

Meet About:Energy, powering the batteries of tomorrow

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Gavin White, Co-Founder and CEO of About:Energy about building better batteries, transformative technology and wisdom.

What was the catalyst for launching About:Energy?

About:Energy is a leading battery data and software company started in 2022 together with my co-founder *Kieran O'Regan*. Our shared mission was to accelerate the transition to electrification by providing the tools and data needed to optimise battery design.

During my PhD research on measuring lithium-ion battery thermal properties at Imperial College London, I invented a novel testing method and obtained a patent. Recognising the commercial potential, I joined forces with Kieran, an expert in electrochemical modelling to launch the company.

Tell me about the business – what it is,

what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

About:Energy is the leading battery data and software company helping to advance the transition to electrification. We accelerate electrification through battery virtual prototyping and provide digital tools for the battery industry to build better batteries, cells, and systems. Our software streamlines battery R&D processes, reducing time-to-market and enhancing battery system performance for organisations across sectors like automotive, aerospace, and manufacturing.

Our mission is to accelerate the transition to electrification by providing the tools and data needed to optimise battery design. We aim to become the central hub for battery data, where any company can access the information needed to build the right battery for their specific application. By equipping companies with better data, we empower them to make more informed decisions that reduce development costs and time-to-market for battery-powered products.

We help major automotive OEMs to optimise battery design. By modelling cell performance and degradation, we identified opportunities to enhance range, lower costs, and extend service life from the start.

We reach out customers via digital marketing, PR and strategic partnerships to build awareness and access to buyers in these rapidly growing markets. We also focus on providing an excellent customer experience and cultivating referrals and word-of-mouth within the cleantech community. In addition, we leverage industry events, associations, and speaking opportunities to showcase our business to the right decision makers and influencers.

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

When Kieran and I founded About:Energy we were focused on commercialising the novel battery testing method I had developed during my PhD research. My patented approach for measuring thermal properties was promising, but we realised the opportunity was much bigger.

Since those early days as a small startup, About:Energy has rapidly evolved to provide a wider range of testing services and data tools that can optimise battery design across sectors. We've now expanded beyond my initial testing

method into a more comprehensive battery data and software company.

Our vision now is to become a central hub for battery data, where companies can access the specific information they need to build tailored, high-performance batteries. To do this we launched *The Voltt*, a comprehensive database of various commercial batteries, offering access to models such as electrical, thermal, electrochemical, and degradation. We procure cells in real-world conditions and spend months, sometimes up to a year, testing these batteries. This process builds a digital representation of the battery, which can be directly integrated into engineering workflows for battery design.

At the end of 2023, we were also thrilled to welcome Thierry Bolloré to our board. With his extensive automotive expertise, including as former CEO of Renault and Jaguar Land Rover, Thierry has already helped shape our strategy for the auto industry as we continue to evolve.

We're proud of our growth and look forward to continuing to develop About:Energy's capabilities to further our mission of enabling optimised battery solutions.

Tell us about the working culture at About:Energy

The working culture at About Energy is collaborative and innovative. Our team values open communication, creativity, and a commitment to sustainability. We encourage employees to share ideas freely and work together to find solutions. There is a strong sense of mission driven by our goal of accelerating the transition to clean energy.

Kieran and I try to ensure that everyone feels empowered to make an impact. The atmosphere is lively yet focused, with employees motivated by seeing their work make a real difference. While we work hard, we also value work-life balance and wellbeing.

How are you funded?

To date, we have raised £1.7M in funding from investors including HighSage Ventures, Vireo Ventures, and Plug and Play Tech Centre. We have also secured £1M in government grants with both amounts allowing us to scale our operations. Our capital efficiency is strong and has allowed us to rapidly and serve more than 10 high-profile customers to date.

We are currently exploring a Series A investment round, with support from our

seed investors as well as new partners. This funding will enable us to further expand our data and modelling capabilities to meet growing demand. Our financial profile reflects the immense value of our virtual prototyping platform as well as the exciting growth trajectory ahead as we continue enabling organisations to build better batteries faster.

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

The most difficult adjustment for me has been shifting my decision-making approach from the rigidity of science and engineering to the fluidity required in business. Unlike science and engineering, business is heavily situational and probabilistic. Often there is no clear best path and you need to make a decision based on the information you have to hand and keep reevaluating based on new information coming in. An element of chaos keeps it interesting and literally nothing is a given.

How does About:Energy answer an unmet need?

The transition to electrification has been slower and more challenging than many companies predicted. Developing new battery technologies is incredibly complex, requiring extensive testing and refinement to meet cost and performance targets. Physical prototyping of battery cells and systems is expensive and time-consuming. It can take years to gather the data needed to fully optimise a design.

This has created a major bottleneck. Engineering teams lack the insights needed to quickly evaluate options and make informed decisions when selecting cells and integrating batteries into products. Extensive physical testing is required to characterise performance factors like fast charging, thermal behaviour, lifetime, and safety. This physical testing requires significant investment in lab infrastructure and personnel, presenting a barrier to entry or ongoing risk to industry. The resulting development costs and long design timelines hinder innovation and widespread adoption of electric mobility.

Our digital tools address this problem by providing unmatched visibility into battery performance through advanced modelling and data analytics. We empower faster, better informed decision making across activities like cell selection, pack sizing, thermal design, lifetime prediction, and state-of-charge estimation. This unlocks major time and cost savings, accelerating

development while enhancing the quality and competitiveness of electrified products.

What's in store for the future?

In the next five years, we envision About:Energy establishing itself as an essential contributor to the battery revolution. Our objective is to position the company not just as a technology startup but as a leader driving meaningful advancements in this field. We aim for our products and services to have a tangible, positive impact on society and the environment globally. By lowering battery costs, we hope to play a crucial role in expediting the world's shift to electrified systems.

My evolving place in About:Energy will be decided in the future But I am fully committed to carrying out the company's important mission to the best of my abilities. I feel extremely fortunate to work on such transformative technology alongside this talented team and expert advisors. Each day, I'm grateful for the opportunity and excited about what's in store. I'm confident About Energy has a bright future ahead as a catalyst for change in the battery space and beyond.

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

I think it would emphasise the importance of learning from the mistakes of others. While firsthand experience is invaluable, gaining insights from the missteps of fellow entrepreneurs can be equally enlightening. By observing and understanding these errors, you can navigate the challenges of leadership with greater wisdom, without bearing the direct costs of those mistakes.

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

I am the least morning person you could meet but I force myself in for just after 8am – clearing urgent emails and getting ahead of the day makes the whole day more enjoyable. After that it's a mix of team meetings and online calls with a focus on in-person where possible to reduce zoom fatigue. Regularly carving out time for 'deep-work' is important too, which I try to do a couple of times a week – the key is turn off slack, email, teams etc. After 5pm its usually wrapping up any actions from the day before aiming to clock out at 7pm.

For routine I'm a subscriber to Steve Jobs philosophy of decision fatigue. I've effectively got my own uniform which I cycle through every week, and I get the same meal deal and eat the same batch cook recipe for dinner. Having these constants means I have more time to focus on the important events going on in or outside of work. It sounds quite boring, but I actually really enjoy the steadiness it brings me. My latest discovery is decaf coffee, you still get the placebo effect without the mid-afternoon crash – a real coffee every few days is enough to keep my body fooled.

Gavin White is the Co-Founder and CEO of *About:Energy*.

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