

Co-operatives UK launches UnFound Accelerator – for ethical digital business start-ups

Case studies available

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Signalise – social care



- **Signalise** is a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreting service and a pioneering example of a platform co-op.
- It is co-run and co-owned by Deaf people and BSL interpreters, who come together to collaborate, discuss and drive the business for their mutual benefit.
- Unlike the profit-led corporations that have traditionally been providers, Signalise is improving access to health services by empowering users and giving them choice and control over their access.
- Both service providers and users have a stake in the co-op and they're the ones in control. Interpreters and Deaf members come together to collaborate, discuss and drive the business for their mutual benefit.
- BSL interpreter, Kwan Perry, said: "We've never had control over our services. We're told what to do by faceless agencies and it felt like the time for change."

Wings – gig economy



- Providing an ethical alternative to existing food delivery apps, **Wings** platform co-op was formed to give delivery riders fair pay and conditions.
- Launched in the Finsbury Park area of London in July 2021, the Wings app is the only food delivery platform that pays riders a guaranteed London Living Wage. It's also the only platform with 100% zero-carbon vehicles.
- Wings riders are ensured job security, sick pay and benefits. And the co-op is committed to prioritising local, independent businesses over big chains.
- Chorlton Bike Deliveries is a similar cycle courier co-operative operating in Manchester – and there are others across the UK

Red Brick Language School – education

- **Red Brick Language School** offers online clubs and courses in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It was founded with the aim of creating a community where teachers are valued, paid, treated and supported fairly – and where students are listened to and taught with their best interests at heart.
- Red Brick’s participation in the UnFound Accelerator programme was an invaluable experience for the fledgling platform co-op.
- Co-founder, Bernie Kennedy: "I had wanted to start an English Language school as a worker collective for a long time and during the first Covid-19 lockdown I realised that a platform English school was the way to go – online learning was no longer only for the tech savvy”



- “We learnt so much over the ten weeks about co-operation and many aspects of running a worker collective. We had never even thought about what’s involved with finance, marketing, law – the list goes on. As teachers, we’ve broadened our skill set hugely.”

Dopo – social care



- **Dopo** offers holistic abortion support that includes access to trained practitioners and self-care resources.
- The platform was created when founder Zachi Brewster saw the need for the service after having an abortion. “I couldn’t find many organisations that could support me. The few I did find were centred around post-miscarriage services. There was no support for people like me,” she said.
- About the UnFound Accelerator programme, Zachi Brewster says: “The 10-weeks with the UnFound team and our fellow platforms were invaluable in moving us from an idea to a growing community, and now with access to this fund, we will continue building our platform based on this upgraded approach to support.”

Resonate – music streaming

- **Resonate** is an emerging platform co-op that aims to revolutionise music streaming
- They give artists a fair share of streaming revenue
- And allow music lovers to own a track after they have listened to it several times

 resonate

Play fair.

The community-owned music network.

Contact Co-operatives UK

If you're interested in:

- Featuring our story
- Featuring any of the case studies
- To arrange an interview with Co-operatives UK CEO Rose Marley

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