

# Lisboa Ecosystem Guide

How to Start and Scale





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1st revised edition, 2023

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**Directed by LISBOA UNICORN CAPITAL**

**Research and written by THE SQUARE - YOUR COMMUNICATION OFFICE**

**Designed by THE SQUARE - YOUR COMMUNICATION OFFICE**

# INDEX

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<b>Manifest</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Why Lisboa?</b>	<b>12</b>
Lisboa, the home of Web Summit	17
Lisboa as an emerging global ecosystem	20
<b>From Startup City to Unicorn Capital</b>	<b>22</b>
What does it mean to be a Unicorn Capital?	26
Meet Margarida Figueiredo	28
Meet Gil Azevedo	29
<b>How to Start and Scale in Lisboa</b>	<b>32</b>
Lisboa Unicorn Capital	34
Hub do Beato & Hub do Mar	36
Unicorn Factory Lisboa	37
Startup Lisboa	39
Startup Portugal	40
<b>Messages from the Ecosystem</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>More info about Lisboa</b>	<b>68</b>

**MANI —  
FEST**



# MANIFEST

8

The narrative of Lisboa's entrepreneurship ecosystem began over a decade ago. Back then, our mission was to position Lisboa as a city known for its creativity, competitiveness, and innovation. We successfully realized this ambition and worked hard to build a new and globally recognized community. Now, ten years on, we find ourselves revisiting this ambition once again. We now have an attractive city for companies, ranked in global innovation reports, and now is the perfect time to take the next step. Our aim is to create a new Lisboa: more than just a starting point

**we aspire to be fertile  
ground for the growth of  
successful and globally  
recognized businesses.**

Therefore, we have devised  
a new and improved strategy:

**Lisboa as a Unicorn  
Capital - a global,  
innovative, intelligent,  
and sustainable  
metropolis.**

In line with this objective,  
we are implementing various  
initiatives to catalyze this  
growth, attracting technological  
expertise and fostering local  
talent. What sets us apart is our  
uniqueness. We are an unparalleled  
city, a place where opportunities  
abound on every corner, enabling  
new ideas to grow, and dreams to  
come true.

**We're the home of the  
believers.**



Lisboa is a vibrant melting pot, and it's from this unique starting point that we present ourselves to the world.

10

Here we stand, in one of Europe's oldest cities, where a mere tram ride away, you can stroll between traditional tiled facades and disruptive facades that serve as a blank canvas for street art. It's a city that regenerates itself through local commerce while steadfastly investing in innovation and technology. A city that cherishes its industrial heritage and simultaneously establishes centres for artificial intelligence. Lisboa, with a gaze cast towards the memory and legacy of fishermen and explorers, takes confident strides into the realm of innovation in the blue bioeconomy. This is a city that knows how to extend a warm welcome to those who choose it, valuing both its locals and those who arrive from afar, considering everyone part of the transformative talent within the city. As a result, Lisboa remains a preferred destination for expatriates and digital nomads.

Our vision for the future of Lisboa is clear: a city that invests in authenticity, diversity, innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship as the driving forces propelling its development. Present-day Lisboa

is unfurling banners for entrepreneurship, transforming itself into a veritable business hub, particularly for companies with high growth potential. It's a City of Unicorns, teeming with startups and scaleups, well on its way to securing its place as the innovation capital of Europe. However, amid these ambitions for impressive numbers and global recognition, Lisboa does not forget the individuality of the entrepreneur. The city continues to uphold its commitment to and support for small, private ventures, acknowledging the human face of those who nurture their ideas and bring them to life. Lisboa also values the inventor, the one who experiments, innovates and meticulously builds their business, courageously embracing risk as a way of life. Without them, we would not be the City of Unicorns.

Over a decade has passed since the inception of the city's dedicated public policies for entrepreneurship. The significant leap we are proposing to take today, the aspiration to become the unicorn capital, is only attainable because of the groundwork that has been laid. It's not just an entrepreneurial ecosystem, but a community forged by entrepreneurs. Within the community of those who believe and call Lisboa their home today, creatives and entrepreneurs hold a special place. They are the risk-takers who confront the unknown and devise solutions that were deemed impossible until they made them real. This is the very fabric from which Lisboa is woven, proving that, just as in the past when Lisboa set sail across the sea into an unknown world, our city continues to embrace the spirit of exploration and innovation.

