




# Impact startups and venture capital 2022

January 2023



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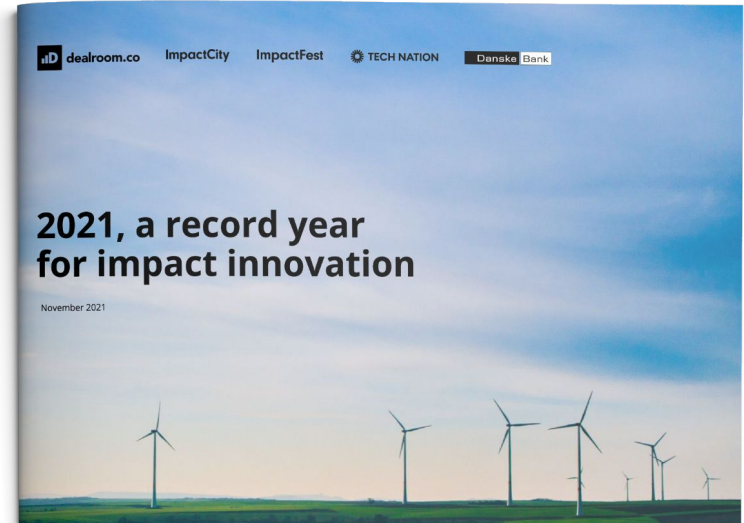
## Previous reports:

Impact Startups 2022

State of Impact Startups in the Nordics

The energy landscape 2022

The Rise of European Climate Tech



To read the report *2021: a record year for impact innovation*, click [here](#)

# Impact startups in 2022 - what happened?



## Impact is not immune to the global pullback in venture capital

After a record year for impact startups in 2021, investment into the impact ecosystem is down 25% in 2022, with \$57B raised globally.

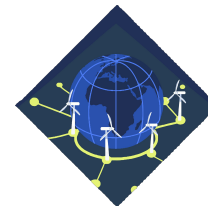
Yet, Impact funding is holding on better than the broader venture capital ecosystem, where funding is down 36% in 2022 compared to a global peak in 2021.



## Impact appetite and performance vary significantly by geography.

The USA still attracts more than half of impact investment. Yet Europe punches well above its weight based on size of ecosystem, and is catching up with the US.

In 2022, impact investment in the US fell 36%, while Europe's final account for 2022 came in at +1%.



## Climate Tech dominates the Impact ecosystem

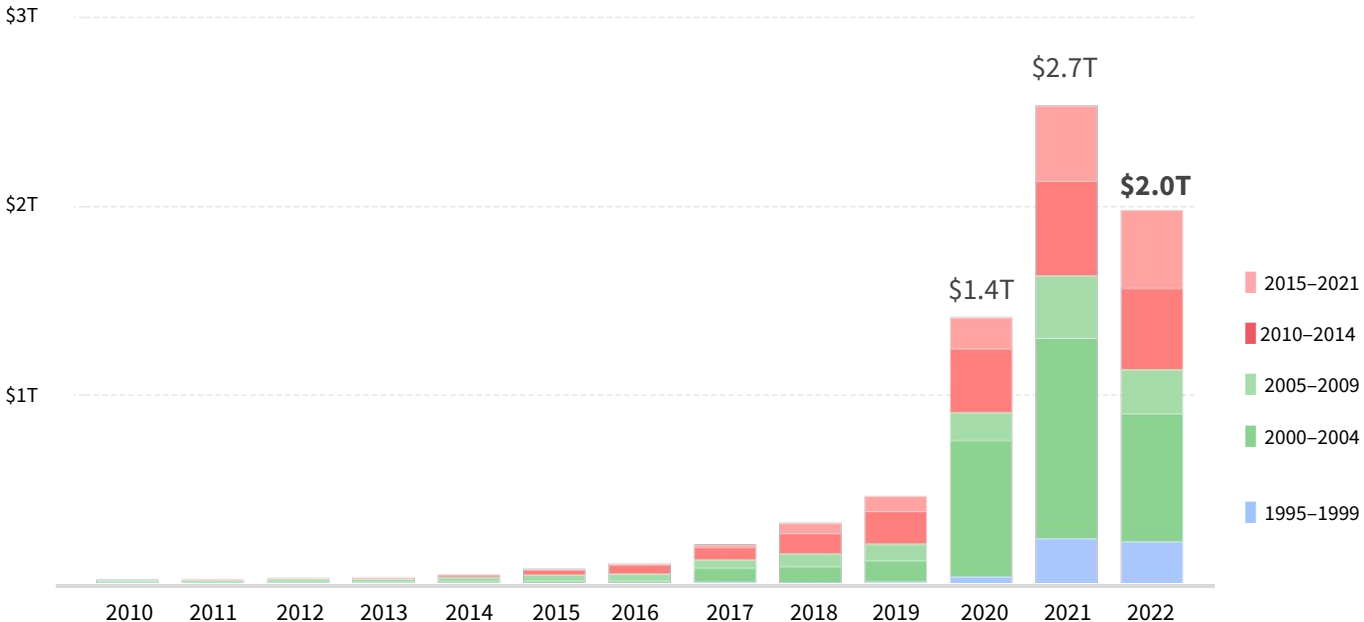
Climate tech startups raised \$44B in 2022, almost 80% of all impact funding.

Overall climate tech funding fell 20% year on year, yet several promising segments registered growth. Circular economy, biodiversity and wind energy are all building momentum into 2023.

# 1 ● Global Impact Update

# Combined enterprise value of global impact startups decreased by 20% in 2022, but the ecosystem is still up +40% since the close of 2020.

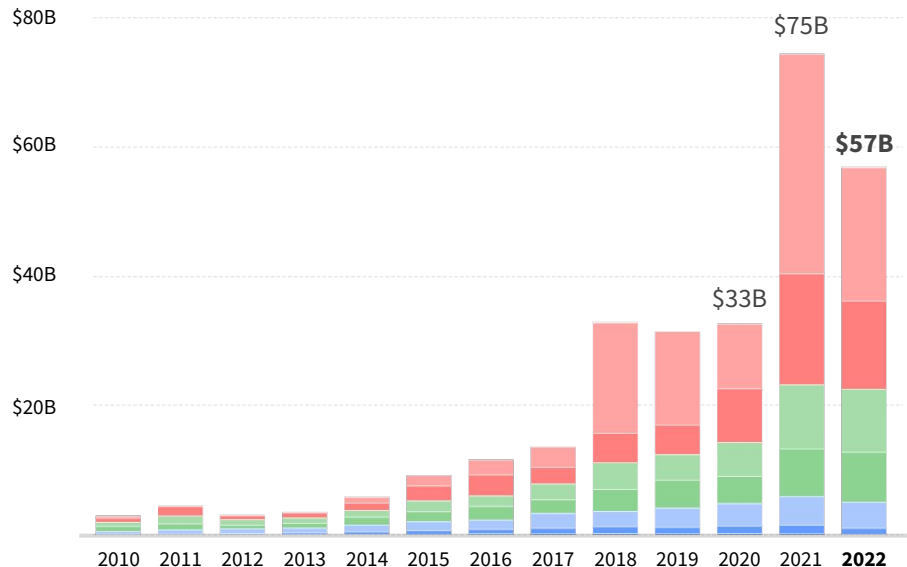
Combined enterprise value of impact companies by launch year [» view online](#)



