



Manchester
Digital



STARTUP ACTIVATOR

Sponsor Pack

Fuelling innovation, forging connections

“As Greater Manchester’s not-for-profit trade body, Manchester Digital is dedicated to fostering a dynamic and resilient digital and tech ecosystem. Our focus is on empowering entrepreneurs to become tomorrow’s leaders, helping startups scale, and driving innovation to create sustainable growth and prosperity. Through impactful programmes and partnerships, we equip businesses with the tools, knowledge, and connections they need to thrive.

By partnering with us, you can help amplify this mission, showcase your brand, accelerate innovation and shape a prosperous future for Greater Manchester’s digital economy.”

Katie Gallagher OBE
Managing Director
Manchester Digital



"Manchester is a thriving hub for innovation. Ranked the second-best city in the UK for startups and scaleups outside London (Beauhurst), initiatives like NPIF2, the Innovation Accelerator, and Barclays Eagle Labs – to name a few – are already driving its growth. Our vision is to unify and amplify these efforts to create a sustainable source of support and lasting impact for entrepreneurs across Greater Manchester. Join us in shaping this exciting future."

Alice Pickersgill
Startups Programme Manager
Manchester Digital



Our work so far to support startups

We work at the forefront of shaping policy and driving change for the digital and tech sector, collaborating with policymakers and organisations such as the Startup Coalition and DSIT. Our Managing Director, Katie Gallagher, chairs the UK Tech Cluster Group and advises on the Government's Digital Skills Council. This ensures we're not only supporting businesses locally but also influencing the policies shaping the UK's digital future.

Since 2001, Manchester Digital has been a trusted leader in Greater Manchester's tech ecosystem, helping hundreds of businesses scale and succeed. Over two decades, we've combined local insights and industry expertise to deliver real impact.

In 2023, we launched the Startup Activator, empowering over 350 individuals through events, initiatives, and community-building. Our Initiate Cohort Programme has supported 100 founders across Greater Manchester, with over 62% of participants from underrepresented groups.

350 individuals supported

62% diversity amongst participants

20 events hosted

8 webinars hosted

Why you should join us

Core sustainability investment

Your sponsorship powers vital programmes, events and initiatives for early-stage businesses across Greater Manchester. By supporting the next generation of innovators, you're helping to drive growth, resilience and prosperity across the region's digital economy.

Shape the ecosystem

Play an active role in shaping the future of Greater Manchester's startup ecosystem. Contribute to important policy conversations, collaborate with other stakeholders, and help define what the region needs to thrive.

Be recognised as a leader

Showcase your commitment to the region's success. Gain recognition as a key partner in supporting tech businesses, demonstrating leadership and excellence in driving meaningful change.

Promote fairness, equality and diversity

Champion a more inclusive ecosystem by helping to break down barriers for founders from all walks of life. Your involvement ensures equitable growth opportunities, regardless of diverse socioeconomic status, genders, ethnicities, sexual orientations and those with mental or physical health conditions.

Give back and inspire

Give early-stage founders the opportunities, resources, and connections they need to succeed. Together, we'll create a stronger, more connected community of innovators.

Fostering connections

Access unique opportunities to connect with and build relationships with early-stage businesses and founders from the very beginning of their growth journey.

Partner packages



Transformational Headline Partner

£20,000+VAT investment

We're seeking a visionary partner to take centre stage as the champion of Greater Manchester's entrepreneurial ecosystem. As the headline sponsor, you'll connect with ambitious startups and scaleups, positioning your organisation as a key driver of innovation and growth.

Through thought leadership opportunities like fireside chats, panel discussions, and bespoke events, you'll share your expertise, build relationships, and inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs. Together, we'll create a programme that uplifts the startup community and solidifies your role as a trusted partner in their success.

