



**Global Business Innovation Programme
Createch “Slush 2026” Finland
Wednesday 15 July 2026**

Agenda

Innovate UK and Priority Sectors

Ellie Wicks Jones, Relationship Manager - Creative Industries Innovate UK

Innovate UK Global Activities

Sarah Pagan, Europe Partnership Manager, Innovate UK

Global Business Innovation Programme & Slush

Louise Hooker, Global Business Innovation Programme Manager, Innovate UK Business Growth

Creative Sector Plan, Thematic Focus & Suitability

Alina Cameron, Innovation Lead - Creative Industries Innovate UK

Reflections from a Createch Slush 2024 GBIP Delegate

John Thomewill, CEO, Red Nought

Application, Eligibility Selection & Award

Louise Hooker, Global Business Innovation Programme Manager, Innovate UK Business Growth

Q & A

An Introduction to Innovate UK and Priority Sectors

*Ellie Wicks Jones, Relationship Manager - Creative Industries Innovate
UK*

OUR VISION AND MISSION

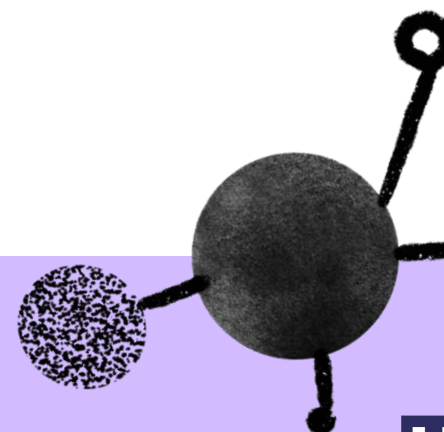
OUR VISION

Our vision is for a UK where breakthrough ideas become industry giants.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to accelerate business innovation for the nation.

We will help breakthrough technologies become scalable businesses – turning innovation into commercial and economic growth.



HOW WE WORK:

THE INNOVATE UK MODEL

1

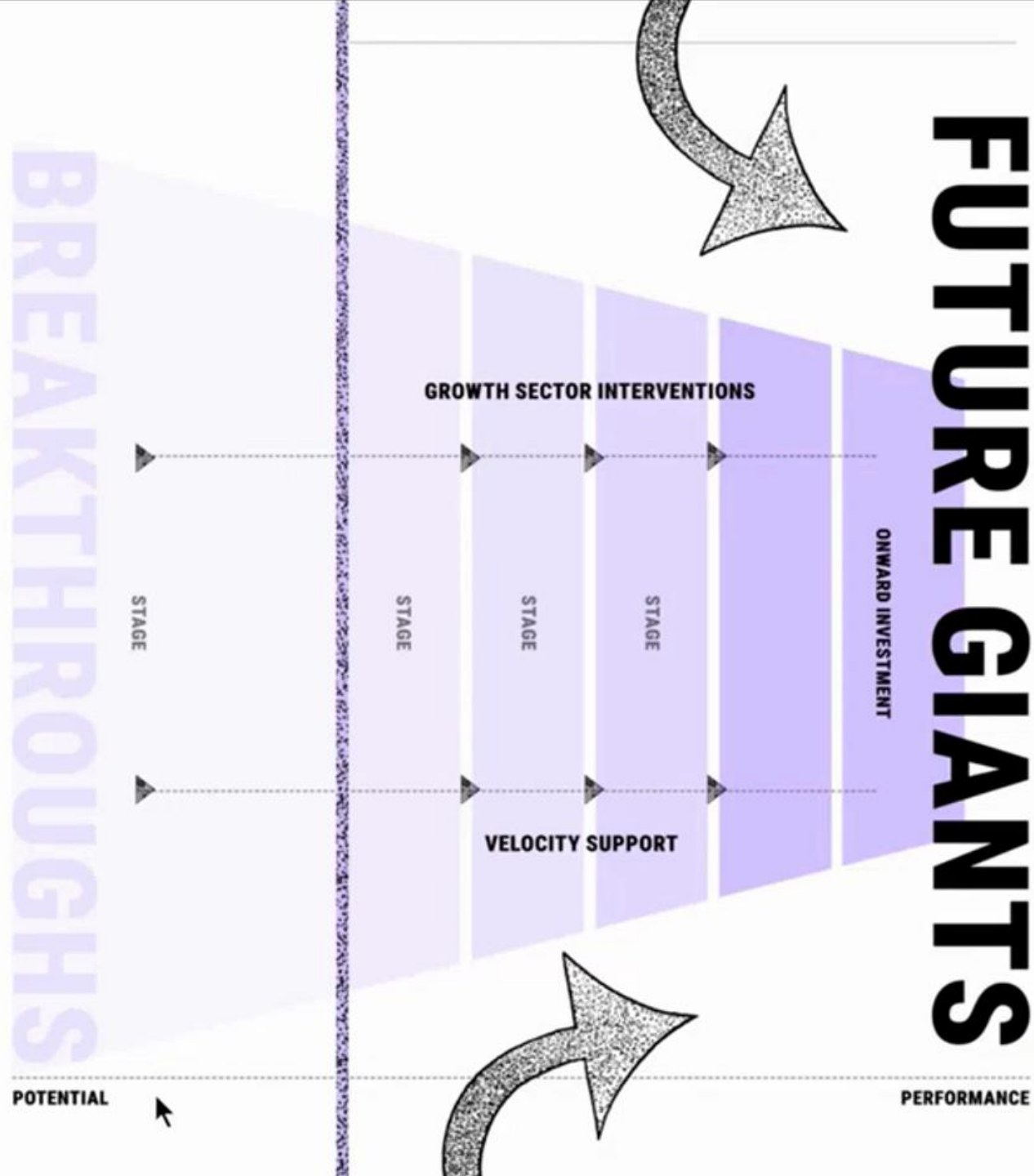
IDENTIFYING INNOVATE UK'S HIGH POTENTIAL BUSINESSES:
SIGNS OF POTENTIAL, SIGNALS OF PERFORMANCE

