

# **University of Edinburgh AI Accelerator programme helping emerging companies**

**The University of Edinburgh's AI for good accelerator programme will help 13 companies based in Scotland and all over the world which are focused on using AI (artificial intelligence) in a beneficial way.**

This year the companies chosen include Kenya-based Agritech Analytics founded by Maryanne Gichanga which uses technology to tackle annual crop losses in Africa caused by pests, diseases and climate change. Another in the programme is Edinburgh based Black Goblin which creates an all-inclusive collaboration platform enabling independent content creators to design sound. Happitech is a Netherlands based company using smartphone technology to provide a transformative solution in addressing heart disease.

The companies chosen must use AI for "wider societal benefit to deliver solutions in core areas such as health and wellbeing, social care, and environmental sustainability". The programme offers a package of support such as building connections and leadership mentoring.

Professor Ruth King, Director of the University of Edinburgh's Bayes Centre, said: "We warmly congratulate the 13 companies which have been selected for this year's AI Accelerator programme through a highly competitive process. The cohort

includes a diverse group of companies that are using AI innovation to drive progress in addressing societal challenges in key areas including healthcare and climate change.

“This programme has a clear focus in helping AI-driven businesses further commercialise their proposition to make them world-leading companies. As we have seen from the progress of many of its former participants, the programme has a proud record in helping AI innovators scale up and attract investment to help maximise their full potential.”

John Brodie, who was appointed last year as the AI Accelerator programme’s Entrepreneur in Residence, said: “As an entrepreneur who is passionate about driving actionable data science projects and enabling early-stage businesses to scale, I am incredibly excited to be once again working with the companies involved in this year’s AI Accelerator. The engagement of world-leading, innovative businesses from Scotland, the UK and across the globe underline the impact of this highly-regarded programme in developing AI-for-good solutions.”

Scottish Innovation Minister Richard Lochhead MSP said: “Most experts agree that the impact of artificial intelligence on our lives will be huge, and that if we do it right, AI can do a lot of good, from designing new drugs to tackling the climate emergency. Artificial intelligence has, however, triggered heated worldwide debate.

“We are working to make Scotland a world leader in the development and use of artificial intelligence in a way which is trustworthy, ethical and inclusive. To do so we must rise to the challenges and opportunities, which will be felt across our economy and society.

“The Scottish Government’s new Programme for Government recognises big data and artificial intelligence as a key growth sector, and programmes such as the University of

Edinburgh's AI Accelerator are already demonstrating the significant role Scotland is playing in this important exciting industry. The Accelerator's themes – climate, health and AI for good – chime with our objective that Scotland maximises both the potential economic and social benefits of AI.”

AIA is delivered by the Bayes Centre on behalf of the Data-Driven Innovation hubs, which help organisations tackle challenges of industry and society. Support is also provided by Edinburgh Innovations, the University of Edinburgh's commercialisation service.



Katy Guthrie, AI Accelerator Programme Manager and the cohort for this year's programme.