

Highlights

In 2022/23, the TECH donation box service diverted 12.6T of electronic waste from landfill, saving 311,548kg CO₂

Many devices are refurbished and donated to partnerships tackling digital poverty. In 2023 they gifted 352 devices

Committed to find avenues for all components that they receive, including working with the Royal Mint to recycled motherboards – the gold is recycled into jewellery

19 boxes in use around the city, delivered by electric car to further reduce emissions



Edinburgh Remakery

Edinburgh Remakery, based in Leith, is a social enterprise specialising in repair and reuse education, with the sale of products and services providing environmental and social value. Their TECH donation boxes are a straightforward way to collect unwanted tech, plus an opportunity to educate, create excitement and conversations around repair and recycling.

The business has used innovative partnerships to ensure that their TECH donation service is gaining the maximum value from the items they receive and is keeping items or their components in use for as long as possible. They work with the Royal Mint to recycle motherboards, with the gold from these now being made into jewellery. They have partnered with academics at Heriot Watt University to research ways to recycle the plastic products they did not have a solution for and have engaged with the further education sector to explore opportunities to create a tech repair apprenticeship. By taking this problem-solving approach, the Edinburgh Remakery are aiming to be absolute best at what they do.

Category description: Service Scotland

The Service Scotland Award recognises businesses that have developed a service that brings environmental and business benefits. At the time of the application the service must have been developed and in the marketplace.

In 2022/23, the TECH box service diverted 12.6 tonnes of electronic waste from landfill, saving over 311,500kg of CO₂. Boxes are delivered using an electric car, further reducing emissions that are related to the service. In addition, the businesses sponsoring or renting the TECH boxes can use them to contribute to their own sustainability/ESG goals, whilst also benefitting the Remakery by providing items for refurbishment.

Many devices are refurbished and sold through the Edinburgh Remakery, providing an income that can be reinvested in the service or other parts of the organisation. The business also donates a percentage of the refurbished items to partnerships tackling digital poverty. In 2023, the Remakery gifted 352 refurbished devices.

The service has attracted sponsorship which creates further additional income. There are plans to expand these sponsorship models and change the way this works to maximise the opportunities for this. There is no direct profit related to the boxes; however, the success of the TECH boxes has resulted in the creation of three permanent posts within the Edinburgh Remakery. These employees have come through various routes including Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Employability schemes.

The boxes have been in several high-profile places such as the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Government, Central Library, schools, universities and several businesses across Edinburgh and Glasgow. The reputation and awareness of the Remakery has received a huge boost through the boxes, in addition to providing an opportunity to raise awareness of the circular economy.



Edinburgh Remakery engage with diverse sections of the Leith community, including at risk groups such as refugees, through their workshops and repair cafes. The repair cafes offer volunteering opportunities and encourage all sectors of the community to see and take part in repair and reuse of tech and textiles. In wider engagement, the business is speaking with other social enterprises throughout the UK to help them set up similar services in other UK cities.

Quote from the company:

“The Edinburgh Remakery is over the moon to have won the prestigious VIBES Award 2024. This gives everyone in our team a real boost to know that our hard work has been recognised as an exemplar of how innovative circular economy principles can reap benefits for not only our business but also the planet and the communities we support.”