2

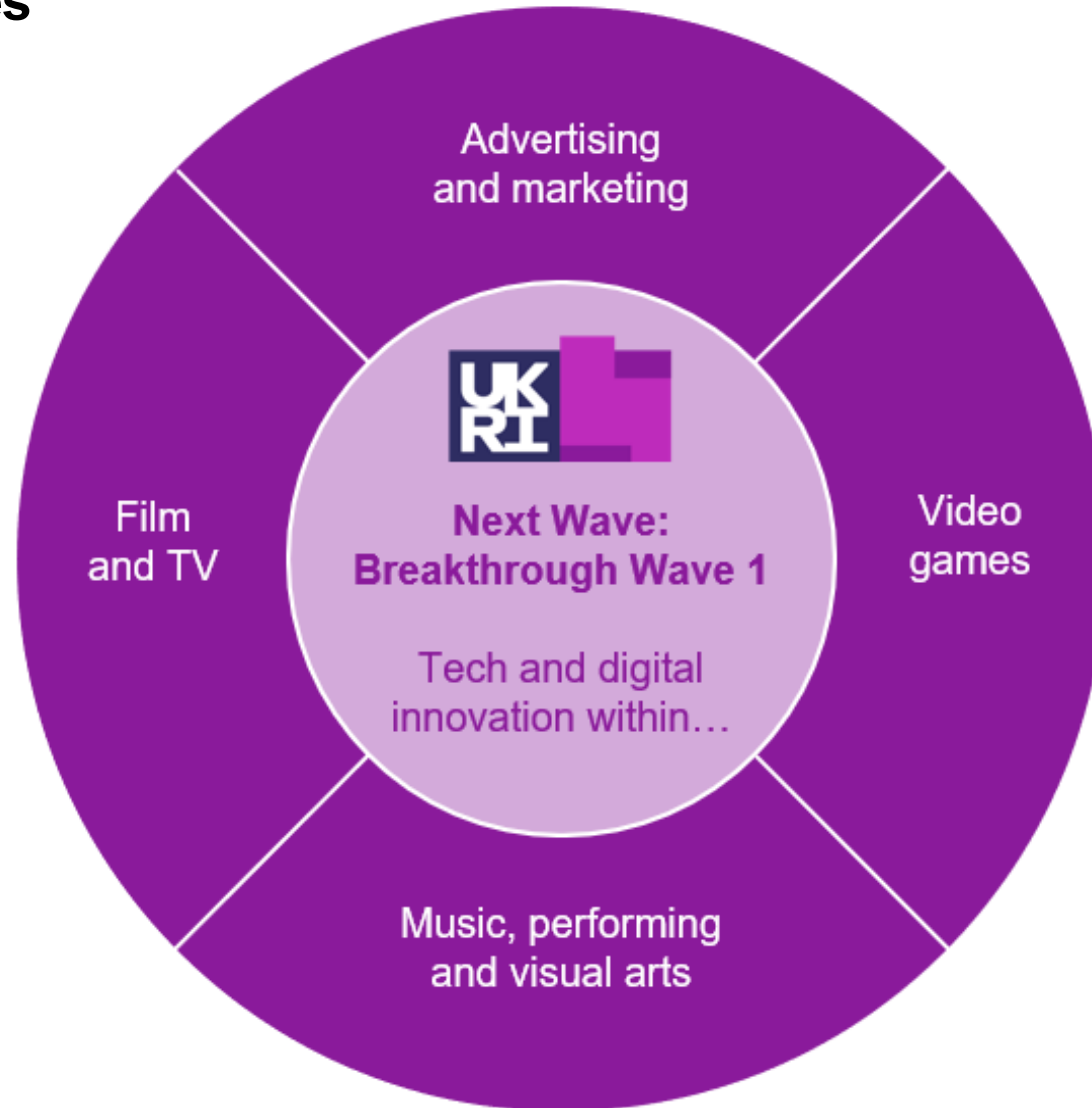
GROWTH SECTOR TEAMS:
DEEP SECTOR EXPERTISE AND ACTIVE PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

