



The platform hopes to diversify the venture capitalism industry | Photo source [Christina @ wocintechchat.com](#)

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FREE VC TRAINING PLATFORM LAUNCHES TO TACKLE INDUSTRY'S DIVERSITY PROBLEM

 FINANCIAL SERVICES

The platform allows participants to source startups and analyse markets like real venture capitalists

Spotted: Merit, a new kind of training program for aspiring venture capitalists (VCs), hopes to make getting an internship at VC firms a more meritocratic process.

Launched in beta at the beginning of July, the platform allows participants to source startups and analyse markets. Points are awarded through peer-reviewing, after which top performers are introduced to VCs. The process is, therefore, based on their own abilities; rather than where they went to school or who their parents are friends with.

“I fundamentally believe that diversity is one of the biggest issues we need to tackle as an industry,” said [Jacob Claerhout](#), an analyst at French VC firm Partech and founder of Merit. “If we want to make the whole startup ecosystem more diverse, we can’t take VC recruiting too lightly.”

The work done on Merit is like that of an analyst or junior VC at any fund. Participants find and analyse one promising startup per week, and in order for deals to be peer-reviewed, users also analyse investment opportunities found by two other participants. Not only does this allow points scored for doing good work to be fair, but it also allows participants to mutually learn and help one another.

To decrease the advantage of some participants with previous experience, Claerhout will provide resources like videos and blog posts which explain how to look at markets and business models.

The first round will run for six weeks, requiring about three hours of work each week. The top 50 participants will then be given access to a curated list of VC job postings, and the top 20 participants will be introduced to VC firms.

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Takeaway:

Venture hiring is greatly exclusive. Not only is the industry exceedingly gender imbalanced, with data showing that [84.6 per cent of senior investors](#) are male, but the vast majority of VCs are white and come from privileged educational backgrounds. Over the past few years, a flurry of new VC training schemes have launched, and with technology like this, we have the opportunity to provide a product-focused and scalable solution to the problem.