Founders worth meeting.

World-class companies,
built with a **fraction** of the capital.

SLOVENIA BUSINESS

I FEEL SLOVENIA



No one invests in, buys from, or builds with a company they have never met.

Consider this the introduction.

An afternoon is enough.

EU · EURO · SCHENGEN

Most startup ecosystems take weeks to understand.
This one takes an afternoon.

First, the proof. 02

Then the founders who just raised. 05

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SKIP TO THE FOUNDERS.

For readers in a hurry.

INVEST.SPIRITSLOVENIA.SI/STARTUPS

You may already know some of this.

SLOVENIAN TEAMS INSIDE GLOBAL COMPANIES

Sportradar
acquired KLIKA

Teads (formerly Outbrain)
acquired ZEMANTA

Planet Labs
acquired SINERGISE

Bragg Gaming
acquired ORYX GAMING

SAP LeanIX
acquired CLEANSHELF

Robinhood
acquired BITSTAMP

BUILT IN SLOVENIA

GAMES · **Outfit7.** Built the global Talking Tom & Friends franchise without institutional venture capital. Acquired for about USD 1 billion in 2017.

BIG SCIENCE · **Cosylab.** Builds the control systems used at CERN, ITER and other major research facilities. Independent since 2001.

AEROSPACE · **Pipistrel.** Built the world's first type-certified electric aircraft, certified by EASA in 2020. Now part of Textron.

BIOTECH · **BIA Separations.** Developed purification technology for mRNA, plasmids and gene therapies. Acquired by Sartorius for EUR 360 million in 2020.

Pipistrel and BIA Separations were built in the same town of 6,500 people.

These are the ones to know next.

MEDTECH · **Tofant**
Developing blood that stays stable without refrigeration.

FINTECH · **Fliqa**
Powers seamless payments, enriched data and smarter financial decisions.

FOODTECH · **Juicy Marbles**
Meat, reinvented without animals. A premium brand from Slovenia.

REGTECH · **DDD Invoices**
One API for e-invoicing rules in over thirty countries.

AGRITECH · **MooHero**
Smart collars that track the health of dairy cows around the clock.

DEEPTECH · **BioSistemika**
What if all the world's data fitted inside a test tube?

SALES SOFTWARE · **SaleSqueze**
Builders sell complex products online. Live in more than thirty countries.

CONSUMERTECH · **Bird Buddy**
Smart bird feeders that photograph every bird that visits.

EDTECH · **Astra AI**
Every student gets a personal tutor. Already more than 10 million learners.

CLEANTECH · **ReCatalyst**
A nanotech platform for next-generation catalysts that use fewer critical materials.

Ten among many. The rest are in the database.

A certified electric aircraft.
The control systems that run CERN.
Europe's first EuroHPC machine.
A regulated crypto exchange.
A talking cat downloaded billions of times.
A bird feeder that knows the birds.

Not concepts. Not prototypes. Products.

This is a country that delivers.

Four worth meeting.

Four founders building the next generation from Slovenia. Not a ranking.



Jan Habat
FRESH 32

FRESH 32 is rethinking the toothbrush, swapping nylon bristles for TPU rubber.

In its first year, FRESH 32 sold over 50,000 toothbrushes.



Martin Rojnik
Grashka

Grashka uses native fermentation to turn plants into clean-label, high-protein foods.

Grashka products are sold in more than 700 stores across Europe.



Taja Benčina
Realtracing

An AI construction intelligence platform that turns projects into sales opportunities.

150+ B2B customers across Slovenia, Croatia and Germany, revenue up 10×.



Dušan Omerčević
*codeplain

*codeplain is an AI platform turning ***plain specifications into production-ready software.

In June 2026, *codeplain raised EUR 2.6 million in seed funding.

Four of them. The rest are in the database.

Why it keeps happening.

The same conditions repeat, decade after decade. Here is what they look like in numbers.

#8 worldwide

Production and export complexity. Slovenia makes and exports goods that few economies can.

28% of graduates

are in STEM fields. The technical base renews itself every year.

69% of R&D

is performed inside businesses, not in institutes alone. Research sits close to the products and processes it improves.

315 robots

per 10,000 manufacturing employees. 7th worldwide, 2024.

7th worldwide

Scientific and technical articles relative to GDP. A small country producing a disproportionate amount of research.

Slovenia ranks fourth among the world's safest and most peaceful countries.

Sources · IFR World Robotics 2025 · WIPO GII 2025 · SURS 2024 · OECD EAG 2025 · GPI 2026

What changes next.

A national startup strategy, adopted in March 2026, running to 2030.

BY 2030

10×

more venture investment per capita.

2×

as many startups per million people.

25%

average annual growth across jobs, revenue and taxes paid.

Keeping more innovation in Slovenia.

POLICY IN MOTION

Employee ownership that works.

Reviewing and improving employee equity and option schemes.

A company form built for rounds.

A lean corporate form, fully digital, with simple entry and exit.

Talent without the wait.

A fast-track unit for work and residence permits.

Capital that co-invests.

Public-private venture funds and greater participation from pension capital.

