SUPERTEAM UK

Early-Stage Funding Playbook

Less-Obvious Capital Sources for UK Web3 Startups

February 2026

Executive Summary

This report maps early-stage funding channels that are either overlooked, under-utilised, or uniquely suited to UK-based Web3 startups. Rather than listing mainstream crypto VCs, we focus on five categories of opportunity: angel syndicates with warm-in pathways, startup pitch competitions, accelerators that include direct funding, government and DAO grants, and innovative alternative mechanisms.

A recurring theme is the advantage available to Web3 founders who present themselves effectively to non-Web3-native investors and grant programmes. The UK's SEIS/EIS tax framework makes the country one of the most angel-friendly jurisdictions in the world, and many syndicates actively look for under-the-radar technology sectors. Web3 can land strongly here when positioned as 'fintech infrastructure', 'distributed computing', or 'digital ownership' — language that resonates with non-crypto angels.

1. Angel Syndicates

The following syndicates represent the best blend of openness to technology-forward bets, SEIS/EIS eligibility (critical for early-stage UK startups), and clear application pathways. Entries are deliberately weighted toward less well-known groups.

1.1 Ventures Together (VT)

One of the UK's most active but least-publicised angel groups. VT is made up of over 150 top UK startup founders and operators who collectively back up to two startups per week — a pace that dwarfs most formal syndicates. Because members are operators rather than professional investors, they are considerably more open to emerging and disruptive technology sectors, including Web3, than traditional angel networks.

Cheque Size	£20k – £200k per deal, sometimes more via follow-on
Stage	Pre-seed and Seed
Sectors	Sector-agnostic; strong appetite for technology and founder-led businesses
Pitch Process	Apply via venturestogeher.com; screening call with team, then presentation to syndicate members
Warm In	Reach any VT portfolio founder via LinkedIn and ask for an intro — member-recommended deals move fastest
Website	venturestogether.com

Why for Superteam: VT's operator-founders understand technical products, network effects, and token-adjacent go-to-market strategies better than most angels. Frame your Web3 product around real user problems and revenue, not tokenomics.

1.2 Firestartr

A London-based seed syndicate of domain experts focused on digital startups. The model is deal-by-deal, with angels pooling on a pledge basis rather than through a formal fund. Firestartr has backed over 30 companies in FinTech, SaaS, Cybersecurity, Big Data, and RegTech — sectors that naturally intersect with Web3 infrastructure plays.

Cheque Size	~$100k average; up to $2m in follow-ons
Stage	Seed (SEIS/EIS eligible)
Sectors	FinTech, Big Data, Cybersecurity, SaaS, RegTech — London-based or willing to locate
Pitch Process	Open to enquiries via firestartr.co; deals typically introduced through network, but founders can reach out directly
Warm In	The best route is via a portfolio founder. Search "Firestartr portfolio" on LinkedIn to find investees and request intros
Key Contact	Simon Cook (Managing Partner) — linkedin.com/in/simonwcook
Website	firestartr.co

Why for Superteam: The RegTech and FinTech focus is directly relevant to DeFi, tokenised assets, stablecoin payment infrastructure, and compliant digital asset custody plays. Lead with the compliance and infrastructure narrative.

1.3 Ascension Syndicate Club

The angel co-investment arm of Ascension VC, one of the UK's most active seed-stage funds. Individual angels co-invest alongside Ascension's fund on a deal-by-deal basis. The syndicate is sector-agnostic but has a documented interest in FinTech and digitally-native B2B businesses. SEIS/EIS-eligible deals only.

Cheque Size	£5,000 – £300,000 per angel; average £25,000
Stage	Seed; looks at 3,000+ opportunities per year
Sectors	FinTech, B2B SaaS, Climate Tech, Life Sciences; sector-agnostic fund layer
Pitch Process	Apply via weareascension.co — the VC team screens first; strong deals are presented to the syndicate
Warm In	Request office hours via the Ascension website before formal application. The team runs 'Surgery' sessions for early conversations
Key Contact	Sonal Patel (Investment Director) — linkedin.com/in/sonalpatel99
Website	weareascension.co

1.4 NorthInvest Angel Network

The primary angel network for Northern England, supporting tech and digital startups aligned with the Northern Powerhouse initiative. Significantly less competitive than London-based syndicates and actively seeking digital-first companies. Important for Superteam UK founders based outside London.