11

**Diogo Moura**  
**Councilor for Economy and Innovation**  
**Lisboa City Council**

**WHY —  
LISBOA?**



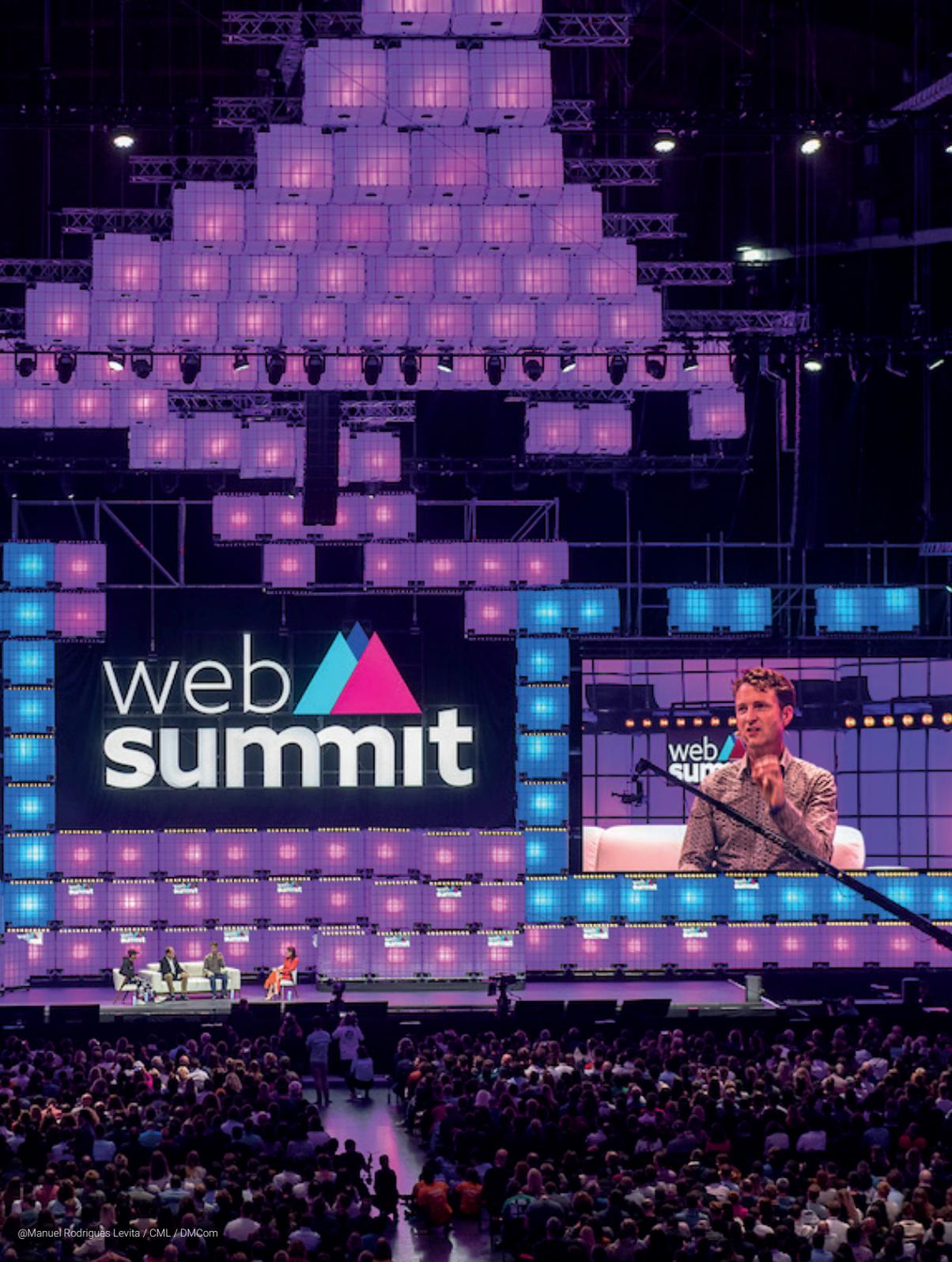
Over the past decade, Lisboa has emerged as a highly desirable destination for international companies and entrepreneurs. Several factors have contributed to its appeal, including favorable weather conditions, a culture of openness towards innovation, programs designed to attract foreign talent, companies, and investors, a strong pool of high-quality tech talent, and widespread English proficiency. This unique combination has positioned the city as one of the **top 40 global emerging ecosystems** in Startup Genome's Report.

The Lisboa ecosystem is already home to **+1200 startups**, accounting for nearly 50% of all registered startups in Portugal. In addition, it is home to **+80 scaleup**, as confirmed by Dealroom. The openness and focus on international markets have generated visibility and interest among **international investors**, who played a crucial role in contributing over **80% of the 400M€ raised by Lisboa-based startups** in 2022.

The cross-border connection extends even further with initiatives such as the **Scale Cities Alliance**, a partnership among public ecosystem builders from 13 European cities aimed at creating **Europe's most interconnected technology hubs**. Moreover, a national network of incubators provides support for starting and developing concepts, even beyond the major hubs. Lisboa's distinction as **the host city of Web Summit**, the world's leading tech conference, also adds to its allure. This event brings together thousands of founders and investors from around the globe, offering unparalleled networking opportunities.

While the Portuguese startup ecosystem is still in its early stages, it already represents **1.1% of the country's GDP**, and its **startups have raised almost 1B€ in 2022**.





web summit



# Lisboa, the home of Web Summit

***Lisboa made the Web Summit and the Web Summit helped make the Lisboa of today.***

stated Paddy Cosgrave, Web Summit's co-founder, on Renascença, on October 31, 2022

Lisboa was chosen as the new home for the Web Summit, hosting Europe's largest technology event for the first time in 2016. Back then, more than 53,000 participants from 166 countries converged in Lisboa, marking a pivotal moment that transformed the city into a true global hub for entrepreneurship.

The initiative's impact on the national economy was rapidly felt. According to a study conducted by the Secretary-General for the Economy, Web Summit's influence on Portugal's Gross Domestic Product has been estimated to range between €102.5 million and €180 million in 2017 (the year in which 60,000 people participated). By the third year after the inaugural event, Portuguese startups present had already secured over €60 million in funding after 41 rounds. Looking forward to 2028, the projected impact is already valued between €164.8 million and €385.9 million.

