

From farming robots to coral reef 'cubes': The tech firms named ones to watch in the South West

Farming robots, 'Google Maps for boats' and artificial coral reef cubes are amongst the technologies celebrated in the first ever Tech South West Ones to Watch company showcase in 2023.

Nominated by tech hubs, clusters and science parks across the South West, the Ones to Watch project showcases 22 of the tech sector's most exciting high potential companies and includes organisations hailing from across the region – including Truro, Salisbury, Bristol, Plymouth, Totnes, Dorset and beyond.

The Ones to Watch list includes Plymouth-based software development firm CoreBlue, which was founded in 2016 and now employs nearly 30 people, with a global client list.

Lewis Boyles-White, CEO of CoreBlue, said it is an 'absolute honour' to be selected.

He added: "It's been great to witness the South West evolve into this thriving hub of innovation which is home to so many incredible tech businesses.

Totnes-based fan engagement platform Filmily, Dorset online marketplace OnBuy and Torbay's Bay Photonics are also involved in the programme.

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The logo for BusinessLive, featuring the text "BusinessLive" in white on a dark rectangular background.

Companies in the programme will have access to bespoke business support from TechSouth West ScaleUp Studio on key topics such as finance, marketing, investor readiness, risk management, and talent delivered by Growth Partners Microsoft, King Recruit, Skowt Consulting, Program, British Business Bank and Bishop Fleming.

Tech South West director and Funding and Support Lead, Ben Cooper, explained that each of the Ones to Watch receive a package of support and benefits, including an assessment to help identify areas where the businesses may require additional support from our Growth Partners.

The scaleups will also attend two packed Growth Days full of workshops, 1-1 sessions and roundtables in March and June, gaining expert insight to support their growth journeys.

Dorset-based savvy navy, which develops digital navigation tools for the marine sector, is also in the Ones to Watch showcase.

Company founder Jelte Liebrand, who won Scaleup Entrepreneur of the Year at the Great British Entrepreneur Awards 2022, said: "Over the past six years we have worked hard to constantly develop our all-in-one navigation app with unique and user-friendly features based on feedback from users. We now have a team of 14 employees, our turnover has more than doubled this year and the number of users of the savvy navy app continues to rapidly grow globally."

The company is joined on the programme by Torquay marinetech firm ARC Marine and Exeter-based firms Klarian and Intelligent AI.

The Ones to Watch showcase forms part of Tech South West's mission to enable collaboration and highlight the region's vibrant and diverse tech sector.

Pippa Clarke, Chair, Head of Technology, Innovation and Growth sector at Bishop Fleming, a Growth Partner for the Ones to Watch programme, said: "From green energy to habitat restoration, marinetech and space science, the South West is full of innovative, fast-growing tech companies that are delivering solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges.

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Bristol scaleup Paranimo, Exeter-based Securious and Bath biotech firm Kelpi also make the showcase, alongside Salisbury's Small Robot Company, Dorset-based Husmus and Bath-based fintech firm Seccl.

Cornish startup Data Duopoly is also featured. The company creates mobile applications that harness the power of GPS and AI to improve visitor experience at large venues such as the Eden Project, Cornwall's tin mining coastline and the Falmouth University campus.

CEO and Founder Tanuvi Ethunandan said: “We want our technology to power existing consumer facing applications to map and predict footfall worldwide. Ultimately, we connect people, spaces and places using data and AI.”

Research commissioned by Tech South West in 2022 revealed that the sector is on track to grow to almost £20bn gross value added (GVA) a year by 2026, creating more than 125,000 new jobs.

Devon-based Oooby, a decentralised marketplace for local, ecological food, makes the showcase alongside Bristol-based software consultancy Deazy.

Machine learning consultancy digiLab and healthtech firm HCI Digital, both based in Devon, also make the list alongside Newquay-based information management platform SimSage, Truro-based audiobook disruptor xigxag and Falmouth-based 3D visualisation specialists Amutri.

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