

Next generation of Scottish offshore wind innovators unveiled

1 year ago



Ten innovative companies targeting success in the offshore renewables market have secured a place in the inaugural [Launch Academy Scotland](#) programme – the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult’s industry-backed national technology accelerator programme – on this occasion open exclusively to Scottish SMEs.

Each of the early-stage businesses pitched their technology solutions in response to challenges set by Launch Academy Scotland’s industry sponsors. The selection panel comprised representatives from ORE Catapult, sponsors Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, South of Scotland Enterprise, global renewable energy developers BlueFloat Energy | Nadara Partnership, Ocean Winds, and Inch Cape Offshore Wind Farm.

The successful companies – Airspection, AJT Engineering, Fathom Group, Fennex, Frontier Robotics, Innovair, Kraken Robotics, Revive Geoscience, Smarter Subsea (Handling) and Subworx – are developing innovative technologies capable of derisking and reducing costs for the wider offshore wind sector, helping to accelerate deployment of renewable energy and assisting the UK in meeting its ambitious renewable energy targets and net zero ambitions.

Since 2020, through both national and regional programmes across the United Kingdom, Launch Academy has supported 57 companies which have gone on to raise £26.7m in private investment, £8.4m in grant funding and had 150 patents filed.

This Launch Academy Scotland cohort will enter an industry-focused technology development and business mentoring programme that provides wraparound support, designed to accelerate

commercialisation of their products and services which target the UK and global offshore wind market.

Dr Stephen Wyatt, Director of Strategy and Emerging Technologies at ORE Catapult, said: “The UK is recognised internationally as a global leader and innovator within the offshore wind sector. We recognise that the industry-focused thinking, creativity and collaborative approach demonstrated by Launch Academy supply chain companies will be instrumental in helping the sector deliver its crucial role in achieving energy security and clean renewable energy targets while smoothing the transition towards net zero.

“We are grateful to our industry partners and sponsors who support the Launch Academy mission to strengthen the UK’s offshore supply chain, and will continue working with our cohort companies and expert partners to drive the industry forward.”

Inch Cape’s Innovation Champion and Interface Manager Shane Macken said: “I would like to congratulate the 10 innovators who made it through to the ORE Catapult Launch Academy Scotland programme as they begin their seven-month journey to accelerate the commercialisation of their innovations. As a judge, it was eye-opening to see the strength and creativity within the applications which ranged from ingenious uses of existing technologies to fully original concepts.

“Inch Cape is proud to be a founding sponsor of the inaugural Scottish iteration of this successful national technology-accelerator programme, and we are sure the experience will add value not only to those taking part but also the wider offshore wind sector.”

Kirsty Adams, Head of Supply Chain, BlueFloat Energy | Nadara Partnership said: “Designing and building our future renewable energy system will require innovation on an unprecedented scale, and so pathways to commercialisation like Launch Academy are essential for small businesses and start-ups to grow their ideas and concepts that will ultimately enhance the sustainability and efficiency of offshore wind projects going forward.

“We were impressed with the quality of applications through this first Scottish cohort and as sponsors, we are genuinely excited by the opportunity to partner with brilliant minds across the ten successful companies to unlock ground-breaking solutions that will ensure the UK remains at the forefront of renewable energy innovation.”

Mark Baxter, Project Director of Caledonia Offshore Wind Farm, said: “Caledonia will be Ocean Winds’ third project in Scotland. We have committed £46 million of supply chain enabling investment and have a significant local content target of 60% to ensure long-term growth opportunities and skills development continue to thrive.

“We therefore have a vested interest in seeing the local supply chain succeed and to support initiatives like ORE Catapult’s Launch Academy which enable SMEs to contribute original innovations and skills at pace and at scale. We look forward to playing a part in the development and success of this cohort of Scottish businesses.”

Adam Swainbank, Offshore Wind Supply Chain Specialist, Scottish Enterprise said: “Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and South of Scotland Enterprise are delighted to support, along with our programme partners, the 10 successful companies chosen for the flagship innovation accelerator programme Launch Academy – ORE Catapult. This is a great example of the 3 economic development

agencies in Scotland working in collaboration with ORE Catapult to address the offshore wind challenges before us, helping accelerating, de-risk and commercialise innovative technology with a goal of ensuring we maximise local content and reducing costs and risks for offshore wind developers.”