What was initially envisioned as a three-year association blossomed into a highly successful long-term partnership. Following two triumphant editions and just before what was expected to be the final edition in the country, Paddy Cosgrave declared that the Web Summit would continue to call the Portuguese capital home for another 10 years – until 2028.

“The “love story” between Web Summit and Lisboa, and how it propelled the Portuguese capital to the center of the global entrepreneurship stage, has inspired other major cities worldwide.

18

While Web Summit continues to expand and influence ecosystems around the world – with events planned in Rio de Janeiro in 2023 and Qatar in 2024 – one thing remains certain: Lisboa will, most definitely, remain its true home.

# unicorn

Factory  
Lisboa

## SCALING UP the unicorn

A "growth stage" program that gives scale-ups the sales and leads to unlock their potential.



## SOFT LANDING the unicorn

A tailored program for high-growth startups to help them establish a presence in the market and secure a solid customer base.



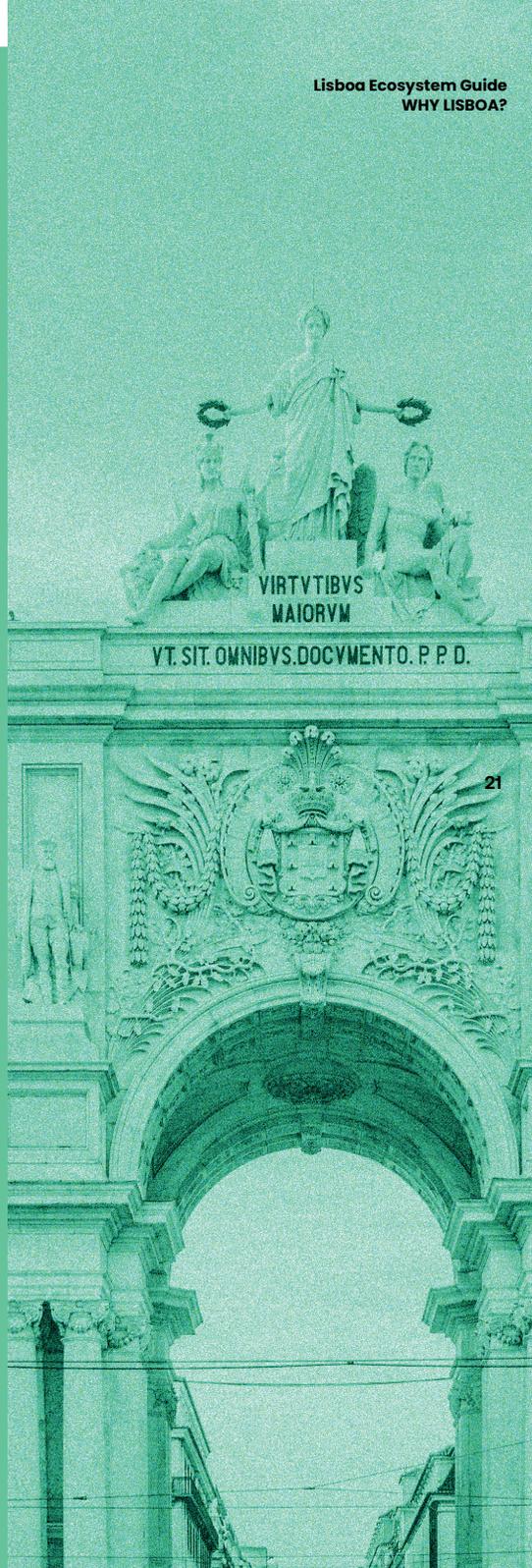
## Lisboa as an emerging global ecosystem

**67%** of Portugal's tech value is concentrated in Lisboa's startup ecosystem

**400M€** raised in 2022 by Lisboa based startups

**€21.4B** is the  
combined enterprise  
value of Lisboa's startup  
ecosystem

**+7M€** raised  
by more than 30 impact  
startups in 2022



**FROM  
STARTUP  
CITY —  
TO UNICORN  
CAPITAL**

inspired by Margarida Figueiredo and Gil Azevedo

This story began several years ago, back in 2010, when Portugal, like the rest of the world, was hit by the financial crisis. This crisis led to the intervention of the International Monetary Fund resulting in an economic downturn and less job opportunities.

As a result, Lisboa's City Council created the Department of Economy and Innovation. This entity aimed to transform Lisboa into a competitive and globally recognized city, capable of competing with other European capitals as a thriving startup hub - a Startup City.

Additionally, the citizens of Lisboa saw this as an opportunity to embrace entrepreneurship, as a mean to drive the economy forward, and voted to implement Startup Lisboa, providing physical space, capacity-building programs and development structures to support entrepreneurs in transforming their ideas into successful business models.

# STARTUP LISBOA

When Startup Lisboa was originally established as a non-profit organization with the mission to drive Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Lisboa City Hall actively sought strategic partners. The concept was to involve multiple stakeholders within the city and forge partnerships that would bring added value to entrepreneurs and the ecosystem itself.

As a result, IAPMEI and Associação Mutualista do Montepio joined as founding partners. This initiative swiftly gained recognition as a key driver to support and promote entrepreneurship, providing structured training and mentoring for startups, plus dedicated office spaces - areas that had previously been lacking in support and infrastructure.