Cheque Size	£25,000 – £1m (individual investors); SEIS/EIS only

Stage	Early-stage; 10 investments per year
Sectors	Technology, Digital Media, FinTech, Big Data, AI, Cybersecurity, EdTech
Pitch Process	Apply via northinvest.co.uk; pitches to investor panel after shortlisting
Key Contact	info@northinvest.co.uk
Website	northinvest.co.uk

1.5 Clearly Social Angels

A lesser-known angel network that meets bi-monthly and specifically backs startups creating innovative solutions to social problems — including those touching financial inclusion, identity, and fair access to capital. Web3 projects with a clear social impact thesis (remittances, DeFi for the underbanked, decentralised identity) are a natural fit.

Cheque Size	£300,000 – £1.5m in debt or equity
Stage	Early-stage, UK-focused
Sectors	Impact tech, social enterprise, fintech-for-good; technology-enabled social solutions
Pitch Process	Apply via clearlyso.com; quarterly open calls
Warm In	Reach out to Clearly Social via Twitter/LinkedIn with a 2-sentence impact pitch; they are publicly accessible and respond well to direct outreach
Website	clearlyso.com

1.6 AngelClubRCA (Royal College of Art)

A small, high-quality angel network affiliated with the Royal College of Art's InnovationRCA incubator. The focus on design-led, human-centred businesses means this group is particularly well-suited to Web3 consumer apps, NFT platforms, digital identity, and UX-forward DeFi products. Investments range from £10k to £500k and the process is relationship-driven.

Cheque Size	£10,000 – £500,000
Stage	Early-stage; RCA alumni or design-adjacent ventures preferred
Sectors	Design-led tech, digital products, consumer Web3, digital fashion, creative tooling
Pitch Process	Invitation via RCA's InnovationRCA incubator; founders can approach the network via the RCA Enterprise team
Key Contact	enterprise@rca.ac.uk
Website	rca.ac.uk/research-innovation/innovationrca/

1.7 SFC Capital (Startup Funding Club)

One of the most active SEIS investors in the UK by deal count, investing in 50+ companies per year. SFC runs both an angel network and a SEIS fund, making it easy to access both institutional and individual capital in a single process. The volume of investments and sector-agnostic mandate make it among the highest-probability routes for any qualifying UK startup, including Web3.

Cheque Size	£100,000 – £500,000
Stage	Seed; SEIS/EIS required

Sectors	All sectors except Life Sciences, Engineering, Deep Tech, Gambling, Alcohol
Pitch Process	Apply via startupfundingclub.com; rolling applications reviewed weekly
Key Contact	Louis Coppey (Partner, investor relations) — linkedin.com/in/louiscoppey
Website	startupfundingclub.com

2. Startup Competitions & Pitch Events

Competitions serve two purposes: direct cash prizes (non-dilutive) and investor exposure. The events below are either specifically open to Web3 companies or actively welcome them, and offer meaningful prize pools or investor access.

2.1 The Pitch (SeedLegals)

The UK and Ireland's largest early-stage pitching competition, run by SeedLegals. Applications for the 2026 edition are open now. There are regional finals (winners receive £2k in prizes) culminating in a national final with a £25k prize package. The competition is sector-agnostic, explicitly welcomes digital and fintech businesses, and is deliberately accessible — any early-stage UK startup can apply for free.

Prize	£25k package (national final); £2k (regional finals)
Eligibility	Any UK or Ireland early-stage startup; no sector restriction
Applications	Open now for 2026; apply at thepitch.uk
Format	Online application → regional heats (in person, various UK cities) → national final in London
Key Contact	holly@seedlegals.com
Website	thepitch.uk

2.2 NatWest Accelerator Pitch

NatWest launched a £1 million prize pot competition series in 2025, running multiple competitions with £100k per round. Entry is via a 60-second video pitch. No business banking requirement. Any UK-registered business can enter. Finals are held in London and Manchester. The next round is expected in early 2026 — monitor the NatWest Accelerator social channels for announcement.