# Impact startups raised \$57B globally in 2022, down 25% from all-time high \$75B in 2021.

## VC investment in global impact startups [» view online](#)

■ \$0-1M (pre-seed) 
 ■ \$1-4M (seed) 
 ■ \$4-15M (Series A) 
 ■ \$15-40M (Series B) 
 ■ \$40-100M (Series C) 
 ■ \$100-250M 
 ■ \$250M+

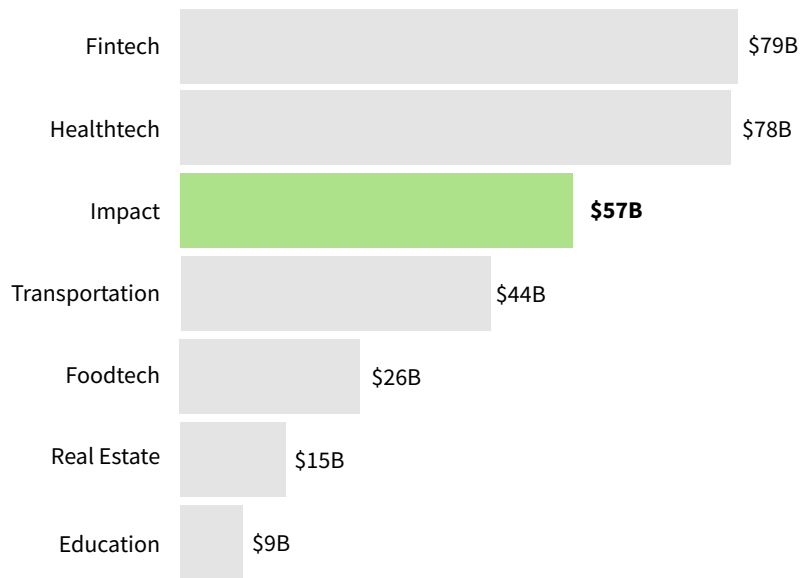


## Largest impact rounds in 2022 [» view online](#)

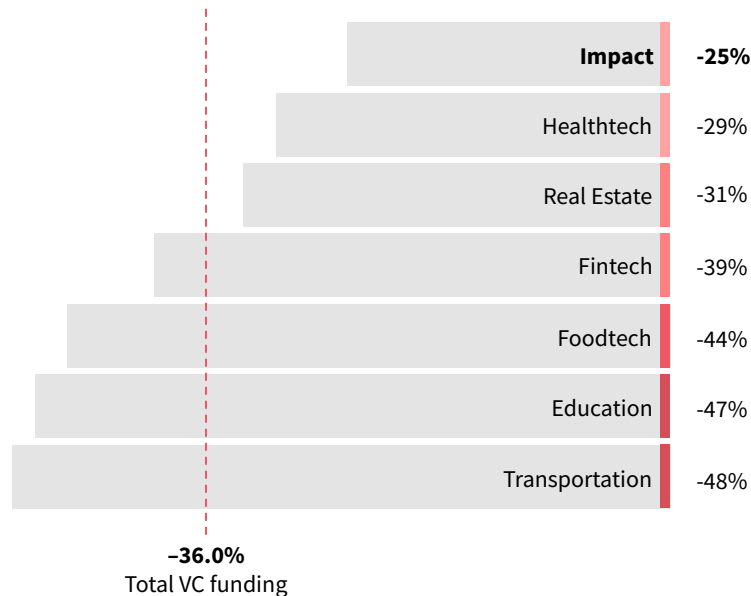
Company	HQ	Transaction
<b>cruise</b>	San Francisco USA	\$1.4b Growth Equity VC
<b>SUNWODA</b> 欣旺达	Shenzhen China	CNY8b Series A
<b>northvolt</b>	Stockholm Sweden	\$1.1b Convertible
<b>TU</b> TeraWatt	San Francisco USA	\$1.0b Series A
<b>TerraPower</b>	Bellevue USA	€750M Late VC

# Impact funding is holding on better than the broader venture capital ecosystem. Especially compared to other key industries.

Global VC funding by industry in 2022 [» view online](#)



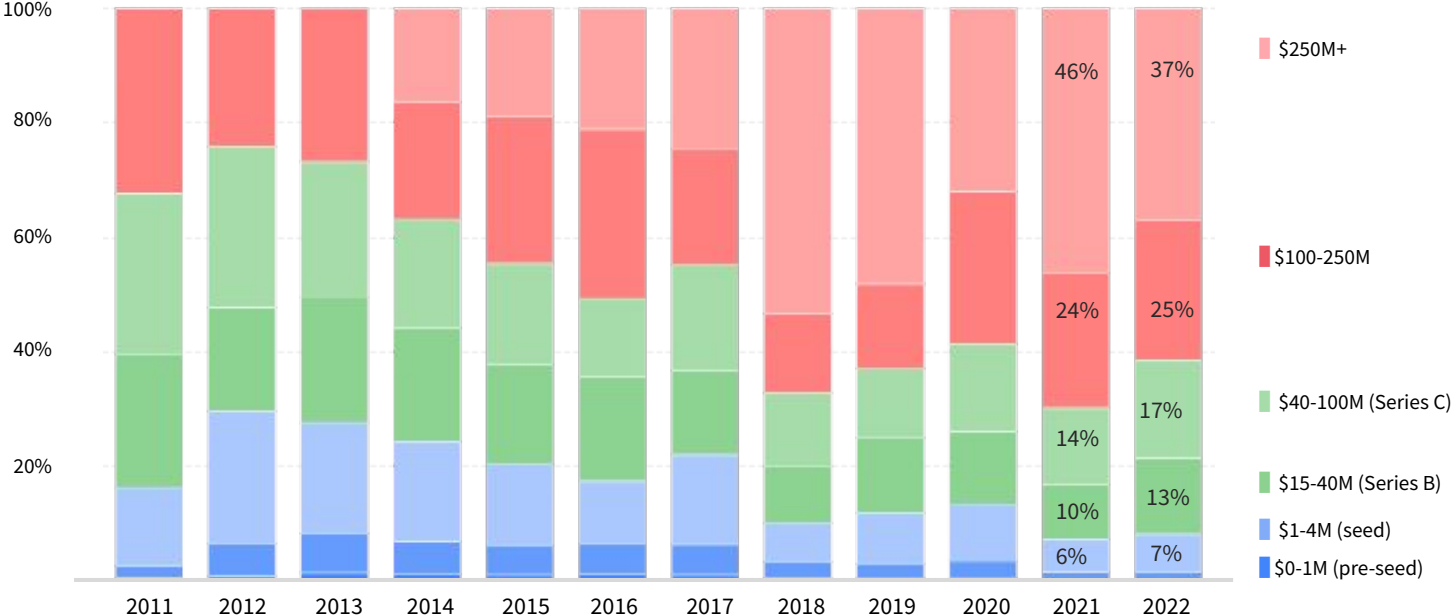
VC funding growth by Industry, 2021 vs 2022 [» view online](#)