3

VELOCITY: A CONCEIRGE APPROACH TO GROWING INNOVATIVE BUSINESSES



Creative Industries



**Other Industrial
strategy areas are;**

Advanced
Manufacturing

Clean Energy

Defence

Digital and Technologies

Life Sciences

Innovate UK Global Activities

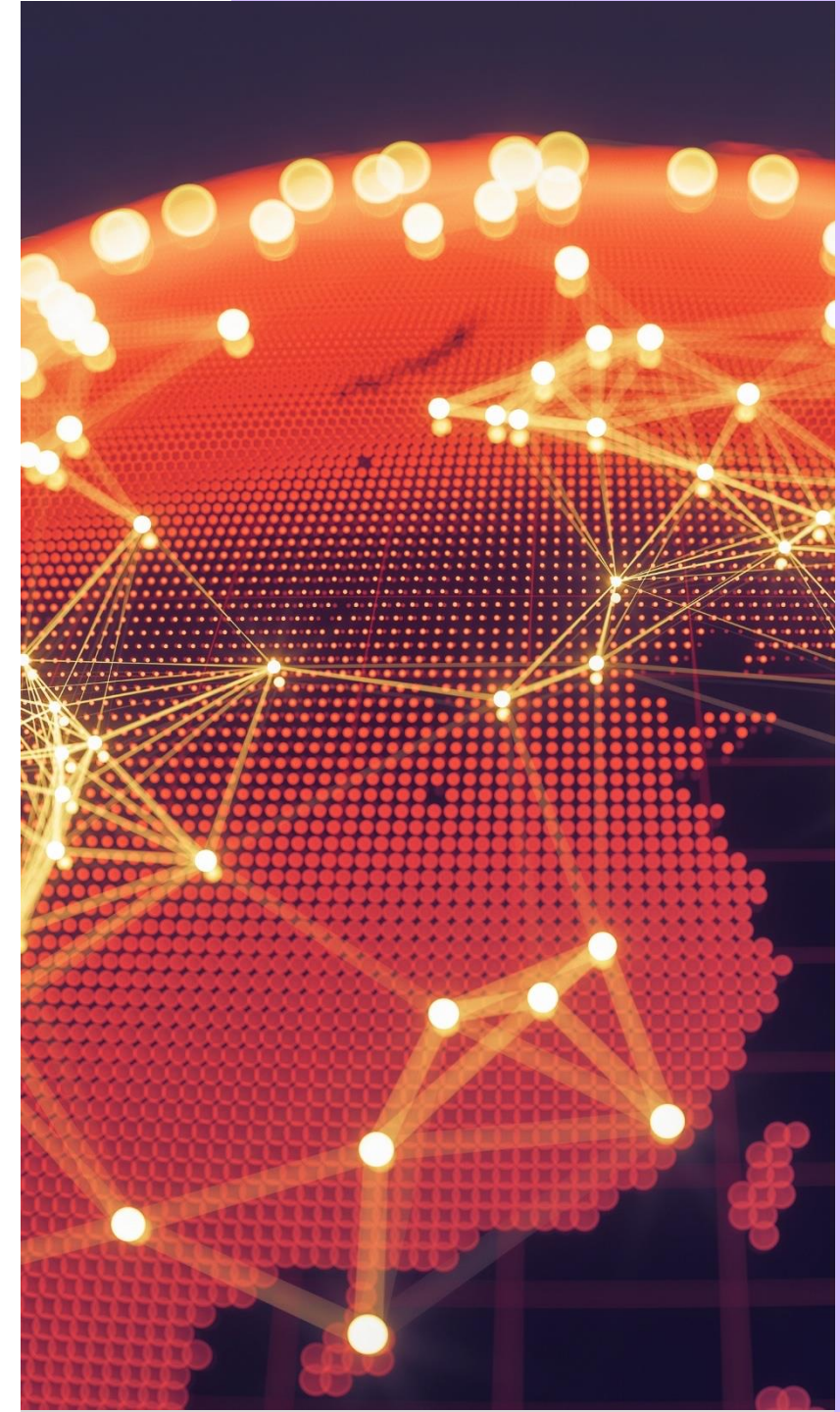
Sarah Pagan, Europe Partnership Manager, Innovate UK

GLOBAL INNOVATION



GLOBAL INNOVATION DELIVERS **ACCESS...** **...AND THEN BENEFIT**

- ✓ Access to ideas
- ✓ Access to people
- ✓ Access to facilities
- ✓ Access to markets
- ✓ Access to knowledge
- ✓ Access to supply chains
- ✓ 10% more growth
- ✓ 15% more sales
- ✓ 23% better quality innovation
- ✓ Improved innovation intensity
- ✓ 11% more export intensity
- ✓ 37% greater share of innovation products in turnover



Global Business Innovation Programme & Slush

*Louise Hooker, Global Business Innovation Programme Manager
Innovate UK Business Growth*

Global Business Innovation Programme

- Innovate UK fully funded competitive programme delivered by [IUK Business Growth](#)
- A national team of innovation and growth specialist advisers providing tailored business support to help ambitious companies commercialise new products and services and accelerate business growth
- Past 6 years programme has supported + 2200 companies in key technology sectors to access markets of strategic importance
- 3 phase programme: Get ready, country visit, exploiting the opportunity
- Aimed at the very best technology-led companies with the greatest potential to scale
- Slush 2026 "*the most founder-focused focused event on earth*" presents ideal opportunity to meet programme objectives: CAPABILITY, CAPACITY and drive COLLABORATION

Get ready

Workshops, Work Plan and 1-2-1 support

- Sharpen your value proposition
- Build/deepen your knowledge of the investor ecosystem
- Craft your investor deck
- Tailor your pitch deck
- Learn from previous delegates
- Share experience and knowledge with peers



Visit

Immersive experience tailored to meet the needs of the delegation, focusing on building knowledge, raising profile and making connections:

- UK House
- Founders Day & Slush
- Side events
- B2B meetings and matchmaking events
- Access to investors, inspirational leaders, iconic founders and a global start-up community



SLUSH 2026: BET ON EUROPE

Not someday. Not somewhere else. Here. Now.

