

# Ski startup Maison Sport launches second crowdfund campaign

COVID-19 has undoubtedly hit the ski industry hard, but the challenges have accelerated the determination of the founders behind Maison Sport.

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The tech startup has launched a crowdfunding campaign on Seedrs in a bid to raise £400,000 as part of a larger £1.4M raise. The funds will allow the independent ski instructor platform to grow, evolve and expand into new countries across the globe. Having already raised £1M at the end of the summer 2020 from a collective of investors, the additional crowdsourced funds will complete their fundraise, enabling the three cofounders to take the marketplace global.

## What does Maison Sport do?

Maison Sport was created to connect people with the very best independent and passionate ski and snowboard instructors, reducing costs to the customer, and providing a more profitable practice for instructors, affording them more control over their earnings and teaching schedules.

Started in 2016, the tech company was founded by three former British ski champions – Nick Robinson, CEO and cofounder; his brother Olly Robinson, COO and cofounder; and Aaron Tipping, CFO and cofounder.

Starting in The Alps, the platform has since grown rapidly to include more than 350 resorts and over 1,000 trusted and fully qualified instructors across France, Switzerland, Italy and Austria. The new round of funding is expected to help the business expand into more than four new areas across the globe over the next six months including Scotland, Norway, Sweden and Japan.

Nick Robinson, who is also a former member of the British Ski Team, said: "Myself and cofounders Olly and Aaron are all passionate ski instructors at heart, which is why it's so important to us that this business grows but grows in the right way to ensure the best possible experiences for our customers and for our instructors.

*"The funding we've secured to date, along with the funds we hope to secure on Seedrs, will give the business the boost it needs to go truly global, and importantly, support independent ski instructors who have been hit hard in the current climate."*

## Mounting success

Maison Sport raised £786,000 from a combination of an initial Seedrs crowdfunding campaign in 2018 – which exceeded target by 135% – as well as two angel funding rounds in January 2016 and December 2016, which allowed them to launch their innovative concept and facilitated early growth.

Last year, the founders raised an additional £1M and have brought serial entrepreneur Lorenz Bogaert on board to join the company as a non-executive director. Bogaert joins non-executive chairman Graeme Gunn, and an impressive advisory board including some well-known fund managers and Kevin Byrne, founder of Checkatrade.com.

Early funding also allowed the founders to attract some of the best tech talent to ensure technology remains at the forefront of the business and that the user experience for both the customer and instructor is accessible, fast and seamless. Over the course of the past six months, the business has gone from seven employees to 15 and expects to grow to 21 once further funding is secured.

The marketplace has recently surpassed 20,000 hours of lessons taught and prides itself on over 3,100 individual instructor reviews left by over 70% of customers, placed on instructor's profile after their lessons. Over 90% of the reviews are rated five stars.

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