



# VENTUREFEST

SOUTH

**ENGAGING WITH US, THE REGION'S  
INNOVATORS, ENTREPRENEURS AND INVESTORS.**

There's nothing lightweight about the south's innovation economy. It's arguably the most vibrant in the UK, with players covering all sectors, helping to create the perfect environment for new innovations to become world-leading businesses. There are many organisations, individuals and groups in this game sharing the fact they are underpinned by the Venturefest South network.

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# JOIN US IN NURTURING, SHOWCASING & SUPPORTING THE REGION'S INNOVATION ECONOMY.

"I can't think of any other event where you have cutting-edge space companies, exhibiting next to early stage start-ups."

John Wheal - Founder of Group Hub

The Venturefest Network, supported by Innovate UK and the Knowledge Transfer Network, is well established and expanding. Venturefest South (VFS) is about strengthening connectivity between innovators, investors and entrepreneurs and giving a real focus to accelerate the translation of business ideas into increased economic growth.

About five years ago, our region's universities started the journey to make VFS a reality. It's been a challenging journey, given government cut-backs. VFS was made a reality by our 'angel investors' including University of Southampton, University of Portsmouth, Southampton Solent University, Enterprise M3 LEP, Solent LEP, Carswell Gould, Oxford Innovation, Dorset Growth Hub, Bournemouth City Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council. They each helped put seed funding in the bank and thus became our first VFS Partners, helping drive what we do each year. As partners, they invest because, whatever their individual agenda, a dynamic, engaged, prosperous and innovation rich region benefits us all.

VFS exists to connect our region's innovative and creative business community and individuals with entrepreneurs and investors. The southern economy has many focuses, business support programmes and networks, but nothing that showcases and promotes it collectively.

We recognise we are not the only ones working in this space. This is why we have remodelled this year to ensure we act as a force for good for anyone interested in innovation. We underpin the great work of individuals, organisations and groups that are supporting the innovation economy. We offer a platform to promote what they are doing, support their success and give them a home in which to collaborate, share ideas and events and promote their activities.

Our purpose is to showcase and support the innovation economy across the south. What we do is the key to driving long-term economic value for our region. It's a massive cross sector network full of incredible people, ideas and opportunities, which is why we are growing every year and attracting more and more interest.

**WE'RE ALREADY  
HELPING INNOVATORS,  
INVESTORS AND  
ENTREPRENEURS  
FLOURISH, WE WANT TO  
DO MORE WITH YOUR  
HELP. SO, THIS IS YOUR  
INVITATION TO JOIN US.**

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## HOW YOU WILL BENEFIT

Partnership, sponsorship and exhibition packages are available, which offer organisations the opportunity to engage with the network and become part of the Venturefest family. It's a great way to showcase your brand, people, products and services and the perfect place to connect, share ideas, meet entrepreneurs and develop new opportunities.

## NOW IS THE TIME TO JUMP ON BOARD. OUR 2019 SHOWCASE WILL SEE...

- A new unique, bigger venue in the heart of the region
- 700 + delegates (the last two years we saw 500+)
- 100 + innovators showcasing their new ideas
- Enhanced networking opportunities
- Wider participation for young entrepreneurs
- Expanded PITCHFEST events for investors
- Broader topics range in the Knowledge Zone
- And, of course, totally awesome ideas as standard!

## SO, THE QUESTION IS HOW WILL YOU ENGAGE?

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# THE VFS NETWORK SO FAR...

**1000+** ATTENDEES TO OUR TWO KEY SHOWCASE EVENTS

**500** PEOPLE ATTENDED 20 RUMBLE EVENTS HELD OVER THE 12 MONTHS

**£35M+** FUNDING ASK AT PITCHFEST IN 2017 AND 2018

**105** VIDEOS SHARED ON 'VSFVT' PLUS ACTIVE AND ENGAGED SOCIAL MEDIA

**1000+** NETWORK MEMBERS ON OUR PRIORITY DATABASE

**136,600** TWITTER REACH DURING VFS18 SHOWCASE DAY

**462,073** TOTAL PR REACH FOR THE VFS18 SHOWCASE, NOT INCLUDING COUNTLESS PARTNER, INNOVATOR AND SPONSOR RELEASES

"Fantastic event, enjoyed being part of the Innovation Zone which had a great buzz inside. Really did well to give it a friendly social feel."

James Crook Managing Director - Forty1 Kitesurfing

"VentureFest South 2018 was brilliant from start to finish... There was a good attendance...and it was great being able to chat to those excited about pitching their new ideas right up to well established companies looking to support those that are just starting out. I look forward to seeing the event continuing to grow and to attending next year."

