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Pro \ Briefings



Creator economy

Startups helping to keep clicks, collabs and cash flowing

4 August 2022

Market 101

What could be better than making a living from doing what you love? More and more creators have flocked to YouTube, Instagram and TikTok to find out — but for most of them, things haven't quite panned out as they might have hoped. Incumbent platforms encourage ever more content production in a zero-sum competition between creators that lets only a select few rise to the top. For the rest, passion has turned into grind, and the once-attainable dream of fame into a reality of precarious or unpaid labour.

A new wave of startups is convinced there's another way though, whether by building platforms that offer creators a bigger slice of the revenue pie and more engagement, or providing the tools that free up more time for creators to focus on what they're actually good at. The jury's still out on whether their efforts will be enough to rebalance the sector towards the needs of the long tail of creators who, once hankering for fame and fortune, are now merely getting by.

Early stage market map

Startups tracked by Sifted, from pre-seed to Series A

Backend tools

Fintech

Coconut
XPO APP
Earnr
MONET

Content creation

Artivive
Detail
Recngo Kft.
Tella TV
LICKD
Loupedeck

Productivity & collaboration

Passionfroot
Vimma
Kive
Flowrite

Alternative platforms

Monetisation

Newcon
Mana
Off Script
The Plate
Utip
Fanvue
Roombles GmbH
Genflow
Blisser
memmo.me
Liteup Media UG
IndieFrame

Growth & discovery

StreamBee
Guild
Infinite Canvas
Lurkit
Groover
FAVE
OnJam
Rezzonation
Roopor
Entale Media
Meme.com

Web3

FUEL
Pixchange
Realm
DropStar
Customuse
Condense

Creator marketplaces & management

Wehype
Whalar
Ifluenz
FuelYourBrands
Influo
Hypest Hive
SocialPubli.com
Beatly
Make Influence
Inzpire.me
Promoty
Join
Post for Rent
Contact
Hulc
The Story Market

Key stats

12

% of online creators who make more than $50k per year[1]

$3 to $5

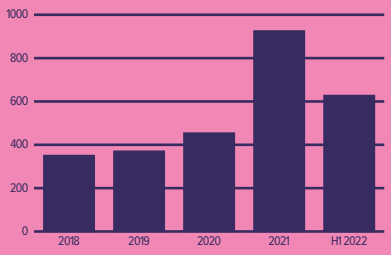
creator earnings per 1,000 views on YouTube[2]

86

% of youngsters who want to join the creator economy[3]

Funding for creator economy startups more than doubled in 2021

VC funding into creator economy startups (€m), 2018-2022



Source: Crunchbase

\sifted/ FT

Trends to watch

1. Setting the creator founder free

→ While creators start out with the goal of producing content, many of them become bogged down with admin, chasing invoices and other repetitive tasks.

→ Startups are now popping up to solve these headaches, from providing creators with working capital while they wait for invoices to come in to developing the tools they need to manage their communities or edit their content more quickly.

2. Art vs the algorithm

→ Creators' main goal is to find new fans, not only engage more deeply with existing ones. But to be discovered, they need to rely either on word of mouth or cater to platforms' preference towards viral content.

→ Funnelling a critical mass of users to their platforms is no easy task for startups, which are up against the recommendation algorithms of social media giants.

3. New income streams

→ Some challengers to the big social media platforms let creatives profit from fewer but more engaged fans.

→ Then there are creators who are experimenting with new income streams like merchandise or meet-and-greets — and those dabbling with Web3 technologies like tokens or NFTs, both to earn more money and animate their community.

4. Beat platform dependency

→ Creators are increasingly spreading their reach across platforms and face a high cost if they're late to a new platform that's mid-blowing up.

→ In this context, among the startups providing the plumbing between platforms and creators, those which are platform agnostic may have the highest chance of success.

Sifted take

Creator economy startups have no easy task ahead of them: serving a class of highly price sensitive customers who are effectively running small businesses, yet have earnings that are too low to charge SaaS-level prices. Startups will need a sound strategy both for taking a share of already-small revenues and growing into billion dollar companies.