Until 2011, **entrepreneurship was not widely embraced**, and it primarily emerged out of necessity for those who were unemployed or newly graduates. Existing incubators and accelerators were predominantly focused on academia, keeping entrepreneurship away from the economy and community. In 2012, the City Council organized the first edition of Entrepreneurship Week – a set of initiatives organized by different players from the ecosystem – but the turnout was disappointing. Organizers even resorted to using a megaphone under the arch of Rua Augusta, a prominent city landmark, to raise awareness. But it didn't end there. In addition to boosting the creation of the ecosystem, Lisboa City Hall began implementing educational entrepreneurship programs in public schools, from primary to 12th grade, which played a crucial role in the success of our ecosystem.

After this initial phase and until 2016, the ecosystem grew steadily and gained traction organically as the economy also started to recover. All the commitment and effort was, eventually, recognized internationally, with the Web Summit moving to Lisboa, attracting the attention of international tech companies, startups, investors, and other stakeholders, with the local ecosystem gaining significant international exposure for the first time.

***In 2022, after a decade of progress, the startup city ecosystem had reached a consolidated state in the early stage, boasting numerous incubators, acceleration programs, co-working spaces, and both public and private early-stage funding. The newly elected Council had made innovation as a key priority for Lisboa, which prompted the opportunity to take the next step and set the vision to establish Lisboa as a Unicorn Capital, with the flagship project “Unicorn Factory”, aiming to become a key global innovation ecosystem, joining other international cities that have been established for many years.***

## What does it mean to be a Unicorn Capital?

The vision of turning Lisboa into a leading innovation city on a global level led to the establishment of the Unicorn Factory Lisboa in 2022, which marked this new and exhilarating phase, transitioning from the identity of Startup City to Unicorn Capital. The ambition grew, envisioning a city that can become a global centre of excellence for innovation, where entrepreneurs can start, grow and become future unicorns. The city is now making the very significant qualitative leap from being a highly promising early-stage ecosystem, to becoming a developed ecosystem for startups and scaleups in all stages.

26

The central location will be at Unicorn Factory Lisboa in Beato Hub serving as the focal point for innovation and entrepreneurship, attracting startups, scaleups and companies in the innovation and creative industries. It will be a melting pot of ideas and disruption, leveraging on a vibrant community and linked with a network of vertical hubs across the city, networking and contributing to the ecosystem's growth. Lisboa aims to excel in various innovation verticals, including the AI, blue economy, fintech, gaming, foodtech, sustainability, web3, and more. Lisboa already has a strong footprint in many of these strategic areas. In sustainability alone, Lisboa was designated the European Green Capital in 2020 and considering its commitments until 2030, the city has been taking proactive steps to encourage companies and startups to adopt net-zero measures. As a result, new projects and startups have emerged, focusing on sustainability, the environment, social impact, and the transformation of governance models. Sustainability is deeply ingrained in our vision for the city's economy.



## Lisboa City Council

is creating key projects towards a truly international ecosystem in Lisboa



# MEET

If you're stepping into Lisboa's thriving entrepreneurship ecosystem, chances are you'll cross paths with Margarida Figueiredo, the General Director for Economy and Innovation at Lisboa City Council.

For over a decade, Margarida's enduring dedication has been instrumental in building and nurturing the dynamic ecosystem that is now so familiar to all. She catalyzed projects like the participatory budget that gave birth to Startup Lisboa; the Lisboa Empreende program, a catalyst for SMBs and startups; the educational programs fostering entrepreneurship and innovation; the inception of Made of Lisboa, and a series of other forward-looking ventures introduced over the years to galvanize innovation across the city. Web Summit is also one of her main priorities, since its first edition in Lisboa and more recently had a hand in creating the Unicorn Factory Lisboa.

Margarida leads what she considers to be a startup within the City Council – a group of bold, proactive, and visionary entrepreneurs who want to strengthen Lisboa's position as a Unicorn Capital. In essence, the concept of a Unicorn Capital would be incomplete without the indelible contribution of Margarida.

## MARGARIDA FIGUEIREDO



## MEET

Gil Azevedo, Executive Director of Startup Lisboa is the driving force behind the Unicorn Factory Lisboa. Since his return to Lisboa after 10 years working in a financial institution in the areas of strategy, digital, customer excellence and marketing, in Dubai, Gil's mission has been to launch and develop the Unicorn Factory Lisboa and its various programs, plus hubs to support startups and scaleups.

In close collaboration with the Lisboa City Council, he is also developing the vision and strategy to make innovation a key growth lever and drive significant impact on the city. Furthermore, Gil is also enhancing and expanding Startup Lisboa's capabilities in light of the new vision, supporting local and foreign startups in developing their concepts into successful and scalable businesses.

29



# GIL AZEVEDO

# unicorn

Factory  
Lisboa



# unicofn

It's only a myth until  
you make it true.

[unicornfactorylisboa.com](http://unicornfactorylisboa.com)



**HOW TO  
START AND  
SCALE —  
IN LISBOA**

Lisboa's entrepreneurial community is vibrant and diverse, encompassing individuals from all backgrounds. Collaboration and mutual support are at the core of this city where like-minded people and organisations come together to share their passion and vision. Whether you're a tech startup, a creative agency, or anything in between, you'll find plenty of like-minded people and organizations who share your passion and vision.