Prize	£100,000 per competition (grant, non-repayable)
Eligibility	Any UK-registered business; not exclusive to NatWest customers
Format	60-second video + short application → five finalists selected → live final (10 min pitch + Q&A)
Applications	Monitor natwestacceleratorpitch.co.uk for next round opening (expected Q1 2026)
Website	natwestacceleratorpitch.co.uk

2.3 Santander X UK Awards

Annual competition open to UK university entrepreneurs and early-stage SMEs. The winners of the UK final compete in the pan-European Santander X Global Award. The 2025 edition offered a share of £135k in equity-free funding. The competition has historically been open to all sectors and several FinTech/blockchain businesses have previously advanced to the final.

Prize	Share of £135,000 equity-free funding; winners progress to global competition
Eligibility	UK university students, graduates, or early-stage SMEs
Applications	Annual cycle; typically opens January – April each year. Apply via santanderx.com
Website	santanderx.com

2.4 Tata Varsity Pitch (Centre for Entrepreneurs)

One of the UK's longest-running student pitch competitions, hosted during Global Entrepreneurship Week each November. The champion receives £15,000 in cash. Open to student and graduate businesses across five categories. Superteam UK founders currently at university or who graduated recently (within 1–2 years) should apply. Historically open to tech businesses of all kinds.

Prize	£15,000 (champion); £2,500 each (two runners-up); £25,000 total pot
Eligibility	UK student or graduate founders (within ~2 years of graduation)
Applications	Opens annually in September; finals during Global Entrepreneurship Week in November
Website	varsitypitch.org
Key Contact	Centre for Entrepreneurs: centreforentrepreneurs.org

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2.5 Hello Tomorrow Global Challenge (Deep Tech)

A Paris-based but internationally open deep-tech competition that selects 'Deep Tech Pioneers' and gives winners up to €100k in equity-free funding. Blockchain infrastructure, cryptography, and ZK-proof projects are regularly accepted. Selected pioneers gain access to major corporates and investors in Paris. Applications for the 2025/26 edition opened in September 2025.

Prize	Up to €100,000 equity-free funding for winners; non-financial benefits for all selected Pioneers
Eligibility	Global; UK companies fully eligible
Applications	Deadline typically end of November; finals at Hello Tomorrow Summit in June 2026
Website	hello-tomorrow.org

2.6 London Blockchain Conference (LBC) Startup Pitch

One of the UK's largest enterprise blockchain events (5,000+ attendees). LBC typically runs a startup pitch track where early-stage teams compete in front of institutional investors, corporates, and government stakeholders. This is particularly powerful for startups building blockchain infrastructure, tokenised RWAs, or digital identity solutions. The in-person event also allows for direct relationship-building with attendees from finance, government, and technology.

Focus	Enterprise blockchain, tokenisation, DeFi, AI x blockchain, digital identity
Audience	Institutional investors, corporate innovation heads, UK government officials
When	Annual; typically May/June in London
Website	londonblockchain.net

3. Accelerators with Direct Funding

3.1 Outlier Ventures Base Camp — Post Web Programme

The world's leading Web3 accelerator by volume. Base Camp is a fully remote 12-week programme. The current flagship cohort targets founders building across DeAI, DeFi, RWA, and DePIN. Teams receive an upfront stipend at programme start plus the potential for follow-on investment. Outlier's alumni have raised a combined $250m+ in seed capital, and the network of 400+ mentors is unmatched in the Web3 space.

Investment	Upfront stipend + potential follow-on up to ~$200,000; terms vary by cohort
Duration	12 weeks, fully remote
Focus	DeAI, DeFi, RWA, DePIN, Post Web infrastructure
Applications	Now accepting early applications for 2026 cohort at outlierventures.io/base-camp
Key Contact	basecamp@outlierventures.io
Key Person	Jamie Burke (CEO) — linkedin.com/in/jamie-burke-outlier-ventures
Website	outlierventures.io/base-camp

Why for Superteam: This is the single highest-value accelerator for Solana ecosystem builders. The combination of cash, protocol partnerships (Polkadot, NEAR, Aptos), and fundraising support makes it transformative for pre-seed Web3 teams.

