

Nutritionist ZOE, customer intelligence and help for the visually impaired all feature in this week's Maddymoney

Every week, Maddyness brings you the latest investment news from the UK startup ecosystem. Here's a recap of this week's investments.

Total

£181.91M

Number of deals

11

ZOE raises £25M investment and invites community to become owners

ZOE, the personalised nutrition company, has secured £25M via its Series B extension round. This latest funding round comes from ZOE's existing international investors, led by Accomplice, with investment from Balderton Capital, Ahren, Daphni, and new investor L Catterton, and brings ZOE's total investment to £73M.

ZOE is a personalised nutrition company that runs the world's largest nutrition-science study and the ZOE Health Study (formerly ZOE COVID Study). Using data at a scale not previously imagined, they are improving the health of millions and unravelling the complex relationship between food, lifestyle and health. The ZOE programme starts with an at-home test and gives our members tailored insights into how to eat for their bodies and long-term health. Their science is rooted in the understanding that everyone responds to food differently and that our gut bacteria play an important role in our health. Located in London and Boston, ZOE was founded by Professor Tim Spector of King's College London, data science leader Jonathan Wolf, and entrepreneur George Hadjigeorgiou.

The funds will be used to rapidly scale operations in the UK to enable ZOE to meet the demand of its 250,000-strong waitlist and expand its research. Rather than including more institutional investors in this round, ZOE plans to build on this success by inviting its community of over two million to invest via Crowdcube. ZOE is opening this opportunity to its community because it believes it can build even better science with members more deeply participating in its journey and because it wants members to share in the company's future success.

In addition to scaling the company's operations, ZOE is also committing to furthering its understanding of nutrition, the microbiome, sleep, mood, activity and other factors that affect long-term health. The company will continue to publish groundbreaking scientific research that is available to the public. It is also committed to maintaining and running the ZOE Health Study, offering a greater variety of health and lifestyle studies advocated by its contributors and scientists.

The ZOE community will have exclusive access to participate on the 13th of December 2022, followed by the Crowdcube community starting on the 14th of December 2022 before launching to the public. Anyone in the UK and EU can invest and become an owner for as little as £10.

Food-tech Clean Food Group raises investment for sustainable Palm Oil Alternative

Clean Food Group (CFG) – a pioneering UK-based food-tech business that has developed a revolutionary and sustainable, bioequivalent alternative to palm oil has announced that it has received an undisclosed investment from Doehler Ventures.

The sustainable palm oil alternative will help reduce the detrimental environmental impact of a range of palm-based ingredients that can be found in nearly 50% of all packaged products on our supermarket shelves. CFG's mission is to be part of the solution to this environmental crisis beginning with the production of its palm oil alternative.

With the Doehler Group, CFG will scale up their technology, demonstrating production at commercial scale as well as manufacturing product batches required for market approval.

Read also

[Looking for a a bio-equivalent to palm oil? Meet Clean Food Group](#)

Nature-tech firm Verna's first equity round takes total funding to £2.2M

British green-tech startup Verna, which provides data and software for sustainable land management has raised £860K in equity funding.

The company produces software tools to help grasp opportunities to draw down carbon and boost biodiversity, whilst making sustainable financial returns. Its ForestFounder system, which finds and assesses sites for tree-planting, has gathered a range of large customers including National Highways, the Environment Agency, and Forestry England.

The investment will be used to widen Verna's tools beyond tree-planting,

identifying the best carbon and biodiversity options for land across a range of interventions – such as peatland restoration and grassland enhancement.

Chattermill Secures £23.1M to analyse 1B+ pieces of customer feedback for businesses

Chattermill has raised £23.1M in funding to meet its vision as the first true Unified Customer Intelligence Platform. The Series B round was led by Beringea.

Chattermill analyses millions of interactions between a company and its customers, from feedback data to social media. It empowers businesses to easily unify their customer experience data, and uses deep learning-based AI to deliver actionable insights that help companies deliver loyalty and growth-driving customer experiences. Chattermill works with leading brands, including Amazon, Uber, H&M, and Zappos, to power their CX programs.

The funding will support its continued organic expansion in the US and Europe as well as its growing partner network across the world. Chattermill is growing its team and is hiring across Engineering, Data and Commercial functions.

Read also

Meet Chattermill, the SaaS platform turning data into improved customer experience

Phlux Technology secures £4M to bring LIDAR sensors to the mass market

Phlux Technology, the designer of high-performance infrared sensors, has secured £4M in seed funding from leading deep tech investors, led Octopus Ventures.

A spin-out of Sheffield University, it has used its in-depth research into

Antimony, the semi-metal element, to develop a unique, patented approach to infrared sensors to dramatically improve their performance in LIDAR (light detection and ranging) systems. The new architecture is 10x more sensitive and with 50% more range compared to equivalent sensors, reducing the cost of manufacture of LIDAR sensors and opening up mass market adoption.

With the funds Phlux will build an integrated subsystem and array modules, forming a high-performance sensor toolkit. It will grow its engineering team in areas such as fabrication, mixed signal circuit design, optics and testing.

Customer rewards platform Propello raises £650k investment

Propello, a Manchester-based customer rewards platform, has raised £650K in an investment round led by DSW Ventures.

The company has developed a white-label SaaS platform which offers customers a fully branded yet quick to implement 'plug-and-play' solution. The platform enables customers to easily build their own rewards and partnership programs, increasing value provided to their own end customers and reducing churn. Propello has already built an impressive customer base including HelloFresh, JD Gyms and British Business Bank.

The investment will allow the company to build a team of nearly 30 people by the end of 2023.