# The impact ecosystem is maturing. Megarounds constitute the majority of rounds. Yet, they dropped by 10% in 2022.

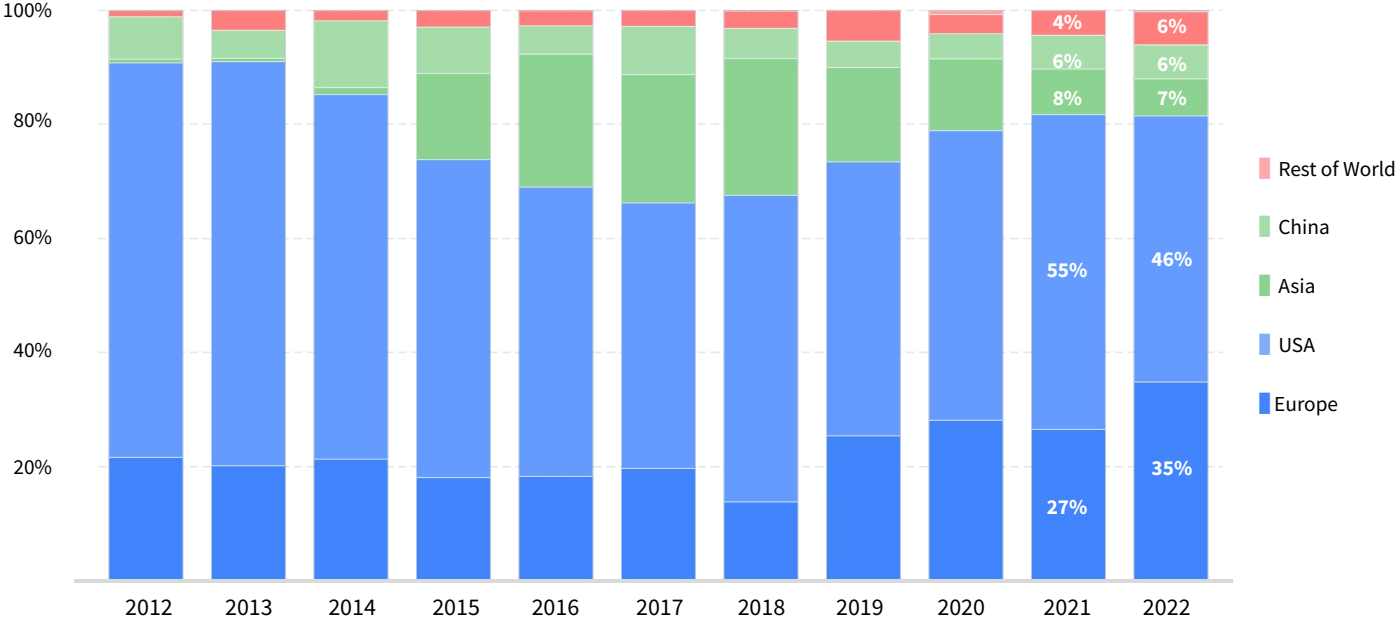
VC investment in impact startups by round size [» view online](#)



## 2 ✦ Regional update

# USA attracted almost half of global impact funding in 2022, yet Europe is slowly catching up. Asia remained steady throughout the pullback.

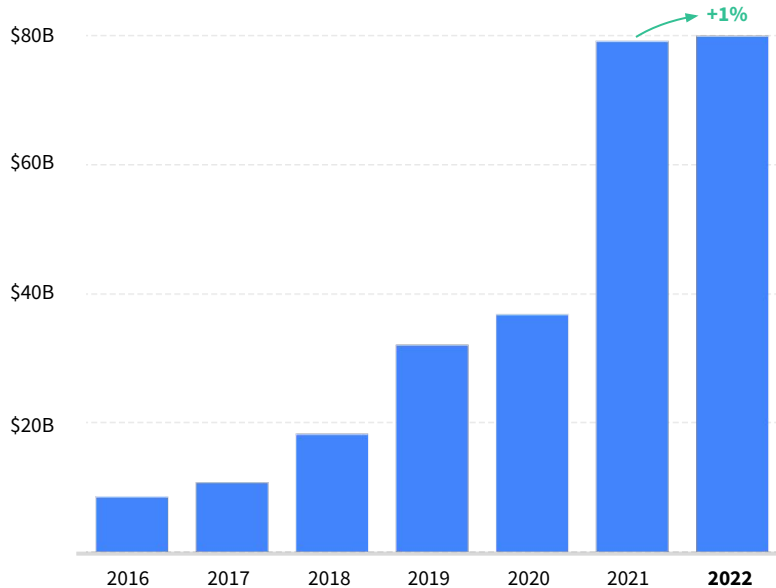
VC investment into impact startups per HQ region » [view online](#)



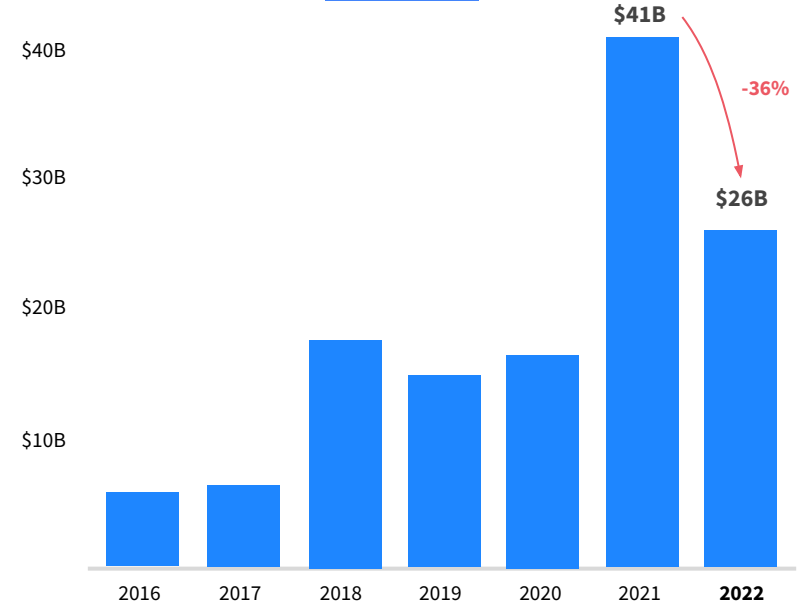
# Impact startup investment fell by 36% in the USA in 2022, while Europe registered moderate growth through the first stretch of a global downturn.