3.2 Gate Ventures x Superteam UK x Cambridge Blockchain Society Programme

A bespoke programme co-launched by Gate Ventures, Solana Superteam UK, and the Cambridge Blockchain Society. This is specifically designed for academic founders building at the intersection of blockchain and AI, with priority for teams from top UK academic institutions. Investment tickets range from $100,000 to $1,000,000 with flexible timelines and hands-on post-investment support.

Investment	$100,000 – $1,000,000 per team
Focus	Blockchain infrastructure, DeFi, AI-powered applications on Solana
Eligibility	Early-stage academic founders; Cambridge and other top UK universities prioritised
Applications	Live; apply at superteamuk.typeform.com/gate-cambridge
Key Contact	ventures@gate.com

3.3 Entrepreneur First (EF) — London

EF is a talent investor that backs individuals before there is even a co-founder or idea. The London programme runs twice a year. EF has a documented history of building Web3 companies (Aztec Protocol, Voltz, Bluejay Finance) and actively recruits those with blockchain expertise. The programme invests cash and provides structured co-founder matching, culminating in a Demo Day in front of hundreds of seed VCs.

Investment	~£80,000 pre-seed; opportunity for follow-on from EF fund and Demo Day investors
Duration	~6 months (Form + Launch phases); cohorts run Spring and Autumn
Focus	Sector-agnostic; specifically recruits individuals with blockchain/Web3 expertise
Applications	Rolling; apply at apply.joinef.com

Key Contact	hello@joinef.com; Alice Bentinck (CEO) — linkedin.com/in/alicebentinck
Website	joinef.com

Why for Superteam: EF is ideal for technically strong individuals who do not yet have a co-founder. The Web3 ecosystem built at EF is deeply connected to a16z and Paradigm. EF alumni who graduate into these Tier-1 VCs are reachable warm intros via LinkedIn.

3.4 HelpBnk x Superteam UK Future Fund

A $100k grant fund and accelerator programme specifically for UK founders leveraging Web3. This is the most direct and accessible programme for Superteam UK startups. Grants range from $2,000 to $10,000 (non-dilutive), released in milestones. Standout teams are fast-tracked into accelerators offering hundreds of thousands in further investment. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis.

Investment	$2,000 – $10,000 grant (non-repayable, non-dilutive)
Eligibility	UK-based founders and teams; internet and Web3-focused projects
Focus	Digital economy, Web3, community ownership, open infrastructure
Applications	Rolling; apply at uk.superteam.fun
Bonus	Top teams gain fast-track access to accelerators worth ‘hundreds of thousands’

3.5 Seedcamp

One of Europe’s most respected early-stage funds with accelerator DNA. Seedcamp runs a networked model (not a traditional cohort programme) and has explicitly listed crypto/Web3 among its active sectors. The fund backs pre-seed and seed companies, typically writing the first institutional cheque. Entry is via a direct application; Seedcamp also runs regular Office Hours sessions that are a lower-stakes entry point.

Investment	Typically leads or anchors early rounds; cheque size undisclosed but significant
Focus	Fintech, SaaS, infrastructure, AI, crypto/Web3
Office Hours	Regular sessions open to all founders; apply via seedcamp.com/office-hours
Applications	Rolling; seedcamp.com
Key Contact	Carlos Espinal (Managing Partner) — linkedin.com/in/cee
Website	seedcamp.com

4. Grants (Government, Ecosystem & DAOs)

4.1 Innovate UK Smart Grants (UKRI)

The UK government's flagship innovation grant programme, run by Innovate UK. Grants of £100,000 – £500,000 for 6–18 month projects, or up to £2m for longer projects. Open to any UK-registered SME in any technology sector. Blockchain startup Millicent won a Smart Grant for digital finance infrastructure, demonstrating that Web3 projects are fundable here when framed around economic benefit, financial inclusion, or infrastructure innovation. Smart Grants are paused for a new pilot in Spring 2025 but the main programme continues quarterly.

