

News Release

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Digital directory serves up innovative traveltech solutions to Scotland’s tourism SME’s

A new digital directory of over 100 traveltech businesses and 30 industry case studies goes live today (Friday). Developed by the **Traveltech for Scotland** cluster, it showcases how various technologies such as online ticketing, smartphone apps and social distancing solutions can help tourism businesses in Scotland adapt and diversify in a post-Covid19 world.

Traveltech for Scotlandhas collaborated with a small team of experienced tourism leaders, Karin Gidlund and and Megan McGurren, who, as part of a previous industry project, with Jemma Reid and Thayanne Scardini, created a Scottish tourism toolkit resource to help businesses develop their digital capabilities in response to the pandemic. Karin and Megan have led on developing the new interactive directory, designed to help tourism businesses find the technologies they need.

The directory includes information for attractions, tour operators, accommodation providers and transport companies, and showcases over 100 technology companies offering solutions to tourism businesses. These include booking platforms, touchless solutions, digital signage and more, highlighting Scotland’s diverse traveltech innovators alongside their UK and overseas counterparts.

Since launching in August 2020, Traveltech for Scotland, jointly funded by Scottish Enterprise and the 2014–2020 European Structural and Investment Fund through SPRITE (Scottish Programme for Research, Innovation and Technology Ecosystem) has engaged with over 100 businesses; developing collaborations with industry partners including Tech Nation, Codeclan, ScotlandIS, the Scottish Tourism Alliance and VisitScotland. It aims to support a growing Scottish traveltech community to capitalise on training, funding, learning and collaborative project opportunities.

**Joshua Ryan-Saha, Director, Traveltech for Scotland said:** “*Since launch, we have been impressed by the agility and resilience of the traveltech businesses and their commitment to deliver innovative technology in a challenging environment. These technologies are already helping Scottish tourism businesses adapt their* *products and services to meet evolving customer needs. Traveltech is going to play an important part in getting the Scottish tourism sector back on its feet and this directory will help tourism businesses connect with Scotland’s traveltech pioneers.”*

**Aileen Lamb, Tourism Manager, Scottish Enterprise, said**: *“The passion, entrepreneurial spirit and innovation evident across Scotland’s traveltech community is recognised as one of the important building blocks which will help our places, tourism businesses and communities build back post-Covid19. Working together to create new opportunities and solve challenges is the ‘Scottish way’. The importance of bringing these two vital parts of Scotland’s economy together can’t be underestimated and Scottish Enterprise is proud to support this important programme”.*

The Traveltech Directory will be showcased in a series of online sessions commencing **Wednesday 9 December, continuing into 2021**, to help tourism businesses get the best out of the digital resource, with the aim of finding tech solutions which can help them not only adapt to unprecedented challenges but build a more resilient and sustainable future.

**View the Directory:** [**Traveltech Directory - Universe (airtable.com)**](https://airtable.com/universe/expXy3xyXBa8RsOl2/traveltech-directory)

**For further information and images, please contact: Joshua Ryan-Saha, Director, Traveltech for Scotland:** [**Joshua.ryan-saha@ei.ed.ac.uk**](mailto:Joshua.ryan-saha@ei.ed.ac.uk) **or Lesley Judge, Project Manager, Traveltech for Scotland:** [**Lesley.judge@ei.ed.ac.uk**](mailto:Lesley.judge@ei.ed.ac.uk)

**Visit:** [**https://efi.ed.ac.uk/traveltech-scotland/**](https://efi.ed.ac.uk/traveltech-scotland/)

**ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND:**

Traveltech for Scotland is a three-year project funded under Scottish Enterprise’s Cluster Builder programme – supported by the 2014-20 European Structural and Investment Fund through a programme of jointly funded projects with the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), and managed by the Scottish Government. The £342,000 initiative – led by the University of Edinburgh, through Edinburgh Innovations and the Edinburgh Futures Institute, taps into Scotland’s research excellence and seeks to nurture the country’s tech graduate talent.

Traveltech encompasses a range of businesses developing digital and data-driven technology products and services for the travel and tourism sector. Traveltech organisations provide ‘business to business (B2B)’ and ‘business to consumer (B2C)’ products and services. Traveltech innovations range from robots in hotels to travel planning applications to virtual reality experiences. In 2018, Scotland’s digital tech turnover was £4.9bn from more than 9,500 businesses with more than 100,000 in Scotland in digital roles.

The Scottish Tourism Toolkit was developed by tourism professionals as part of the Destination Leaders Programme group, DLP Assembles in Spring 2020. The Directory work has been led by Karin Gidlund and Megan McGurren,who were both involved in developing the original toolkit project earlier this year together with Thayanne Scardini and Jemma Reid, to help visitor attractions and experiences use technology to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Karin Gidlund**: With more than 20 years' experience of working in tourism for some of the most successful tour operators and DMCs in the UK, Karin specialises in product development, contracting and sales. She spent her time on furlough creating the Toolkit earlier this year and has led on the final development of the digital directory.

**Megan McGurren:** With more than 10 years’ experience of every aspect of tour operations: product development, contracting, guide management, operations, reservations as well as database management, Megan joined the Toolkit team ahead of the second edition, to help manage the development of the Toolkit into an online digital resource.

