

A Guide to Cross-border Investing in Early-Stage Startups in Finland



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1. Startup Ecosystem in Finland

Finland may be small, but it has been named the happiest country in the world several years in a row, and the World Economic Forum ranked Finland as the top 6th most innovative country in the world in 2023.* With a population of 5,6 million people, a stable society, good infrastructure, low corruption, and tightly collaborative networks of investors, founders, and public organizations, it is an ideal place for tech investors and founders alike.

Finnish unicorns



*source: World Economic Forum <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/10/innovation-technology-wipo-countries-ranking/>

There are approximately 3000–4000 startups operating in Finland. In 2022, Finland had several unicorns or soonicorns in big data, AI, gaming, and health tech: Whim, Supercell, Wolt, Aiven, Relex Solutions, HMD Global, Rovio, Oura, Smartly.io, Swappie, ICEYE and more are on the way.

Finland has a strong reputation for technology and engineering expertise. Nokia played a significant role in shaping Finland's startup ecosystem, both during its success and decline. Former Nokia employees were supported in starting their own tech businesses through different programs, leading to positive outcomes and the development of a startup-friendly environment. Now, Finland focuses on creating competitive clusters in areas like New Space, Quantum, Health, Energy & ClimateTech, FoodTech, Immersive & Games, data analytics, Dual-use and defence, and New Materials. These clusters have led to many successful stories.

The new Co-Investment Fund aims to boost startup investing in Finland. The fund, managed by Innovestor, provides equity financing to Finnish start-up companies alongside business angel syndicates. Business Finland Venture Capital Ltd has invested EUR 30 million in the fund, and Co-investment Fund started its operations in December 2023.

The co-investment fund invests in investment targets prepared by business angel syndicates and proposed to the fund. This business angel syndicate must have at least three angel investors onboard - only new investors to the company.

Finland's strong ecosystem attracts foreign founders easily, thanks to its stable business environment and great work-life balance. The country offers a high quality of life, allowing startup founders to balance career success with personal happiness. Finland is known for its expertise and happiness, making it the happiest startup nation.

2. Deal Flow & Ecosystem Operators

The most important deal flow channels in Finland include university entrepreneurship societies, large and well-known startup events like Slush and Arctic15, accelerator programs, and the Finnish Business Angels Network's deal flow to name a few.

Each larger region has its own organization focusing on accelerating local businesses: Business Helsinki, Business Jyväskylä, Boost Turku, Business Joensuu, Business Oulu, Business Tampere, and Business Kuopio. The regional operators organize regional startup events and may connect you to local startups and investors if you are looking to connect in one of these areas. They are also your best contacts when you're looking for region-specific expertise, as each region may have slightly different kinds of knowledge and specialties. For example, the city of Oulu has been ranked as one of the top cities for health tech.*

2.1 Key events

Bigger events like Slush and Arctic15 are important channels for deal flow in Finland. Smaller ones, like Polar Bear Pitching in Oulu, bring together entrepreneurs, investors, and industry experts to share insights, network, and explore investment opportunities.

Slush

Slush annually hosts the world's leading startup event bringing together a curated crowd of European startups, world-class investors, and tech journalists.

*source: <https://ouluhealth.fi/startupblink-ranks-oulu-as-one-of-the-top-cities-for-healthtech/>

Arctic15

Arctic 15 is the most effective matchmaking startup event in Northern Europe. The focus is on making deals and quality networking. The 2-day event brings together a focused international crowd of startups, investors, corporates, media, and influencers.

SHIFT

SHIFT Business Festival redefines corporate events as dynamic festivals, blending networking, learning, and inspiration to foster growth and innovation among forward-thinking companies and individuals.

Polar Bear Pitching

Polar Bear Pitching is an extraordinary event that challenges startups to pitch their ideas standing waist-deep in icy waters, attracting top talents, investors, and media to witness these innovative presentations in Oulu, Finland's unique setting.

Dream Startup Festival

A smaller festival in Lahti that has separate pitching tracks for early-stage startup teams and students.