VC investment in impact startup by HQ

Europe » [view online](#)



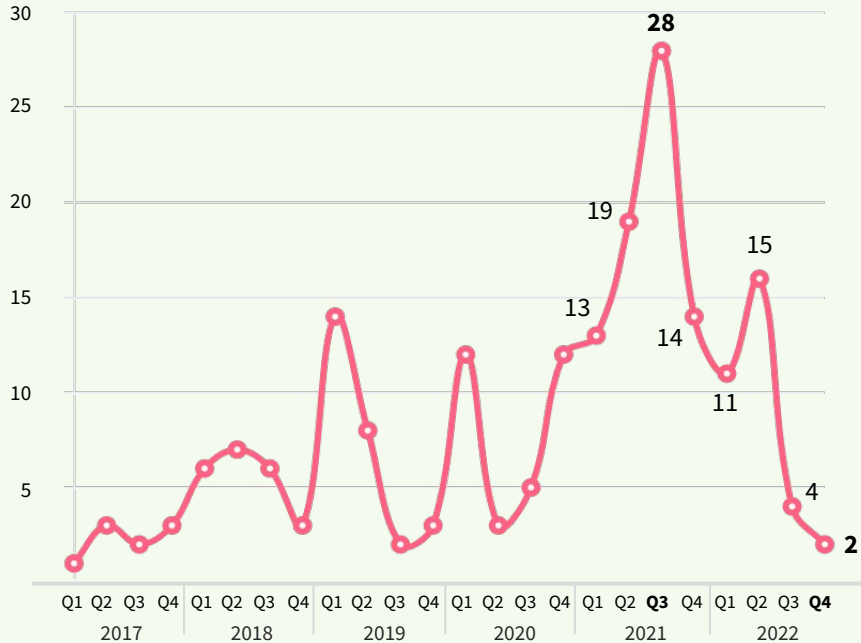
USA » [view online](#)



# 3 Unicorns and exits

# The number of new unicorns decreased year on year. 32 unicorns were created in 2022 compared to 74 in 2021. Q4 saw only 2 new unicorns, down from a peak of 28 in Q3 last year.

Number of new impact unicorns globally » [view online](#)

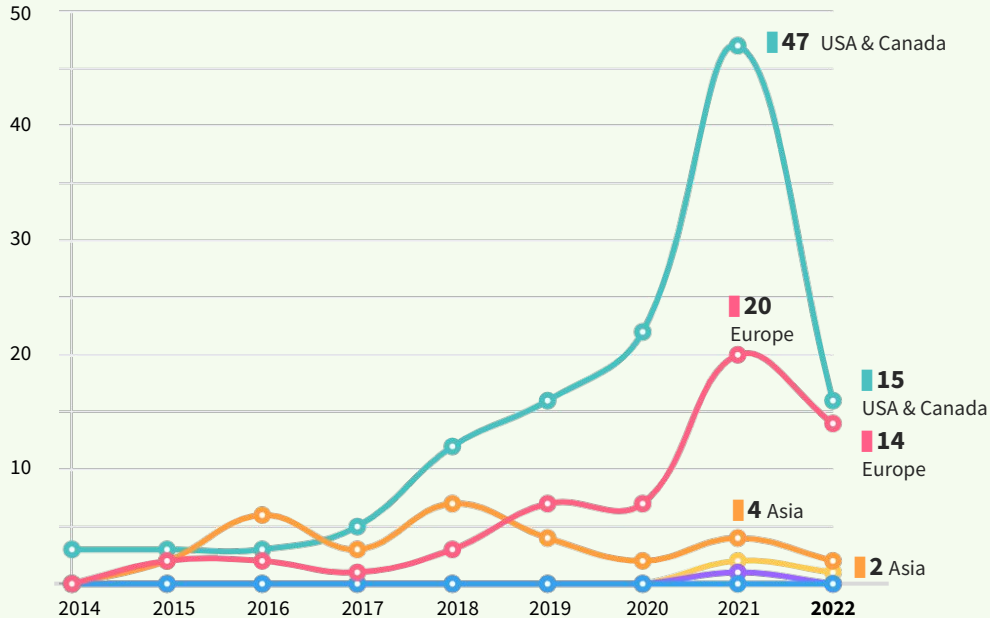


New impact unicorns in 2022 » [view online](#)

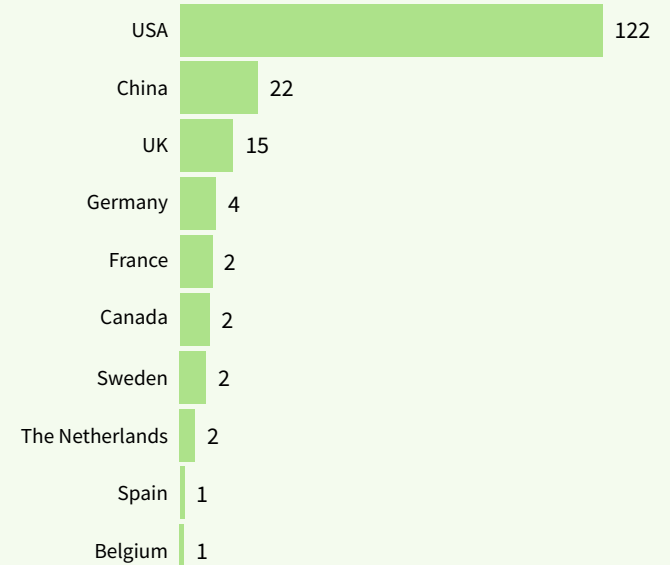
	<b>Allego NV</b> (formerly Athena Pubco) Delivers charging solutions for ele...	B2B energy transportation mobility energy storage	deep tech commission manufacturing		8%
	<b>Arcadia</b> ★ Building the utility of the future wi...	B2B energy clean energy	commission saas		40%
	<b>Choco</b> ★ Provides a digital platform connec...	B2B food in-store retail & restaurant tech	commission saas		32%
	<b>Einride</b> ★ A technology company that develo...	B2B robotics transportation vehicle production mobility logistics & delivery	autonomous & sensor tech deep tech machine learning artificial intelligence commission		94%
	<b>X-energy</b> Delivering the next generation of c...	B2B energy clean energy	deep tech commission manufacturing		75%
	<b>Jetti Resources</b> ★ Makes it possible to extract copper...	B2B	hardware commission manufacturing		30%
	<b>EcoVadis</b> ★ The world's most trusted provider ...	B2B	natural language processing artificial intelligence		38%

# Regionally, Europe created 14 new unicorns, only one less than the USA. Yet, USA has still the highest number of cumulative impact unicorns globally.

