

Where to find investors

Your personal and professional network

You may have done a friends and family round already, but there are still often professional contacts or friends of friends you could still approach. The key is having a common ground to approach them on, usually, the business idea itself. This is where your professional network can be the most fruitful, as those contacts will already have knowledge or a deep understanding of the sector your new business is operating in. Never approach anyone asking for money, but instead, seek support and guidance with your business, over time your story will come across and they'll recognise your need for investment and may well be prepared to help, or introduce you to someone else who can. Investors with deep domain expertise that you find through your own professional network could also act as lead investors. It can also be difficult to secure investment from investors if you have no funding pledged towards your round at all, so finding a professional an experienced investor with industry experience to put money in your business can act as a real cornerstone and comfort factor to other future investors.

Many investors only invest in businesses that have come through a personal referral so building relationships with other founders in a similar sector might help you get an introduction to that crucial investor that can really help your business fly.

The industry

When starting or growing a business, especially a business that brings innovation to a sector, a very strong place to seek support is from senior and experienced individuals within the same sector. They would want to know more about a new, relevant innovation within their space and, as above, may be willing to give you some advice or feedback. Again, it is important not to ask them for investment but to ask for feedback and support. If they are interested in what you are doing you can then invite them to become a special advisor or mentor and investment may follow in time. A good place to look is on LinkedIn or at relevant industry events.

The UKBAA member directory

Our member directory is the UK's single largest source of early-stage investors, advisors and intermediaries. We represent thousands of investors via our member organisations and you can approach any of the organisations that you feel would be a good fit for your business. Before you make an approach to one of our members, do your research on them first and tailor your approach based on your findings. If you just send a cold blanket email out to all the members in the directory, you are unlikely to get a meaningful response. By conducting research on the angel group beforehand and gaining a better understanding of what type of business really interests them, you can make a more targeted and tailored approach which makes them more likely to respond. Look at their website if they have one, many seed VCs and angel groups have online application processes to help them better triage potential investments.

You can browse all our members in our [member directory](#), it is completely free.

The UKBAA DealShare platform

DealShare is a private, members-only online platform designed to improve deal flow and create co-investment opportunities for the UKBAA community by allowing members to both browse and list live, active investment opportunities.

It is not a deal execution platform and no transactions can take place online. It is a deal discovery platform, which means that once an investor is interested, any discussions can continue elsewhere.

The platform is free to use and there are no associated costs or fees.

Founders can only access the DealShare platform via a referral from a member of UKBAA and must meet the following criteria:

- The business must have passed the 'Proof of Concept' stage and have some commercial traction or validated product:marketfit.
- Eligible for EIS, SEIS or SITR. It can be structured as straight equity or ASA or SAFE.
- The deal needs to have at least 20% of the funding round promised or committed from other investors.
- The founders and the core business activities must be predominantly based in the UK.
- Any funding round must be more than £100k and no more than £5m.

Attending events

There are hundreds of relevant events around the country, whether it is industry events or indeed investor events, it is hard not to find one worth going to in any given week. Sign up to our [newsletter](#) to find out about events our members are holding, or visit the [events section](#) of our website but also do your research on sector-focussed events that you could attend too. Remember to be prepared for that chance encounter with a potential investor!

Accelerator programmes

As well as helping businesses to find their product market fit many accelerators also have what is known as a demo day. These days are basically pitching events where the accelerator invites all their investor contacts and colleagues to see businesses who have successfully completed their programme present their business and their investment requirement.

Other investors

Investors are a fantastic source of other investors. as you build momentum in your funding round and start to attract investors in ones and twos that process should accelerate as investors invite their friends and colleagues come in alongside them.