

NEW INITIATIVE CALLS FOR ‘MINDFUL INVESTMENT’

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Guy Tolhurst

A new investment initiative aims to create improved outcomes and equal opportunities for entrepreneurs.

Founded by author and entrepreneur Guy Tolhurst, Mindful Investor assesses an investor’s policies and working practices, mapping them against how they are actually working for the teams they invest in. The programme focuses not only on the benefits of financial capital to help businesses grow but on the importance of emotional, intellectual and human capital to support business founders.

With founder mental health identified as a priority, the programme has launched with the backing of relevant delivery partners including Mental Health First Aid England, Harley Street Therapy, weare3sixty and The Self Space. The programme will see participating investment firms receive training and support across a range of priority areas – from mental and physical health, to diversity and inclusion, communication and unconscious bias. Those who complete the annual assessment and meet the required standard will be awarded the Mindful Investor kitemark.

Guy Tolhurst said: “Investors can deliver huge value and impact beyond investment, providing an unparalleled support network when done right. They and entrepreneurs alike need to be responsible with other people’s money though. Businesses aren’t slot machines, they’re a collection of people united behind an idea, vision or mission.

“With heightened expectations and little experience in the highs and lows of running a high growth business, some entrepreneurs can find themselves responsible for an investor’s cash without having had the chance to build up the skills, resilience and support network they need to succeed. This can lead to burnouts, breakdowns and eventually founders being forced out of their own brainchild.

Through Mindful Investor we aim to create a more supportive and inclusive investment culture, by encouraging investors to pay closer attention to the wellbeing and diversity of the teams they invest in.”

Simon Blake, CEO of Mental Health First Aid England, said: “More and more leaders in the commercial world are waking up to the fact that positive mental health, diverse workforces and business success go hand in hand. And the investor community should be no exception.

“Rapid change and transition in any environment can create challenges which impact our mental health – both positively and negatively. For entrepreneurs and start-ups this is their day-to-day, so it is really encouraging to see initiatives like Mindful Investor setting out standards for investment practices that put people and profit on an equal footing.”

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