Cumulative number of impact unicorns  
[» view online](#)

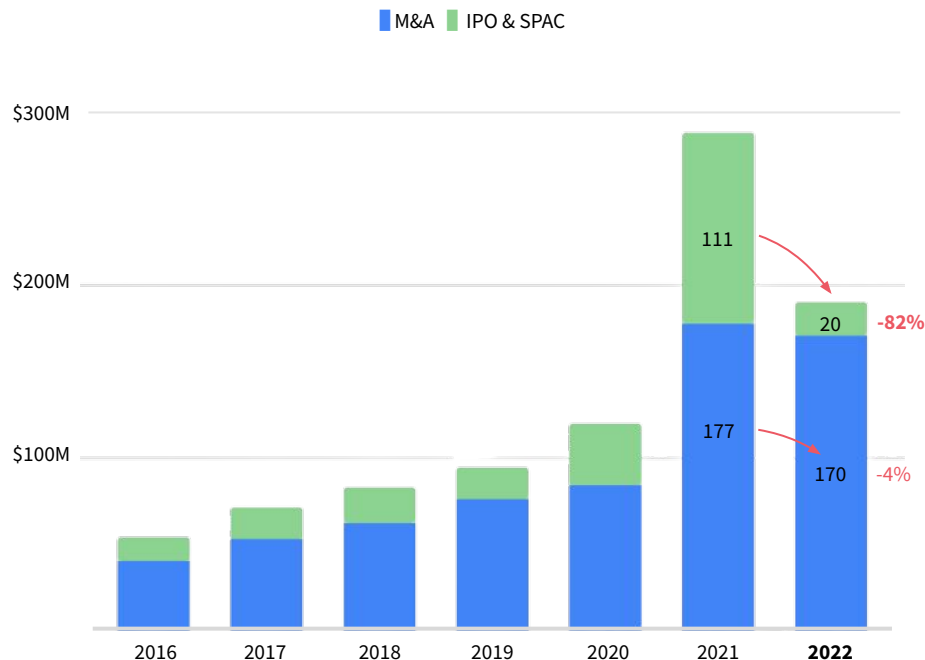


Cumulative number of impact unicorns  
[» view online](#)



# Despite frozen public markets, M&A remained stable between 2021 and 2022 at around 170 transactions.

Number of exits by type [» view online](#)



Selected exits in 2022 [» view online](#)

Startup	Exit Round	Valuation	Focus
energy	SPAC IPO	\$2B	Nuclear Energy
Allego	SPAC IPO	€3.1B	EV Charging Solutions
IMPERFECT FOODS	Acquisition	€700M	Food Waste
STANDARD SOLAR	Acquisition	\$540M	Solar Energy
Classy	IPO	\$472-708M	Fintech for impact
BreezoMeter	Acquisition	\$225M	Environmental Intelligence



# Explore impact unicorns online.

Impact unicorns are being created faster than ever before.

» New unicorns in 2022

» Private unicorns

» Rumoured unicorns

» More ...

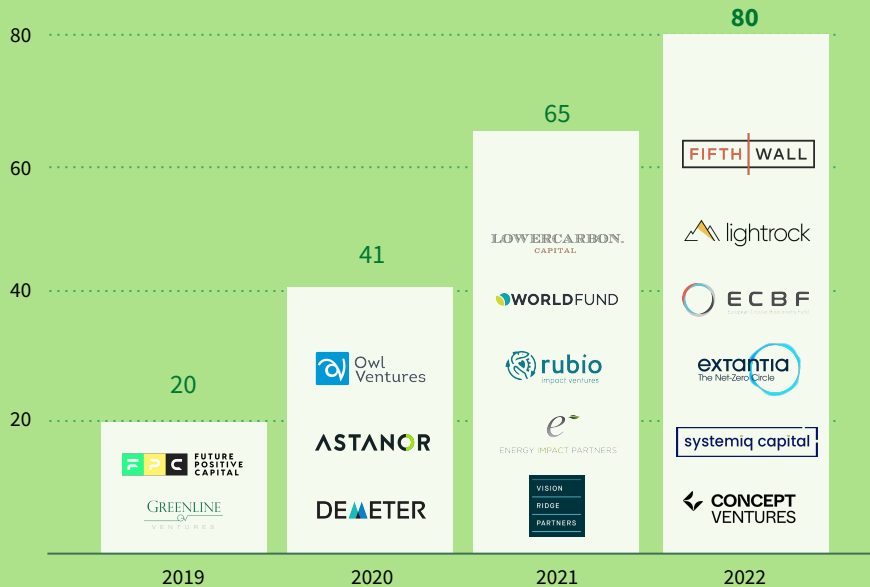
NAME	MARKET	TYPE	GROWTH 12 months growth	LAUNCH DATE	YEAR COMPANY BECAME UNICORN	VALUATION
 <b>Enpal</b> ★ 🗑️ ❤️ Germany's online solar provider	B2C energy energy providers clean energy	subscription	 116%	Feb 2017	2021	\$2.5
 <b>Sunrun</b> ★ 🗑️ Provides solar panels to homeowners...	B2C real estate energy energy storage clean energy	manufacturing	 10%	2007	2014	\$12.5
 <b>Lucid Motors</b> ★ 🗑️ Silicon valley company that designs...	B2B energy transportation energy storage vehicle production	commission manufacturing	 55%	2007	2018	\$10.0
 <b>Allego NV (formerly Athena Pubco)</b> 🗑️ Delivers charging solutions for electric...	B2B energy transportation mobility energy storage	deep tech commission manufacturing	 8%	2013	2022	\$3.1
 <b>Redaptive</b> 🗑️ Develops a program and identifies...	B2B real estate energy real estate services energy efficiency	commission manufacturing	 32%	2013	-	\$1.0
 <b>Arcadia</b> ★ 🗑️ Building the utility of the future with...	B2B energy clean energy	commission saas	 40%	2014	2022	\$1.5
 <b>Choco</b> ★ 🗑️ ❤️ Provides a digital platform connecting...	B2B food in-store retail & restaurant tech	commission saas	 32%	Mar 2018	2022	\$1.2
 <b>Group14 Technologies</b> ★ 🗑️ Brings new finely-tuned performance...	B2B energy transportation energy storage	hardware deep tech nanotech commission manufacturing	 76%	2015	-	\$3.0
 <b>Vestiaire Collective</b> ★ 🗑️ ❤️ Curates and connects the world's...	B2C fashion energy footwear accessories luxury	commission marketplace & ecommerce	 27%	2009	2021	\$1.7
 <b>NotCo</b> ★ 🗑️ Recreates the same products ever...	B2C food innovative food	deep tech machine learning artificial intelligence selling own inventory manufacturing	 65%	2015	2021	\$1.5
 <b>Einride</b> ★ 🗑️ A technology company that develops...	B2B robotics transportation vehicle production mobility	autonomous & sensor tech deep tech machine learning artificial intelligence	 94%	2016	2022	\$800m

