Guidelines on Opportunity Selection Process

What we look for in an investment opportunity

The following provides some background on our investment preferences and is intended to give founders a clearer understanding of the types of companies that tend to resonate with our members.

Our aim is to help founders assess whether SAIC could include a group of angel investors to support their investment journey. These are guidelines rather than a rigid set of rules, and we are always open to hearing about compelling businesses that may sit outside them.

- *Great companies with great founders* - We are looking for ambitious, high-quality businesses with strong founding teams from across the UK.
- *SEIS and EIS* - Companies with SEIS and/or EIS Advanced Assurance are particularly well suited to our membership and their investment approach.
- *Pre-revenue businesses* - Being pre-revenue does not rule out an investment. We are happy to consider early-stage companies where there is defensible intellectual property, a compelling USP or other strong barriers to entry, alongside a credible route to commercialisation.
- *Inclusive approach to founders* - We welcome founders from all backgrounds and are committed to considering opportunities on their individual merits. We do not focus on any diversity characteristic.
- *Fundraising requirements* - Our members have supported successful raises ranging from approximately £20k to £200k over the past few years. For companies seeking to raise more than £1m, particularly at the beginning of an investment round, we would generally recommend securing a lead investor and some initial funding before approaching SAIC. This can help provide momentum and create a strong foundation for a wider angel syndicate.
- *Founding team* - Having more than one founder can be an advantage, although it is certainly not essential. We also value founders who can demonstrate relevant sector knowledge, commercial experience and/or previous start-up experience.
- *B2B and B2C* - Historically, B2B propositions have been particularly successful with our members, although we are equally happy to consider compelling B2C opportunities.
- *Market opportunity* - We tend to be attracted to businesses addressing new, emerging or rapidly developing markets, where there is significant potential for growth, rather than highly saturated markets with limited differentiation.
- *Scalable business models* - We favour businesses that can achieve significant growth without a corresponding increase in staffing or capital requirements. Businesses whose growth depends heavily on adding employees—for example, traditional skills-based service businesses—or on significant physical capital investment, such as retail outlets, are therefore generally less suited to our members' investment models.

Ultimately, these guidelines are intended to help rather than restrict. If you have an exciting business, a strong proposition and an ambitious plan for growth, we would encourage you to consider whether SAIC could include members interested in investing in your opportunity.

SAIC
Southern Angel Investors

By sector

Sector focus - Our sector categories broadly align with the UK Business Angels Association (UKBAA) classification, helping us assess opportunities consistently across a wide range of industries.

High Preference	Medium Preference	Low Preference
Agri-Tech Business Products B2B tech Clean Tech and Eco Innovation Computing and Electronics e-commerce Consumer Technology Fin Tech Financial and Professional Services Internet of Things Renewables and Energy	Aerospace and Defence Automobile and Transport Digital Media and Content Logistics and Distribution Life Sciences Materials and Manufacturing Med Tech and Digital Health Mobile and Telecoms Retail Social Impact	Creative Arts and Entertainment Fashion and Design Healthcare provision Food and Drink Advertising and Publishing

By stage of investment

High Preference	Medium Preference	Low Preference
Seed and pre-seed Expansion Bridge Early-Stage VC	Pre-revenue Later Stage VC	Distressed/Turnaround

By valuation level

High Preference	Medium Preference	Low Preference
£500k to £5m	£5m to £10m Less than £500k	Above £15m (unless a follow-on round from previous investment)