AaltoES

A student-run volunteer organization, that runs several startup and entrepreneurship-themed projects and programs. As a part of nationwide ES network, Aaltoes boosts entrepreneurial mindset among students and provides opportunities for everyone, regardless the background.

Maria O1

Maria O1 is Nordic's leading startup campus and a community. It has a thriving environment for ambitious early-stage startups, renowned investors and VCs, large enterprises and other ecosystem organizations under the same roof.

Red Brick

Red Brick is supporting the growth of pre-revenue startups all the way to first customers and first investments. They have two tracks to provide: a pre-accelerator and accelerator.

HXRC

The Hub is a unique program for early-stage companies working within the realms of spatial computing, metaverse, and associated technologies. It offers free workspace and hardware, mentoring, and networking opportunities.

Turbiini

A student-targeting pre-incubator program that runs in three campuses in Helsinki region. Organised by Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, they also offer co-working spaces.

ESA BIC

Incubation program for space-related projects. Organised by ESA and Business Finland.

Oulu Startup Incubators

Local incubator program in Oulu region supports idea-stage startups. Startup Express is a pre-incubator program that provides skills, confidence and contacts.

Health Incubator Helsinki

Health Incubator Helsinki is an incubator program for research-based early-stage teams and startups operating in the health sector in Finland and abroad. The program provides long-term support for participants.

2.2 Entrepreneurship societies in universities

Entrepreneurship Societies are student-driven non-profit associations. They normally operate in close collaboration with universities around Finland, empowering students towards high-growth entrepreneurship. Finnish universities typically put a lot of effort into entrepreneurship education, and entrepreneurship-minded students have formed non-profit, student-run entrepreneurship societies around Finland - there were 17 in 2024. These associations often boost startup culture in their regions and run incubator programs too.*

Aaltoes

A student-run volunteer organization, that runs several startup and entrepreneurship-themed projects and programs. As a part of the nationwide ES network, Aaltoes boosts entrepreneurial mindset among students and provides opportunities for everyone, regardless the background.

LUTES

A student-run entrepreneurship community-based in Lahti and Lappeenranta. LutES organises startup events on a regular basis.

2.3 Incubators and accelerators

Start-up incubators in Finland are typically organizations that offer a range of support services to help start-ups develop their business. These services may include providing space, funding, mentorship, and access to resources. Finland boasts a vibrant startup ecosystem with a range of incubators supporting early-stage ventures. Startup incubators in Finland stand out due to their close ties with academic institutions and research centers. Many incubators, such as those affiliated with Aalto University, leverage the country's strong emphasis on education and innovation to provide startups with access to cutting-edge research, technology, and expertise.

The collaborative culture in Finnish incubators encourages interdisciplinary cooperation, fostering a unique blend of business and technical acumen. Moreover, Finland's commitment to sustainability and clean technology is often reflected in the types of startups supported by these incubators, aligning with the country's green innovation initiatives.

Besides incubators, Finland offers many accelerator programmes, and many of the organisations listed below are actually both.

Accelerators focus more on the growth of the start-up and providing it with the necessary resources and guidance to become successful.

These initiatives typically span a few months and culminate in demo days, where startups pitch to investors and potential partners.

Accelerators provide not only funding but also valuable guidance and connections to propel startups into global markets.

Finnish startup accelerators are unique in their focus on preparing startups for global expansion. The country's small domestic market compels startups to think internationally from the outset. Finland's strategic location as a bridge between Europe and Asia further enhances these programs' ability to open doors to international markets. The accelerator programs often encourage a strong sense of camaraderie among startups, creating a supportive community that extends beyond the duration of the program.

KIUAS

Kiuas provides early-stage startup founders with invaluable support, networks, and tools to take their progress to the next level. Kiuas Accelerator is an award-winning 10-week program, and they have worked with over 600 founders so far.

Red Brick

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Ignite

Ignite is a 10-week accelerator where first-time founders find their first customers and launch their businesses. Organized by the student entrepreneurship society Aaltoes.

xEdu

A business accelerator for ed-tech startups creating transformative learning solutions with pedagogical impact. The program provides coaching and mentoring, real-life testing environments for research and development, and a global network.

