

# Accelerating Location and Property Innovation at Geovation



After opening its first premises in summer 2015, Geovation has grown to support a community of more than 1,200 entrepreneurs, investors, developers, academics, students and corporate innovators. It is now based at Geovation's Hub in Clerkenwell, London. Geovation is dedicated to supporting open innovation

and collaboration using location and property data. The Land Registry is now also a partner. Location is at the heart of many of the most successful digital products and services. Land and property are the foundation of the national economy.

Community membership of [Geovation](#) is open to individuals working with location or property data and is free. Start-up membership is also free and open to new and early-stage businesses with up to two team members. SME membership is open to established and growing businesses with up to three team members for a fee. The Geovation Accelerator Programme, which is delivered and funded jointly by Ordnance Survey and HM Land Registry,

supports start-ups with funding, data and office space and has produced a steady pipeline of success since its introduction in 2015. 84 start-ups have gone through the programme, creating more than 200 jobs and raising £23.3 million in investment funding. Over ten market sectors have been covered.

## Advantages for GeoTech and PropTech start-ups

The Accelerator Programme offers numerous advantages for GeoTech and PropTech start-ups. It puts people in touch with a network of mentors who are established entrepreneurs, industry leaders and advisors. A grant of £10,000 for six months, with the opportunity for another £10,000 afterwards, is available – along with 12 months' free desk space at the hub. Programme members are given access to technical expertise, Ordnance Survey and HM Land Registry data, and open data sources. They also receive one-to-one sessions and workshops covering finance, fundraising, business planning, legal and intellectual property, company law, and coaching on presentations and pitching. Geovation puts a strong emphasis on training start-ups to succeed, starting with the interview session and then ensuring that they have the right skills to run a business and market their product effectively.

□ The past six months has seen Geovation expand through partnerships with complementary innovation hubs in Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff and Manchester, in addition to the new Accelerator Programme run in Edinburgh through Geovation Scotland.

Alex Wrottesley, Head of Geovation, says: "We offer a founder-friendly environment, great mentors, high-quality workshop content and, almost uniquely, a dedicated software development team in house who work hand in hand with our companies to build and release their first products. This is something very few accelerators can offer, and it means the businesses joining us can move faster and further than they otherwise would have been able to."

The seven companies making up the 2019 accelerator intake were selected from over 100 applicants who went through a rigorous interview programme over two days. Candidates were selected on the basis of clarity, credibility and coachability. The industry sectors addressed by the successful accelerator candidates are very wide and cover agriculture, planning, crisis management, drones, home security, construction and housing. The entrepreneurs starting these companies typically have

experience in their sector, but not necessarily working with geospatial data nor with starting a successful company, and this is where Geovation is so valuable.

I visited the Geovation Hub and the energy was palpable with people at their workstations, groups in deep conversation and a general sense of purposeful activity. One of the keys to success is creating a community which enables start-ups to interact with each other, with the expertise available at OS and Land Registry, with potential users of their products and with the wider geospatial community. This sense of community is very evident amongst the people whom I spoke to.

Gareth Whatmore came from a background of transport planning and his company will offer a service to drone operators which will allow them to find out who owns the land that they wish to fly over and whether there are any restrictions in place. His platform DronePrep uses property data from the Land Registry and information provided by landowners. Already the company has provided an essential key to planning a route to deliver medical supplies from Southampton to the Isle of Wight. Gareth says that he would never have been able to develop the platform and make the connection with potential users without the support from Geovation.

Hugh Farquhar was a crisis manager for a major international bank and has developed a platform to provide information within seconds of the start of a crisis. Watchkeeper International draws together data on the assets and personnel of a company and adds location and local information to draw a real time picture of the impact of a crisis or disaster on anybody involved. One of the main benefits of Geovation to Hugh is making him ask the difficult questions which entrepreneurs don't want to ask, and providing the support network to help answer them.

□ Geovation is dedicated to supporting open innovation and collaboration using location and property data.

Droneprep and Watchkeeper International are part of the latest batch of companies in the accelerator programme. The previous group, now in their second six months at Geovation, are now busy refining their products and seeking investment.

The start-up companies working at Geovation are working on products which will address the issues and problems facing society. They demonstrate that geospatial data is key to solving many problems and helps companies and government understand the problems better through linking people and assets, particularly property, to location and by highlighting links and context through visualisation. The Geovation ecosystem is enabling people who see these connections to promote them to a wider audience.

## **Geovation Ready to Accept Applications to its Accelerator Programme**

Start-ups using location, land and property data in their products and services can now apply to join the Geovation Accelerator. Fledgling firms using data produced through mapping and related technologies could be in line to receive expert business support and funding to help them flourish on the world stage.

Andrew Trigg, Chief Geospatial & Data officer, said: "Since our relationship with Geovation began in 2017, it's been fantastic to see the ever-growing list of PropTech start-ups realise their potential with the help of the accelerator programme. To see, and support, the latest generation of innovators apply HMLR and OS data to real social and commercial challenges by such novel, and clever means is a real testament to the potential of our property data. We couldn't be more excited to see the ideas and solutions presented in this next round of applications for the programme."

Find out more about the [Programme](#).

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