59 startups tracked by Sifted

Subindustries

29/59 Alternative platforms

16/59 Creator marketplaces & management

14/59 Backend tools

2018 Avg. launch year
1.7 years Avg. launch to seed
1.7 years Avg. seed to Series A
€2.5m Avg. seed funding
€10m Avg. seed valuation
€7.6m Avg. Series A funding
€36m Avg. Series A valuation

Investors by type

46% Angel

35% VC fund

8% Accelerator

4% CVC

2% Startup

2% Public funding

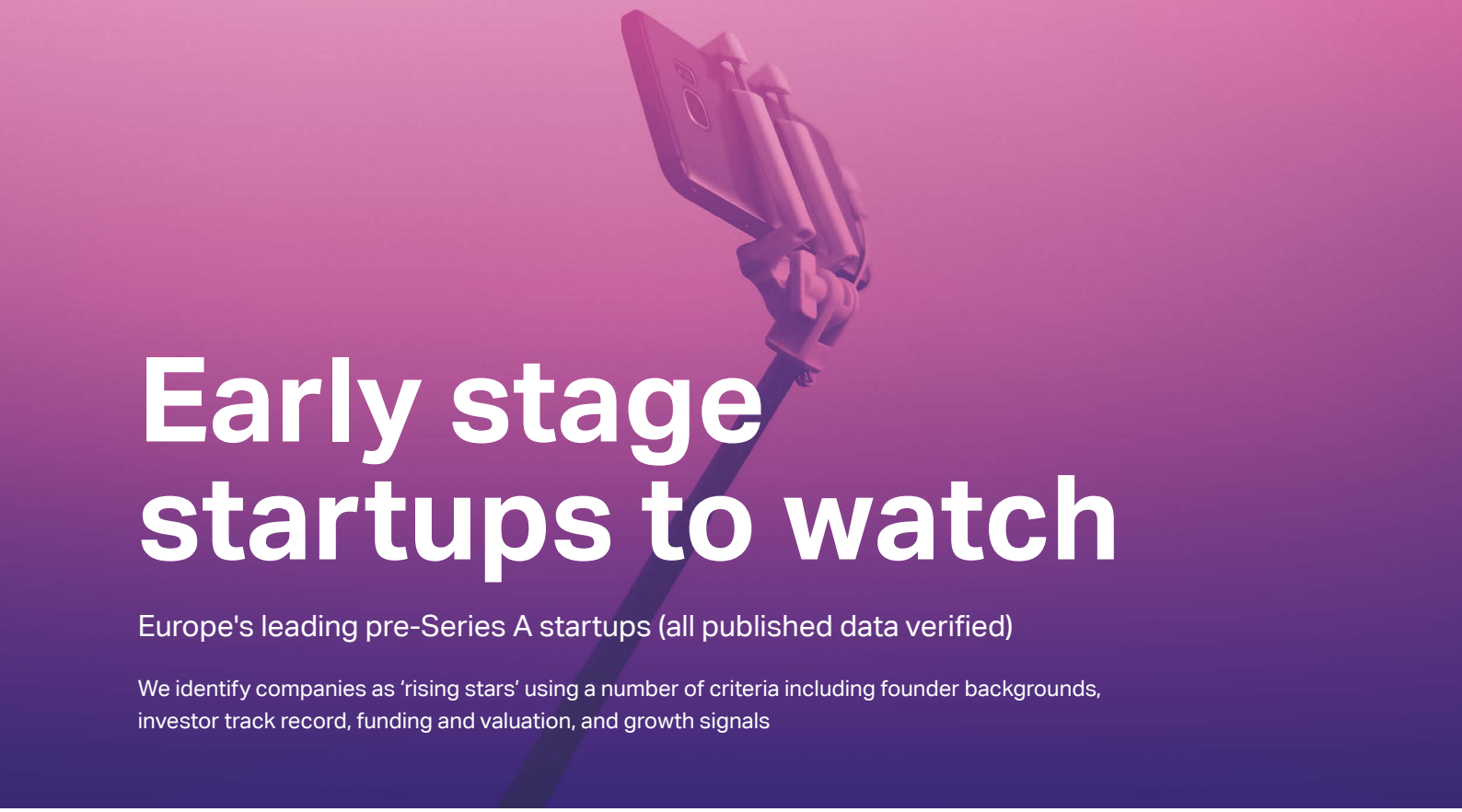
1% Private equity

1% Family office

1% Crowdfunding

Most active investors by deal count

4 Techstars ACCELERATOR
3 Antler VC
2 Warner Music Group CVC
2 Seedcamp VC
2 Hustle Fund VC
2 FJ Labs VC
2 Creandum VC
2 7percent Ventures VC



Early stage startups to watch

Europe's leading pre-Series A startups (all published data verified)

We identify companies as 'rising stars' using a number of criteria including founder backgrounds, investor track record, funding and valuation, and growth signals

The Plate

RISING STAR

Alternative platform Monetisation

Berlin, Germany 2021

TOTAL FUNDING (€)	LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
1.6m	1.6m
LAST ROUND STAGE	**VALUATION (€)**
Pre-seed	Undisclosed

Backed by the likes of FoodLabs, GE Ventures and Village Global, The Plate is a platform for culinary creators focused on live formats to let them engage more deeply with their followers. Its cofounders are two former management consultants.

Click here to read our interview with The Plate cofounder Isabell Weiser.

Kive

RISING STAR

Backend tool Productivity & collaboration

Stockholm, Sweden 2018

TOTAL FUNDING (€)	LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
1.5m	1.5m
LAST ROUND STAGE	**VALUATION (€)**
Pre-seed	Undisclosed, Undisclosed

Provides a content library for creatives that uses AI to let users categorise material according to styles, shots and even human emotions. Its investors include Creandum and EQT Ventures.

Detail

RISING STAR

Backend tool Content creation

Amsterdam, Netherlands 2021

TOTAL FUNDING (€)	LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
6.1m	4.3m
LAST ROUND STAGE	**VALUATION (€)**
Seed	Undisclosed

Founded by serial entrepreneur Paul Veugen, Detail provides one app for users to record, stream and edit their videos using their cameras. It has secured backing from the likes of Point Nine and angels including Sten Tamkivi and Taavet Hinrikus.

