



## **NXT BLD and Bentley Systems Launch NXT Activate Accelerator to Back the Next Generation of AEC Software Innovators**

*New programme opens with \$3 million in funding and dedicated mentorship to early-stage companies building on both open and proprietary platforms*

**LONDON – 14 May 2026** — Today at the [NXT BLD conference](#), founding partners NXT BLD and infrastructure engineering software company, [Bentley Systems, Incorporated](#) (Nasdaq: BSY), announced the launch of [NXT Activate](#), a developer-focused accelerator for early-stage companies building transformative software for the architecture, engineering, and construction (AEC) sectors.

The accelerator will back startups that are creating applications to solve the industry's most critical challenges by breaking down data silos and unlocking more efficient workflows from design through operation.

The programme is uniquely designed to support startups, regardless of the technology they choose to build on. Whether a company is building on open standards, such as IFC or 3D Tiles, or leveraging proprietary platforms they are eligible for funding. This core principle ensures the accelerator supports the best new ideas in the industry, rather than limiting startups to a single vendor's technology.

Initially seeded by Bentley Ventures, the corporate venture capital arm of Bentley Systems, NXT Activate will launch with a commitment of up to \$3 million over a three-year term. This capital will be deployed annually across cohorts of six to eight startups, with the first cohort scheduled for autumn 2026. The consortium is designed to expand with the addition of future strategic sponsors and investment members.

Martyn Day, director of NXT BLD and publisher of AEC Magazine, commented: "For 10 years, NXT BLD has been at the forefront of the industry's shift toward the cloud, AI, and data-centric workflows. The next generation of essential AEC tools will come from an agile, startup-driven culture. We are ecstatic to work with Bentley to find the next generation of tool makers and software firms. With NXT Activate we have the means to back them. This is deliberately not a single-vendor programme. We will support companies working on open standards and proprietary platforms, because that diversity is what makes the AEC software ecosystem credible."

"A vibrant and diverse developer ecosystem is essential for the future of infrastructure," said James Lee, Chief Operating Officer at Bentley Systems. "Through Bentley Ventures and as a founding investment member of NXT Activate, we are directly funding the community that will build the next generation of infrastructure digital twin applications. Whether they build on open standards like 3D Tiles or on platforms like iTwin, we are committed to empowering the innovators who are creating transformative solutions for the built and natural environment."

### **What Startups Receive**

Each cohort participant is eligible for up to \$200,000 in investment in exchange for a fixed equity stake. Beyond capital, NXT Activate provides an invaluable strategic advantage:

- **Domain Expertise:** Interact with domain experts relevant to challenges cohort participants are seeking to solve.
- **Direct Technical Access:** Deep integration support with the founding members' platforms, SDKs, and technical teams.
- **User Validation:** Programme-led introductions to enterprise and industry players.

- Industry-Scale Visibility: Potential exposure on the influential stages of NXT BLD, NXT DEV, and other annual industry forums where the AEC industry's largest firms and contractors gather to evaluate emerging technology.

Investment decisions will be made jointly by a committee of the programme's founding and investment members. NXT BLD and *AEC Magazine* will retain full editorial independence.

### Call for Applications

NXT Activate will begin accepting applications in summer 2026 from early-stage startups and developer teams focused on software solutions for the built and natural environment. The sixteen-week programme is designed to provide a direct path from concept to commercialisation through capital, platform integration, and user validation.

Application details will be published at [NXTActivate.com](http://NXTActivate.com).

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### Associated images



**Caption:** Martyn Day, director of NXT BLD and publisher of AEC Magazine, announced in partnership with Bentley Systems the launch of NXT Activate, a developer-focused accelerator for early-stage companies building transformative software for the AEC sectors.

### About NXT BLD and AEC Magazine

NXT BLD, organized by AEC Magazine, is the premier conference and exhibition focused on next-generation technology for the built environment. It brings together the most innovative thinkers, practitioners, and technology developers to explore the future of architecture, engineering, and construction. AEC Magazine is a leading global publication that has been at the forefront of AEC technology for over two decades, providing essential news, analysis, and insights to a worldwide audience.

### About Bentley Systems

Around the world, infrastructure professionals rely on software from Bentley Systems to help them design, build, and operate better and more resilient infrastructure for transportation, water, energy, cities, and more. Founded in 1984 by engineers for engineers, Bentley is the partner of choice for engineering firms and owner-operators worldwide, with software that spans engineering disciplines, industry sectors, and all phases of the infrastructure lifecycle. Through our digital twin solutions, we help infrastructure professionals unlock the value of their data to transform project delivery and asset performance.

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