Grant Size	£100,000 – £500,000 (6–18 months); up to £2m (longer projects)
Eligibility	UK-registered SME; project activity must occur in the UK
Assessment	Innovation impact, market opportunity, economic benefit to the UK, team capability
How to Apply	apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk
Key Contact	support@iuk.ukri.org | 0300 321 4357
Tip	Frame your Web3 project as 'distributed ledger infrastructure' or 'digital finance' rather than 'crypto' for assessors

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4.2 Solana Foundation Grants & Convertible Grants

The Solana Foundation runs a rolling grants programme open to all builders on Solana. Three types are available: standard grants (for open-source public goods), convertible grants (for commercial projects, convert to investment if milestones are hit), and direct investments (for commercial ventures actively raising). All applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. As a Superteam UK project, you have an institutional connection that meaningfully improves your application's standing.

Grant Types	Standard (public goods); Convertible (milestone-based); Investment (commercial)
Eligibility	Open globally; UK startups fully eligible
Focus	Developer tooling, validator infrastructure, open-source SDKs, community resources, DeFi, consumer applications
How to Apply	solana.org/grants — rolling applications reviewed by subject-matter experts
Tip	Superteam UK membership is a credibility signal. Mention it in your application and reference the UK grants programme: earn.superteam.fun/grants/solana-foundation-uk-grants/

4.3 Gitcoin Grants (Quadratic Funding)

Gitcoin is the most significant community-funding mechanism in the Ethereum ecosystem. Each quarter (GG rounds), projects apply to participate in funding rounds where community donations are amplified by a matching pool. The more individual contributors, the larger your match — making community-building as important as funding. GG24 ran in October–November 2025 with $1.2m+ distributed across 235 projects. GG25 is expected in early–mid 2026.

Mechanism	Quadratic Funding: community donations amplified by matching pool based on number of unique donors
Rounds	4x per year; rounds typically last 2 weeks. Applications open ~2 weeks before donations begin

Best For	Open-source tooling, public goods, developer education, Ethereum/Solana ecosystem contributions
How to Apply	grants.gitcoin.co — create a project profile and apply to eligible rounds
Tip	Build your donor community before the round opens. Even 200 small donors (e.g. £1 each) can result in $5,000–$15,000 in matched funds

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4.4 Outlier Ventures / Protocol Ecosystem Grants

Many blockchain protocols offer grants to teams building on their networks. Several are directly accessible to UK startups and require no prior relationship. The following are currently active and accepting applications:

- Polkadot Treasury / Web3 Foundation Grants — grants.web3.foundation. Focus: open-source software, Polkadot/Substrate ecosystem. Rolling applications reviewed quarterly.
- Ethereum Foundation Grants — esp.ethereum.foundation. Focus: developer tools, research, L2 infrastructure. Application by email: esp@ethereum.foundation
- Solana Mobile Builder Grants — solanamobile.com/grants. Focus: mobile-first Solana dApps. Rolling applications.
- 1inch Foundation Grants — $3m in 1INCH tokens for community dev, research, and network development. Focus: DeFi, analytics. Apply via 1inch.io/foundation
- Kadena Grants ($50m programme, 2025) — $25m for RWA projects; $25m for EVM/AI innovation. Rolling, 2–4 week decision timeline. Apply at kadena.io/grants

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4.5 DCMS Creative Industries and Digital Economy Grants

The UK Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) and its associated bodies periodically run grant programmes for digital economy innovation. The Creative Industries Clusters programme has previously funded blockchain provenance and digital ownership projects. Grants typically range from £50,000 to £500,000. Monitor the DCMS website and the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) for relevant calls.

Grant Size	£50,000 – £500,000 (varies by programme)
Focus	Digital economy, creative industries, data-driven innovation, digital ownership
Monitor	gov.uk/dcms and ukri.org/councils/ahrc/
Tip	NFT provenance, creator economy tools, and digital collectibles map well to creative industries framing

5. Innovative & Alternative Funding Mechanisms

5.1 SEIS/EIS — The Underused Structural Advantage

The UK's Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS) and Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS) are the single most powerful tools available to any UK early-stage startup. Under SEIS, individual investors can claim 50% income tax relief on investments up to £200,000 per tax year. Under EIS, the relief is 30% on up to £1m. For Web3 startups, this creates a strong financial incentive for traditional investors who might otherwise hesitate at the sector risk.

