



Sport Tech Hub launched their first Impact Report earlier this week

Nov 19, 2020 14:49 GMT

The Digital Revolution (Still) Continues



To mark four years since the announcement of Sport Tech Hub and this week's publication of the three-year Sport Tech Hub Impact Report, Alex Zurita, London Sport's Specialist Advisor - Technology for Participation, reflects on the journey since late-2016.

Writing this, I can still picture the day in November 2016 when I sat in the auditorium of the IMAX at Waterloo as an attendee of [Sport 2.0 – The Digital Revolution Continues](#) and first heard London Sport announce its plans to boost the battle against inactivity with the [launch of the UK's first sport technology hub](#).

That moment was the first step in a four-year journey to this week; one that's taken me into a dedicated role focused on building connections between physical activity and tech innovation, and one that's led to the growth of an innovation programme that has helped more than 130,000 people getting active through new tech ventures working here in the capital.

Sport Tech Hub, launched a little under a year on from that day in November 2016, began with an effort to address a gap in our sector and to act as a bridge between traditional physical activity and sport, and the burgeoning SportTech industry that was beginning to emerge throughout London.

And this week, as we look back on the story of Sport Tech Hub so far with the [publication of a three-year Impact Report](#), I'm confident that we can say we stayed true to our commitment, helped to bring the sport and tech industries closer together, and harnessed innovation to get people more active.

What does that impact look like in real terms? First of all, it means more people getting active in new ways. At a conservative estimate, [130,000 Londoners have used Sport Tech Hub backed products to move, exercise and play sport](#).

And that really is only the beginning; so many of these products are just getting started, and have the potential to reach tens of thousands more people in the years to come.

It also means building long-term partnerships, and I'm proud that one of Sport Tech Hub's biggest impacts has been in brokering more than 30 pilots between SportTech ventures and some of the leading players in physical activity and sport.

From Local Authorities and Leisure Operators to National Governing Bodies, Health Trusts and Community Clubs, we have helped create new partnerships exciting new tech products and community stakeholders.

Those partnerships will form the bedrock of projects and initiatives that will help physical activity to reach more people in London and across the country in the years to come.

And it means supporting Founders and their businesses. The life of a tech Founder is difficult, and it can be thankless without proper support around you.

Through Sport Tech Hub, I'm delighted that we have supported more than 30 individual tech ventures with a total of 3,000 hours of support.

And that support has had a real impact: 90% of the tech start-ups we've worked with are still operating today (a figure far higher than the national start-up survival rate), and between them they've raised more than £4.2m of public and private investment to help grow their products for the future.



But one of the findings I'm most proud of is the diversity of the tech community we've worked to support.

It's well known that the tech and sport sectors have both suffered in the past from a lack of diversity; if we're serious about helping communities with diverse experience to live more active lives, we need to ensure that diversity is reflected in the organisations we support and work alongside.

And while we still have work to do here, the 27% of ventures supported by Sport Tech Hub that are led by founders from ethnically diverse communities is almost double that of the tech sector as a whole.

These past four years have seen some exciting progress, but this truly is only the start.

Yes, we can look back with pride on what we and the innovators we've worked alongside have achieved, but we can't afford to rest on our laurels.

Physical inactivity remains a major challenge for London and for the country as a whole, and the impacts of covid-19 have only exacerbated the issues our society was already facing.

This is the time for SportTech to step up to the plate and help more people, of every background, to get active. This is what will continue to drive our efforts through Sport Tech Hub.

It's a journey we're excited to be on, because four years on it remains true: the digital revolution still continues.

About London Sport

London Sport is a charity working to ensure more Londoners live happier, healthier lives through access to sport and physical activity. Supported by Sport England and the Mayor of London, we collaborate with those that share our vision, running and supporting projects that help children, young people and the least active adults to embed sport and physical activity into their lives.

For more information on London Sport, visit www.londonsport.org

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