

FEATURE ARTICLE

15 October 2013

£1million funding opportunity unveiled for UK Low Carbon businesses

Environmental impact company Berti Investments is once again taking applications for their Berti Green Accelerator Programme.

Berti Investments is a young and inspiring environmental impact investment company that invests in growing, entrepreneurial, low carbon businesses in the UK. Their concept is clear; they focus purely on innovative, thought-leading organisations whose strategy is led by carbon reduction techniques and best practice methods; ensuring they have a positive impact on the environment.

The Berti Green Accelerator programme was launched in 2012 and attracted more than 80 companies to apply for investment and business support from all over the UK. These companies ranged from enterprises engaged in a variety of sectors. Applications came from online conferencing, social networking, bio char, community solar initiatives, large-scale renewables such as tidal and biomass and consultancies and service providers.

The inaugural funding round was incredibly successful and led to two of the winning companies being awarded with transformational funding to help grow and nurture their businesses. This year, the programme, in partnership with leading global investor Collier Capital, is busy searching for three UK low carbon companies whom they believe will help deliver their shared vision of creating a long-term positive impact on the environment. The process is shaped by three simple stages: an initial online application submission, pitching in a finalists' selection event, then going in 'Dragon's Den' style into a final pitch. The fortunate winning three companies will be awarded with a free 12 month mentorship programme from Collier Capital, and access to a £3M funding pool from Berti.

Shaping Sustainable Growth

It's clear to see why the accelerator programme is popular, but it is by no means an easy ride. The judging criteria is strict, companies must be able to demonstrate long-term, sustainable growth plans that align with the programme's impact-focused approach to investing. Many entrepreneurs lack the experience and knowledge about certain aspects of their business, such as financial or operational expertise. Berti Investments clearly recognise the restraints and dilemmas that many entrepreneurial businesses face, including barriers to capital and select networks, but also elite, hands-on support from experts.

Flying High: a look at one of the 2012 winners

Firefly Solar, specialists in Solar Energy Solutions were one of the 2012 winning companies. The funding has allowed Firefly to move from the start-up phase into a sustainable growth phase. Firefly received six months of first class business support and expertise from Hamilton Bradshaw Impact Partners, and £550k of investment from Berti Investments to help their business to the next level.

Andy Mead, Founder & CEO, Firefly said:

“With the economic crisis making it difficult for small businesses to access funds, the Berti Green Accelerator Programme (BGA) has filled the much needed gap for British cleantech SMEs. The people behind BGA share a common vision with Firefly Solar. This shared vision paired with the extensive experience of the management of Berti Investments and their extend network has enabled Firefly to get the advice and support it needs to grow in a sustainable manner.

Without Berti, Firefly would not have been able to move to new premises, expand the staff and grow the business at the same speed. The management of Berti have ensured that their time is made available to Firefly on an on-going basis. Firefly has had access to a high profile network of business leaders as a result of association with Berti. This culminated in appointing Jeremy Leggett as Chairman - one of the industry's leading thinkers.”

Smart Investment

The low carbon sector is a key growth area in the UK; however, the majority of these young, innovative UK start-ups that choose to enter the marketplace find themselves struggling to secure the necessary funding opportunities and increasingly lack the support that would give them the crucial next steps to grow. Investor confidence in the UK's green industry has been at an all-time low, meaning that these SMEs have to really stand out from the crowd to get in front of some of the more 'smart' investors in this hugely competitive landscape. This is where the Berti Green Accelerator Programme steps in. They are fully in tune with the increased scarcity of natural resources and therefore look towards businesses that will solve some of these related environmental and social problems.

Berti believes in the power of smart thinking, intelligent capital to combine investment and expertise that ensures a greater chance of building a sustainable, successful business. Applications for the programme are now open and will close on November 7th 2013. The Berti Green Accelerator is in partnership with Collier Capital and supported by Irwin Mitchell, ecoConnect and FORE Partnership.

<http://bertiinvestments.com/berti-green-accelerator/>

ENDS.

Notes to Editors

The [Berti Green Accelerator Programme](#) is now open for applications, key dates are:

- The Application Deadline is 7 November 2013
- The Finalist Selection Event is 28 November 2013
- The Final Pitch is 5 December 2013

Applications can be made by UK-focussed sole traders, partnerships or limited companies; including university or government spin-outs, that have been generating revenue for at least six months prior to the application deadline. They must have a minimum team of two people and generate revenues of less than £5million (GBP) annually.

Final Judging Panel



Jeremy Collier
Founder & CIO of Collier Capital



Jeremy Leggett
Founder & Chairman of Solar Century



Jacques Tredoux
Founder & Director of Berti Investments



Ben Goldsmith
Founder & Executive Director of WHEB Group

[View the Berti Green Accelerator Terms and Conditions here](#)

APPLY ONLINE TODAY AT: <http://bertiinvestments.com/berti-green-accelerator/>

About Berti Green Investments

[Berti Investments](#) is an environmental impact investment company. They invest in innovative, growing, entrepreneurial businesses in the UK whose strategy focuses on reducing carbon emissions. They invest solely in UK-based environmentally focused businesses that benefit society.

They believe that the best way of catalyzing a long-term positive impact on the environment is by leveraging established financial models to support sustainable cleantech businesses that address key market failures.

They invest in UK-based companies that can demonstrate long-term, sustainable growth. Their investment horizon is typically between £250k and £1m; they are not technology specific.

They are supported by the Bertha Foundation, whose outreach program engages with social impact organisations worldwide.

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About Collier Capital

[Collier Capital](#) is the leading global investor in private equity's secondary market. They provide liquidity to investors wishing to exit early from their private equity investments – which may be either Limited Partner positions in private equity funds or portfolios of direct investments in private companies (typically owned by financial institutions or corporations).

Investments vary widely in size – from single LP positions in small private equity funds, to large portfolios of diverse assets – from as small as \$1 million, to \$1 billion or more.

www.collercapital.com

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