Many Web3 startups fail to claim SEIS/EIS advance assurance before fundraising, making them unappealing to SEIS/EIS-focused syndicates (which represent the majority of UK angel capital). Claiming advance assurance from HMRC before pitching dramatically increases the number of syndicates accessible to you.

Action	Apply for SEIS/EIS Advance Assurance via HMRC before your first investor conversation: gov.uk/guidance/venture-capital-schemes-apply-for-the-enterprise-investment-scheme
Cost	Free to apply (or ~£1,500 with a solicitor to improve odds)
Impact	Opens the majority of UK angel syndicate capital, which is SEIS/EIS-gated

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5.2 Revenue-Based Financing via Clearco / Capchase

For Web3 startups with predictable protocol revenue, subscription income, or recurring transaction fees, revenue-based financing (RBF) is a non-dilutive alternative to equity. Clearco and Capchase both operate in the UK. The advance is typically 30–5x monthly revenue, repaid as a percentage of future revenues. This is ideal as bridge financing between grants and a formal seed round.

Advance Size	Typically 3–30x monthly revenue (£10k – £2m)
Eligibility	Requires 3–12 months of consistent revenue data; crypto/stablecoin revenue may need to be shown in fiat terms
Providers	Clearco (getclearco.com) | Capchase (capchase.com) | Pipe (pipe.com)

5.3 Token Generation Events & Community Rounds as Bootstrap

For projects that are genuinely decentralised protocols (not equity-structured), a well-structured token launch or community round can provide the initial capital needed to reach seed metrics. Gitcoin Grants and Juicebox (juicebox.money) allow Web3 projects to crowdfund from their community in a transparent, onchain manner. This is not a replacement for equity investment but can fund an MVP to the point where traditional investors are willing to engage.

Tools	Gitcoin Grants (QF rounds); Juicebox (onchain crowdfunding); Bonfire (token pre-sales for communities)
Best For	Open-source protocol infrastructure, developer tooling, public goods
Caution	UK regulatory treatment of token sales is evolving; take legal advice before any public token sale

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5.4 Colosseum Hackathons (Solana) — Prize to Accelerator Pipeline

Colosseum runs the official Solana hackathons and operates a direct pipeline from hackathon winner to accelerator investment. Select winners receive pre-seed funding, mentorship, technical resources, and a

fast-track into the Colosseum accelerator. For builders already in the Solana ecosystem, this is one of the fastest routes to a funded company. Hackathons are run quarterly at colosseum.org.

Investment	Pre-seed funding (amount undisclosed; typically $25k–$250k)
Eligibility	Open globally; Solana builders
Process	Enter hackathon at colosseum.org → win/place → apply to Colosseum accelerator
Website	colosseum.org

5.5 Corporate Innovation Programmes

Several major UK corporates run innovation programmes that provide non-dilutive funding, pilots, and partner intros to early-stage startups. These are particularly valuable for Web3 startups with a clear enterprise or financial services use case:

- Barclays Accelerator (powered by Techstars) — Fintech and PayTech. £120k investment + corporate mentorship. Apply via techstars.com/accelerators/barclays
- HSBC Digital Innovation Fund — pilot programmes for digital asset custody, tokenised payments, and trade finance. Contact via innovation.hsbc.com
- Mastercard Lighthouse FINITIV — supports fintech startups including digital assets. Applications via mastercardlighthouse.com
- Lloyds Banking Group Innovation Lab — blockchain and digital currency pilots. Contact via lloydsbankinggroup.com/ourgroup/innovation

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5.6 University Proof-of-Concept Funds

UK universities hold significant proof-of-concept (PoC) grant budgets, typically £2,000–£25,000 per project, aimed at taking early-stage research ideas to MVP. These are accessible via university technology transfer offices and are particularly valuable for founders with any academic connection:

- UCL Technology Fund (ucltech.co.uk) — Up to £25k for UCL-connected founders; applications rolling
- Imperial Enterprise Lab — Proof of concept grants and co-working; imperialenterpriselab.com
- Oxfordshire/Oxford University Innovation Fund — Sterling Road grants of £1,000 each to Oxford founders (eship.ox.ac.uk)
- Edinburgh Launch Point Fund — Share of £4,000 for University of Edinburgh student/graduate founders (uoe-edinburgh-innovations.ed.ac.uk)

6. Warm-In Strategy for Superteam UK Founders

Cold applications to angel syndicates rarely succeed. The following tactical approaches are specifically actionable for founders in the Superteam UK network.

