

Media release

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## NEW SCOUT PROGRAMME GIVES KIWIS THE CHANCE TO BECOME VENTURE CAPITALISTS

Kiwis that think they have the potential to pick smart investments are now being offered the once in a lifetime opportunity to start their own investment fund.

Los Angeles based venture capitalist Rob Vickery is starting a first of its kind 'scout programme' for New Zealand.

As a part of the main Hillfarrance Venture Capital fund, the one million dollar fund will select 10 would be venture capitalists to invest up to 100 thousand dollars each in businesses they believe have the creds to become the next Xero or Rocket Lab.

"Scout programmes are a pretty established and successful way of finding hot new investment prospects in Silicon Valley, but so far, no-one has launched one in New Zealand," says Hillfarrance CEO Rob Vickery

Vickery, who is currently based in Los Angeles started the 35-40 million dollar venture capital fund Hillfarrance during the Covid-19 pandemic and plans to relocate to New Zealand once the travel restrictions are limited.

"New Zealand represents a unique opportunity for venture capital. It has a burgeoning community of entrepreneurs and companies, such as Halter and Rocketlab, that are pushing the boundaries of technology and innovation. It has a small but vibrant investor community who have valiantly served the ecosystem on its own until now and now need additional sources of capital to take it to version 2.0.

"What better way to find these opportunities than through the smart, switched on business community themselves who have great connections and insights but perhaps lack the funds."

So how does it work? The scout will identify a team and an idea that is worthy of investment. After undertaking due diligence on the investment both Hillfarrance and the Scout decides whether or not to proceed with the investment and Hillfarrance wires the money to the startup. Once the company exits or creates dividends the returns get split between the scout and Hillfarrance.

Not just anyone will be let loose with the fund though. The chosen 10 will need to be demonstrate they have what it takes to pick a winner.

“We’re looking for unique individuals that can really sniff out an interesting concept or gap in the market,” says Vickery. “The most effective scouts in Silicon Valley have been founders and serial entrepreneurs, former institutional investors who want to try the other side of the table, and well-connected individuals who have unique access to groups of people who are pursuing really cool things.

“Regardless of their origin story, a good Hillfarrance scout will have an insatiable curiosity for new ideas, a natural ability to connect deeply with people and a character that reflects the values of our company - humility, passion and a sense of family.”

An established venture capitalist, Vickery has somewhat of a fascination with New Zealand and believes that our track record of establishing wildly successful startups puts us in a unique position to create an unfair advantage.

“What excites me about the New Zealand entrepreneurial ecosystem is that there is talent in so many different pockets of the community. It has probably one of the most active and engaged angel investor communities in the world and has already created a number of wildly successful companies. With a little more capital investment I expect that to continue to trend upwards.”

Those that think they have what it takes can find out more at [www.hillfarrance.co.nz/scouts](http://www.hillfarrance.co.nz/scouts) and apply by sending a brief bio or cv and one paragraph about why they think they’d make a

great scout to [scouts@hillfarrance.com](mailto:scouts@hillfarrance.com). The closing date for entries is the 15<sup>th</sup> of August and the first scouts will be selected and notified by the end of September 2020.

Ends

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### **About Hillfarrance**

Hillfarrance is a new investment fund launched in March 2020. It invests in diverse entrepreneurs who are building sustainable and defensive business models, that democratise new technology, extract unique value from proprietary data and create an unfair market advantage as a result. The fund is managed by Los Angeles based venture capitalist Rob Vickery who has had the first close of a planned \$35-40 million dollar fund. The fund will invest into The fund will make investments of between 250 to 500 thousand dollars into about twenty companies. It's first investment is in to Yabble, an Auckland based digital and data insights platform.