# Lisboa Unicorn Capital

*The official platform of Lisboa-based innovators*

## Apply for Lisboa

Do you know why Lisboa is Europe's best work-and-play capital? This and other answers about the city context, startup landscape, and how you can get started if you want to move here can be answered in this moment. Stay tuned for these regular webinars, every two Fridays.

## Unicorn Capital Tours

There's no better way to meet the innovation hubs based in Lisboa than with our tour, once per month. Learn more about the innovation drivers in the city, and connect with their workers and leaders, while learning more about different sectors and areas.

## Unicorn Week

A pioneer in many aspects, Lisboa Entrepreneurship Week was created to promote and develop a sense of belonging and involvement of all actors in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. With its eyes on the future, it now assumes the name of Unicorn Week and intends to attract and retain talent, challenging them to join this community that has been consolidating itself, fueled by ambition and audacity. Happening in May, the program includes dozens of initiatives, mostly free of charge, seeking to affirm Lisboa as global, innovative, intelligent, and sustainable.

Learn more here:





## Hub do Beato

The home of Unicorn Factory Lisboa is much more than that. In the heart of the Beato neighborhood, this former Portuguese Army industrial complex, with more than 50 thousand square meters, is the space where work, leisure and cultural areas intertwine to unveil new urban dynamics, a daily living space shared by the hub residents - entrepreneurs, freelancers, startups, scaleups and large companies - and the entire surrounding community.

36

## Hub do Mar

The upcoming Hub do Mar project is poised to revolutionize Lisboa's maritime sector. Located on a Tagus River dock, it brings together maritime companies, laboratories, and prototyping spaces, fostering collaboration among universities, the scientific community, and businesses. With direct access to the sea, the hub facilitates the exchange of knowledge and the creation of synergies. Key partners, including the Lisboa Port Authority and Lisboa University, underscore its significance in reshaping the city's maritime future.

Learn more here:



# Unicorn Factory Lisboa

*"It's only a myth until you make it true."*

Envisioned by the Lisboa City Council with the aim of expanding Lisboa's entrepreneurial ecosystem, Unicorn Factory Lisboa is a platform of programs and hubs, inspired by international best practices, which supports startups and scaleups in creating sound products and business models, developing efficient processes, and achieving sustained accelerated growth from Lisboa.

## Hubs

Lisboa's dynamic innovation landscape owes much of its shape to the Hubs initiative, a collaborative effort involving strategic partnerships with both public and private entities. This initiative has given rise to specialized hubs, each dedicated to fostering innovation in specific verticals. The Web3 Hub, leveraging the transformative potential of Web3 technology, positions Lisboa as a global leader in this domain, capturing the attention of investors and startups alike. The Welltech Hub, a collaborative venture with key investment partners, focuses on health tech, sports tech, and fitness tech, introducing state-of-the-art technologies that promote healthier lifestyles. Additionally, Lisboa actively explores opportunities in other high-growth sectors such as gaming, food tech, work tech, and clean tech. These hubs serve as dynamic platforms, offering tailored programs, coworking spaces, and invaluable networking opportunities.

## Scaling Up

The first-ever program in Lisboa specialized in providing scaleups with the necessary support to help unlock their growth potential. Based on the most successful international programs, it develops the critical skills of leadership teams and addresses growth challenges, both in the Portuguese and international markets. Besides connecting scaleups with experts, mentors and the scaleup community, it also provides continuous exposure to potential corporate partners and clients.

Learn more here:



## Soft Landing

To simplify the process of moving or expanding operations to Lisboa, ensuring a soft landing without constraints, the Program supports scaleups in 5 key areas:

- **Immersive Sessions** (Focused on the initial guidance and professional network)
- **Curated Networking** (With program partners for tailored guidance in key business areas, as well as personalized support in networking and connecting with key stakeholders);
- **Community** (Introduction to the ecosystem key players);
- **Helpdesk** (Administrative support and legal assistance);
- **Office Space** (Access to temporary office spaces fully functional at competitive rates).

Learn more here:



# Startup Lisboa

Born in the heart of the city, Startup Lisboa has a major influence in the capital entrepreneurship ecosystem. This incubator offers mentoring, link to strategic partners, access to investment/funding, networking activities and a community based on knowledge and sharing.

39

## Launch in Lisbon

It doesn't need to be difficult to set up your life and business in Lisboa. This three-day soft landing program targeted at foreign entrepreneurs, companies or investors is composed of practical workshops, cultural activities, and introductions to key partners and the ecosystem.

Learn more about the  
next editions here:



# Startup Portugal

Startup Portugal is a private non-profit organization, whose mission is the promotion of the Portuguese entrepreneurship, in close connection with public and private entities operating in the national entrepreneurship ecosystem. Since 2019, holds a statue of public utility to support the Government in the creation and implementation of the National Strategy for Entrepreneurship, monitoring the design and implementation of public policies to support and promote entrepreneurship and Portuguese startups in national and foreign territory, and seek and implement European funding aimed at boosting the entrepreneurial fabric, among other activities.