Boost Turku

Turku-based 8-week early-stage startup accelerator. Stage preference: An idea with a team + initial research done.

Energy Spin

Accelerator for energy sector companies. seeking international growth. It is a ten-week-long Accelerator programme including company-specific training for business growth planning, product development, commercialization, financing, and marketing.

Aalto Startup Center

Aalto Startup Center from Aalto University, is a hybrid accelerator that offers its own incubator and accelerator services, among several partnership programs. It has a focus on sustainable research-based and innovative deep-tech startups.

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[The Scandinavian ABC Company](#)

Security Startup Test Drive is a risk-free way to see if you would enjoy the life of a security startup entrepreneur. The program provides help while developing the idea.

2.4 Business Angel Networks

Finland has many smaller and local angel investor groups. However, there's only one large angel investor network, [Finnish Business Angels Network FiBAN](#), which is by member count the largest in Europe, having over 600 investor members. FiBAN focuses on matchmaking between the best startups and angel investors, and it also provides training programs and investment material to its members. FiBAN's flagship event Pitch Finland is organised 8-10 times a year, and FiBAN also organizes plenty of networking-focused events for investors.

FiBAN members invest in all industries. While most angels focus on sectors that they themselves understand well, many are also sector agnostics, investing in lucrative opportunities across all industries. However, in 2023 software industry attracted the most funding among FiBAN investor members, according to [FiBAN's data](#).

The new Co-Investment Fund aims to boost angel investing in Finland. The fund, managed by Innovestor, provides equity financing to Finnish start-up companies alongside with business angel syndicates. Business Finland Venture Capital Ltd has invested EUR 30 million in the fund, and Co-investment Fund started its operations in December 2023.

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2.5 VCs

Finland's thriving startup ecosystem attracts plenty of international venture capital funds. [Finnish venture capital association](#) has over 200 company members, being the largest venture capital association in the Nordics. According to [their data from 2023](#), there are 40 VC companies in Finland. The ICT sector has shown to be the most popular among VC investors in Finland. That includes for example software, applications, communication, computer technology, and electronics.

15 new venture capital teams in Finland in five years

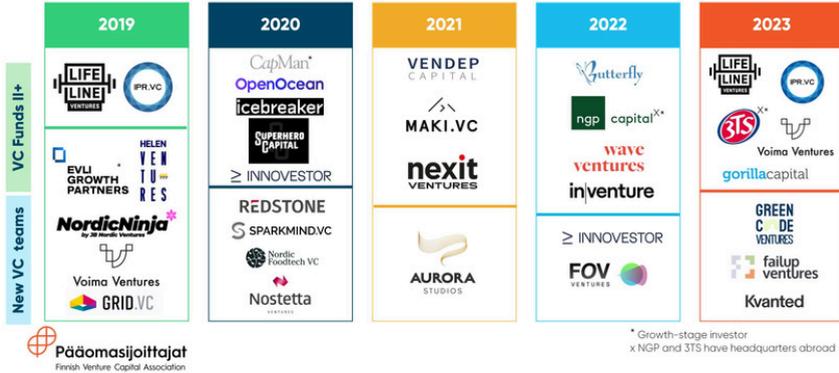


Image source: https://paaomasijoittajat.fi/app/uploads/2024/04/Venture_capital_Finland_2023.pdf

“Finland has a lot of early-stage funding available and maintained these levels during 2023. Over the recent decade, the Finnish startup ecosystem has matured – and after many successful exits and global growth stories, we now have a pool of highly experienced entrepreneurs both investing in and building the next wave of European tech companies. It’s no wonder that international VCs are interested in integrating into the Finnish ecosystem,” Jonne Kuittinen, Deputy Chief Executive at FVCA [explains](#).

Some venture capital companies that operate in Finland:

[Superhero Capital](#)

Superhero Capital is based in Helsinki, focusing on early-stage technology startups in the Nordic and Baltic regions. They invest up to €1M in insight-driven, software-focused startups, providing the necessary funding and support to help founders reach the next level.