# 4 ◆ Funds and Investors

# Despite the pullback, ever more funds are being raised by impact-focused VCs. Last year 80 new funds were raised by impact-focussed venture investors, an all-time high.

300+ VC funds focusing on impact investing »

Explore list »



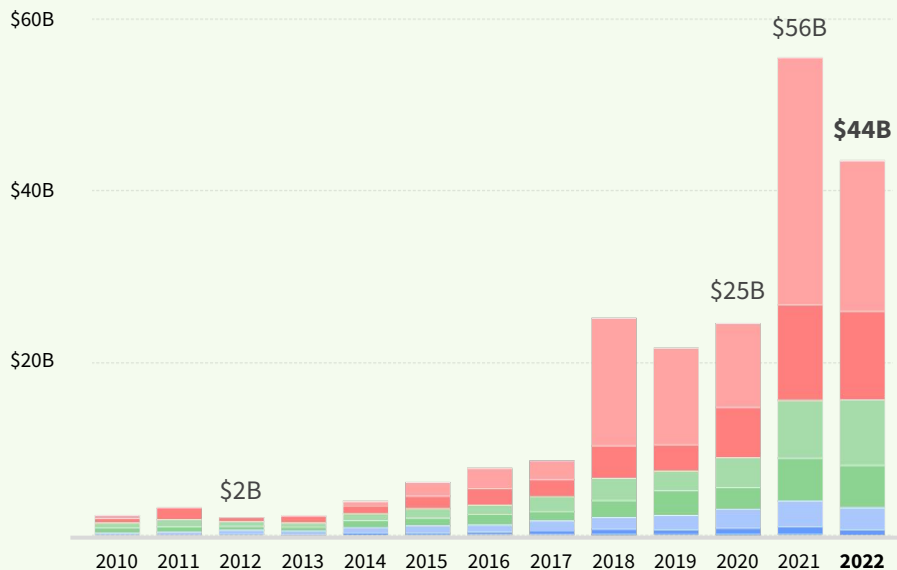
NAME	INVESTOR RANKING <small>S&amp;P 500 based ranking 2022</small>	PREFERRED ROUND	LOCATION	DEAL SIZE RANGE <small>min - max</small>	NO. OF ROUNDS <small>All Time</small>
<b>Systemiq Capital</b> The system change company. We ...		SERIES A	London, United Kingdom	-	4
<b>Concept Ventures (formerly RLC Ventures)</b> Concept Ventures is the UK's largest...		ANGEL	-	\$100k - \$1m	41
<b>Cornerstone VC</b> Fund to back diverse teams in the UK		SEED	London, United Kingdom	\$200k - \$1m	-
<b>Ecosystem Integrity Fund</b> The Ecosystem Integrity Fund ("El...)		SERIES A	San Francisco, United States	\$500k - \$5m	35
<b>Azolla Ventures</b> Azolla Ventures invests in early-sta...		SEED	Cambridge, United States	-	3
<b>AENU</b> AENU is an evergreen impact fund ...		SERIES A	Berlin, Germany	-	12
<b>Black Seed</b> Building the tech ecosystem black ...		Unknown	United Kingdom	-	-
<b>Planetary Impact Ventures</b>		SEED	Humblebæk, Denmark	\$50k - \$200k	-
<b>Winequity</b> French fund for early-stage female ...		SEED	Paris, France	-	3

# 5 ▼ Spotlight themes

# Climate tech accounts for almost 80% of impact investment. \$44B was raised in 2022 by startups transforming every industry, from energy and transport to real estate and finance.

## VC investment in global climate tech startups » [view online](#)

■ \$0-1M (pre-seed) 
 ■ \$1-4M (seed) 
 ■ \$4-15M (Series A) 
 ■ \$15-40M (Series B) 
 ■ \$40-100M (Series C) 
 ■ \$100-250M 
 ■ \$250M+

