



## **Former FanDuel Executives Launch BetDEX, the World's First Decentralized Sports Betting Protocol, and Secure Largest Ever Seed Round by a UK Startup**

***- \$21m seed investment round led by crypto investment firm Paradigm and cryptocurrency exchange FTX***



**Left to right are BetDEX co-founders Nigel Eccles, Varun Sudhakar, and Stuart Tonner  
(Photo: Business Wire)**

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EDINBURGH, Scotland--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--Former FanDuel executives have launched a new company, [BetDEX](#), positioned to be the world's first decentralized sports betting protocol, while securing the largest ever seed investment round by a UK startup. Set for launch in the first half of 2022, BetDEX combines blockchain technology with sports betting, with the aim of transforming the consumer sports betting experience.

The \$21 million investment round is led by San Francisco-based crypto investment firm [Paradigm](#) and Bahamas-based cryptocurrency exchange [FTX](#), which was recently valued at \$25 billion after its own Series B-1 round was disclosed in October. [Multicoin Capital](#), [Hack VC](#), [Lightspeed Venture Partners](#), [Sino Global Capital](#), [Solana Ventures](#), and Everblue Management also participated in the round.

Former FanDuel co-founder and CEO Nigel Eccles becomes BetDEX's Non-executive Chair, Varun Sudhakar is appointed CEO, and Stuart Tonner takes up the CTO role. BetDEX plans to scale the business from a base in Scotland and is now hiring for a range of positions.

Eccles co-founded FanDuel in 2009, with the company going on to become Scotland's first \$1 billion dollar-valued startup before being acquired by Flutter in 2018. FanDuel is now estimated to be worth around \$30 billion. Varun Sudhakar, who began his career in investment banking in Silicon Valley, worked alongside Eccles in senior strategy and corporate development roles at FanDuel between 2015 and 2018, before going on to senior executive positions at other venture-backed startups in New York. Stuart Tonner was the first engineer hired by FanDuel, spending over eight years with the company, building the core FanDuel platform and scaling it to tens of millions of users.

In 2020, the global sports betting market was valued at USD \$203 billion and is forecast to grow to USD \$350 billion by 2024. Despite the immense size, popularity and potential of the sports betting market, it has been characterized by incumbents charging high fees and delivering minimal product innovation.

BetDEX aims to take the opposite approach, with a protocol built on public blockchain [Solana](#), and will offer consumers extremely fast and low-cost trades, while eliminating counterparty risk. The protocol will be fully decentralized and open-sourced, allowing third parties to build their own applications and innovate on top of the platform. BetDEX plans to accept wagers in USDT, SOL and SAMO at launch.

Nigel Eccles, Co-Founder and Chairman of BetDEX, said: "Blockchain technology is set to revolutionise sports betting and we want to be at the forefront of that. It's exciting to be founding the business with Varun and Stuart, and to be building it in Scotland. We are energized to have the backing and wealth of expertise that comes with having Paradigm and FTX as cornerstone investors."

Varun Sudhakar, Co-Founder and CEO of BetDEX, said: "The sports betting industry charges high prices for poor products and limits trades by its most successful users. BetDEX is diametrically opposed to this approach, we will successfully compete against incumbents with a markedly superior product and low fees, which is now possible with the advent of blockchain technology. Winners will always be welcome on our protocol."

Sam Bankman-Fried, CEO and Founder of FTX, said: "We are thrilled to be backing a team with deep industry expertise to transform the sports betting experience. It is mind-boggling that more sports wagering does not occur on exchanges - we firmly believe in giving consumers the ability and control to set their own price and are excited to partner with BetDEX to bring this vision to fruition."

Arjun Balaji, investment partner at Paradigm, said: "It feels obvious crypto will transform online sports betting. DeFi has shown how financial markets can be automated and distributed to the benefit of consumers. Crypto can do the same for all other kinds of financial activities, including betting. The BetDEX team has the right combination of industry experience and technical skill to create something that shows the way forward for everyone working in the space."

For further information: [www.betdex.com](http://www.betdex.com)

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## **Contacts**

**Nick Freer**

**+44 (0)7841 571 871**

**[nick@freerconsultancy.com](mailto:nick@freerconsultancy.com)**