Extending the Reach
Paid work experience for blind and partially sighted people
RNIB’s **Extending the Reach** programme (EtR) offers employers the chance to recruit a blind or partially sighted person whose skills and experience have been carefully matched to a role.

**Background**

Research shows that a lack of experience is a key reason behind the low employment rate of people with sight loss, with almost 70 per cent of blind and partially sighted people not in employment.

There are many blind and partially sighted people in England who would like to use their skills to gain employment. By opening up an opportunity to a person with sight loss you can help provide valuable work experience to someone from this group.

*“I feel that I am now a part of the real world... I can hold my head up higher being a full-time employee and working for the money I spend”*

**Employment opportunities**

Blind and partially sighted people can do almost any job. There are blind and partially sighted secretaries, car mechanics, nurses, scientists, stockbrokers, MPs, journalists, web designers and teachers.

Advances in technology mean that many computers, laptops and mobile phones now come with accessible technology built in. This means that people with sight loss can overcome many of the barriers to work that they may have faced in the past.
By employing a blind or partially sighted person through RNIB’s Extending the Reach Programme you can demonstrate your commitment to equality, feel confident in employing people with sight loss and recruit an excellent member of staff who will have a brighter chance of securing long term employment.

All placements are for 21 hours per week, for a duration of 50 weeks.

**Benefits for your organisation**

In return for offering a placement to someone through the EtR programme, RNIB can:

- Provide you with **free advice about supporting someone with sight loss**, including a work-based assessment to recommend adjustments and equipment that may be beneficial to your new employee.
- Help you **access government grants** that can cover the cost of equipment that an employee may need such as magnification software for their computer.
- Provide **visual awareness training for colleagues and staff** to build confidence in working with someone with sight loss. Government grants may be able to cover the cost of this training.
- **Cover the cost of their training and support allowance** during their work experience. We ask that you make a contribution of just £200 per month towards the programme.

**For full details**

Visit rnib.org.uk/extending
Call 0121 665 4265
Email EtR@rnib.org.uk
Extending the Reach

With support from:

About RNIB

RNIB is a charity and we have three clear priorities: stopping people losing their sight unnecessarily, supporting blind and partially sighted people to live independently and creating an inclusive society.

We listen, campaign, work energetically with others and show what can be achieved. Our work includes:

- Improving educational opportunities for blind and partially sighted children and adults, including those with complex needs.
- Enabling people with sight loss to retain and gain jobs.
- Influencing partners across the world to make computers, television, mobile phones and satellite navigation systems easier to use for people with sight loss.

rnib.org.uk/extending