



The Restart Project

www.therestartproject.org

REconomy Project

Mission

Our mission is to mobilize a global network of people who extend the lifespan of electronics by fostering repair skills and improving product design.

Is there a link with Transition?

The organisation was co-founded by a member of Transition Belsize's coordinating group and it often organises events in collaboration with Transition initiatives in London. Other Transition initiatives across the country have expressed an interest, and we would be happy to support them.

Your product or service – how much does it help improve resilience in your local community or elsewhere?

"Restart Parties" are our current main service. These are events where volunteers experienced with electronics help participants learn to repair or maintain their broken or slow electronic devices, as well as share tips on how to take back control of what they buy. We organise these parties as free community events in collaboration with Transition groups, community libraries, markets and the like. In addition, we have begun working in partnership with universities, schools, councils and others to provide educational opportunities, including lectures on planned obsolescence, Restart Parties for students and repair courses. The next step will be events and opportunities targeting local businesses, inspiring them to embrace repair and to find fun ways to be more resilient in the workplace.

We directly curate events across London and we are increasingly supporting other groups set up their Restart Parties all over the UK and abroad, with requests from Italy, France, Canada, South Africa, Egypt, United States and beyond.

Employees

At the moment, we have two staff members who are both working part-time without a salary, plus fundraising and training volunteers. Our network of volunteer repairers is constantly growing.

Are you in profit? If not, when do you anticipate being so? How long have you been trading?

We are not-for-profit and at the moment we can only pay our expenses. We began running free events in June 2012, but only registered and began trading in March 2013.

What is your company structure and why did you choose it?

We are a Charity Incorporated Organisation. We chose this structure because we see ourselves as a social startup/enterprise but given that a lot of our activities bring social benefits without necessarily generating revenues, a charitable form was preferable. We also chose this structure in order to ensure transparency and accountability.

What about financial sustainability? Are you trading or part-trading without money?

Initial funds were raised through a grant from Earthkeepers (Project Dirt/Timberland) and through loans by the founders. We currently charge institutions for some of the events we curate/organise on their behalf. We accept donations both on our website and at events, and we're looking for sponsors to support the expansion of our network of community events. We are also fundraising to develop an online platform to promote local repairers of all kinds of things and to make it easier to find them, both in the UK and abroad.

Are you looking to build more common wealth & ownership and is priority your profit sharing and/or community benefits versus more traditional investor returns?

We are a charitable organisation, meaning there is no return to investors/profit sharing. We reinvest all we earn from events to further develop the organisation. We contract our volunteers for some of the paid services we provide, thus reinforcing their connection with the project.

Localisation – are you sourcing, distributing and interacting locally?

We strongly believe in repair and reuse and we try to source locally all supplies we can't reuse.

Climate impacts – negative, beneficial or neutral?

At the moment, they are completely beneficial: thanks to our work, participants at our events, courses, talks – as well as our followers on social media – are exposed to the importance of repairing and reusing electric and electronic products. In addition, the tangible benefit is an immediate reduction of unnecessary waste and of excessive consumerism, prolonging the use of existing products and increasing resilience and skill-sharing in the communities we work in. Our work does not generate a negative climate impact: we use public transport and bicycles. The only merchandising we do is via stickers. We go the extra mile to promote reuse as an alternative to recycling, helping communities, such as Freecycle groups, to repair the products they attempt to save from landfill.

Anything else you want to share with us?

Our slogan: don't despair, just repair!

In addition to our direct activities, we promote the concept of repair online and through public events with the goal of helping communities to prepare for a new, more resilient economy, based on renewed trust and recognition for local repair heroes. By reimagining the role of repair and skill-sharing in our future high streets we explore ways to build an efficient, more frugal and less wasteful economy.