6.1 Leverage the Superteam Alumni Network

Superteam UK has facilitated $15.7m in fundraising and has portfolio companies backed by a16z, Pantera Capital, and Innovate UK. Each of those funded founders is a warm entry point into their investor's portfolio. A message via the Superteam UK Discord or Twitter asking for an intro to a specific investor from someone who has already been backed by that investor is the highest-ROI activity available.

6.2 Build in Public Before You Pitch

Angel syndicates increasingly check social presence and builder credibility. Sharing weekly build updates on Twitter/X, writing Superteam UK blog posts about your technical work, and demonstrating community traction (even small numbers) creates a track record that investors can reference before a pitch. This is especially important for crypto-adjacent syndicates where pseudonymous founders are common.

6.3 The Accelerator-as-Signal Strategy

Getting into Outlier Ventures Base Camp, EF, or the Gate Ventures x Cambridge programme dramatically de-risks you for follow-on angel capital. Even being shortlisted (not accepted) signals credibility. Apply to accelerators first, then use the process (acceptance, mentorship letters, LOIs) as social proof in angel outreach.

6.4 SEIS Advance Assurance as Unlock

Getting HMRC SEIS advance assurance turns your startup from 'risky crypto bet' to 'tax-efficient investment' in the eyes of UK angels. File for this before pitching any SEIS/EIS-focused syndicate (which is most of them). The application takes 4–8 weeks and is free.

Appendix: Quick-Reference Contact Table

Key contacts and application URLs for all opportunities listed in this report.

Opportunity	Type	Contact / Apply	Key Person / LinkedIn
Ventures Together	Angel Syndicate	venturestogether.com	LinkedIn: search 'Ventures Together'
Firestartr	Angel Syndicate	firestartr.co	Simon Cook — linkedin.com/in/simonwcook
Ascension Syndicate	Angel Syndicate	weareascension.co	Sonal Patel — linkedin.com/in/sonalpatel99
NorthInvest	Angel Syndicate	info@northinvest.co.uk	northinvest.co.uk
Clearly Social Angels	Angel Syndicate	clearlyso.com	clearlyso.com/contact
SFC Capital	Angel Syndicate	startupfundingclub.com	Louis Coppey — linkedin.com/in/louiscoppey
The Pitch (SeedLegals)	Competition	thepitch.uk	holly@seedlegals.com
NatWest Accelerator Pitch	Competition	natwestacceleratorpitch.co.uk	natwestacceleratorpitch.co.uk
Santander X UK	Competition	santanderx.com	santanderx.com
Tata Varsity Pitch	Competition	varsitypitch.org	centreforentrepreneurs.org
Hello Tomorrow	Competition	hello-tomorrow.org	hello-tomorrow.org
Outlier Ventures Base Camp	Accelerator	outlierventures.io/base-camp	basecamp@outlierventures.io
Gate x Superteam x Cambridge	Accelerator	superteamuk.typeform.com/gate-cambridge	ventures@gate.com
Entrepreneur First	Accelerator	apply.joinef.com	Alice Bentinck — linkedin.com/in/alicebentinck
HelpBnk x Superteam UK	Grant	uk.superteam.fun	Superteam UK Discord
Seedcamp	Accelerator/Fund	seedcamp.com	Carlos Espinal — linkedin.com/in/cee
Innovate UK Smart Grants	Government Grant	apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk	support@iuk.ukri.org
Solana Foundation Grants	Ecosystem Grant	solana.org/grants	earn.superteam.fun/grants
Gitcoin Grants	DAO / QF	grants.gitcoin.co	gitcoin.co
Web3 Foundation Grants	Ecosystem Grant	grants.web3.foundation	grants@web3.foundation
Colosseum (Solana Hackathon)	Hackathon/Accel	colosseum.org	colosseum.org
Barclays Accelerator (Techstars)	Corporate	techstars.com/accelerators/barclays	techstars.com