40

## Startup Law

The Portuguese Government launched in May 2023 the new Startup Law, governing the entrepreneurship ecosystem and introducing the definitions of startup and scaleup and also changes to the tax regime for stock options, giving more favourable tax conditions to holders of shares under the so-called Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP). The new regime proposes that beneficiaries should only be taxed when the shares are sold or when they lose the status of resident in Portugal, for example, with the IRS rate (28 per cent) being applied to 50 per cent of the gains, resulting in an effective rate of 14 per cent, and also establishes the conditions for enjoying this benefit.

## One Stop Shop

One Stop Shop - Balcão do Empreendedor is a free service provided by Startup Portugal designed to help entrepreneurs and investors, seeking information to set up operations in Portugal, and other information of the ecosystem offering online and offline individual support.

Learn more  
about it here:



41

## Governmental supports

**Vouchers for Startups – New Green and Digital Products** - A financial support for startups with projects within the green and digital areas, in the amount of 30 thousand euros per startup, with a total allocation of 90 million euros funded by the Portuguese recovery and resilience plan.

Learn more  
about it here:



**Tech Visa** - A certification program addressed to companies that wish to attract highly qualified and specialized staff to Portugal, nationals from countries not included in the Schengen area. This program, made available by IAPMEI, aims to ensure that highly qualified workers can access jobs created by Portuguese incorporated companies or startups, in a simplified way.

42

Learn more  
about it here:



**Startup Visa** - Provided through IAPMEI, Startup Visa is a residence visa for entrepreneurs, which aims to attract investment, talent, and capacity for innovation to Portugal.

Learn more  
about it here:



# Entrepreneurial Communities



startupgrind

COWORKING THURSDAYS

Based in Lisbon



CREATIVE MORNINGS

Know more about  
them here:



**MESSAGES  
— FROM THE  
ECOSYSTEM**

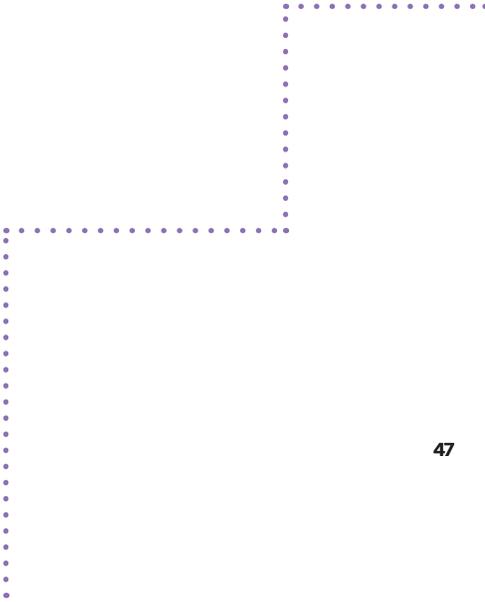




## **Ana Casaca, Global Head of Innovation at Galp**

### **Why should you meet Ana?**

Ana has over 20 years of experience in innovation & tech transfer. She began as a researcher in a startup in San Francisco with a Fulbright scholarship and moved to become a corporate entrepreneur. Throughout her career she has taken on several leadership roles in driving transformation and creating innovation ecosystems within notable companies in the Chemical, Industrial, Retail, and currently, Energy sectors. Ana is also an Expert Evaluator in Horizon Europe for European Commission.



***“Choosing Lisboa means choosing to be impactful, shaping an Old Continent innovation hub in a globalization-embracing city. With a rich history and strategic location, Lisboa fosters idea exchange, while its support system empowers startups. Combined with quality of life, deep tech talent and open policies, this creates a unique environment for entrepreneurs to thrive, leaving an indelible mark on the global entrepreneurial landscape.”***



## **Cristina Fonseca, Co-Founder and Partner at Indico Capital Partners**

### **Why should you meet Cristina?**

Cristina is a highly influential figure in the Portuguese investment and entrepreneurship landscape. What sets her apart? In simple terms, she breaks the bias. She began her professional career as an entrepreneur, co-founding Talkdesk in 2011, the first cloud-native Call Center solution which raised \$500M from top global investors. And once a founder, always a founder.

Cristina went on to co-found Cleverly.ai in 2018, an Artificial Intelligence automation startup that was acquired in 2021 by Zendesk, Inc., the global leader

in customer service software.

Cristina is currently a Partner at Indico Capital Partners, the leading venture capital firm in Portugal with a focus on technology and sustainability.

Appointed a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum in 2021, she holds a degree in Computer Engineering and Telecommunications from Instituto Superior Técnico in Lisboa. Cristina also serves as a non-executive member of Galp's Board of Directors and is a member of Galp's Sustainability Committee.



***In Lisboa, you'll find a city with a unique combination of personality, diversity, tech talent, and available capital. Moreover, venture capital playing according to international best practices. However, to access all this, it is crucial to understand some ground rules: Portugal is a nurturing environment for business growth, not the end market – so it's essential to keep a global mindset."***

She is a member of the Singularity University Portugal and the General Council of the University of Lisboa. Driven by a natural entrepreneurial spirit, Cristina is continuously motivated to pursue ambitious goals.



## **Daniela Braga, Founder and CEO at Defined.ai**

### **Why should you meet Daniela?**

Daniela Braga's professional journey has been very eclectic when it comes to her professional choices. With a multidisciplinary and multicultural background in linguistics and engineering, she has emerged as one of the most renowned figures in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

In 2015, she founded Defined.ai (previously known as DefinedCrowd), with the intention of driving innovation in AI. Today she serves as the company's CEO and splits her work base between the US and Portugal, drawing

on her experience across three continents – America, Europe, and Asia.