Benefits include:

- **Exclusive leadership role:** Headline recognition across all Startup Activator initiatives, including at our Startup Conference and in our monthly newsletter.
- **Custom engagement:** Up to three bespoke Innovation Insights Days designed in collaboration with Manchester Digital are available. A mixed-method delivery is available: insight days hosted onsite at the sponsor's office or insight breakfasts/'lunch and learns' / workshops hosted by Manchester Digital.
- **Participation invitations:** To policy-shaping discussions, ministerial roundtables, exclusive meetups with other partners.
- **Thought leadership speaking:** Up to two guaranteed speaking or panel slots or workshop participation at other Startup Activator or Manchester Digital events.

- **Thought leadership insights:** Up to three blogs or articles featured across Manchester Digital's platforms.
- **Thought leadership content:** A thought leadership piece in the Startup Annual Review.
- **Presence:** Premium placement at all events and on Startup Activator channels.
- **Impact:** Co-designed success stories shared widely to inspire others.
- **Showcase:** A premium dedicated page on our Startup Activator Portal with opportunities to submit credited content and resources.
- **Social reach:** A monthly original social post across MD channels and further repost opportunities.
- **Account management:** Monthly meetings with the Startup team to review delivery, evaluate progress against agreed goals and identify opportunities for growth and engagement.
- **Network engagement:** Four places at our Startup Activator Partners Dinner - an exclusive private dining opportunity to network and foster collaboration and client opportunities with other supporters, featuring an after-dinner speaker.
- **Community engagement:** Five tickets to our Startup Activator conference and at Startup Activator open events.

**Ready to lead the charge in Greater Manchester's entrepreneurial ecosystem?
Let's discuss how you can become our Transformational Headline Partner.**

Growth Catalyst Partners

£10,000+VAT investment

We're inviting a consortium of trusted partners to collaborate in driving the growth of Greater Manchester's startups as they scale. This sponsorship tier offers a unique opportunity to actively engage with ambitious businesses, providing them with the tools and resources they need to succeed.

As a partner, you'll play a vital role in supporting operational success, connecting directly with high-growth startups, and showcasing your expertise in helping businesses scale. Together, we'll catalyse the next wave of innovation, building a stronger, more resilient ecosystem that delivers lasting impact.

Benefits include:

- **Custom engagement:** Co-host a minimum of one event (e.g., workshops, insight breakfasts, lunch and learns, or social/networking meetups) for an engaged audience, including the option to hold drop-in clinics.
- **Thought leadership speaking:** One guaranteed speaking, panel slot, or workshop participation at another Startup Activator or Manchester Digital event.
- **Executive forum:** A quarterly steering group meeting with other Growth Catalyst partners.
- **Thought leadership content:** Up to two blogs or articles featured across Manchester Digital's platforms.
- **Presence:** Visibility across appropriate events, materials, and digital platforms.
- **Showcase:** A dedicated page on our Startup Activator Portal with opportunities to submit credited content and resources.

- **Social reach:** A quarterly original social post across MD channels and further opportunities for reposts.
- **Account management:** A monthly meeting with our Startup Activator team to review delivery, evaluate progress against agreed goals, address challenges, and identify opportunities for further growth and engagement.
- **Network engagement:** Two places at our Startup Activator Partners Dinner – an exclusive private dining opportunity to network and foster collaboration and client opportunities with other supporters, featuring an after-dinner speaker.
- **Community engagement:** Three tickets to our Startup Activator conference and at Startup Activator open events.

Be a part of Greater Manchester’s growth story by driving innovation and supporting startups and scaleups in the region.

Insight Partners

£7,000+VAT investment

As an Insight Partner, you'll have the opportunity to showcase your expertise and influence by contributing research, insights, and thought leadership to Greater Manchester's startup ecosystem. Your involvement will strengthen initiatives, providing valuable perspectives that shape the future of business growth in the region. This is an opportunity to position your organisation as a trusted voice in the startup community while driving meaningful, long-term impact through your contributions.