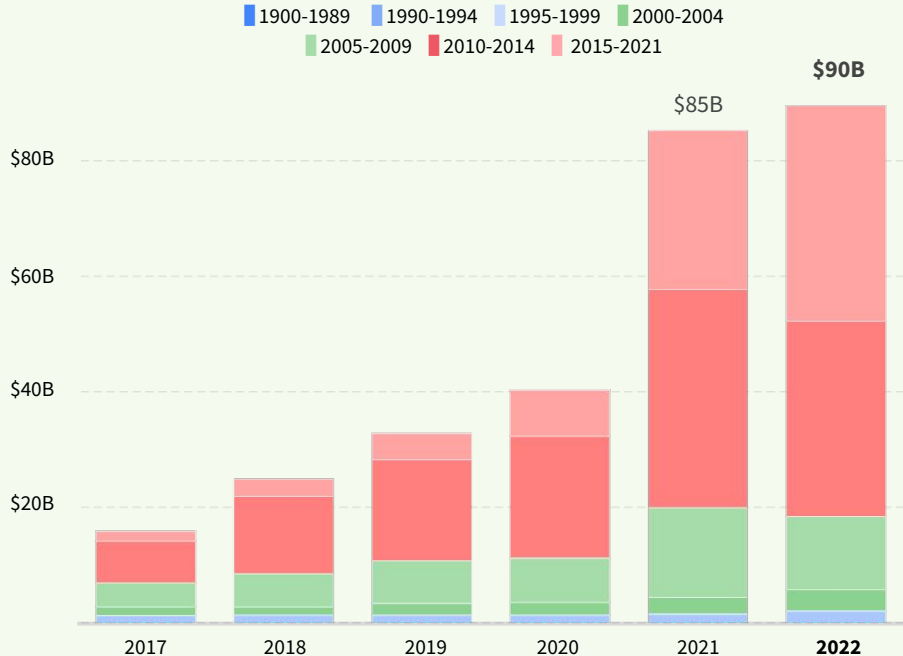


## Top 100 Climate Tech startups to watch » [view online](#)

NAME	DEALROOM SIGNAL	MARKET	TYPE	GROWTH
<b>Battery Resources</b> Provides recycling for lithium ion ...	80	B2B energy transportation waste solution energy storage	commission manufacturing	12 months growth
<b>Vinted</b> ★ The largest online international C2...	75	B2C fashion apparel	mobile app commission marketplace & ecommerce	12 months growth
<b>Too Good To Go</b> ★ App that offers a solution to sellers...	75	B2B, B2C food energy waste solution food logistics & delivery in-store retail & restaurant tech	mobile app commission subscription marketplace & ecommerce	12 months growth
<b>Imperfect Foods</b> ★ Delivering groceries on a mission t...	70	B2C food energy food logistics & delivery waste solution	mobile app commission marketplace & ecommerce	12 months growth
<b>Wildplastic</b> ★ We source our plastic from beache...	70	B2B energy waste solution	manufacturing	12 months growth
<b>EcoATM</b> ★ An e-waste recycling company tha...	69	B2B energy waste solution	commission manufacturing	12 months growth
<b>BOLT Threads</b> ★ Materials company that invests in	62	B2B fashion energy	deep tech commission manufacturing	12 months growth

# Once an industry barely taken seriously, Circular Economy startups are now worth over \$90B. And their combined enterprise value grew by 6% between 2021 and 2022.

Combined Enterprise value [» view online](#)



280+ Circular Economy Startups»

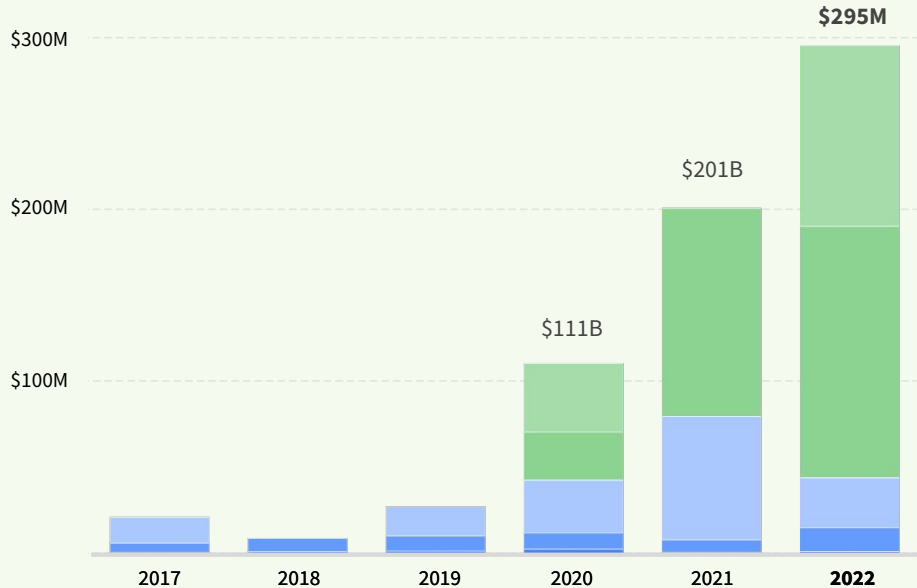
Explore list

- Advanced Recycling Technologies** (Combined funding \$ 64M): ECO2 Plastics, Cadel Deinking, saperatec, Gr3n, C-Green, Enval, ReVentas, PureCycle Techn, Wimao Oy, Grycle, CircleSmart, Mint Innovation, Mycocytle.
- Carbon** (Combined funding \$ 772M): Carbon Cleanup, Perpetual Next, Carbon Recyclin, Votechnik, Waste R.
- Packaging Solutions** (Combined funding \$ 238M): Junee, TIPA, &Repeat, Originalrepack, RECUR, Pieter Pot, The Modern Milk, recyda, Good Club, Reath, Great Wrap, GreenMining, Agramo.
- No Food Waste** (Combined funding \$ 1.5B): Spoiler Alert, IntelliDigest, Misfits Market, Apel Sciences, Imperfect Foods, SIRPLUS, Foods!, Full Harvest, Too Good To Go, Phood, Ambrosia, Orbisk, Insignia Techno, Explicat, Justnow, KITRO, Fozla Gida, YourLocal, MyFoody, Oddbox, Ass-Bar, Keep-it, Whywaste, FoodLoop, Karma, Comerso, ResQ.
- Marketplaces** (Combined funding \$ 2.4B): ikeep, Aspire, Globechain, Back Market, Oceanworks, Vestiaire Colle, Vinted, cirplus, Grover, Trove, LARGO, Retriever.
- Recycling Robotics** (Combined funding \$ 156M): Votechnik, Waste R.
- Supply Chain Tr** (Combined funding \$ 90M): Circular, Sensefinity, Empower.eco.
- Special Waste R** (Combined funding \$ 20M): EcoTire.
- Waste Sorting T** (Combined funding \$ 25M):

# A nascent biodiversity startup ecosystem is showing green shoots of promise. Funding grew 47% in 2022 for startups supporting a sustainable biosphere.

## VC investment in biodiversity » [view online](#)

■ \$0-1M (pre-seed) 
 ■ \$1-4M (seed) 
 ■ \$4-15M (Series A) 
 ■ \$15-40M (Series B) 
 ■ \$40-100M (Series C) 
 ■ \$100-250M 
 ■ \$250M+



## 140+ Biodiversity Startups»

[Explore list](#)

