

Digital Catapult welcomes nine innovators onto pioneering accelerator spearheading AI adoption in transport

October 4, 2023



Digital Catapult, the UK authority on advanced digital technology, in collaboration with Innovate UK BridgeAI programme partners, has announced a cohort of nine innovative startups and SMEs participating in the first of five BridgeAI Acceleration programmes.

The FutureScope High Growth AI Accelerator for BridgeAI is designed to empower participants in crafting AI and ML solutions that are not just technologically advanced but also grounded in responsible innovation and ethics. This initiative is set to advance the adoption of AI across four high-growth sectors, addressing a crucial need within the UK economy for responsible and ethical AI and ML solutions. Its ripple effect could encompass the widespread adoption of AI, a surge in innovation, and a substantial boost in efficiency.

The announcement marks the commencement of the 12-week programme, where Digital Catapult will provide each startup and SME with a range of resources, including computing power, technical expertise, and top-notch support for implementing ethical and responsible AI. Furthermore, programme participants will gain access to a dynamic ecosystem of AI developers and adopters, as well as opportunities for workshops, masterclasses, and peer-to-peer learning.

Through this accelerator, artificial intelligence and machine learning innovations are set to revolutionise multiple sectors across the UK's economy. These pioneering ventures are set to transform the construction, transport, agriculture and creative sectors, solving industry challenges and driving long-term economic growth.

Participating companies will enact sustainable sectoral growth and sharpen the UK's competitive edge on the programme, by leveraging emerging technologies to achieve long-term business success. Responsible innovation will also play a critical role in the programme, ensuring that all new AI solutions are developed safely and sustainably.

The 9 startups joining the FutureScope High Growth AI Accelerator for BridgeAI are:

- **Optimal Slope Ltd**

- Slope Optimiser is a geotechnical software programme that can determine pit walls – the slopes within a mine – with optimal shapes, significantly reducing waste rock excavation, lowering excavation costs, and thereby increasing profits while reducing the carbon footprint.

- **Material Index**

- Material Index is a UK-based Construction Technology SME founded by a team of software developers, engineers, and architects that enables construction material reuse at scale.

- **Agave Networks**

- The platform for matching and sharing excess materials caters specifically to SME manufacturers, facilitating a streamlined process for the efficient exchange of surplus materials and enhancing sustainability.

- **Veunex Global Ltd**

- Veunex, a startup, is poised to revolutionise safety, particularly in the realms of Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE), by harnessing the formidable capabilities of AI and big data.

- **TagnTell Technology**
 - Experience the revolution with Attent, where cutting-edge technology meets peace of mind, promising a landscape of electrical monitoring that is more secure, reliable, and predictive thanks to AI.
- **NeuralEcho Labs**
 - NeuralEcho Labs is creating the ultimate immersive virtual experience through brain wave communication.
- **Kelp Technologies Ltd**
 - Kelp Technologies is a SME that collates, processes and analyses product data from the internet and uses it to provide market-wide solutions in the second hand fashion industry.
- **Visualax Ltd**
 - “Genbeat”, Visualax’s pioneering AR app, designed to redefine music engagement using Generative AI, blending them seamlessly with their physical surroundings.
- **Creative Colab AI Ltd**
 - Creative Colab AI Ltd. develops AI-powered networked haptic devices that push the boundaries of human-computer interaction.

The programme is designed to leverage commercialisation interventions, allowing early innovators to tap into potential market opportunities that are relevant to their products and services.

BridgeAI is an **Innovate UK** funded programme, delivered by a consortium including Innovate UK, **Digital Catapult**, **The Alan Turing Institute**, **the Hartree Centre (STFC)**, **British Standards Institution (BSI)**. The programme is designed to leverage commercialisation interventions, allowing early innovators to tap into potential market opportunities that are relevant to their products and services.

This FutureScope accelerator programme is proud to partner with **Google Cloud Platform (GCP)**, **Amazon Web Services (AWS)**, **Information Commissioners Office (ICO)**, **NVIDIA**, **Graphcore** and **YellowDog**.

FutureScope is Digital Catapult’s deep tech acceleration support for the UK’s leading tech innovators and businesses. As part of the FutureScope programme, the participating companies will receive business and technological support, drawing on Digital Catapult’s decade of experience supporting UK startups. Through mentorship, workshops and masterclasses, the programme will look to help each participating company raise investment and scale their solutions.

Digital Catapult is unique in its ability to connect high-potential companies with established businesses to discover new ways of solving industry challenges, increasing productivity, and opening up new markets. Through this programme, the participants will be able to accelerate the readiness of their AI/ML solutions. This is through the computational power, specialised hardware, deep learning servers, support from Digital Catapult experts, industry partners, workshops, masterclasses and access to the wider BridgeAI network.

Sara El-Hanfy, Head of Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning at Innovate UK, said: “The FutureScope Accelerator is a vital part of our Innovate UK BridgeAI programme, and its launch is a significant stride towards our goal of propelling the adoption of AI across key sectors.

“These nine pioneering startups and SMEs will play a crucial role in shaping responsible, ethical, and high-impact AI and ML solutions. By providing them with essential resources, technical expertise, and access to a dynamic AI ecosystem, we aim to spark transformative change in sectors ripe with growth potential—namely, agriculture, construction, creative industries, and transport.

“This initiative is part of our commitment to championing innovation that not only drives economic progress but also tackles real-world challenges head-on. I’m confident that these organisations will have a significant impact in these critical domains of the UK economy.”

Jessica Rushworth, Chief Strategy and Policy Officer, Digital Catapult, said: “Through the Innovate UK BridgeAI programme, Digital Catapult has launched a new accelerator for AI & Machine Learning, building on the success of our award winning Machine Intelligence Garage programme from the past few years. We are delighted that many outstanding AI companies have applied, making it difficult to select the final nine and highlighting the strengths of the UK AI ecosystem.

“We are very excited to support these exceptional AI companies working at the forefront of innovation, and developing groundbreaking AI solutions for the transport, agriculture, creative industries and construction sectors. We look forward to seeing them scale faster through the programme and demonstrating the opportunity of adopting AI in these critical areas of the UK economy.”