Benefits include:

- **Thought leadership speaking:** One guaranteed speaking, panel slot, or workshop participation at Startup Activator or Manchester Digital events, including the option to hold drop-in clinics.
- **Thought leadership insights:** Up to two blogs or articles showcasing the sponsor's expertise featured across Manchester Digital's platforms.
- **Thought leadership content:** A feature in the Startup Annual Review.
- **Presence:** Visibility across appropriate events, materials, and digital platforms.
- **Showcase:** A dedicated page on our Startup Activator Portal with opportunities to submit credited content and resources and insights.
- **Social reach:** A quarterly original social post across MD channels and further repost opportunities.
- **Account management:** A monthly meeting with our Startup Activator team to discuss any insights/trends both parties see in the market.

- **Network engagement:** Two places at our Startup Activator Partners Dinner – an exclusive private dining opportunity to network and foster collaboration and client opportunities with other supporters, featuring an after-dinner speaker.
- **Community engagement:** Three tickets to our Startup Activator conference and at Startup Activator open events.

Let's explore how your insights can shape the future of Greater Manchester's startups.

Inspire Partners

£4,000+VAT investment

As a Support Partner, you'll align with our mission to empower Greater Manchester's early-stage ecosystem while maintaining a lighter-touch involvement. Your support will help us deliver high-quality programmes and connections, ensuring startups have the resources they need to thrive and contribute to the region's growth. This partnership allows you to play a meaningful role in fuelling innovation and supporting the success of emerging businesses in the local economy.

Benefits include:

- **Presence:** Visibility across appropriate events, materials, and digital platforms.
- **Showcase:** A dedicated page on our Startup Activator Portal with opportunities to submit credited content and resources.
- **Social reach:** A social post across MD channels every six months.
- **Content feature:** One blog or article featured across Manchester Digital's platforms.
- **Account management:** A quarterly meeting with our Startup Activator team to update you on the support you're funding and insights and trends we are seeing.
- **Network engagement:** A place at our Startup Activator Partners Dinner - an exclusive private dining opportunity to network and foster collaboration and client opportunities with other supporters, featuring an after-dinner speaker.
- **Community engagement:** One ticket to our Startup Activator conference and at Startup Activator open events.

Play a role in shaping the future by supporting tomorrow's innovators through a flexible partnership.

Ally Partners

From £1,000+VAT investment

This is a chance to give back to Greater Manchester's thriving startup ecosystem. Whether you're an experienced professional or a growing organisation, your support will directly help the next generation of innovators succeed.

This package offers a meaningful way to contribute to the region's tech community, empowering startups and making a tangible impact on the future of innovation in Greater Manchester.

Benefits include:

- **Recognition:** Listed as a Startup Activator Supporter on the website and digital assets.
- **Content feature:** Possible blog or article based on relevance.
- **Showcase:** A dedicated page on our Startup Activator Portal with opportunities to submit credited content and resources.
- **Social reach:** A social post calling out their contribution and highlighting their work to support startups.
- **Network engagement:** A place at our Startup Activator Partners Dinner – an exclusive private dining opportunity to network and foster collaboration and client opportunities with other supporters, featuring an after-dinner speaker.
- **Community engagement:** One ticket to our Startup Activator conference and at Startup Activator open events.
- *Further bespoke benefits, such as additional events, can be discussed.*

Be part of the journey of shaping tomorrow's innovators. Join as an Ally today.

Bespoke

Our partnerships are designed to achieve a shared goal: strengthening Greater Manchester's startup and scaleup community, ensuring its creative heritage and entrepreneurial fire continues to be fuelled.

We understand that every partner brings unique strengths and objectives, so we offer tailored sponsorship packages that align with your goals while driving mutual benefit.

Let's collaborate to create something impactful - to support innovation, foster growth and make a lasting difference for the region's entrepreneurs.

As a bespoke partner, you'll also have first refusal to support and participate in our Startup Conference, ensuring your contribution has maximum visibility and impact.

Ready to shape the future of Greater Manchester's innovators? Let's start the conversation.

Contact information

Join us in shaping the future of Greater Manchester's digital economy. Contact us today to start the conversation.



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