5,800

FOUNDERS & OPERATORS

Founders come from around the world to experience the Slush extravaganza and matchmake with investors, partners, and each other.

3,300

INVESTORS

Our investors range from private angels to leading VCs and Limited Partners.

2,100

PARTNERS & ECOSYSTEM

Creating life-changing tech is an ecosystem effort.

HOW TO SLUSH – FOR FOUNDERS

CONNECT

Find partners and investors among tech execs and industry leaders

Partner and Startup Booths

MEET

Visibility among over 13,000 thought leaders and future makers

Open Discussions

COMMUNITY

Peer-support from thousands of founders and operators

Founder Focused Side Events

ACTIVITIES

Join exclusive founders activities such as Slush 100, Founders Day, mentoring sessions & roundtables

Side Event Tool

MATCHMAKING

Access to investors through our Matchmaking Tool → over 1000 meetings every hour

Matchmaking Tool



Innovate
UK

EVERYONE IS HERE

THEY'RE COMING TO SLUSH YEAR AFTER YEAR

Accel

SEQUOIA

BENCHMARK

NORTHZONE

Index
Ventures

GENERAL CATALYST

ICONIQ

initialized

al6z

Lightspeed

CREANDUM

Target Global

INSIGHT
PARTNERS

DST
GLOBAL

FELIX CAPITAL

Bessemer
Venture Partners

20VC

AND MANY MORE...



the first thing I would say
is go to Slush.

Exploitation

- Exploit the opportunity workshop, share your experience, identify opportunities
- Implement learning, develop market entry strategy, nurture and develop relationships
- On-going support from IUK Business Growth innovation and growth specialist



Key Dates

Application Deadline

30 July 2026, 17:00

Confirmation of Selection & Payment of Deposit

18 September 2026

Get Ready Workshop Reading

8 & 9 October 2026

Innovation Visit

15 - 20 November 2026

Exploit the Opportunity Workshop Reading

21 January 2026



Innovate
UK

Impact

Explore investment options and develop your investor deck

Improve your proposition, hone your skills and grow in confidence

Raise your profile and stimulate new business opportunities

Be inspired by industry leaders

Seed new business partnerships and develop R D & I collaborations

Build market intelligence and stimulate new ideas

Extend your international and national networks

Learn from like-minded ambitious founders

Slush Delegate Feedback

The workshops were really useful for finding out what to expect, how to prepare and what to do at the event, so we were able to get a lot more out of it than if we went in "blind" and tried to figure it out on the spot

Doing this as part of a group and with a place to check in throughout the event was the best support possible, it made for a lot more enjoyable experience that others were also doing the same thing.

I owe a great deal of the success to the GBIP team for their **excellent organisation and inclusion of great partners and contacts** in events- they have facilitated environments where great opportunities have presented themselves.

Communication was excellent in the preparation stage, which allowed us to **share experiences and benchmark our results with peers**, the team were also quick to identify where things need to be improved to make the most of the visit.

A key benefit was the **opportunity to connect with investors and other founders from across the world face to face** which I think is important when establishing relationships. **Everyone there was eager to connect** and it didn't feel forced and I felt I had some really interesting and useful conversations.

