Tech Nation Launches The UK's First National Cyber Security Scaleup Programme

- Tech Nation's Cyber programme is designed to boost the UK's digital security sector by accelerating the growth of its top startup companies
- Applicants sought from fast-growth cyber startups across the UK
- A total of 20 startups will be selected for leading cyber security experts from the public and private sector, as well as investors and founders

London, 6th February 2019: Tech Nation, the UK network for ambitious digital tech entrepreneurs, is seeking 20 startups with the potential to go head to head with some of the biggest players in the global cyber security market. Applications are invited for the UK's first nationwide scaleup programme for startups in cyber security, designed to build on Britain's existing heritage in this key sector and produce the global leaders of tomorrow.

Starting in April 2019, Cyber is aimed at founders and leadership teams and the six-month, non-residential programme will expose those taking part to scaleup expertise and provide them with the knowledge and connections required to effectively grow their businesses in domestic and global markets. As part of the programme, the successful startups will also take part in a showcase trip organised in conjunction with the Department of International Trade.

A cross industry judging panel will select the 20 most promising cyber companies across the country for the programme. The panel includes Robert Coles, Chief Information Security Officer at NHS; Dr Emma Philpott, CEO at The IASME Consortium; Talal Rajab, head of programme for techUK's Cyber and National Security programmes; Alastair Paterson, CEO and co-founder of Digital Shadows and James Chappell co-founder and Chief Innovation Officer of Digital Shadows.

A Crucial Sector

According to UK Government data, there are currently more than 800 cyber security businesses headquartered in the UK, with small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) making up 89% of the total. In the final three months of 2018 alone, there were an estimated 30 million cyber attacks in the UK and the scope and reach of digital crime is also growing. In addition to attacks intended to steal, destroy or corrupt information on company systems, the rapid development of the Internet of Things is creating new vulnerabilities at the interface between digital and physical systems.

Boosting Growth

Against this backdrop, the goal of the Cyber programme, is to boost the UK's digital security sector by accelerating the growth of its leading startup companies.
Digital Minister Margot James said: "To stay ahead of cyber threats it is crucial we support and promote our world-class cyber security industry. Tech Nation's new programme will not

only help young businesses to expand but ensure our thriving cyber sector continues to grow."

"This is both an important and exciting time for the UK digital security industry." commented Mike Jackson, Entrepreneur Success Director of Tech Nation. "The UK is an acknowledged leader in cyber security and many successful businesses - large and small - are headquartered here. But it can be a challenging marketplace for young businesses that are seeking to expand. In the security field there are specific challenges to scaling, for instance startups will often be targeting corporate buyers and building trust and credibility can sometimes seem like an impossible task. Equally, partnerships with other providers can play a key role in the growth story. So regardless of the quality of the product, a company's ability to grow will often depend on industry knowledge and connections, which is why we're delighted to announce this latest scaling program for cyber companies to be launched by Tech Nation."

An Enabling Programme

Tech Nation's Cyber programme has been carefully designed with industry leaders to meet the needs of scaling cyber companies and to support founders with specific challenges for this sector. At the same time the programme is focused on the specifics of the digital security marketplace.

Key elements of the agenda include a series of four masterclasses - each taking a deep dive into core businesses issues - and multiple networking sessions designed to foster peer-to-peer learning. In addition, those joining the first cohort will have direct access to scaleup experts who will address important issues such as creating and maintaining culture; hiring and nurturing talent; developing leadership skills; raising capital; and international expansion.

Participants will also have opportunities to network externally with potential customers, partners and investors. This side of the programme is facilitated through three "cohort trips," including one visit to a foreign market, co-organised by the Department for International Trade.

"What we have put together is a programme that will help businesses on the cohort move up to the next level," said Ollie Bone, Cyber Lead at Tech Nation. "Making the transition from startup to scaleup requires founders and managers to develop new and often challenging personal and business skills. But scaling up also involves reaching out and making connections across the security industry itself and in the customer marketplace. What we're offering in Cyber is a real opportunity to overcome the factors that might be putting a brake on growth."

Judging panelist Seb Wallace of venture capital investor, Triple Point, said: "As interpersonal and inter-device connectivity grows, the global economy increasingly relies on its heightened connection to function. Against this backdrop, the cyber security sector has never been more

important. It is becoming a backbone of the 21st century. Together with Tech Nation, we want to see the UK lead in this area as we move into the next decade."

Mike Kennedy, director at Downing Capital, stressed the need to remove the barriers to growth in the sector: "Most startups wish-lists look the same: customers, talent, capital and in that order. For Cyber Security companies these have been typically harder to acquire but the importance of the growth of this sector to the UK means things must change. Thankfully they are!"

Full list of judges:
- Pratima Aiyagari, Corporate Development & Venture Investments at Cisco
- Mike Kennedy, Director at Downing Capital
- Robert Coles, Chief Information Security Officer at NHS
- Dr Emma Philpott, CEO at The IASME Consortium Ltd
- Deeph Chana, Professor of Practice at Imperial College Business School
- Itxaso del Palacio, Investment Director at Notion Capital
- Akriti Dokania, Early Stage Investor at Octopus Ventures
- Dr Jamie Graves, CEO & Founder at Zonefox
- Andy Williams, CEO at Global Transatlantic Ltd and Advisor to UK Department for International Trade Defence and Security Organisation Cybersecurity
- Seb Wallace, Investor at Triple Point Ventures
- Alastair Paterson, CEO & co-founder at Digital Shadows
- James Chappell, CIO and co-founder at Digital Shadows

Applications are now open and close on 4th March. Successful participants will be notified in late March. The programme kicks off in April.
Apply here: https://technation.io/programmes/cyber-security/

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