James Kitching, Solicitor, Coffin Mew

## PARTNER EXHIBITOR, INNOVATOR AND SPONSOR FEEDBACK

**91.67%** Aim to be involved again next year

**83.33%** Rated experience good or excellent

**91.67%** Made useful connections

**83.34%** Rated the venue good or excellent

## WHAT THE VISITORS SAID ATTENDEES FEEDBACK

**92.72%** Rated the innovators & exhibitors excellent

**85.45%** Rated overall experience good or excellent

**96.37%** Intend to attend again next year

**85.45%** Intend to follow up with contacts

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Let's explore the variety of opportunities to engage with VFS

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# WE'RE ALWAYS READY TO RUMBLE

Ongoing engagement activity

Throughout the year the network run events workshops and experiences for businesses, innovators, investors, and entrepreneurs. These happen up and down the region, in offices, collaborative working spaces, universities, theatres and pubs. They are hosted by VFS network partners and we also collaborate with other groups and organisations sharing our agenda.

Last year over 500 people attended a wide range of workshops, talks and events across the south, hosted by partners and sponsors.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

- Ongoing events in the region happen throughout the year
- Flexible format
- Engaging with our network
- Partner and co-branded events
- Branding, engagement and marketing opportunities

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## MORE?

You can check out a write-up from Solent University on the [The Museums Hack Day South East](#) co-branded event here. See how Enterprise M3 LEP and Oxford Innovation ran at [Venturefest South - Pitchfest 2018 - Investment Readiness Workshop](#).



# WHERE INVESTMENT MEETS OPPORTUNITY

Pitchfest in the Investment Zone

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We help innovators prepare and then pitch. A key part of the VFS audience are business investors and investment fund managers. Our partners help innovators prepare and then pitch to real investors. With so many amazing innovators in our region it's no surprise we are always oversubscribed for Pitchfest and our Investment Zone.

Our partners help to find, prepare and select the innovators who will pitch at the big event. Last year 44 hopefuls applied to pitch and our board of experts analysed the investment opportunities and selected 18 to pitch live for a total ask of £9 million.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

- Engage and influence how the event is run and who pitches
- Grow the impact by making it possible for more to pitch
- Engage with investment-ready innovators
- Engage with investors and entrepreneurs

## MORE?

See video of the pitches on [VFSTV our own video channel.](#)

WHAT'S ON: [venturefestsouth.co.uk/schedule](http://venturefestsouth.co.uk/schedule)  
FOLLOW: @Venturefestso (#vfs18)  
WIFI: GuildhallPublic, PW: winchester

# INNOVATION SERVED UP ON A PLATE

The Innovation Zone

"This event is a great opportunity to see what's going on in the local community and meet with investors. Following on from my pitch, I was approached by two potential investors."

Natalie Dobson, Director of Care Quest

The Innovation Zone is the heart of our showcase event. It's a place where we will meet and greet the south's leading innovators with their cutting-edge technology and ground breaking ideas which are central to what we do.

VFS partners and sponsors subsidise stands for innovators. They don't pay a thing, we give them the platform to show off their innovations and attend. By collecting them together in one place we show the world how powerful the south's innovation economy is and create a unique opportunity to engage with early stage innovations looking for support, funding, advice and guidance.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

- Engage with the latest innovations
- Help us select the innovators that get the funded space/opportunity
- Expand the number of places and grow the Zone
- Branding, engagement and marketing
- Showcase your innovation

## MORE?

See a list of [last years innovator's here.](#)

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"VFS is the perfect opportunity to showcase yourself to businesses, investors and advisors. I signed up to the Open Mic sessions last minute and was thrilled to win. I've never been to VFS before but will definitely return next year."

James Zorab, Rail Buddy

# EMBRACING THE BATTLE OF THE OPEN MIC CONTEST

The 'open to all' opportunity

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Pitching for all has become a large part of the VFS ethos. A popular and unique part of our VFS event is the Open Mic Arena, which invites big thinkers and early-stage innovators to pitch fresh new ideas to a panel of experts.

It's a great opportunity for innovators and entrepreneurs who didn't make it into the Pitchfest event to get noticed, have a platform and get valuable feedback. It's relaxed, fun and you never quite know what will happen. From new forms of regional currency to apps that help commuters, we've seen it all. It's run by VFS partner Carswell Gould.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

- Lead the judging panel and select the winner
- Present the award and branding on the zone
- Name the awards after your company
- Set up a scholarship, prize or experience
- Showcase your innovation

## MORE?

Read what Ed Gould, VFS partner from Carswell Gould [said about the event here](#). Watch videos of the [pitches on VFSTV here](#).

"Open Mic was a great opportunity to present my business and get immediate constructive feedback from the panel and audience. I left VFS18 with plenty of useful contacts and opportunities to follow up."

Nikolaos Maniatis, The Cato Bot Company

The Young Entrepreneurs Zone was developed by students and designed to provide a platform for the region's young innovators to showcase their ideas, get involved with workshops, collaborate and look for funding and support.

Last year, 20 of the south's brightest talent from across multiple universities demonstrated their innovations, with free places and partners subsidising their stands.

"It was great to network with other start-ups, advisors and investors, and I've even received an offer of investment from a contact as a result."

