking investment from Foresight and GrowthDeck, securing an additional £350k and leading to a £1.36m follow-on round in April 2025. This funding enabled the company to strengthen its team, growing headcount from 13 to 19 in high-skilled roles across sales, engineering, software, and support. Backed by £529k in grant funding, the company has raised over £3.7m in equity and expanded its global footprint, with systems now installed in the US, Canada, UK, EU, UAE, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia.

The future

The company expects to raise an additional scale-up round in late 2025 to support continued growth and commercial expansion.



Project lead: Zayndu

zayndu.com

Total project cost: £1.18m

Grant funding: £0.53m

Aligned investment: £2.5m

Investor partner: Foresight WAE

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