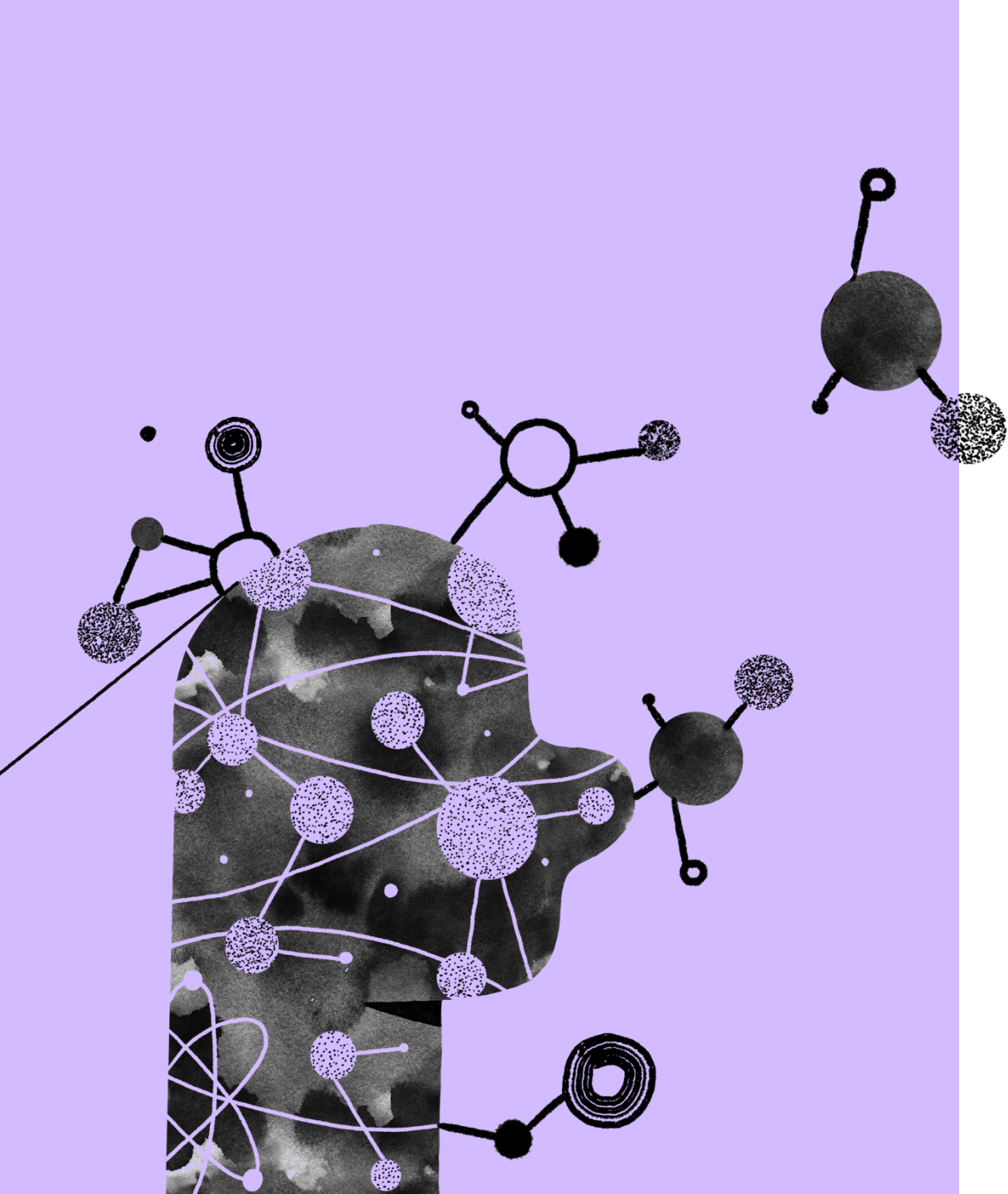
Meeting with key decision makers at organisations like BFI and VC firms **allowed me to pass hurdles that would normally be much more challenging**

Creative Sector Plan, Thematic Focus & Suitability

Alina Cameron, Innovation Lead - Creative Industries Innovate UK

| THE FOUNDATIONS OF NEXT WAVE





NEXT WAVE INNOVATE UK'S CREATIVE PROGRAMME

Next Wave backs commercially scalable digital platforms and services in the Frontier Industries where the UK has a clear right to win.