At the age of just 44, Daniela stands as the only woman leading the AI sector in Portugal. She was chosen by the President of the United States to join the task force for the country's AI strategy. Daniela is dedicated to empowering women, and inspiring them to pursue their aspirations without ever giving up.

As a testament to her success, Defined.ai has been recognized as one of the 100 most promising AI companies in the world. Notably, she is also the woman who globally raised the highest amount of venture capital when it comes to Artificial Intelligence.

51



***I believe the key to success is to always try to stay connected. The more you give the more you receive, and this mindset is crucial when starting, trying, and creating and Lisboa seems to be the best place for this. With its vibrant ecosystem, people are open and enthusiastic about forming new networks and connections. Our talent is loyal, and our culture reflects multiculturalism, making it the ideal environment to embark on your entrepreneurial journey."***



## **Elisa Tarzia, Vice President at 351**

### **Why should you meet Elisa?**

Elisa, an Italian entrepreneur who fell in love with Lisboa, has been living in the Portuguese capital since 2013. Her first contact with the city came in 2008 during her Erasmus exchange, and she has been passionate about the Portuguese ecosystem ever since. As the Vice President of 351 and Head of Marketing at BRIDGE IN, Elisa also runs her own events company, primarily organizing conferences for startups.

Elisa has a very diverse academic background, with a degree in Sociology of Communication and International Relations as well

as a postgraduate degree in Visual Anthropology. She embarked on her professional journey at the Festival Sete Sóis Sete Luas, an international festival of music and contemporary art, which gave her the opportunity to travel extensively. Seeking to enhance her skills, particularly in the finance sector, she travelled from the UK to the US, Africa and Southern Europe.

Elisa believes that always being open to learning as much as we can is paramount to achieving success.

**“There are many reasons why Lisboa is the best place to start: from its talented workforce to its safe and welcoming environment, it is truly one of the best places to be. However, what I believe sets this city apart is its ‘urgency spirit’. In Lisboa, everyone strives to make things happen – here, people aspire to be the best and that energy is highly contagious. We must continue to broaden the horizons of the capital to truly realize our ambitions.”**

In 2018, Elisa joined Beta-i as Head of the Events Department where she produced two editions of the Lisbon Investment Summit, one of Portugal’s major entrepreneurship events prior to the pandemic. She considers Beta-i was her gateway into the local ecosystem. Subsequently, she became a moderator at the 351 community and played a pivotal role in its transformation into a non-profit association in September of last year.



## **Fernando Mendes, Founder at NOW Beato**

### **Why should you meet Fernando?**

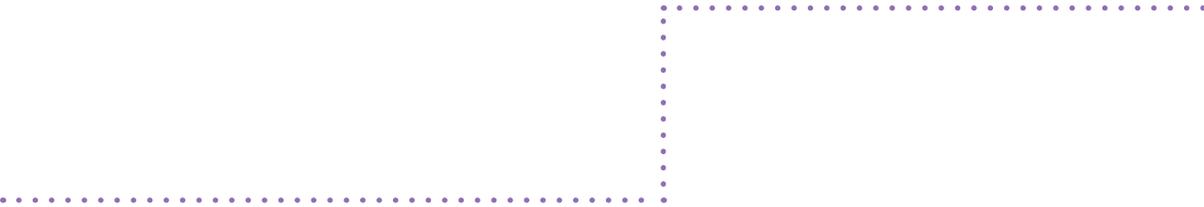
With 30 years of experience as a designer, Fernando Mendes is not only an accomplished professional in his field, but also considers himself an academic. From a very young age, Fernando began his career by designing some of the most recognized logos in Portugal, kickstarting his journey as a designer and embracing new projects and challenges along the way.

Always driven to evolve and improve, he decided to rethink his path and, in 2010, created Lisboa's first coworking space, Coworklisboa.

This space was envisioned as somewhere ideas could flourish. Considered the pioneer of the coworking movement in Lisboa, he sees himself as a natural networker and believes love is always the main ingredient when starting something new.



***We've undergone various changes in recent years but I believe the key messages about Lisboa remain unchanged. We have an incredible city, with wonderful weather and a welcoming atmosphere. It's easy to arrive here and immediately feel like a part of it. We are constantly striving to provide the best ways to make people feel at home. I think that sets us apart."***





## **Gonçalo Amorim, Founder and CEO at BGI**

### **Why should you meet Gonçalo?**

56

Gonçalo brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the table. With an academic background in Engineering, he embarked on a diverse career that began in England, back in 1997. He worked at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory (RAL) in Oxfordshire (UK), designing scientific experiments.

In 2000, he joined Hewlett Packard's Semiconductor division (UK), where he filed numerous international patents across the US, Europe & Japan. However, his entrepreneurial spirit

soon took precedence. In 2008, he founded his first company within the Sonae Group, one of Portugal's largest corporations. Over the past decade, Gonçalo has mentored over 200 tech-based founders, entrepreneurial teams, technology startups, and spinoffs through various structured programs.

He has also served as an advisor and board member for several emerging tech-focused startups. Additionally, he founded Food4Sustainability, a Collaborative laboratory dedicated to realizing a sustainable food system for Europe and making “farm2fork” a reality.