WeWALK raise £2M to “transform mobility” for the visually impaired

WeWALK, the company behind the world's first smartphone connected 'smart cane' for the visually impaired, has announced a £2M investment round to help evolve its technology and grow its global market presence. The round was led by Nesta Impact Investments.

WeWALK's first product, launched in 2019, was a GPS-enabled smart cane which connects to a smartphone app to make navigation easier, safer and more accessible for the 253 million people worldwide who are visually impaired. The smart cane can detect obstacles and vibrate to help the user avoid them, provide navigation prompts, and update users with key details like bus and train timings or which restaurants are nearby. The cane was named one of TIME Magazine's best inventions of 2019 and already has thousands of

users across over 59 countries.

Working in partnership with Imperial College London and the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), the team will use this investment to develop “computer vision” capabilities for the smart cane; allowing users to be given far more information about what’s in front of them. The ambition is to create advanced mobility tools that can read road signs, tell the user the number of the bus they’re about to board, inform them what objects are in their path, use facial recognition technology to prompt the user if someone they know is approaching them, and integrate with a wide-range of smart city technologies.

Komi raises £4M to provide creators a home on the internet

Komi, an all-in-one SaaS platform purpose-built for creators, has closed a £4M seed round led by Contour Venture Partners. High-profile angel investors include World Cup-winning soccer star Mario Gotze, Victoria Secret Angel Taylor Hill, Mumford & Sons’ Ben Lovett and Spotify’s Sven Ahrens.

Komi raises \$5m to provide creators a home on the internet

Komi is currently invite-only but is already partnered with a range of the world’s top music artists, athletes, entertainment stars and digital creators with a combined fan following of >1 billion. Selected personalities utilizing Komi’s platform include Lizzo, Idris Elba, Addison Rae, Matthew McConaughey and Usher.

With bases in LA and London and a user-base of talent and creators across the world, Komi expects further global growth in the coming months.

Entrepreneur on mission to stream live video from space raises £2M for new satellites

An entrepreneur on a mission to launch the world’s first service streaming live video from space has raised over £2M in an investment round led by Mercia.

Charles Black’s company Sen will enable consumers around the world to watch free ultra high-definition (UHD) videos of Earth from cameras located on its

satellites and will also offer a premium service to commercial users.

Sen launched its first satellite in January this year and will release its app in the new year to allow users to view daily videos and livestreams of Earth. The latest funding will enable it to place orders for two more satellites in preparation for a Series A funding round early next year.

#GREENTECH

Verna

£860K

Vanneck EIS & Octopus Ventures

#FOODTECH

Clean Food Group

N/A

Doehler Ventures

#HEALTHTECH

Zoe

£25M

Accomplice, Balderton Capital, Ahren, Daphni & L Catterton

#MOBILITY

Bumper

£26.1M

Jaguar Land Rover & Others

#PLATFORM

Chattermill

£21.3M

Beringea, DN Capital, Ventech, Runa Capital, btov Partners, SVB & Blossom Street Ventures

#LIDAR

Phlux

£4M

Octopus Ventures, Northern Gritstone, Foresight Williams Technology Funds, Innovation Fund & Innovate UK

#FINTECH

Allica Bank

£100M

TCV, Warwick Capital Partners & Atalaya Capital Management

#PLATFORM

Propello

£650K

DSW Ventures

#CULTURE

Komi

£4M

Contour Venture Partners & Angels

#SPACETECH

Sen

£2M

Mercia

In other investment news

Jenson Funding Partners launches £60M Net Zero-focused Aurora I Fund for early-stage investments

Jenson Funding Partners, the UK-based early-stage venture capital investor, has launched a new fund, Aurora I, for pre-seed-to-Series A stage companies developing innovative solutions that make the transition to Net Zero accessible to all.

The venture capital firm, which is one of a small number to be *B Corp* certified in the industry and has achieved more than 10 exits with an average of 4x returns, aims to start deployment of the fund in mid-2023.

Tech Nation, the national network for tech entrepreneurs, recently published a report that identified a funding gap for UK climate tech between seed stage and Series A. Aurora will target this gap and will be deployed over three years: with 60 pre-seed and seed stage companies in the first year, 20 follow-ons in the second year, and then a final 10 investments made in the most successful firms.

ImVitro raises \$2.5M to increase IVF clinic workflow efficiency and maximise success with AI

ImVitro recently announced a \$2.5M seed round led by LDV Capital.

ImVitro developed an operating system that combines the power of cell culture and AI to tackle infertility. As a starting point, the company brings AI-powered automation to the embryo evaluation process which is at the heart of the IVF workflow. EMBRYOLY analyses videos from microscopes to save clinicians' time, bring transparency to patients, eliminate human errors and deliver reliable predictions to embryologists at scale. With ImVitro, clinics can also grant access to their patients to a patient portal to deliver simplified lab results.

The company will use this financing to add key hires across technical and sales teams, expand to the U.S. market, and develop additional features to their software to keep saving clinicians' time.

Einride secures \$500M in financing to accelerate the deployment of sustainable freight mobility

Freight mobility technology company Einride announced today it has secured \$500M in financing, including both a Series C equity raise and a debt facility. The debt financing, which is the largest asset-backed facility to date for heavy-duty electric vehicles, will provide transformative funding for Einride's fleet of electric vehicles across the world.

Einride designs, develops and deploys technologies for freight mobility. By building grids powered by a first-of-its-kind ecosystem — the intelligent platform Einride Saga, electric and autonomous fleets, charging infrastructure

and connectivity networks — a resilient, cost-effective shipping future is unlocked.

The Series C provides a next step in the funding of new developments and deployments across Einride's autonomous and digital offerings, as well as expanding Einride's offerings to new markets and clients.

Article by MADDYNESS UK