

Planet-friendly laundry, digitising the Mental Health Act and gamified stroke rehab - 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.

Temps de lecture : minute

2 September 2022

Total

£67.55M

Number of deals

9

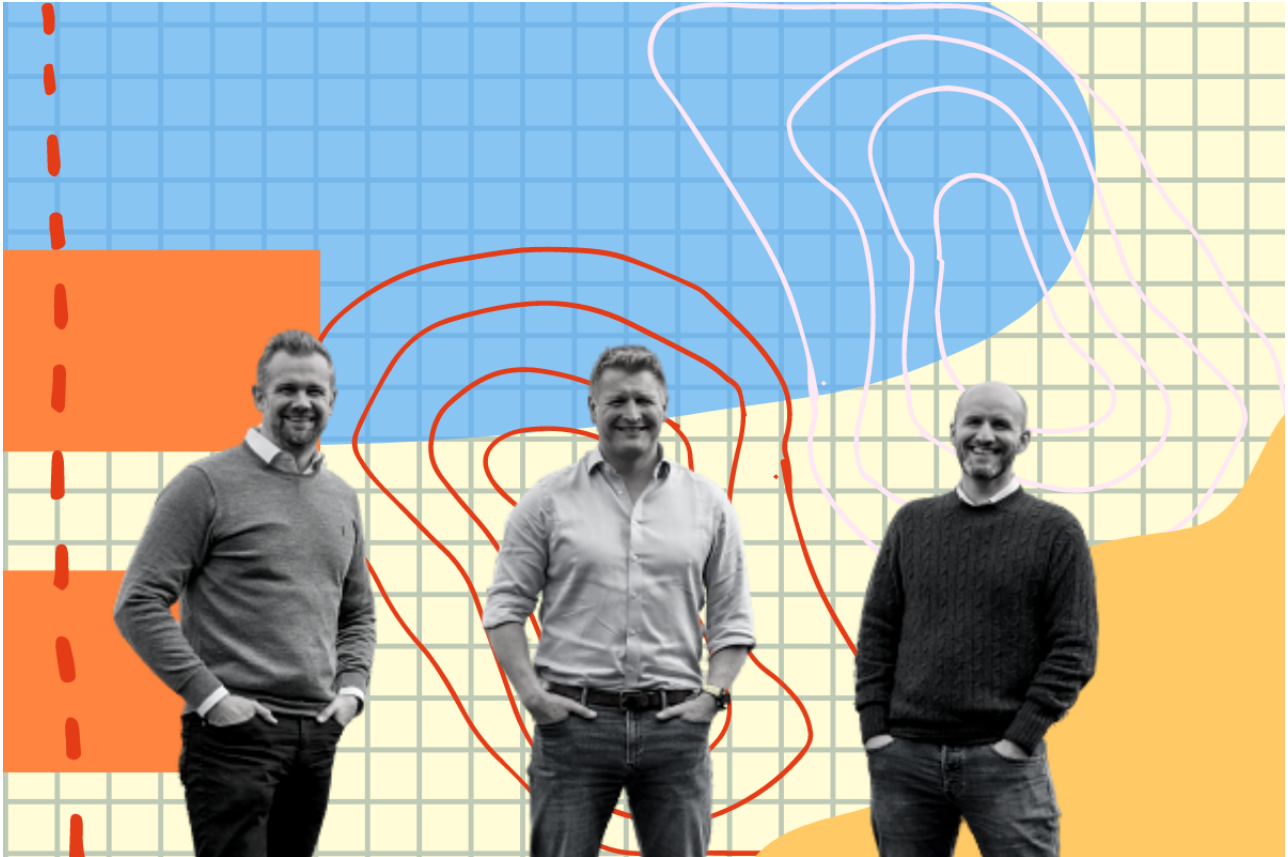
£4.1M Seed Round into EV Battery Technology Innovator Anaphite

Bristol-based Anaphite is helping to power the sustainable energy revolution by incorporating graphene into the next generation of lithium-ion batteries. Elbow Beach Capital, the sustainability and social impact investor, announces a £1.5M investment into [Anaphite](#), leading a £4.1M seed round supported by Wealth Club, Blue Wire Capital, Oxford

Investment Opportunity Network and others.