[Trind.vc](#)

Trind.vc leverages over 20 years of experience to help founders succeed, focusing on scaling B2B and B2C companies with consumer or community components. They invest €0.1-1.0 million in early-stage software solutions and have the capacity for up to €5M per company, targeting enthusiastic teams in Northern and Central Europe.

[Inventure](#)

Inventure specializes in early-stage investments across the Nordics and Baltics, with an average ticket size ranging from €1 million to €3 million. They support startups with initial investments starting from €300,000 and can provide funding up to €5 million per company.

[Maki.vc](#)

Maki.vc is a Helsinki-based venture capital firm specializing in early-stage deep tech and brand-driven companies across the Nordics and Northern Europe. They invest from €300k to €3M per company, supporting founders from inception to series seed and beyond, with a global mandate and a focus on scientific advancements and strong IP.

[Icebreaker.vc](#)

Icebreaker.vc has supported over 100 teams from idea to seed stage and beyond since 2017. They invest up to €1.5M as first tickets in Estonia, Finland, and Sweden, welcoming ambitious and diverse teams across all stages of growth.

[Innovestor](#)

Innovestor is a Finnish investment company, focusing on venture capital and real estate. Innovestor offers corporate venturing services. Innovestor also manages the Finnish angel co-fund initiated by Business Finland and FiBAN. The angel co-fund aims to invest 35 million to complete angel investment rounds.

Evli

Evli Growth Partners (EGP) focuses on investing in promising growth companies across Europe, particularly in the Nordics and Baltics. They operate a €200 million investment program spanning four funds from 2018 to 2028, targeting minority investments in companies with significant growth potential and revenues exceeding €5 million.

Helen Ventures

Helen Ventures invests 50 million euros in the most innovative and transformative European startups in the energy, e-mobility, circular economy, decarbonization and digital solutions sectors.

Baltic Sandbox VC

Baltic Sandbox VC supports early-stage Deep Tech, Life Science, and Dual-use Technologies startups in the Baltic region. They invest in R&D-focused teams tackling complex technical challenges with commercial potential, having committed over €2.5 million to more than 23 ventures in sectors such as HealthTech, BioTech, and MedTech.

Wellstreet VC

Wellstreet was launched in 2016 and has since made a significant impact on the Nordic startup scene. As a super-active early-stage investor, they have been part of creating success cases like Tibber, DanAds, Regily, Scrive, and roughly 40 more.

A full list of FVCA members can be found on their [website](#).

2.6 Supporting Services

Besides incubators and accelerators, Finland's startup ecosystem benefits from various supporting services. These include legal and financial advisory firms specialized in startups, talent and relocation services or co-working spaces like Maria O1 or Platform 6, which foster collaboration. These services contribute to the holistic growth of startups in Finland's dynamic entrepreneurial landscape.

The Shortcut

The Shortcut is a pioneering non-profit in Finland, fostering professional integration and entrepreneurship through impactful training and a robust startup network.

[Maria O1](#)

MariaO1 is the leading startup campus in the Nordics. They provide a thriving environment for ambitious early-stage startups, renowned investors and VCs, large enterprises, and other ecosystem organisations.

[Startup Sauna](#)

Startup Sauna is a focal meeting point for entrepreneurs and investors alike. Startup Sauna is also the home base for the largest student-led community in Europe.

[BusinessOulu](#)

Business Oulu's Startup Station is a hub providing inspiration, knowledge, and networking for entrepreneurs and early-stage startups, featuring a studio, event space, and temporary co-working facilities.

[Crazy Town](#)

Crazy Town is Finland's largest and oldest community-driven workspace for companies of all sizes.

Coworking spaces

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Platform 6

Platform 6 operates in Tampere by uniting startups, driven individuals, and organizations to take action and build a thriving startup community.

Kampusklubi

Kampusklubi offers its members selected services to support collaboration and networking, facilities around the campuses, and access to an international scientific community and talent pool.

Helsinki Partners

Helsinki Partners matches investors, business professionals, founders, talents and visitors with possibilities in Helsinki.