In 2025, Slovenia made the EU's biggest year-on-year gain in startup policy implementation.

Sources · Slovenian Startup Strategy 2030, adopted 5 March 2026 · ESNA Startup Nations Standards Report 2025

Where the ecosystem meets.

PODIM.

The region's leading startup and investor conference, and the main event on the regional calendar. Curated one-to-one matchmaking, a filtered founder pipeline, and the people from this book in one room.

PODIM.ORG

PODIM 2027 · 17 TO 19 MAY 2027 · MARIBOR, SLOVENIA



The Investors Edge.

The region's investor-first conference: a hand-picked room of more than 150 active investors from over 20 countries, focused on cross-border capital in Central and Southeast Europe.

THEINVESTORSEDGE.EU

THE INVESTORS EDGE 2027 · JUNE 2027 · NOVA GORICA, SLOVENIA · TBC



Five people you can write to.

SLOVENIAN STARTUP ALLIANCE



Slovenia is the next big thing, and I am your shortcut. I connect international investors directly to founders, funds and angels.

Nina Dremelj

Managing Partner, Vesna VC
President, Business Angels of Slovenia

NINA.DREMELJ@BUSINESSANGELS.SI



As head of Start:up Slovenia and the PODIM Conference, I sit at the centre of the ecosystem. One email to me opens every door.

Matej Rus

Head of Start:up Slovenia & PODIM Conference

MATEJ.RUS@STARTUP.SI



Active investor, ecosystem builder, policy advocate. I bridge the region, Europe and the US. Tell me where you want in.

Vuk Lau

Partner, Silicon Gardens
CCIS Startup & Scaleup Section

VUK.LAU@SILICONGARDENS.COM

SPIRIT SLOVENIA

I run Slovenia's startup delegations. Tell me which event you are at and I will set up the meetings.

Aleš Ogorevc

National Startup Internationalisation Adviser

ALES.OGOREVC@SPIRITSLOVENIA.SI

I look after the startup database. Tell me what you are looking for and I will send you a filtered list.

Vladimir Milovanović

Startup Ecosystem Intelligence Lead

VLADIMIR.MILOVANOVIC@SPIRITSLOVENIA.SI

The ecosystem. Two pages.

The entry points that matter, grouped by what they do.

GOVERNMENT

Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Sport. Owner of national startup policy. Sets the strategy to 2030, the legislation and the incentives the ecosystem runs on.
GOV.SI

SPIRIT Slovenia Business Development Agency. Your national gateway to Slovenia's startup ecosystem. We connect international investors, corporations and partners with high-potential Slovenian startups, coordinate national startup delegations and serve as Slovenia's EIC National Contact Point.
SLOVENIABUSINESS.EU

Named Best Community-Driven Ecosystem in the Balkans, 2026.
STARTUPBLINK GLOBAL STARTUP ECOSYSTEM INDEX

CONNECT

Slovenian Startup Alliance. The national startup partnership.
STARTUP AND SCALEUP SECTION OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF SLOVENIA
START:UP SLOVENIA INITIATIVE
BUSINESS ANGELS OF SLOVENIA ASSOCIATION
STARTUP.SI/EN-US

Slovenian Technology Forum. A business association of high-tech, high-value-added Slovenian companies competing in global markets.
TEHNOLOSKI-FORUM.SI/EN

CAPITAL

Slovenian Enterprise Fund. Grants, guarantees and convertible loans.
PODJETNISKISKLAD.SI/EN

SID Banka. Development bank financing for growth companies.
SID.SI/EN

Business Angels of Slovenia. The national angel network and its syndicates.
POSLOVNIANGELI.SI/EN/HOME

Venture funds. A dozen active funds, among them Silicon Gardens, Vesna VC and South Central Ventures. The full list is in the database.

KNOWLEDGE

Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency (ARIS) and the RDI Hub. Research and innovation funding, Slovenian RDI ecosystem information, data and analytics.
ARIS-RS.SI | RRI.SI

Jožef Stefan Institute · National Institute of Chemistry · National Institute of Biology

University of Ljubljana · University of Maribor · University of Primorska

Licensing and spinouts run through the technology transfer offices.

BUILD

Technology parks, incubators and accelerators. A national network, present in every region.

You're still early.

Slovenia boasts an exceptional quality of life.

That is a bit of a downside for startups (not a joke). Other than that it ticks every checkbox of a great startup ecosystem. It has world-class talent that has been largely untapped. It has no local market, so every startup is born global. And it has multiple generations of experienced global founders helping the ones coming after them.

Come, check it out!

ANDRAŽ TORI
CO-FOUNDER OF ZEMANTA AND SILICON GARDENS FUND
CHIEF SCIENTIST AT TEADS

The brochure ends here. The ecosystem doesn't.

THE DATABASE

Every founder raising now.

Filtered by sector, stage and technology. Each profile connects you directly with the company.

INVEST.SPIRITSLOVENIA.SI/STARTUPS

THE COMMUNITY

Everything happening around them.

News, events and what founders, investors and support organisations are doing right now.

STARTUP.SI/EN-US

Don’t remember this brochure.
Remember the founder you met because of it.

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