

ROLI

ROLI raises \$27 million Series B led by Foundry Group to globally expand its Connected Music ecosystem

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New York—[ROLI](#), the East London-based music technology company, has raised \$27 million to accelerate growth and bring its revolutionary devices—including the celebrated [Seaboard RISE](#)—to music-makers around the world.

ROLI has rapidly established itself as the most innovative company in music technology by creating connected instruments that offer unprecedented expression. The Series B fundraising will help ROLI scale to meet growing demand, expand in new markets, and intensively build out its [product, engineering, and marketing teams](#) in North America and Europe.

[Roland Lamb](#), Founder and CEO of ROLI, said: “Music is a source of joy, and we want to make music creation more connected and accessible for everyone. The success of the Seaboard has shown that people want musical devices that are elegant, advanced, and open to all—and as easy to use as a smartphone or tablet. We’re thrilled to be partnering with some of the world’s most experienced investors as we revolutionize how people express themselves through music. And as we continue this journey, we are looking for everyone—from coders and makers to composers and musicians—to join the ROLI team as we change the shape of music.”

ROLI’s chain of connected hardware, software, platform, and developer products have received worldwide acclaim. The [Seaboard RISE](#), an instrument that launched in September 2015, remodels the piano keyboard as a soft, smooth, touch-responsive surface that lets music-makers shape sound through [five dimensions of touch](#). [Artists](#) have celebrated the Seaboard RISE, while [reviewers](#) have hailed it as “one of the most exciting, progressive, and potent MIDI controllers ever made” that “borrows the best of the analog and digital worlds” to “offer the electronic musician a more personal, emotionally engaged playing experience.” In December 2015 ROLI launched [NOISE](#), a free iOS app that turns iPhones and iPads into delightfully expressive musical instruments. The app, which the Apple Store features on demonstration units of its iPhones, has set the standard in applying Apple’s 3D Touch technology to music creation.

[Foundry Group](#), the Boulder-based venture capital firm, led the round in its first investment outside the US. Ryan McIntyre, partner at Foundry Group, said: “We’ve had the opportunity to partner with companies at the forefront of Connected Health, Connected Play, and other areas where the intersection of physical and digital technologies is transforming the way we live. We’re tremendously excited to be working with Roland and the ROLI team to transform and connect how people make music. The Seaboard is a truly expressive new instrument, and we believe this is just the first step in a breakthrough roadmap for Connected Music.”

London-based [BGF Ventures](#) and San Francisco-based [Founders Fund](#) joined the round alongside all the investors who participated in ROLI's \$12.8m Series A: [Balderton Capital](#), [FirstMark Capital](#), [Index Ventures](#), [Horizons Ventures](#), and [Universal Music Group](#).

ROLI welcomes new US-based investors Foundry Group and Founders Fund at a time when the US accounts for a large share of current and prospective sales. It has opened offices in New York and Los Angeles since its acquisition of [Blend](#), the cloud-based music-sharing platform, in October 2015. While ROLI continues to grow in the US and Europe, it is also expanding internationally. Seaboard is now available in approximately [200 retail outlets](#) in 15 countries. Seaboard purchased on ROLI's [online Store](#) ship globally.

ROLI is extending the journey of music creation to everyone not only through its products but also by working with institutions like [Children's Music Fund](#), [INSPIRE Music](#), and [Rytmo](#). Expanding its commitments to society, ROLI announces today that it will pledge 1% of its products, equity, and team's time to find new ways of bringing the joy of making to everyone. It joins technology companies such as Salesforce.org, Techstars, and Glassdoor in the [Pledge 1%](#) movement in the US and UK.



Roland Lamb, founder and CEO of ROLI, in ROLI's newest East London railway arch.



The Seaboard RISE 25, ROLI's multi-award-winning MIDI controller that launched in September 2015.

About ROLI

ROLI is a London-based technology company that is creating a more connected music ecosystem. The [award-winning Seaboard RISE](#) and [Seaboard GRAND](#) are redefining how expressive a musical instrument can be. [NOISE](#), the free music-making app, turns the iPhone into a powerful handheld instrument. New dimensions of musical expression are opening through [Equator](#), ROLI's groundbreaking sound engine. As the leading C++ framework for audio, [JUCE](#) is making music applications run faster in real time. And [Blend.io](#) is building a new community for music collaboration by letting artists share their projects on an open social platform. Through hardware, software, and social products, ROLI is making a new chain of music-making tools that lets people express more.