Connell McLaughlin, Founder of Route Reports

#### THE OPPORTUNITY

- Help shape future innovators
- Run workshops or events with the exhibitors
- Budget and award the best young innovator
- Showcase your innovation

#### MORE?

Read more about Connell McLaughlin on the [FutureWorlds wesbite](http://FutureWorlds.wesbite).

# YOUNG, GIFTED & FULL OF HOPE

The Young Entrepreneurs Zone

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Chris Allington, Chair of Venturefest South Group, presented the Best Young Innovator' 2018 to Connell McLaughlin, Founder of Route Reports, a hazard detection system designed for buses and trains, to prevent vehicle damage and passenger injuries.



We believe that a big part of inspiring success and helping the innovation economy flourish is the sharing of knowledge. At VFS, we do this in a number of ways; our rumble events, open Mic, Pitchfest and most clearly through our Knowledge Zone. In our showcase events we offer a wide variety of pertinent talks and workshops. We invite a variety of leading speakers and experts to share their insights and expertise.

We also give a platform to successful innovators who have been there and done that, as well as investors and entrepreneurs. Last year, the area was led by Grant Thornton who curated their own schedule of speakers.

#### THE OPPORTUNITY

- Run the area and curate the talks
- Present your topic to the audience
- Host debates after each talk
- VIP zone and partner benefits

#### MORE?

Watch a 3D Video of James Brugger from Seraphim Capital talk about Space tech and check out presentations from the [Grant Thornton Knowledge Zone of VFSTV](#).

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# BECAUSE KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

The Knowledge Zone

Collaborating, working together and signposting opportunity and resources for innovators, entrepreneurs and investors is what all VFS partners set out to do.

We and the region's most passionate advocates, advisors and organisations help innovators and investors at every stage. We help nurture deals, build business cases, develop and promote. The Collaboration Zone at our showcase events provides us all with an opportunity to make the most of our involvement and engage with the innovation community.

#### THE OPPORTUNITY

- Become a partner and host your own space in The Collaboration Cone
- Sponsor and brand the Zone
- Host a drinks networking event

# WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE BIGGER THINGS HAPPEN

The Collaboration Zone

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# BEST OF ALL YOU CAN HAVE IT YOUR WAY

The Your Space proposition

Something that is unique about VFS is the way in which we offer totally flexible and self owned managed opportunities within our showcase event. Last year at VFS18 our YOUR SPACE concept was a huge success. Innovate UK took one of the floors and created an amazing experience for delegates where it hosted a space tech focused workshops, exhibitions and talks.

What's your big agenda and do you want a platform to present it to the right audience? This year there is more opportunity at events with a larger, more flexible space.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

- Become a partner and host your own space
- Run workshops, events, rooms, experiences within our annual showcase events
- Host drinks and networking events
- The freedom to do whatever you like

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# A UNIQUE EXHIBITION OPPORTUNITY

Exhibiting at VFS19

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As the biggest innovation network in the south, we aim to offer exhibitors flexibility and real value which is why established businesses, consultants and organisations really enjoy exhibiting at Venturefest South. Best of all, your presence as an exhibitor directly helps fund innovator's spaces in which to present their ideas and services to our audience. As an exhibitor you have the opportunity to be as creative or as pragmatic as you like.

## OPPORTUNITY

- Flexible space for any kind of exhibitor
- Opportunity to do more than exhibit and get involved with the day
- Your exhibit will be in the busiest area of the event

# LET'S TALK OPPORTUNITY

We invite you to discuss any of the following opportunities with our team, simply email us on [engage@venturefestsouth.co.uk](mailto:engage@venturefestsouth.co.uk)

"We're thrilled to be involved with Venturefest South. Its ambitions to boost the region's innovation credentials and help the next generation of technology be discovered and developed here is very exciting. Grant Thornton definitely wants to be a part of that."

John Wheal - Founder of Group Hub

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**BECOME THE OFFICIAL  
VFS PROGRAMME PARTNER  
FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS**

**SPEAKER SLOTS,  
OPPORTUNITIES  
TO PRESENT**

**SPONSOR THE MAIN  
EVENT, THREE LEVELS  
AVAILABLE TO HEADLINE,  
ZONE AND OUTDOOR**

**EXHIBITION STANDS AND  
SPACE FOR BUSINESSES**

**INFLUENCER, MARKETING  
AND CONTENT PARTNERSHIPS**

**SUPPORT OUR PROGRAMME  
OF RUMBLE EVENTS**

**CURATE YOUR OWN  
EXPERIENCE ROOMS  
AND THEMES WITHIN  
OUR MAJOR EVENTS**

**HOST DRINK AND NETWORKING  
EVENTS FOR OUR NETWORK**

**PRODUCT SAMPLING  
AND DEMONSTRATIONS**

**THIRD PARTY ENDORSEMENT  
OF YOUR BUSINESSES,  
PRODUCTS AND SERVICES**

**RUN NETWORKING,  
BOARD MEETING AND  
ROUND TABLE DEBATES**