3. Cultural Aspects: Ecosystem Strengths and Challenges

Finnish people are often described as trustworthy and straight to the point. Finland doesn't have a strong culture of small talk - quite the opposite. In fact, Finns can be considered quite literal. If you ask, "How are you?" Finns will answer honestly.

Finland's strengths as a startup ecosystem are in innovation and stability, and the business ecosystem is largely developed. Furthermore, Finland's strong social welfare system and favorable business environment create a safety net that allows entrepreneurs to take calculated risks, promoting a more fearless approach to entrepreneurship. This unique blend of support, international outlook, and innovative event concepts sets Finland's startup ecosystem apart on the global stage.

“The biggest differences are the cultural ones. Finland is usually nr 1 or 2 in the level of trust in business overall in the world, competing with Singapore. In Finland, you ask questions, you do the DD, and that’s it. When someone tells you something, you believe it.”

- Partner at TrindVC, Reima Linnanvirta

3.1 Strengths

Cross-border investing in Finland rarely has issues. As a modern, stable economy, Finland offers a good investment climate and well-developed digital infrastructure with stability, functionality, and a high standard of living.

“Due to regulatory harmonization across the Single Market, trade and investment barriers are relatively low for investors within the EEA, compared to multilateral rules applicable to third countries. Moreover, interacting with the Finnish authorities is fairly easy and straightforward.”

- Attorney-at-law, Nora Haapala, Rödl & Partner

“Finland is super easy; there is a huge level of trust. If someone says something, that’s the way it is. As angel investments are not so big, you are not going to do such a deep DD, and thus, trust makes it really easy. Strengths – a lot of stuff happening, very easy to do business, a lot of trust.”

- Angel Investor Henry Nilert

“Young Finnish founders are very trusting and straightforward. Openness is the biggest strength of the ecosystem. I can have a half an hour meeting with the founder, and after, they will send over all their data and business secrets, and it's not a problem”

- Partner at TrindVC, Reima Linnanvirta

3.2 Challenges

Finland’s market is fairly open, and there are not many barriers to trade. Startups rarely face major issues and for investors, company registrations are fairly straightforward. However, according to Nora Haapala, Attorney-at-law and Associate Partner at international advisory firm Rödl & Partner, there are some factors that may make cross-border investments in Finland more challenging. Following, shall be in this sense kept in mind:

- Long processing times for operational permits, such as opening a bank account and company registration.
- Excessive bureaucracy to recruit non-EEA workers.
- Strict labor market regulation.

“Finland has only few explicit restrictions on foreign direct investments (FDI) and relatively low barriers to trade and invest, which contributes to attracting inward FDI. Finland maintains as well only few barriers in professional services sectors and has a favorable regulatory environment for digitally enabled services.”

- Attorney-at-law Nora Haapala, Rödl & Partner

“Finnish startups are less global. The market is just big enough to start here, and thus, startups do not go to bigger markets at first. Later, they must figure out where to expand country by country, which is a difficult and lengthy process.”

- Angel investor Henry Nilert

“Expectations for the investors are that the process is quick and smooth, and founders get upset if things take time.”

- Partner at TrindVC, Reima Linnanvirta

4. Legal, taxation, and local bureaucracy

To attract investment, the Finnish government cut the corporate income tax rate in 2014 from 24,5 % to 20 % (the lowest rate in the Nordics) and simplified its residency permit procedures. Private ownership and the participation of foreign companies or individuals are generally unrestricted.

4.1 Founding Company

Establishing a business in Finland offers a streamlined and efficient process supported by a well-connected startup ecosystem. While not as digitized as in Estonia, when it comes to registering a company as a non-citizen. However, Finland's online registration system ensures a smooth and relatively quick company formation process. What may ease many startups, is the fact that there is no notary requirement in company transactions in Finland.

The flexibility of business entity options, including private limited companies, partnerships, and sole proprietorships, caters to diverse entrepreneurial needs. The country's robust support system includes business development organizations, accelerators, and innovation hubs, fostering collaboration and growth. For those unfamiliar with local procedures, various services are available to aid with company setup, address provision, and accounting.

