

Ignite Accelerator seeks cohort for final North East programme

Start-up accelerator Ignite is appealing for applicants to join its final North East programme taking place this summer.

The renowned support organisation first launched in the region in 2011 and has since delivered support for founders across the country and on home soil. Now it is accepting applications for its final two-month accelerator programme in the North East, spanning August and September and featuring mentoring, workshops, and connections with experienced entrepreneurs and investors.

The programme is open to those fundraising or on the cusp of doing so and is the last to be delivered through the Digital Pipeline project, funded by the North of Tyne Combined Authority. But the team behind Ignite are understood to be working on continued support for entrepreneurs in the region.

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Manufacturing software business SQCDP and marketing tech firm Polybox were both participants in the 2023 Accelerator Programme and recently secured £200,000 and £500,000 pre-seed funding respectively. And 2022 alumnus Gridfinder, the esports start-up launched by motorsports fans, was sold in a [multimillion-pound deal](#) announced earlier this year.

Founders and teams in this year's cohort will also go on a fully-funded trip to San Francisco – the global epicentre of tech businesses – where they will get the chance to meet

potential investors. And start-ups will receive credits and discounts from companies such as Amazon Web Services, Google and Stripe.

Jo York, CEO of Ignite, said: “We are looking for ambitious founders ready to advance their fundraising efforts and start scaling their businesses. The quality of applications to our previous programmes has been outstanding, and we expect the same level this year.

“Over the last three years we’ve seen multiple companies go from the very early stages of traction, to securing significant investment and even go onto exit within a couple of years of taking part in the programme. We’re looking for startup founders with the same level of ambition to join the final programme as part of the North East Digital Business Pipeline project.”

Tom Bunten, CEO of Gridfinder, said: “Ignite taught us to think globally. Gridfinder is a regional business, but it has access to an international market. This realisation transformed our business strategy and empowered us to access a whole host of incredible opportunities, ultimately growing Gridfinder to a successful exit.”

Stephen Mitchell, co-founder and CEO of SQCDP, said: “We’ve seen that we can solve problems for manufacturers close to home here in the North East and are now in a position to start to scale. We learned loads through the Ignite programme and in raising our pre-seed round. The investment will help us start onboarding new customers remotely and grow the team.”

Interested start-ups can apply online at this [link](#). Early submission is encouraged due to the competitive nature of the selection process.