Graphene is a unique material with desirable properties such as high electrical and thermal conductivity. Graphene properties are fully harnessed once incorporated into other materials, and Anaphite incorporates graphene into battery materials, via an inexpensive and scalable process that fits directly into existing cell production lines. Anaphite focuses on the enhancement of lithium-ion batteries for the electric vehicle industry, helping to reduce battery manufacturing costs by over 10%.

The proceeds of this round will be used to open licence negotiations with a material supplier or cell manufacturer, build a materials demonstration reactor with 100kg/day production volume. The funding will also be used to test potential niche applications for Anaphite's technology, for example in drones or e-bikes, validate the company's battery prototype with an OEM, and complete a 10m roll-to-roll coating line demonstrating Anaphite's novel low energy battery production process, by the end of 2023. Anaphite aims for its technology to be used in commercial EV production by 2028.



Read also

Decarbonisation, sustainable energy and social impact, a profile of Elbow Beach Capital

Purpose-led laundry startup Oxwash raises £10M Series A and becomes B Corp certified

London-based Oxwash is the UK's first sustainable, on-demand laundry and wet-cleaning startup. It raised £10M in its latest funding round as it sets out to grow its nationwide footprint. The Series A round was led by Untitled VC, the investment firm founded by lead partners Magnus Rausing (Tetra Pak) and Bertie Crawley (ZuluForest). Long standing supporter Biz Stone, cofounder of Twitter, also returned for the round, as did Indeed founder Paul Forster, and Holly and Sam Branson. Oxwash has now raised a total of £15.7M to date.

Brainchild of ex-NASA scientist, Dr Kyle Grant and engineer Tom de Wilton

in 2017, the startup also unveils its global certification of B Corporation status, the only laundry company to do so. The convenient service uses next-gen ozone technology to deodorise and sanitise fabrics at lower temperatures, biodegradable chemistry formulations processes to achieve higher than medical-grade disinfection. Oxwash uses a combination of electric cargo bikes as well as its own fleet of electric vans and DPDs electric vehicle service for a nationwide zero-emission logistics footprint. It also champions an innovative 'wet cleaning' technique which offers a sustainable, chemical-free alternative to harmful dry cleaning.

With the latest funding, the business will be able to build a giant facility with the ability to service clients up and down the country. Achieving B Corp status reflects Oxwash's drive to deliver a convenient and cost-effective service that doesn't destroy the planet. The funding will also be used to fuel its mission to widening its national footprint ahead of expansion into the USA.



Read also

[Six climate tech startups to watch](#)

Digital rehabilitation platform Neurofenix raises £6M to transform stroke and brain injury recovery

London-based Neurofenix, a neurological rehabilitation platform that uses sensor technology in a bid to improve patient recovery outcomes, has raised £6M million in Series A funding. This funding was led by AlbionVC, with additional participation by HTH, InHealth Ventures, and existing investors. This will enable Neurofenix to build out its product line and invest in US expansion, including funding US clinical trials.

Over 75% of stroke, traumatic brain and spinal cord injury patients face long-term disabilities because of insufficient neurorehabilitation and a shortage of occupational therapists. Once patients are discharged, they're even less likely to complete home therapy programmes due to a lack of engagement, monitoring or support. Neurofenix's patient-focused approach combines sensor-based technology and a telemedicine platform to personalise rehab in an attempt to improve recovery and outcomes. Neurofenix's rehab programme currently focuses on arm and hand therapy through its NeuroBall™ device, which is personalised to each patient based on their current needs and enables them to perform increasingly challenging, repetitive movements to help build up strength.