Altogether, founding a company in Finland is marked by accessibility, innovation, and comprehensive assistance, making it an appealing destination for entrepreneurs aiming to bring their ideas to fruition.

Business set-up service providers:

KPMG

KPMG offers comprehensive business set-up services in Finland, including company registration, employment and immigration services, tax compliance, bookkeeping, and legal advisory, ensuring a streamlined process by handling all necessary interactions with local authorities.

Private Finance

Private Finance offers comprehensive company registration services in Finland, including legal address, tax registration, and local director services, with varying packages and ongoing support for accounting and bank account setup.

1Office

1Office offers business set-up services with international experience, local expertise, transparent pricing, and a straightforward process, providing comprehensive support to entrepreneurs starting and running businesses abroad, with most services available for online purchase.

Business Helsinki

Business Helsinki offers a comprehensive range of no-cost services to help entrepreneurs start and develop their businesses, including info events, guidance in business planning or advisory meetings, startup grants, and access to extensive informational resources.

Rödl & Partner

An international advisory firm present with over 100 offices in 50 countries worldwide, providing comprehensive legal, tax, audit, accounting, management and IT consulting services. In the Nordic and Baltic Region, Rödl & Partner has been present for more than 30 years, supporting some of the most important investment and transaction projects.

4.2 Taxes

Finland's tax system is structured to provide both stability and support for individuals and businesses alike. Known for its transparency and efficient administration, the Finnish tax framework ensures a fair and balanced contribution towards public services and social welfare. Income tax is a fundamental component, with progressive rates that mean higher earners contribute more.

Additionally, Finland has a value-added tax (VAT) system that applies to goods and services, with varying rates for different categories. It's important to note that Finland has social security contributions, which help fund the country's robust healthcare and social welfare programs. For businesses, corporate income tax is levied on profits, and there's a strong emphasis on research and development incentives.

Despite its comprehensive taxation structure, Finland provides various deductions and credits to ease the tax burden, including those related to entrepreneurship, housing, and family. Overall, Finland's tax system strikes a balance between financing public services and fostering economic growth, making it a foundation for a stable and well-functioning society.

[Finland Tax Information](#)

[Tax Competitiveness index 2022](#)

4.3 MODEL DOCUMENTS AND TEMPLATES

To make doing business in Finland easier, StartUpTools and Seriesseed.fi have created standardized legal documents for common activities in collaboration with Superhero Capital, Vendep Capital, Lifeline, Inventure, Icebreaker, Reaktor Ventures, Nordic Foodtechvc, Maki.VC, Slush, Aaltoes, Helsinki Think Company, Kiuas, and Bird&Bird. The documents provide good explanations of the choices they made (and alternative options) in the footnotes. Although they cannot be held responsible for the content of the documents, the link below provides an overview of all of them.

[StartupTools](#)

StartUp Tools offers free, standardized legal documents and resources for startups, created in collaboration with seriesseed.fi, with over 15,000 downloads in the Nordics.

[Business Guide](#)

Business Guide offers a comprehensive beginner's guide for establishing a business in Finland, with general information sourced from Finnish authorities, expert interviews, and official websites, while recommending consultation with relevant authorities for detailed legal, accounting, and taxation issues.

[SeriesSeed.fi](#)

Seriesseed offers a set of free, standardized legal documents for startups, including shareholders' agreements and investment agreements, crafted with input from both entrepreneurs and investors, and licensed under Creative Commons to facilitate easier incorporation and fundraising without bias.

[Huma](#)

Huma offers free, customizable Finnish Plans and Policy templates, created with Castren & Snellman, to help SMBs comply with Finnish law and manage essential workplace agreements.

4.4 TRUSTED LOCAL PARTNERS FOR LEGAL HELP

[Rödl & Partner](#)

[1Office](#)

[Dealsign](#)

[PrivacyDesigner](#)

[Avance](#)

[Dittmar & Indrenius](#)

[Krogerus](#)

[Fondia](#)

[Roschier](#)

[White & Case](#)

[Bird & Bird](#)

[Borenius](#)

[Castrén & Snellman](#)

[Dottir](#)

[HPP asianajotoimisto](#)

[Lieke](#)

[Magnusson](#)

[Waselius](#)

[Merilampi](#)

[Nordia](#)

[Procope & Hornborg](#)

[Lexia](#)

4.5 Possible Legal Challenges

Generally, it is predictable and safe to operate in Finland. Between different EU countries, different tax systems in the EU member states are quite complicated and not easily accessible to all investors; investors feel that some systems are designed to benefit local businesses more than foreign ones. It is good to be aware that the corporate law systems differ from member state to member state.

