

Wayra brings together the main players in the ecosystem at Espacio Movistar



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Wayra held its ‘Investors Day 2024’ yesterday at the newly inaugurated “Espacio Movistar”, an event attended by more than 300 guests, including the main investment funds of the local and international ecosystem, as well as executives and experts from Telefónica and the founders of the most important startups in its portfolio.

Paloma Castellano, director of Wayra Spain, was in charge of welcoming the attendees and highlighted ‘the transformation that artificial intelligence is bringing to all sectors and how Wayra is accompanying this change’.

She then gave way to Irene Gómez, CEO of Wayra, who had a dialogue with Prithvi Rai, former Global Head of Security at Uber, Facebook and Yahoo! and CEO of Borneo, about the importance of working to develop responsible AI and how organisations and investors can contribute to responsible technology development. During the talk, Irene highlighted that: “The transformative impact of artificial intelligence is unprecedented, and we believe that through startups like those we support at Wayra, we are contributing to this change for the sake of progress.

Afterwards, Marta Antúnez, Director of Investment at Wayra Spain shared Wayra’s investment activity over the last year and presented some of the most outstanding startups in their environment ranging from climate risk management to digital healthcare and secure cloud storage. Among the companies presented were:

- Mitiga Solutions is a company that combines cutting-edge climate science, AI and high-performance computing to help its clients understand their exposure to climate risk.
- Omniloy simplifies data analysis for businesses through artificial

intelligence (AI)-powered tools. Its platform enables non-technical employees to access and analyse their business data through natural language queries.

- BCAS wants to make it easier for anyone to access quality education and better job opportunities. They do this by funding studies that students pay for only when they find a job. It collaborates with top schools and offers training in high-demand areas such as web development, UX/UI and data science. It is backed by the European Investment Fund and supports students with flexible payment terms that are customised to their salary.

- Ciudadela, founded in 2022, is a digital property management platform, focused on improving transparency, speed and security in property management.

- Honei is an innovative solution for payment in restaurants, facilitating a faster and more convenient experience for diners. It allows establishments to streamline their checkout process, improving efficiency and customer satisfaction.

- GrabrFi is a digital service that allows users to access the US banking system without having to travel. You do not need to be a US resident to do so. With an ID card you can receive all the benefits of the US banking system from the comfort of your home.

The event also included a panel discussion titled 'AI, VC & Everything in Between', moderated by Pablo Moro, managing director at Wayra Ventures with the participation of leading international funds such as Nicholas Stocks from White Star Capital, Greta Anderson from Balderton Capital, Anne Charlotte Philbert, Managing Director at Eurazeo Growth and Ryan Foutty from the startup Perplexity. The speakers shared how AI is impacting the way VCs work and the most scalable use cases.

Wayra demonstrated at the Investors Day that it continues its commitment to high-impact technologies that are setting the pace in the global digital transformation, such as artificial intelligence, enterprise software, fintech, insurtech and next-generation networks. In the last year Wayra has focused especially on companies that apply AI, such as startups like Internxt, Shakers and Uelz, among others.

Wayra, Telefónica's corporate venture capital

After more than 15 years since its creation, Wayra announced in February this year a strategic change in which it grouped under its brand all the Telefónica Group's startup investment initiatives, becoming the company's corporate venture capital.

Wayra invests directly in seed and growth stage startups with the capacity to generate business with Telefónica, with investments ranging from 100,000 euros to 5 million euros along with other leading venture capitalists taking minority stakes with a strategic investment role.

The accumulated experience also allows Wayra to provide innovation services to third parties, while offering the possibility of accompanying other companies and institutions to implement their open innovation strategy. In this area, Wayra offers a wide range of services that adapt to the needs of its clients, such as the identification of start-ups, the creation of customised innovation and venture capital programmes and technology labs, among others. It also has innovation platforms, such as Alaian and Open Future, and funds such as Vivo Ventures and Íope Ventures.

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