Andrew Elder, Deputy Managing Partner at AlbionVC commented: "Neurofenix is poised to revolutionize physical recovery after a neurological injury, such as a stroke, traumatic brain injury or spinal cord injury. Its digital therapeutics platform, which can be used in rehabilitation clinics and by an individual bringing clinical-grade treatment into the home, which generates recovery of movement, strength, and activities of daily living faster and with better results. With my background as a neurosurgeon, I could see that Neurofenix is positioned to fill a major gap in the neuro-rehab industry."

Thalamos raises £860K to digitise the Mental Health Act

Thalamos, a platform digitising the Mental Health Act has raised a £860K Seed Round, backed by Ascension's Conduit Impact EIS Fund, Angels including Syndicate Room, and a private Seedrs crowdfund.

Founded in 2018 by cousins Arden and Ross Tomison, Thalamos was inspired by the experience of a close friend who was sectioned. Thalamos gives people who are sectioned under the Mental Health Act quicker and safer access to vital treatment by enabling their care to be organised digitally. It replaces the outdated system of paper forms that is currently used to arrange care. Instead, Thalamos offers a streamlined digital system which significantly lowers the risk of errors and eliminates unnecessary delays. This allows the most vulnerable patients to access life-saving mental health treatment sooner.

This investment is timely, with the number of people being sectioned under the Mental Health Act continuing to rise. The funding will be used by Thalamos to expand their team and strengthen their product, helping them to support a growing number of mental health care providers as they work to better support patients, clinicians and systems.

PsycApps raises £1.5M seed funding to add to growth of gamified mental health interventions

PsycApps, the London-based developer of the evidence-based mental health game for teens and young adults, eQuoo, has raised £1.5M in seed funding from US-based Morningside Ventures. The funds will enable

PsycApps to grow its team and accelerate the development of its mental health platform to address the roughly 50 per cent of teens and tweens who self-report struggling with one or more mental health issues.

PsycApps was co-founded by Clinical Psychologist Silja Litvin and Vanessa Hirsch-Angus to tackle the mental health needs of teenagers and young adults. PsycApp's platform offers an accessible, scalable, and sticky mental health intervention that gives higher education institutions the ability to impact students' mental health positively. Recognising the needs of hundreds of thousands of students in the UK for evidence-based prevention and intervention programs, eQuoo is built for young adults' consumer habits and needs. With 70 per cent of 16 - 28-year-olds being casual gamers, it made sense to Clinical Psychologist and cofounder Silja Litvin to use her gaming industry knowledge to provide treatment they could engage with and enjoy. With over half a million players globally, PsycApps's goal is to reach every young adult needing an emotional and mental boost in a way that makes it easy for them to stick with the program.

Silja Litvin, PsycApps cofounder and CEO, said, "After working in an NHS priority, I realised that my clients were reaching me way too late - often after six months on a waitlist and years after experiencing the first symptoms. I wanted to find a way to give them the skill set they needed before they needed it. If a student drops out of their course due to mental health issues, it will change their lives in a way that hurts them and society. With eQuoo we give young adults a tool that helps them grow mentally, stay mentally healthy and get help if they're experiencing issues."

Compliant payment system Ryft secures

seed round led by SFC Capital, bringing total funding to £1.2M

Ryft, the EU regulation Payment Services Directive 2 (PSD2) compliant payments system, has raised a seed round, led by SFC Capital, the UK's most active seed-stage investor. Additional investors include the ex-founder of Shutterstock and the founder of LoveFilm. Ryft enables automated next day payouts for marketplace businesses and their merchants, for a single flat fee per transaction.

Ryft processes payments and then automatically diverts funds to merchants and sub-merchants (minus any commissions) the next working day. They describe the platform as 'Stripe Connect without the high fees and lengthy payout wait times'. Ryft's end-to-end solution handles everything from accepting online payments, verifying and onboarding merchants, to splitting up the payments however a business wants. This is all done through straightforward API documentation to remove complexity and fast track the development cycle. Ryft streamlines all of these processes in a singular efficient platform, protecting employees, protecting businesses from FCA fines, ensuring anti money laundering rules are followed and reducing the associated risks for marketplaces and their onboarding processes.

