

Meet CUR8, raising the bar on carbon removal

As part of our quick fire questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Marta Krupinska, cofounder and CEO of CUR8 about stopping climate change, creating an inclusive multitrillion dollar industry and the importance of iteration and integrating new ideas.

Even if we radically reduce global emissions we have left it too late to stay below 1.5 degrees without actively pulling carbon out of the atmosphere. Building out the carbon removals industry to the tune of 10 billion tonnes a year by 2050 necessary, as per the IPCC's best estimate, is truly the space race of the 21st century. If done right, we'll be able to stop irreversible climate change and create a multitrillion dollar industry which could be genuinely inclusive from the get go, with opportunities to create jobs and wealth in every corner of the globe, especially the Global South which is the most exposed to climate change.

To all of us at CUR8 this feels like the most important problem to spend our time working on. My cofounders, Dr. Gabrielle Walker (renowned climate scientist) and Mark Stevenson (former advisor to Ministry of Defense on climate change) found first hand that neither the buyers nor the policy makers understand carbon removals or the urgency with which they need to be developed. We were introduced in September 2021 and decided to combine our experiences across climate and startups to build a company and create the tools to professionalise and accelerate the carbon removals industry.

Tell me about the business – what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

CUR8 is a market maker for carbon removals, aiming to accelerate the growth and development of the industry. We screen, analyse and buy carbon removal credits from the most trusted suppliers from across the technological spectrum of available methods and build high-quality carbon removals portfolios. At CUR8 we make it easier than ever for businesses which are already on a reduction pathway to invest in carbon removal portfolios to neutralise their residual emissions, reach their net zero targets and combat the climate crisis.

We have already provided carbon removals for landmark royal events, including The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Pageant and The State Funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II and large-scale events including British Summer Time and All Points East, with the portfolio comprising removals such as direct air capture (1pointfive), enhanced rock weathering (UNDO) or durable soil carbon (Loam Bio).

How has the business evolved since its launch? When was this?

We officially founded and launched the business in 2022. Since then we have been growing the team and building the platform and completing our first carbon removals for CUR8.

Tell us about the working culture at CUR8

We're a small but nimble team that is passionate about building the real tools that will help combat the climate crisis. We spend a lot of time thinking how to be truly inclusive as an organisation and allow the best talent from across business and climate to work together. The team is mainly based in London and we have a hybrid working policy.

How are you funded?

We have raised £5.3M in pre-seed funding from GV (Google Ventures), CapitalT, Climate.vc and more.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

The main challenge for us as a business, and the entire industry really, is how to build awareness and trust for carbon removals, how to differentiate them from carbon offsets (which are a different asset class, largely focusing on reduction or protection of carbon sinks) and how to drive scalability, availability and the costs down.

We have built rigorous selection criteria for our portfolios, using the expertise of the team and our Scientific Advisory Committee. This is necessary to build trust and verification in the industry.

To make it more affordable, we need more buyers and more suppliers – but this isn't possible until we have the foundations in place to build trust and credibility. Once we solve the trust part, we can move on to the affordability challenge.

How does CUR8 answer an unmet need?

Businesses need to invest in carbon removals to neutralise the emissions they can't avoid. The legal definition of net zero in the UK requires organisations to reduce their emissions by 90% and durably remove the rest. But the vast majority don't have the means to understand what carbon removals they should invest in or how to go about sourcing them for their businesses. CUR8 is solving this challenge by providing high-quality carbon removal portfolios that businesses can trust.

We carry out all supplier due diligence in-house for carbon removals to de-risk purchases and make it easier for companies to understand the quality of their carbon investments. CUR8 also tracks and monitors the progress of carbon sequestration so buyers can invest in contracts over several years. As well, the platform wants to help enable new technologies to scale by bringing more buyers into the industry.

What's in store for the future?

We want to facilitate 10% of all global carbon removals over the next 25+ years. The world needs to remove 10 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide by 2050 at least to keep the 1.5 degrees target and we want to build the critical industry infrastructure to enable this. We believe that carbon removals are the key to combating the climate crisis and we want to make that happen.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

Don't be afraid to admit when you don't know something – it's the key to learning. The best founders are those who have strong views loosely held, willing to iterate and integrate new information. It also helps you stay humble and get the help you need when you get stuck.

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

I love running to make me feel strong, stay focused and be optimistic for the future and recently ran the Hackney Half. I also try and stay very grateful for the opportunities I get. I get to build a business I believe in, with the brilliant team we've put together, backed by some of the world's best investors. What an absolute privilege to live like this. Entrepreneurship isn't for everyone and it's incredibly hard work but with the right mix of effort and luck it can be truly magical.

Marta Krupinska is cofounder and CEO of [CUR8](#).