

TECH STARTUPS JOIN UK CYBER EXPERTS TO ADDRESS SECURITY CHALLENGES

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- First companies take their place on the NCSC For Startups programme
- Five innovators will showcase their ideas to address critical UK cyber security issues
- Collaboration between NCSC and Plexal, the innovation company, will support thriving cyber security industry

FIVE cyber security innovators have been chosen to work with the UK's technical experts to address some of the most prevalent threats facing the nation.

The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) – a part of GCHQ – and Plexal, the innovation company founded by Delancey, have today (Tuesday) announced the first companies to join the recently launched NCSC For Startups initiative.

The programme welcomes startups at all stages of maturity; from those developing a Minimum Viable Product (MVP), to those with established cyber security solutions looking to expand into new markets and pilot technology. NCSC For Startups is the successor to the NCSC Cyber Accelerator, a programme which helped more than 40 tech companies raise over £100m in external investment.

The first five companies offer a range of solutions to issues including cyber fraud and ransomware.

The companies are:

- **PORGIESOFT** – an edtech startup using AI to develop cyber fraud detection for enterprise employees
- **Exalens** – equipping SME manufacturers with an inexpensive threat detection service
- **Enclave** – helping organisations effortlessly create Zero Trust overlay networks
- **Meterian** – SaaS provider platform that builds a scalable and sustainable line of defence for apps that use open source software
- **Rebellion Defence** – using AI to defend national security systems against threats like ransomware

The chosen companies will receive direct support from Plexal's cyber innovation team and leading experts from the NCSC and GCHQ. Startups will also gain access to wider technical and commercial opportunities with Plexal's industry partners across the UK's cyber security ecosystem. Startups will keep all intellectual property and equity created during the programme.



For further information, please contact:

NCSC Press Office
 pressoffice@ncsc.gov.uk

Lara Prince
 Seven Hills
 lara.prince@wearesevenhills.com



Chris Ensor, NCSC Deputy Director for Cyber Growth, said:

“The UK has a thriving cyber security industry and I’m excited to get to work with our first five companies and bring their innovations to life.

“Finding great ideas that can help protect all areas of society is a key part of our mission and we look forward to collaborating with more startups as the programme rolls on.”

NCSC for Startups is a collaboration between the NCSC and Plexal, the innovation company. The programme will be supported by Deloitte, CyNam, which brings Cheltenham’s cyber community together, Cheltenham-based coworking space Hub8 and tech skills provider QA.

Saj Huq, Director of Innovation at Plexal, said:

“We’re excited to welcome the first innovators to NCSC For Startups. The response to our call for applications has been phenomenal and we’re looking forward to bringing on more startups throughout 2021 in response to specific challenges and technology needs in the cybersecurity market.

“The NCSC understands the UK’s cybersecurity challenges better than anyone, and the opportunity for innovative startups to benefit from its world-class insight and expertise is unique. Combined with Plexal’s extensive track record in supporting startups to become market leaders, NCSC For Startups will help companies address some of the most challenging security problems facing the government, businesses and society now and in the future.”

Further information on NCSC For Startups and how to apply can be found on the NCSC website: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/ncsc-for-startups/join-the-ncsc-for-start-ups>

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Chris Ensor
NCSC Deputy Director for
Cyber Growth



Notes to Editors

About NCSC for Startups

NCSC For Startups will involve the continual onboarding of companies throughout the year, where they will work from the NCSC For Startups HQ in Cheltenham as well as remotely. This will create the potential for a greater number of industry collaborations than ever before.

Successful companies will also be eligible to apply for funding to help them develop their ideas.

The first five startups joining NCSC For Startups are:

PORGiESOFT - After seeing how online fraud was becoming a growing problem during the pandemic, this edtech startup used its underlying machine learning and natural language processing technology to develop a cyber fraud detection assistant for enterprise employees. SenseText uses AI to calculate a fraud risk score, providing a second opinion on suspicious emails.

Exalens - Exalens equips SME manufacturers with advanced cybersecurity that tends to be reserved for large enterprises. It does this through its threat detection and response solution and cyber-physical AI – both of which don't require an in-house security expert.

Enclave - Enclave helps organisations effortlessly create Zero Trust overlay networks that make private systems invisible to the public internet until defined trust standards have been met. Enclave aims to make security more convenient for organisations running private infrastructure on top of the public internet.

Meterian - Using automation, Meterian secures open source software by building a scalable and sustainable line of defence for apps. It wants to empower time-pressured developers to become the first line of defence for security.

Rebellion Defence - Rebellion Defence is a British-American software company building AI products for the defence sector and for national security purposes. Its SECURE solution helps organisations look ahead, focus their resources effectively and proactively defend their systems and networks against threats like ransomware.

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pressoffice@ncsc.gov.uk

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About Plexal

Plexal is the innovation business that supercharges collaboration.

It combines open, collaborative innovation with a community of fast-growth startups to help enterprises and the government unlock the potential of technology. Plexal works with some of the most influential government departments and global tech companies to deliver innovation projects. These include the cross-border Rapid Innovation Accelerator, which connected entrepreneurs in the UK and Oman, and London RoadLab, which helped Transport for London fast-track innovation.

Plexal's cyber innovation team is also building the UK's most connected cybersecurity ecosystem. Plexal delivers the LORCA accelerator, is the National Cyber Security Centre's partner for NCSC for Startups and is the innovation lead for the Digital Innovation Security Hub in Manchester. Over the last three years, Plexal has helped cyber startups raise over £200m and earn over £37m in revenue.

Its workspace in London is home to over 800 innovators who are breaking new ground in cybersecurity, mobility, inclusive design, healthtech, AI and more. Members get access to community events, connections and 1:1 support designed to help them scale. Plexal regularly partners with members to pilot their solutions, bid for business together and enable them to build solutions with large organisations. The community includes Fiit, the online fitness startup, Quantum technology company M Squared and youth-led charity My Life My Say.

Plexal was founded in 2017 by clients of specialist real estate investment advisory company Delancey.



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