The programme is demand-led: working with broadcasters, global platforms, major IP holders and other market engines to give SMEs clearer customer pull, data access and routes to market.

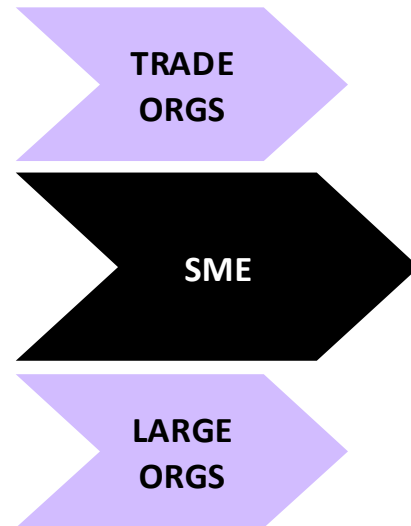
By focusing innovation around real commercial needs, Next Wave helps high-growth UK SMEs move faster from promising ideas to investable, adoptable and globally competitive businesses.

NEXT WAVE SUPPORT PIPELINE

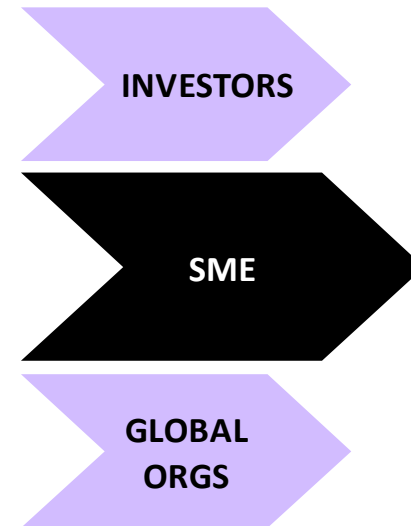
Breakthrough Wave



Collaboration Wave

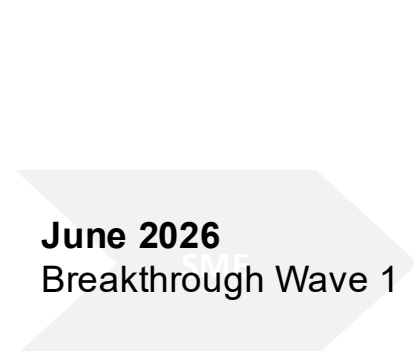


Investment Wave



NEXT WAVE SUPPORT PIPELINE

Breakthrough Wave



Collaboration Wave



Investment Wave



SLUSH NOV 18–19, 2026 | HELSINKI

THE PLANET'S
MOST **FOUNDER-
FOCUSED EVENT**
AND **LARGEST**
VENTURE CAPITAL
GATHERING

12,000+
ATTENDEES

25,000+
MEETINGS

€4T
AUM

200+
SPEAKERS

600+
SIDE EVENTS

Who is this GBIP for

To apply for this GBIP, you must:

- be a UK-based technology-led high growth potential company
- operate within the focus themes: i) video games ii) advertising and marketing technologies
- be a company with fewer than 250 employees
- be the CEO, founder, or senior decision maker in the business
- be able to attend all workshops and complete all activities

IMPORTANT: This GBIP is one of three opportunities:

Finland, Helsinki, Slush: Gaming, Adtech and Martech (Nov 26)

Japan: Music (early 2027)

USA, Austin SXSW: Screen and Adtech (March 27)

A company is only able to participate in one of these three GBIPs. Please apply for the most appropriate opportunity that will support your business.

Innovate UK is committed to improving the diversity of who we support. We welcome applications from under-represented groups.