***Lisboa’s startup ecosystem has developed at a fast pace. The past 10 years have been instrumental in establishing a strong and significant market. However, there is still work to be done and numerous opportunities to shape a new Lisboa. Lisboa requires stakeholders with capital, vision and the determination to seize and ride the wave. Whether you work in the blue economy or sustainability, let’s make it happen.”***



## **Inês Sequeira, Founder and Director at Casa do Impacto**

### **Why should you meet Inês?**

Although Inês Sequeira initially pursued a career as a lawyer, she soon realized that it did not fulfill her ambition to make a positive impact on society. So, in 2009, she joined the Lisboa City Council, where she worked with the councilwoman for Economy and Innovation.

During this period, she was involved in the establishing the Lisboa Association for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Startup Lisboa), implementing Lisboa Empreende (microcredit), creating the Lisboa Incubator Network (which includes Startup Lisboa, Mouraria Innovation

Centre, Fablab Lisboa, and Labs Lisboa), and introducing the first Social Impact Title in Portugal (Junior Code Academy), among other projects. She was also part of the Web Summit coordination team.

Inês Sequeira's journey continued as an advisor to the Secretary of State for Tourism, where she spearheaded the creation and implementation of entrepreneurship, innovation and digital empowerment initiatives at Turismo de Portugal.



***Impact should be at the center of our society, so that we become an open space for everybody who wants to create a brighter future. Portugal possesses unique attributes that demonstrate how even the smallest actions can bring about the most significant changes. Here you can connect with policymakers, expedite your initiatives, and leave a lasting impact on someone's life. It is the best place to start."***

In 2018, she founded Casa do Impacto, at the heart of Santa Casa da Misericórdia, as a community of entrepreneurs, artists, and activists dedicated to creating a better world. Inês and her team truly believe in sustainable business models that make a positive impact.



## **João Pedro Martins, Ecosystem Builder, former Project Manager at Made of Lisboa**

### **Why should you meet João?**

João has a very eclectic profile. With an academic background in Social Communication, he soon discovered his path would pass by exploring other areas such as IT and hospitality. A decade ago, João started working in the main professional social network - LinkedIn - when it was a startup in a hyper growth phase.

Through that experience, João understood the challenges and opportunities that come with different stages of starting and scaling a company.

João has traveled through different parts of the world, which let him connect with other

cultures. In one of those trips realized that he truly wanted to contribute to a greater good in an organization that also had that ambition.

Made of Lisboa - one of City Council's brands dedicated to developing Lisboa's entrepreneurial ecosystem - matched this ambition and was aligned with his entrepreneurship and management competencies. Back then, the ecosystem was taking an important qualitative step, and he got the opportunity to leave his mark in it.

Nowadays, he continues this mission inside and outside Lisboa, attracting more talent and companies, and nurturing relevant relationships to the further development of the ecosystem.



***Lisboa is known for its burgeoning tech scene, but we are more than a talent pool: we are a place where people really want to live. And now is the right time to be here: the startup community is showing Portuguese society that entrepreneurship can be a new path in their life options and to be part of that movement is very exhilarating. Lisboa is the home of the believers, and I am one of them — I believe in the people in this community”***



## **Maria Guimarães, Nova SBE's Innovation Ecosystem Community Manager**

### **Why should you meet Maria?**

Maria Guimarães serves as the Community Manager for the Nova SBE Innovation Ecosystem. With a background in Social Politics, she initially pursued a career in producing contemporary dance shows. However, after a decade in the cultural production field, Maria decided to embark on a different path and explore different perspectives in life.

Committed to exploring the business domain, she joined Startup Lisboa where she supported the events team and had the opportunity to learn from entrepreneurial minds.

Later she also ventured into the area of International Relations, where she grew professionally and developed new skills and connections within the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

In 2022, she became part of the Nova SBE Innovation Ecosystem team, with the goal of fostering relationships between students, startups, companies, researchers, investors, and other relevant stakeholders.

***“ I think one of the main things that sets us apart is our talent. In Lisboa, we have some of the finest universities in Europe which not only prepare Portuguese students but also attract international talent. We not only invest in nurturing our own talent, but also in providing a fulfilling experience for those who come from all over the world. Our supportive and collaborative ecosystem, offering ample networking and mentoring opportunities, makes Lisboa the ideal place to embark on an entrepreneurial journey.”***

Together with other departments at the school, namely the Nova SBE Haddad Entrepreneurship Institute, Maria is dedicated to creating opportunities and fostering innovation, as well as bridging the gap between academia and the business world through an ecosystemic approach that positively impacts both individuals and society.



## **Ricardo Lima, Head of Startups and Investors at Web Summit**

### **Why should you meet Ricardo?**

Ricardo holds a pivotal role in the history of Web Summit in Lisboa. As the first person hired to join the country's team, he now oversees the management of startups and investors' initiatives, events, and participation in Europe's leading tech conference.



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**“***The ecosystem in Lisboa has experienced significant growth and maturity in the past seven years. Entrepreneurs who wish to establish their businesses in Lisboa, now benefit from highly competitive conditions thanks to city and government initiatives in terms of creating a favorable legal framework for startups. I believe that in ten years, we will witness a substantial increase in the number of technology-based companies setting up their operations in Lisboa.*”





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