

Meet Emma-Louise Fusari, founder of In-House Health and Innovator of the Year 2023

We spoke to Emma-Louise Fusari, Founder of In-House Health, named Innovator of the Year at Computing's recent Women in Tech Excellence Awards and finalist at the Super Connect for Good Global Final on powered by Empact Ventures and Hays.

What was the catalyst for launching In-House Health?

Burnout. But not as you typically know it. I was burnt out emotionally in my nursing career. Too much red tape and bureaucracy meant I was seeing patients when it was too late when they'd already had a heart attack, a stroke, or a mental health breakdown and I was unable to help achieve positive health outcomes for them.

So I left the NHS and a short while later I discovered corporate wellbeing. I found an industry that is also taking a sticking plaster approach, with wellbeing initiatives that are fluffy, reactive and unmeasured. But, most importantly they're having no positive impact on individuals' health outcomes and no

financial benefit to the businesses that are investing in them.

That's why *In-House Health* was created, to help businesses get to the root cause of problems causing work-related ill health and have maximum impact.

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

In-House Health is bridging the gap between traditional occupational health services and fluffy wellbeing initiatives for digital tech SMEs. We do this through implementing clinically led, evidence-based and data-informed workplace health and wellbeing solutions that enable organisations to make a measurable impact on their people, performance and profits.

We identify current problems and prevent future risks to an organisation and their people and provide bespoke actionable strategies that deliver tangible results for continued influence on health and growth.

Can you tell our readers about your engagement with Empact Ventures?

I discovered *Empact Ventures* through their Super Connector for Good competition, where I entered their Mental Health and Wellbeing Impact Challenge. I was incredibly proud to have been selected as one of the Top 10 finalists in this vertical and had the opportunity to pitch at their Top 100 Innovation Showcase back in September.

I love the ethos and values at Empact and think the principle of connecting startups to industry professionals is brilliant and much needed, especially for founders from underrepresented backgrounds who don't have the network to help them grow and succeed.

Kosta and the team at Empact have been supportive and do an incredible job of championing tech for good founders and their businesses.

How are you funded?

I've bootstrapped the business to date and continue to grow financially through paid proof of concepts from early adopters of my work.

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

Raising investment had been challenging, especially as a female founder located in the North West of England. I overcome this by focusing on sales and continuing to grow through my visionary early adopters.

Shameless plug, but if you're looking to invest in an early impact business with an incredible founder market fit get in touch; SEIS is available.

How does In-House Health answer an unmet need?

Most employee health and wellbeing apps/initiatives focus on individual employees as if they're not resilient enough, as if they don't have good coping mechanisms for the working environment. However when we look at work-related ill-health, the clue is in the title, the problems are work-related. Providing employees with an app to meditate or watch a video on stress or do a yoga session is not addressing the root cause of the problem – the organisation.

That's what we do, we take a top-down approach that starts with benchmarking and assessing the quality and effectiveness of operational frameworks in place that support good health and wellbeing. We then identify the problem this is having on employee health and culture. Once there is a good foundation in place then we can move on to education and training.

What's in store for the future?

My aim is to be the biggest collector of employee health data so that we can play a role in influencing public health strategy and preventing long-term conditions. From a business perspective that opens up many opportunities for revenue generation and industry workforce reporting as the thought leader in this area. Technology is always advancing and the possibilities are limitless in the positive health impact that can be achieved.

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

Find good mentors who will give you good advice, support you and champion you. You don't know what you don't know and asking for help is a strength all founders need. I wouldn't be being true to myself if I didn't talk about realistically looking after yourself, founder burnout is very real and building and running a start-up is incredibly difficult. Just make sure you're practising the basics; get good quality sleep, eat nutritiously and exercise (could just be a 30-minute walking meeting).

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

Haha quite often I don't practice what I preach above, we all know what we should be doing, it's doing it that's the hardest part. I don't really have a routine as such as I'm definitely more of a night bird than a morning person. There's lots of talk about work-life balance, but I don't think it exists and it's a term of privilege. However, the way I see it is that being present and focused on one area at a time is really important. So whether that's working, spending time with family and friends or prioritising yourself, focus on one thing at a time rather than multitasking and not being present in anything. Try it, it'll improve your productivity levels and life satisfaction.

Emma-Louise Fusari is the Founder of [*In-House Health*](#).

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