4.6 Where to find help with legals and taxes?

In Finland, information in English is mostly readily available online. Find the English resources from the sources below.

[For Finnish customers - Business Finland](#)

[Finnish Tax Admin](#)

[Key legislation - Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment \(tem.fi\)](#)

5. Success Stories of Finland

Not only is Finland the land of a strong gaming industry with Rovio and Supercell among unicorns, but you should keep an eye on at least these 7 soonicorns: IQM Quantum Computers, Rive, ICEYE, Swappie, Appfollow, Smartly.io, and Basemark. Finland as a country is especially strong in technical fields, such as quantum computing, cloud services, health tech, and AI, but also sustainability and impact.

A good example of a Finnish success story is the case of Hostaway. Hostaway is a fast-growing company that provides a SaaS platform for short-term rental management companies globally. The company was founded in late 2015 by Marcus Räder, Saber Kordestanchi, and Mikko Nurminen, a member of the Finnish Business Angels Network. Today, Hostaway has 160+ employees in more than 40 countries, and according to Nurminen, the company will hit 20 million in revenue with high profitability. The Hostaway team is fully remote.

Nurminen and the team recently raised 175 million funding round for Hostaway, a fast-growing short-term rental management platform featured in Talouselämä, HS Visio, and TechCrunch.

“Our growth has been phenomenally fast. We entered the market in February and closed the deal in May. We were lucky to have a lot of interest from investors,” co-founder and [angel investor Mikko Nurminen says](#). “We aim to become the global market leader and expand our business. We already have over 100 partners in our marketplace. Our growth has accelerated since the investment, and our goal is to multiply and expand our operations and eventually become acquired. Our plan is to reach 100 million ARR in the next few years, and we are on track to that milestone!”

6. Emerging Trends and Future Outlook – what to keep an eye on

Finland is also a forerunner in cleantech technology, and that, together with all kinds of sustainability and cleantech sectors are expected to rise in the upcoming years, and it's already on the radar of Finnish early-stage investors. Several circular economy companies have been rising in Finland in recent years. For example, [Infinite Fibre](#) utilizes a groundbreaking technology to convert landfill-bound waste into high-quality textile fibre, and [Sulapac](#) provides a sustainable alternative to plastic packaging – their biodegradable plant-based binders and wood materials can be processed using existing plastics machinery!

Other future industries to keep an eye on in Finland, can be found in the sectors of Life Sciences, ICT, GreenTech, Games, and EdTech. Other emerging future industries to mention in Finland are in dual-use, defence and security.

The changed global political situation is now reflected in the deal flow of the Finnish Business Angels Network (FiBAN ry) in the form of a surge in dual-use, defence and security startup applications. A record number of applications were received for the Pitch Finland DefSec startup competition in June 2024. Finland's membership in NATO has opened up new funding opportunities for start-ups and the industry has attracted new movement amongst early-stage investors.

"NATO's Diana programme and the European Defence Fund have been in the news a lot. This has prompted many entrepreneurs to consider whether their innovation is suitable for a dual-use technology. Now defence start-ups have been given a clear pathway to seek funding from private investors. This is reflected in the number of applicants to FiBAN."

- Tiina Laisi-Puheloinen, CEO of the Finnish Business Angels Network.



This guide is part of the 4NGELS project, which is an international programme organized by four business angel networks: Estonian Business Angels Network (EstBAN), Finnish Business Angels Network (FiBAN), Business Angels of Slovenia, COBIN Angels. The programme is coordinated by Civitta. We bring together investors from Estonia, Finland, Slovenia and Poland to strengthen the level of cross-border investment between our business angel networks.