OnJam

Alternative platform Growth & discovery

London, United Kingdom 2021

TOTAL FUNDING (€)
100k

LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
100k

LAST ROUND STAGE
Bootstrapped

VALUATION (€)
Undisclosed

StreamBee

Alternative platform Growth & discovery

Prague, Czech Republic 2020

TOTAL FUNDING (€)
300k

LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
300k

LAST ROUND STAGE
Pre-seed

VALUATION (€)
Undisclosed, Undisclosed

FAVE

Alternative platform Growth & discovery

Zurich, Switzerland 2021

TOTAL FUNDING (€)
3m

LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
1m

LAST ROUND STAGE
Seed

VALUATION (€)
15m

Guild

Alternative platform Growth & discovery

London, United Kingdom 2016

TOTAL FUNDING (€)
3.1m

LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
4.2m

LAST ROUND STAGE
Seed

VALUATION (€)
Undisclosed

Mana

Alternative platform Monetisation

London, United Kingdom 2020

TOTAL FUNDING (€)
1.8m

LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
1.8m

LAST ROUND STAGE
Pre-seed

VALUATION (€)
Undisclosed

Newcon

Alternative platform Monetisation

Berlin, Germany 2022

TOTAL FUNDING (€)
Undisclosed

LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
Undisclosed

LAST ROUND STAGE
Angel

VALUATION (€)
Undisclosed

Off Script

Alternative platform Monetisation

Stockholm, Sweden 2020

TOTAL FUNDING (€)
1m

LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
270k

LAST ROUND STAGE
Pre-seed

VALUATION (€)
Undisclosed

FUEL

Alternative platform Web3

Berlin, Germany 2022

TOTAL FUNDING (€)
1.5m

LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
Undisclosed

LAST ROUND STAGE
Pre-seed

VALUATION (€)
11.5m

Pixchange

Alternative platform Web3

Bern, Switzerland 2019

TOTAL FUNDING (€)
500k

LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
300k

LAST ROUND STAGE
Angel

VALUATION (€)
Undisclosed

Condense

Alternative platform Web3

Bristol, United Kingdom 2019

TOTAL FUNDING (€)
4.4m

LAST ROUND SIZE (€)
3.5m

LAST ROUND STAGE
Seed

VALUATION (€)
420k

Passionfroot

Backend tool Productivity & collaboration

Berlin, Germany 2021

TOTAL FUNDING (€) 3m
LAST ROUND SIZE (€) 3m
LAST ROUND STAGE Seed
VALUATION (€) Undisclosed

Vimma

Backend tool Productivity & collaboration

London, United Kingdom 2018

TOTAL FUNDING (€) 350k
LAST ROUND SIZE (€) 127k
LAST ROUND STAGE Pre-seed
VALUATION (€) Undisclosed

Flowrite

Backend tool Productivity & collaboration

Helsinki, Finland 2020

TOTAL FUNDING (€) 4.3m
LAST ROUND SIZE (€) 3.7m
LAST ROUND STAGE Seed
VALUATION (€) Undisclosed

MONET

Backend tool Fintech

London, United Kingdom 2020

TOTAL FUNDING (€) 750k
LAST ROUND SIZE (€) 565k
LAST ROUND STAGE Pre-seed
VALUATION (€) 3.2m

Earnr

Backend tool Fintech

London, United Kingdom 2020

TOTAL FUNDING (€) 910k
LAST ROUND SIZE (€) 780k
LAST ROUND STAGE Pre-seed
VALUATION (€) Undisclosed

Artivive

Backend tool Content creation

Vienna, Austria 2017

TOTAL FUNDING (€) 1.5m
LAST ROUND SIZE (€) 1.5m
LAST ROUND STAGE Seed
VALUATION (€) Undisclosed

Hypest Hive

Creator marketplace & management

Bruck an der Leitha, Austria 2018

TOTAL FUNDING (€) 90k
LAST ROUND SIZE (€) 350k
LAST ROUND STAGE Pre-seed
VALUATION (€) Undisclosed

Contact

Creator marketplace & management

London, United Kingdom 2018

TOTAL FUNDING (€) 5.1m
LAST ROUND SIZE (€) 3.3m
LAST ROUND STAGE Seed
VALUATION (€) 16.7m

Make Influence

Creator marketplace & management

Copenhagen, Denmark 2019

TOTAL FUNDING (€) 800k
LAST ROUND SIZE (€) 400k
LAST ROUND STAGE Pre-seed
VALUATION (€) Undisclosed

Sources

Data sources

Sifted proprietary data

Dealroom.co

Research reports

The New Creator Economy: A guide on Web3 creator platforms | Antler | March 2022

[1] 2022 Creator Report | Linktree

News articles

How Startups Can Survive the Creator Economy Winter | Napkin Math | May 2022

Creator economy startups to watch, according to top investors | Sifted | October 2021

[3] A 'neobank for influencers': Why the $15bn creator economy is fintechs' next battleground | Sifted | August 2021

The creator economy is in crisis. Now let's fix it. | Li Jin | August 2021

5 creator economy VCs see startup opportunities in monetization, discovery and much more | TechCrunch February 2021

[2] Building the Middle Class of the Creator Economy | Li Jin | December 2020

Mapping the Creator Economy | Arm The Creators | December 2020

What is the creator economy? Influencer tools and trends | SignalFire | September 2020

How would you rate this briefing?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

bad loved it

Cover image: Steve Gale

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