# North East Social Tech Fund: Tech Supplier Open Call: The Road to Recovery Trust

The Road to Recovery Trust supports people suffering from addiction through peer support and a 12-step abstinence based programme. The Trust delivers these activities from its own building – George Street Social - which features a café and activity spaces. The Trust is looking for a way to increase its income from the café, while enabling those in need to discreetly gain access to discounted food and drink without negatively affecting feelings of pride and dignity.

A budget of £10,000 is made available for a prototype, through support from the North East Social Tech Pilot Fund.

## Charity Information:

**Name of Charity:** The Road to Recovery Trust

**Registered Charity Number:** 1144882

## Pilot Fund Background Info

The purpose of the North East Social Tech Pilot Fund is to help charities and social enterprises in the North East and Tees Valley explore how challenges within their organisation can be addressed through digital technology and 'open innovation'. The pilot programme has provided Innovation Grants of up to £10,000 to each successful VCSE which will be used to commission a solution and digital prototype. In addition, all VCSEs receive dedicated hands on support from the Digital Catapult North East Tees Valley's expert Innovation Teams.

At the current stage, all VCSEs have identified and explored key challenges within their organisations which they wish to address through technology. These challenges have been outlined within the innovation calls. It is up to you; the creative, digital and tech SMEs, to come up with creative solutions to these problems and, if successful, develop a prototype or minimum viable product (MVP).

## Charity Background

The Road to Recovery Trust was formed in 2012 by a small group of people in long-term recovery from addiction and set out to support those struggling with drug and alcohol misuse.

The trust's vision is to transform the North East from a place with the highest mortality rates caused by addiction, into a region with the highest rates of recovery.

The Road to Recovery Trust aims to support addicts through a 12-step abstinence-based recovery plan. It predominantly supports users from its own building – George Street Social – which is designed as a safe, alcohol and drug free space that brings people together (both those in recovery as well as the wider community). The building features a café on the ground floor, and uses spaces upstairs to facilitate community groups and the 12-step peer support programmes.

In addition, a key aspect of the trust's work is to raise awareness of the reality of addiction, challenge stigma and support people in recovery to live life without shame.

## Summary of the Challenge

Road to Recovery Trust are now looking for an organisation who can help digitise the way they charge within the café. This café income should help sustain the organisation. The increase in income is needed to ensure the Road to Recovery Trust can continue to provide a safe space for socialising, 12-step meetings and other support groups who utilise the space.

For many people in recovery, there are financial challenges as people seek to reintegrate into the community and get back into work. While the Road to Recovery Trust want to ensure they charge a fair price for those who can afford it, they also need to ensure they are accessible to those in recovery. The trust wants to ensure that people in recovery who may be struggling financially can enjoy the same food, but at a discount.

As one of the key challenges to recovery is shame and stigma, a way into recovery is the security of anonymity where needed. Road to Recovery is careful not to make people feel as though they must identify themselves as being on low wages/in recovery in order to access food at a cheaper price. Road to Recovery Trust are therefore looking for a discreet solution that will provide people who need it with access to discounted food and drink.

The solution needs to help to streamline the café finances with the rental income from room use to help the organisation to scale and better serve their users.

## Things to Consider

Road to Recovery Trust have previously looked at member options to help those in need access food and drinks at a discount. However, the members service was discontinued due to complications with GDPR requirements. Furthermore, it was a crude system that did not link to the café or EPOS system. Road to Recovery Trust are therefore looking for a solution that enables service users and those in need to access discounted food and drinks while retaining their anonymity, abiding by the GDPR requirements while making it easy and accessible to use for both customers and staff.

Technological solutions must therefore be compliant with GDPR requirements. For example, photos cannot be used without the consent of those within the picture.

Road to Recovery Trust have said it may be beneficial for interested suppliers to go along to the café to see what it is like prior to applying.

The IT Consultants they use are Vital Service.

## Impact of Solving the Challenge

The digital solution will have the impact of seamlessly bringing the community together, without forcing people in recovery to identify themselves in order to access discounted food. People from all backgrounds can sit side by side, eating the same food and drink. This means people will feel happier when spending more time in the café, are more compelled to socialise around meetings, and are more able to enjoy quality food without feeling 'priced out'. The right solution will support social and emotional outcomes, as well as provide healthy food to people whose nutrition will have hit rock bottom during their illness. At the same time, the solution will create a financial impact through

supporting the trust to sustain a healthy income that goes back into the recovering community by charging  the general public / those who can afford it, a fair price for the quality food served.

## Project Roles

The team will include:
Peter Mitchell – Chief Executive
Beth Collard – Manager
Paul Richardson – Treasurer
And the staff who work in the café who will facilitate the system.

## The Budget

This charity was awarded £10,000 from the fund to be allocated to development of a prototype solution. All funds are classed as restricted and therefore 100% will be paid to the supplier upon completion of pre agreed milestones.

## Timescales

| Open Call Deadline | 20/03/2020 |
|---|---|
| Companies Shortlisted | 25/03/2020 |
| Pitch Day | 01/04/2020 |
| Company Selected | 08/04/2020 |
| Solution complete | 31/07/2020 |
| Evaluation Report | 11/09/2020 |

## Evaluation Criteria

| Innovation | Likelihood of solving the challenge and receiving scaleup funds | 25% |
|---|---|---|
| Team | Experience of the solution & the sector | 25% |
| Timescales | Ability to meet timescales | 25% |
| Scope | How much of the brief will be met in the budget | 25% |

## Apply

To apply, please fill in the online application form before 23:59pm on 20 March 2020 (answer with "Road to Recovery Trust" in the 'name of the open call field'): https://airtable.com/shrZWbmjf2isVnac6

## FAQs

### Intellectual Property

All Intellectual Property will reside with the charitable organisation unless otherwise agreed in writing between the charity and the supplier. Therefore we would advise if you wish to pitch a solution that is based on your current infrastructure and therefore your existing Intellectual Property

please state this clearly in your application form so that your IP can be protected and the charity is aware.



road to recovery trust

supporting abstinence based 12 step recovery