Former child refugee partners with The Mayor of London to give away unused tech to Homeless, Refugees, and Older People in isolation

Thursday 19 November, 2020

The Mayor of London has pledged hundreds of laptops and computers to help the vulnerable stay connected during the winter lockdown. Greater London Authority is working with SocialBox.Biz, a social enterprise committed to eradicating digital exclusion.

The partnership between the G.L.A. and SocialBox.Biz will see an initial 400 tech items distributed to charities working with London's elderly, homeless and refugees.

SocialBox.Biz securely wipes the data from the old laptops and computers, adds open-source software, and distributes them to those in need through their charity partners. The partners include Age UK London, the Single Homeless Project, Centrepoint, C4WS Homeless project, the British Red Cross, Routes, Centre 404, The Passage and Housing Justice.

Theo Blackwell, London's Chief Digital Officer said: "Access to a PC or device to get online for those who can't afford one is a very real need for many vulnerable Londoners, especially during the pandemic. I'm pleased that City Hall can support SocialBox.Biz's work in this area whilst also reducing our electronic waste."

SocialBox.Biz was founded by tech expert Peter Paduh, who came to the UK from the Balkans as a refugee in 1993. Peter pinpoints a turning point in his life to the moment he received a free computer soon after he arrived. He then went on to study computing at university, founding SocialBox.Biz in 2014.

Peter Paduh, founder of SocialBox.Biz, said: "The pandemic has rammed home the need for digital exclusion to be prioritised immediately. I'm really pleased to work with government and business leaders in London who get how important this is too."

SocialBox.Biz is currently looking for additional organisations to partner with to collect their old yet still usable tech. More information can be found at https://www.socialbox.biz/.

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