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About Foundry Group

Foundry Group is a venture capital firm specializing in seed, startup, early stage, and late stage growth investments. Based in Boulder, Colorado, the firm has invested in a variety of software and hardware companies including Zynga, Fitbit, Sphero, Jiraffe, and MakerBot. In addition to providing the venture capital to get a company up and running, Foundry Group is committed to leveraging its partners' experience in starting and growing companies, expertise in the technology industry, and network of relationships to help great entrepreneurs turn great ideas into great companies. Foundry Group focuses on technology companies located in the United States. ROLI is its first investment outside the US.

About BGF Ventures

BGF Ventures is the UK's largest ever venture capital company dedicated to earlier stage UK technology companies, with £200m to invest. Launched in September 2015, BGF Ventures is run by a dedicated team led by Harry Briggs, Simon Calver, and Rory Stirling. BGF Ventures' investments include Gousto, Tapdaq, and NewVoiceMedia. BGF Ventures is part of BGF, the UK's most active provider of growth capital to small and mid-sized businesses across a range of sectors. More at www.bgfventures.com and [@BGFVentures](https://twitter.com/BGFVentures).

About Founders Fund

Founders Fund invests in science and technology companies solving the world's most difficult problems. The firm and its partners have been early backers of some of the most prominent companies of the past decade, including SpaceX, Palantir, Facebook, and Airbnb. Founders Fund pursues a founder-friendly investment strategy that provides maximum support with minimum interference. More information can be found at www.foundersfund.com.

About Balderton Capital

Balderton Capital is one of the largest venture capital firms in Europe, committed to finding and helping talented entrepreneurs build great companies. Based in London, the firm manages \$2.3 billion. Since 2000, Balderton has invested in over 100 companies, principally across Europe. Notable realised investments include NaturalMotion, Betfair, LOVEFiLM, and YOOX Group. The current portfolio includes innovative companies such as Nutmeg, Citymapper, CrowdCube, Lyst, 3D Hubs, Globoforce, Banjo, Prodigy Finance, Kobalt, Openet, ScytI, The Hut Group, Tictail, and WorldStores.

About FirstMark Capital

FirstMark Capital is an early-stage venture capital firm based in New York City. Our mission is to partner with exceptional entrepreneurs who are changing the world by solving meaningful problems. We have built a deeply engaged community among the extraordinary teams in our network to spread ideas and opportunities. We are privileged to work alongside the founders of remarkable businesses like Pinterest, Shopify, Riot Games, InVision, Tapad, Schoology, and dozens more. Visit us in New York City or online at firstmarkcap.com and [@firstmarkcap](https://twitter.com/firstmarkcap).

About Horizons Ventures

Horizons Ventures is a venture capital firm started by two Hong Kong women as a personal investment vehicle. It is the common investor behind a parade of success stories in global high technology, including Skype, Facebook, Spotify, Waze, Siri, DeepMind, and Summly. For more information please visit www.horizonsventures.com.

About Index Ventures

Index Ventures is an international venture capital firm that backs the best and most ambitious entrepreneurs in Europe, the US, and Israel, across all company stages, from seed to venture to growth. These leaders are building truly transformative companies that are reshaping the world around us, including Adyen, BlaBlaCar, Dropbox, Deliveroo, King, Squarespace, Sonos, SoundCloud, and Supercell—among many others. Find out more about the Index family at www.indexventures.com and [@indexventures](https://twitter.com/indexventures).

About Universal Music Group

Universal Music Group is the global music leader, with wholly owned operations in 60 territories. Its businesses also include Universal Music Publishing Group, one of the industry's premier music publishing operations worldwide. Universal Music Group's labels include A&M Records, Angel, Astralwerks, Capitol Records, Capitol Records Nashville, Caroline, Decca, Def Jam Recordings, Disa, Emarcy, EMI Records Nashville, Fonovisa, Geffen Records, Harvest, Interscope Records, Island Records, Mercury Nashville, Mercury Records, Motown Records, Polydor Records, Republic Records, Verve Music Group, and Virgin EMI Records. The Universal Music Group owns the most extensive catalogue of music in the industry. Universal Music Group is a fully owned subsidiary of Vivendi.