Ryft will use the funding to accelerate their platform and team expansion. Sadra Hosseini, CEO and founder of Ryft: "We are both incredibly excited to be working with SFC Capital to further our ability to provide seamless support to marketplaces and merchants within the industry and continue to solve the current problems associated with complex money routines under PSD2 regulation. Ryft was created to handle everything so your business doesn't have to."

#BATTERY

Exagen
£35M

#PLATFORM

Hometainment
£390K

#PROPTECH

Flyway
£8.5M

#BATTERY

Anaphite
£4.1M

#CLEANTECH

Oxwash
£10M

#HEALTHTECH

Neurofenix
£6M

#HEALTHTECH

Thalamos
£860K

#HEALTHTECH

PsycApps and eQuoo
£1.5M

#FINTECH

Ryft
£1.2M

In other investment news

Moixa acquired by Lunar Energy,
accelerating the worldwide transition to
clean energy and home electrification

Moixa announced it has been acquired by newly launched Lunar Energy, a US-based company that has emerged from stealth with a mission to electrify the home and provide energy independence to millions worldwide. Lunar will leverage and scale Moixa's proven GridShare™ software to manage the world's batteries across Europe, Japan, the US and beyond. Through Lunar, GridShare™ software will supply a wider range of solutions to electrify homes and connect communities together, building the green, reliable, and distributed energy system of the future.

To enable Lunar to deliver on its mission, the company raised US\$300

million in funding over two rounds led by South Korea's SK Group and Sunrun (NASDAQ: RUN). The capital raised has been used to acquire Moixa, hire great talent and invest in product development and manufacturing activities in order to bring Lunar's first hardware product to market later this year. GridShare™ software is currently deployed across 35,000 homes in Japan. It also supports advanced smart charging services for Honda electric vehicles, flexibility services for UK distribution network operators, and depot smart charging with UPS in the UK. Currently, in official partnership with UK Power Networks (UKPN), GridShare™ software is providing energy capacity to distribution networks from home energy storage until 2025.

Kunal Girotra, Founder and CEO of Lunar Energy: "The Moixa team has pioneered and developed innovative energy optimization algorithms over the last 15 years that remain unparalleled. Moixa's GridShare software is currently managing one of the largest fleets of home batteries in the world, paving the way for virtual power plants and providing peak power and other services to the grid. Lunar Energy's hardware, paired with GridShare software for smart charging, fleet management and optimization, will provide a complete offering to our customers and help us deliver on our mission."

London-based Claret Capital raises €297M fund for European tech start-ups

Claret Capital, the London-based Pan-European growth capital provider, announces the final closing of Claret European Growth Capital Fund III. With total commitments of €297 million, the firm has closed well over its original target of €250 million. The final close of Fund III includes commitments from a broad range of leading institutional investors who continue to support Claret within the debt financing market. Repeat investors include EIF, British Business Investments, RAG-Stiftung, Certior

Capital and KfW Capital.

Over the past nine years, the team behind Claret has become one of the preeminent providers of growth debt to SMEs in Europe, backing over 150 companies and investing more than half a billion euros. Recent exits include numerous acquisitions such as: Packlink (acquired by Auctane), Aava (acquired by Pepperl & Fuchs), Bright Computing (acquired by NVIDIA), Miss Group (bought out by Perwyn & management), as well as publicly held businesses Eurobio Scientific, SFC Energy.

Since the first investment from Fund III in March 2021, Claret has welcomed 29 businesses into the Fund III portfolio. Fund III will continue to invest in innovative growth stage technology and life science businesses throughout Europe – primarily to support organic growth and M&A. Taken together, the final close of Fund III and the co-invest vehicles enable Claret to support businesses with over €500M of capital in the next three years with which we expect to support an additional 50-60 new companies.