Focus Areas

1. Video games

Innovative products, platforms and services that support the development, publishing, distribution, monetisation, operation and commercial growth of video games including but not limited to:

- Games technology
- Development tools
- Publishing infrastructure
- Player engagement platforms
- Related creative technology entertainment, audience growth, player experience where the primary use case is clearly linked to interactive studio productivity, commercialisation, community development, retention or monetisation

Not in scope:

- Individual games, prototypes or content-only projects
- Art assets, characters, levels, stories, worlds or IP development without a scalable technology, platform or service
- Immersive, XR, VR or AR applications where the primary use case is outside video games
- Use of game engines in other sectors, including training, education, healthcare, defence, manufacturing, architecture, property, simulation or digital twins
- Gamification tools for non-games sectors
- Software development tools without a clear video games application
- Generic AI productivity tools without a clear games development, publishing or player engagement use case

Focus Areas

2. Advertising and Marketing

Innovative products, platforms and services that support the creation, delivery, optimisation, measurement and commercial effectiveness of advertising, marketing, public relations and communications activity.

Includes AdTech, MarTech and related creative technology where the primary use case is clearly linked to:

- Audience engagement
- Campaign performance
- Brand growth
- Customer acquisition, retention or monetisation

Not in scope:

- CRM or sales pipeline tools
- Customer service, helpdesk or call-centre platforms
- Payment, POS, booking or hospitality operations systems
- E-commerce operations, fulfilment or inventory tools
- Business intelligence dashboards
- AI productivity tools without a clear advertising, marketing or communications application
- Loyalty/rewards platforms where the innovation is mainly transactional rather than campaign, brand or engagement-led

Reflections from Createch Slush 2024

John Thornewill, Red Nought

RED NOUGHT

Previous SLUSH Attendee



What To Expect

- A full-on experience that you will never forget!
 - Serendipity rules (but make it happen!)
 - Late nights and early starts
 - Money-can't-buy contact opportunities
 - Life-long contacts within the cohort!
-
- The weather – it's not called Slush for nothing

Preparation

- A workshop to get your pitch straight
- A cohort to listen to your pitch and bring new perspectives
- A cohort that makes you feel like you do belong
- Make contacts before you go and don't lose your passport at the airport!

During the event

- Most opportunities come from side-events
- Network, network, network
- Be bold – everyone there is expecting pitches
- Talking to people “in the queue”
- “Money-can’t-buy” events created by Innovate UK

What it meant for Red Nought

- A fundamental shift in the way we operate
- Two business partnerships created
- Ongoing conversations with potential investors
- A far better understanding of the way investors work
- Memories that will last a lifetime

Application, Eligibility, Selection & Award

*Louise Hooker, Global Business Innovation Programme Manager,
Innovate UK Business Growth*

Eligibility

- UK-based operating company with less than 250 employees
- Support is provided in line with the [Subsidy Control Act 2022](#). The GBIP operates under Subsidy scheme SC10723. Under this scheme, Innovate UK Business Growth supports business development services
- Have filed company accounts, have no more than 2 County Court Judgements and no disqualified directors
- Compliance with [UK](#) and the [Finland](#) travel requirements
- This GBIP is one of three being run by the creative team (Adtech and Martech (Nov 26), Japan: Music (early 2027), USA Austin SXSW: Screen and Adtech (March 27). A business can participate in one. Please select the opportunity which will best support your company's growth at this time
- NB GIP Canada: Focus on Video Gaming – Briefing 21 July. Innovation Visit clash
- Hold a senior position (CEO, CTO, founder) and be ***able to fully commit to all 3 phases and key dates***
- Operate within focus themes: Video gaming, martech, adtech

Application

- Online written application and 2 min video

Selection

- 2-stage selection process
 - Individual evaluation and panel review
-
- Registration/approval by Slush 2026

Award

What's included:

- 1 night accommodation at the Get Ready Workshop and dinner
- Return flights Gatwick – Helsinki (15-20 November 2026)
- Slush start up ticket
- Accommodation and group meals in Finland
- In-country group transport

What's not included:

- Travel to and from the Get Ready and Exploit the Opportunity Workshops
- Travel to and from Gatwick
- Non-group in-country travel and meals
- Visas
- Insurance

Questions?

Deadline to apply – 30 July 2026 17:00

Contacts:

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**Global Business Innovation Programme
Createch “Slush 2026” Finland
Thank You**