

NEWS RELEASE

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**FOUNDERS FACTORY LANDS EASYJET AS FINAL
CORPORATE INVESTOR**

- **Multimillion pound deal will see the two companies create from scratch and accelerate startups to innovate the travel sector.**
- **Deal signals the sixth and final corporate investor into Founders Factory; a corporate backed accelerator and incubator.**
- **First investment into the technology startup ecosystem from Europe's leading short-haul airline.**
- **Corporate investors from multiple sectors now working together to innovate each other's industries via Founders Factory.**

LONDON: [Founders Factory](#), the corporate backed, multi-sector accelerator and incubator created by Brent Hoberman, Henry Lane Fox today confirmed easyJet, Europe's leading short-haul airline, as its sixth and final corporate investor.

The five year deal means that EasyJet, through its shareholding in Founders Factory, will scale and invest five early stage startups and co-create from scratch two new companies each year.

The in-house team of experts at Founders Factory, many of whom are successful entrepreneurs themselves, will provide hands-on support and advice to participating startups, as well as working with easyJet to jointly build and launch new TravelTech products and services.

Dame Carolyn McCall, CEO, easyJet, said:

"This partnership will create real value for easyJet and our passengers by putting disruptive thinking at the centre of our digital strategy. Over the last five years, we have used digital to transform the airline and the experience of our passengers.

"Connecting the talented easyJet team with the next generation of disruptive entrepreneurs will only continue to drive fresh thinking and uncover new opportunities. We are already well known for our innovation - whether that be our award-winning app with 17m downloads, mobile host technology at airports or our work with drone technology for aircraft maintenance.

"Working with Founders Factory to explore opportunities for advanced TravelTech services will help us to keep making travel easy and affordable."

Brent Hoberman, Co-Founder and Executive Chairman, Founders Factory, said:

"We are delighted to be once again working with easyJet. I went to the Luton shed to visit Sir Stelios before the airline was even present on the internet. We are now preparing to enter the next phase of digital travel transformation with easyJet leading the airline industry, with 73 million customers and a global brand recognised for innovation and excellence.

"We are confident that together we can support the next generation of innovators in travel leveraging digital scale, data, personalisation, VR, AI, ecommerce breakthroughs and FinTech."



Henry Lane Fox, CO-Founder and CEO, Founders Factory, said:

“easyJet coming into Founders Factory as our sixth and final corporate investor represents a critical milestone. With some of the leading brands and audience owners in the world as investors, we are able to execute on our vision of exploiting new emerging technologies to redefine industries.

“Ambitious founders can now come to London to gain support from a team of 60 digital experts and six of the world's most dynamic corporate partners. This will attract stellar founders from across the globe and help them to become even bolder and more successful entrepreneurs.”

Innovation is in easyJet's DNA – from its launch 20 years ago when it changed the way people fly to the present day where the airline leads the industry in digital, web, engineering and operational innovations to make travel more easy and affordable for passengers. easyJet carries over 70m annually on 830 routes in 31 countries.

Since the launch of easyJet's iPhone app in 2011 it has been downloaded more than 17 million times. The innovative app has evolved from easy booking and check-in functionality to include popular features like passport scanning, live flight tracking, mobile boarding passes and Touch ID. It is also complimented by the easyJet Apple Watch app and real-time airport push notifications with its Mobile Host. easyJet was also the first airline in the world to collaborate with Flightradar24 to integrate live aircraft tracking to its iPhone mobile app. The airline is also currently testing the use of drones for aircraft inspection and pioneered volcanic ash detection technology.

Committed to being at the heart of the growing European tech ecosystem, Founders Factory will develop 200 early stage technology companies over the next five years across six sectors. The easyJet deal represents the company's sixth and final sector partnership having launched its first sector, education, in June 2015 with investment from [Holtzbrinck Publishing Group](#) (whose subsidiaries include Macmillan Publishers); [Guardian Media Group](#) for media in January 2016; [Aviva](#) for fintech and [L'Oreal](#) for beauty tech both in early summer this year and most recently China's CSC Group as its official AI partner.

easyJet will also be part of the Founders Factory Board of Directors and represented by James Millett, Head of Digital, easyJet.

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About Founders Factory

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Positioned at the very heart of the global tech community and benefiting from its strong links to [Founders Forum](#), Founders Factory is a new model in business creation with extraordinary ambition and breadth. Together with our blue chip corporate partners we invest capital and resources and will build and scale 200 early stage technology companies across multiple sectors.

Founders Factory launched its first sector, Education, in June 2015 with investment from Holtzbrinck Publishing Group and its second sector, Media, with backing from Guardian Media Group (GMG) in January 2016, L'Oreal became Beauty partner in May 2016 and Aviva in June this year.

Some of the startups Founders Factory has worked with so far include:

- [Vidsy](#): Self-serve platform for brands to commission and distribute video content from a community of 1,500 film-makers. Founders Factory supported Vidsy's transition from an agency model to a marketplace and in six months revenue has quadrupled, with the company now working with a number of international FMCG brands and Founders Factory partners L'Oreal and The Guardian's editorial team.
- [Flourish](#): Allows brands to connect multiple live data feeds and create complex data visualisations. Whilst at Founders Factory, Flourish also adapted their agency proposition into a powerful self-serve platform (launching in October 2016), was presented to global tech leaders at Founders Forum London and subsequently raised \$1m in seed funding. Flourish is now working on briefs with a number of international media and financial companies.
- [Lightneer](#): Finnish learning games studio based in Helsinki, from the team behind Angry Birds (Rovio). Lightneer is set to launch its first learning game, Big Bang Legends in early 2017 and in the past six months has completed a €2.8 million (\$3.16 million) financing round bringing the total investment into Lightneer to €3.5 million (\$3.94 million).

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About easyJet

easyJet is Europe's leading airline offering a unique and winning combination of the best route network connecting Europe's primary airports, with great value fares and friendly service.

easyJet flies on more of Europe's most popular routes than any other airline. easyJet carries 73 million passengers annually, of which around 12 million are travelling on business. easyJet flies over 240 aircraft on more than 780 routes to over 130 airports across 32 countries. More than 300 million Europeans live within one hour's drive of an easyJet airport.

easyJet aims to be a good corporate citizen, employing people on local contracts in seven countries across Europe in full compliance with national laws and recognising their trade unions. The airline supports a number of local charities and also has a corporate partnership with UNICEF which has raised over £6m for the most vulnerable children since it was established in 2012.

The airline takes sustainability seriously. easyJet invests in the latest technology, operates efficiently and fills most of its seats which means that an easyJet passenger's carbon footprint is 22% less than a passenger on a traditional airline, flying the same aircraft on the same route.