

Press release: Government announces Tech Fund to support disabled people and their employers

The news came as the Minister spoke in Birmingham today (27 April) at Naidex, Europe's largest assistive technology conference.

[Access to Work](#) provides financial support to ensure someone's disability or health condition does not hold them back at work, and can cover assistive technology, workplace adaptations, transport and interpreters.

Previously, medium and large employers were required to pay a mandatory contribution towards the cost of assistive technology required by disabled employees.

As part of the government's drive to ensure disabled people can benefit from the latest advances in technology, this cost will now be waived for all employers under the new Tech Fund.

The Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Sarah Newton, said:

We know that assistive technology has the power to transform lives, helping to break down the barriers disabled people can face at work and so many other areas of their everyday lives.

Access to Work is providing support to disabled people across the country, and I hope that through the new Tech Fund more disabled people and their employers will be able to benefit from advances in assistive technology that can help create more inclusive workplaces.

Employers will be able to make a significant saving through the Tech Fund. Before the new rules were introduced, medium employers paid the first £500 towards technological solutions and large employers paid the first £1,000, with both paying 20% of the cost thereafter up to £10,000.

Paul Luigi Giuntini is a social worker from Scotland who is registered blind and has one hand. Through Access to Work, Paul is able to fund cutting edge assistive technology to help him do his job.

Paul's support includes Orcam, a lightweight camera which clips onto the wearer's glasses that can recognise faces and read from any surface in real time.

Paul said:

Access to Work funding is essential for disabled people, as it helps reduce the barriers and difficulties that disabled people face in trying to get into and maintain full-time employment.

Without the support of Access to Work, I would not have been able to obtain and sustain my current employment. I believe that this funding should be promoted so that disabled people are given every opportunity to improve their life situation.

Access to Work is part of a range of support available to ensure that disabled people can enter, and thrive in, the workplace. This includes supported work experience placements, the government's [Disability Confident](#) scheme and personalised support package.

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