



July 2025

Startup Mentorship

Exeter Innovation Accelerator (SETsquared Exeter)



University
of Exeter

Mentor Pool

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Context

The **Exeter Innovation Accelerator** is a dynamic programme designed to fast-track the growth of ambitious startups across the Southwest. Delivered through the University of Exeter's **Exeter Innovation** division and as part of the **SETsquared Partnership** - the global no.1 university business incubator - the accelerator provides bespoke support for founders tackling commercialisation, funding, and scaling challenges.

The programme is embedded in the region's innovation ecosystem, supporting ventures across sectors including climate tech, health tech, AI, and fintech.

Role Purpose

Mentors play a key role in the growth of a startup.

At points in the entrepreneurial journey, a founder will meet a challenge or opportunity that requires the guidance of an individual that can offer specialist advice built from successful experience.

Through the Exeter Innovation Accelerator, we facilitate the connection of our mentors with founders via the scoping of outcome driven engagements.

These engagements focus on specific areas of a venture's strategy, such as sales and business development, or team growth.

Mentor Pool

Alex Spalding An exited founder in the tourism and leisure industry, Alex's supports founders with go-to-market strategy.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/alex-spalding-766988b6/>

Andrew Walker Over 20 years of experience in SaaS, specialising in building world-class products, Andrew supports founders to understand how to build high-performance teams and drive organisational excellence.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/andrewwalker67/>

Annemiek Hartman A rich history in hospitality, manufacturing, and materials reuse, Annemiek has a focus on community exploitation of impact schemes.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/annemiekehartmanjemmett/>

Dan Wiseman With nearly two decades of experience in web technology, marketing and ecommerce, Dan is able to provide valuable insight around online sales of products and services.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/wisemandan/>

Dougal Scott Dougal's experience in senior commercial and business unit management amounts to the ability to support founders across all areas of operational transformation.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/dougal-scott/>

Gavin Veator-Carey As an experienced technology leader, Gavin advises on high-performance structures, data exploitation, and leadership.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/gavincarey/>

Guy Hutchinson Portfolio CFO for high growth VC backed businesses and founder of the Startup CFO group, Guy is an expert in areas such as data driven decision making, commercial negotiations and more.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/guyhutch/>

James Cater A seasoned advisor in go-to-market, sales, and marketing, with particular experience in the tech industry. James helps founders to effectively articulate and deliver their vision to a market.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/managingdirectorceo/>

James Hill With a history in SaaS and technology sectors, James helps founders to approach their commercial strategies, such as business development, pipeline management, and customer success.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/james-hill-11a93655/>

John Acornley A chartered accountant by training, John has financial experience in multiple sector specialisms, together with a strong fundraising history.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/johnacornley/>

John Zealley A seasoned leader working at the intersection of the marketing, consumer, and tech spaces. John advises on growth strategy, digital transformation, and capitalising on technology opportunities.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/john-zealley-wa/>

Julien Lancha A successfully exited founder, Julien has experience across the whole entrepreneurial spectrum, including go-to-market, investor readiness, and product roadmap management.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/julienlancha/>

Kate Stevens With an interest in impact orientated ventures such as health, edtech, and particularly focussed on helping female founders to realise success. Kate is an expert in organisational and product processes.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kate-stevens-ltd/>

Lisa Compton A Finance Director with significant commercial and financial management experience, Lisa supports founders to transform their cash flow and build rigorous financial structures.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/lisa-compton/>

Michelle Law As an independent strategic consultant and VC COO with experience in investment banking and wealth management, Michelle can effectively guide founders through the intricacies of building a robust investment strategy.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/michellelaw1/>

Mike Unger 30+ years of experience in diverse sectors such as healthcare and telecoms, Mike is a global business development expert advising on market engagement and opportunity identification.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/mike-unger-554646/>

Patrick O'Connell An exited engineering business leader with a history of implementing strategic change, Patrick supports founders' alternative business models and the importance of building strong and lasting partnerships.

Richard Hadden Richard's experience as an entrepreneur and venture capitalist fund manager, enables him to support founders on their investment readiness journey. Advising on the shaping of attractive investment opportunities.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/richard-hadden-a5b7b5/>

Roger Killen A healthcare entrepreneur, investment partner, and Stanford MBA alumni, Roger helps founders to understand healthcare market engagement and investment readiness.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/roger-killen-997ba31/>

Steven Senior A chartered engineer by training, Steve's rich history of entrepreneurial and executive directorship experience allows him to support founders across all aspects of business scale.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/steven-senior-69419116/>

Dave Mutton Predominantly market and product focussed, Dave has expertise in business performance and C-suite operations.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/davemutton/>

Rebecca Pearse With 30+ years of international leadership in B2B SaaS, Rebecca's GTM, enterprise sales, and team management experience allows her to advise on building commercial traction and revenue growth.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rebeccapearse/>

Sarah Knight As a recruitment sector founder, Sarah has an interest in helping female founders to navigate the entrepreneurial journey. Sarah's specialism is in the building of high-performing senior and commercial teams.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/sarknight/>

James Bunney With experience of complex business transformation leadership across multiple sectors, James helps founders to build and evaluate key targets across technical and business domains.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jamesbunney/>

Find out more

To find out more about how the mentor scheme can benefit your venture, or to register your interest to join as a mentor, contact the Head of Business Acceleration, **Colin Dart**, at c.j.dart@exeter.ac.uk