### Environmental DNA (eDNA)

Combined funding \$ 43M

### Nature Exchange Platforms & Products

### Animals Protection

Combined funding \$ 5.4M

### Nature-based solutions

Combined funding \$ 22M

### Agri-conservation

### Marine biodiversity

Combined funding \$ 12M

### Supply Chain Tracking

### Rewilding

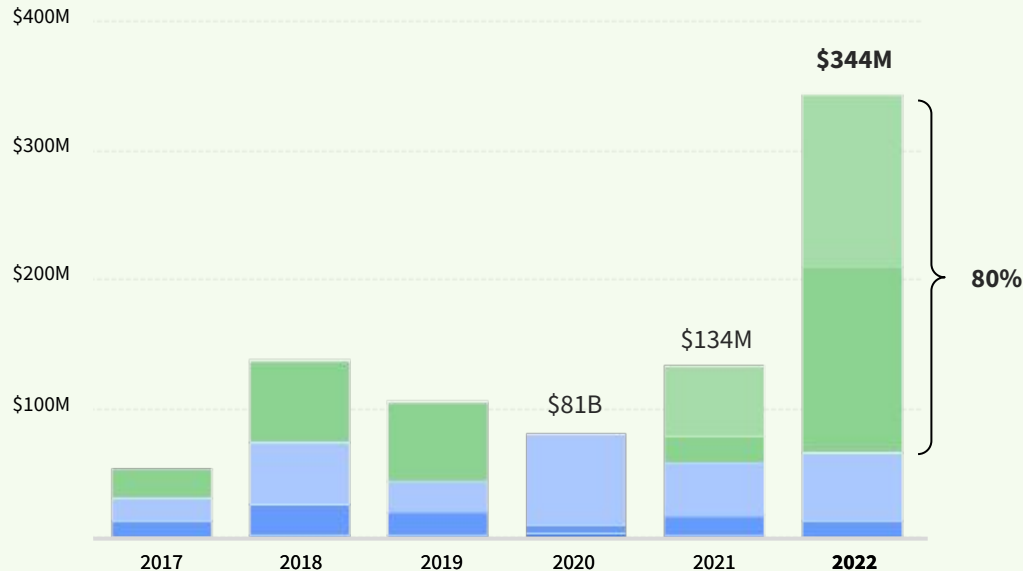
Combined funding \$ 114M

### Climate Fintech X Biodiversity

# The winds of change are blowing for wind energy. Funding momentum is finally building, with record funding in a maturing ecosystem.

## VC investment in wind startups [» view online](#)

■ \$0-1M (pre-seed) 
 ■ \$1-4M (seed) 
 ■ \$4-15M (series A) 
 ■ \$15-40M (series B) 
 ■ \$40-100M (series C)



140+ wind startups»

Explore list

### Turbine monitoring

Combined funding \$ 29M

Greenbyte, Fos4X, MORPHOSENSE, Movelasar, Ping Services, Onyx Insight, Robowind, Renewable Dynam, Tarucca, Sensing360, Fibersail, Vertikal AI

### Vertical axis turbines

Combined funding \$ 3.4M

Icewind, Arkom, XFlow Energy Co, Agile Wind Powe, Alpha-311, NatForce

### Airborne wind energy

Combined funding \$ 29M

Ampyx Power, Kitepower, Kitemill, Skypull, Brainwhere, EnerKite, kiteKRAFT, Windlift, SkySails Group, Anarete, E-Kite

### Turbine simulation

Combined funding \$ 135M

Sentient Scienc, Aksetos, Traverse, Shoreline, Jungie AI, Rosenberg Solut

### Wind turbines components &



# dealroom SIGNAL

Dealroom has launched a powerful predictive algorithm to discover the most promising companies - Dealroom Signal.

The input for each Signal's algorithm includes company growth (team size, product growth), founders strength, completion score and contextual data (does the company fit into segments of interest), timing (is the startup likely to raise their next round soon) and team composition.

We've ranked the top 100 impact startups to watch based on Dealroom Signal: a powerful algorithm helping VCs, Corporates and Governments find the most promising up and coming startups.

» Top 100 Impact Startups to watch

NAME	DEALROOM SIGNAL	MARKET	TYPE	GROWTH 12 months growth	LAUNCH DATE
 <b>Sublime Systems</b> ★ 🗑️ Revolutionizing cement-making u...	100	B2B energy waste solution	commission manufacturing		Mar 21
 <b>Workrise (formerly) RigUp</b> ★ 🗑️ A platform for the energy industry ...	99	B2B energy jobs recruitment	commission saas	 457%	2018
 <b>PurpleAir</b> 🗑️ An air quality monitoring network ...	85	B2C health wellness beauty	hardware iot internetofthings selling own inventory manufacturing		2018
 <b>ADPLIST</b> ★ 🗑️ A community platform where peo...	83	B2C education education providers	commission marketplace & ecommerce	 70%	2020
 <b>Ecoworks</b> ★ 🗑️ ❤️ Developed a process for improv...	80	B2B, B2C real estate energy construction energy efficiency	commission manufacturing		Sep 21
 <b>Battery Resourcers</b> ★ 🗑️ ❤️ Provides recycling for lithium ion ...	80	B2B energy transportation waste solution energy storage	commission manufacturing	 188%	2018
 <b>Otovo</b> ★ 🗑️ ❤️ A marketplace organizing a netwo...	79	B2B, B2C energy clean energy energy providers	commission marketplace & ecommerce	 131%	Jan 21
 <b>Redwood Materials</b> ★ 🗑️ ❤️ Providing advanced technology an...	78	B2B energy transportation energy storage waste solution	commission manufacturing	 172%	Jan 21
 <b>HumanFores</b> ★ 🗑️ ❤️ London's e-bike sharing service wi...	77	B2C transportation mobility	mobile app commission marketplace & ecommerce	 121%	2020

# Impact is to have sustainability at the core

In this report, an impact startup is a company that addresses one or more UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) at the core of its business and the potential to scale. Our litmus test: if you remove the impact, you also remove the business.

Impact sits within a broader framework of Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) which seeks to reduce the harmful impact of business.

Our full taxonomy is available at [this link](#).

**In this report we examined over 13,700 global impact startups.**



## Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG)

REDUCING HARM



## Impact

DOING GOOD

# Venture capital methodology and definitions.

## Startups, scaleups, grownups and tech

Companies designed to grow fast. Generally, such companies are VC-investable businesses. Sometimes they can become very big (e.g. \$1B+ valuation).

When startups are successful, they develop into scaleups (>50 people), grownups (>500 people) and result in big companies, like Arrival or Northvolt.

Only companies founded since 1990 are included in this report.

## Venture capital investment

Investment numbers refer to rounds such as Seed, Series A, B, C, .... late stage, and growth equity rounds.

Venture capital investment figures exclude debt or other non-equity funding, lending capital, grants and ICOs.

Buyouts, M&A, secondary rounds, and IPOs are treated as exits: excluded from funding data.

Investment rounds are sourced from public disclosures including press releases, news, filings and verified user-submitted information.

## Accelerators and workplaces

Fixed-term, cohort-based programs that include seed investment, connections, sales, mentorship, educational components and culminate in a public pitch event or demo day to accelerate growth.

We consider an accelerator as an 'investor' since it takes equity from its startups whereas a 'workplace' does not take equity from its tenants.

In this report, co-working spaces, shared office space that also offer community support, are considered as part of workplaces.

## Valuation

The combined valuation of the tech ecosystem is based on their market cap or latest transaction value.

Transaction value is realized from exit or implied unrealised valuation from the latest VC round, which is either announced or estimated by Dealroom based on benchmarks.



ImpactCity

Danske Bank