

# News Release

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## **Information revolution for Third Sector as two major players join forces**

The Directory of Social Change (DSC) and GuideStar International (GSI) today announced that ownership of [www.guidestar.org.uk](http://www.guidestar.org.uk), the free public website, and GuideStar Data Services, a community interest company providing bespoke information, has been transferred from GSI to DSC. This combines the most detailed repository of information **about** charities and the voluntary sector with the largest publisher of information **for** those who work in it.

DSC CEO Debra Tyler said: "The potential here is immense. Today an entity was created which can refresh and strengthen our vital sector at a crucial time. We are excited about how GDS' unique service supports our mission of connecting people, and working towards social change. Together we can improve everyone's understanding of what charities are and do in 2010, including politicians and policy makers, academics and the wider public.

"DSC's vision is an independent voluntary sector at the heart of social change, and GuideStar provides more tools to make this happen. This unique factual resource will expand and deepen our knowledge. Together we will get more of the right information to the people who need it so that charities can be more effective in achieving their ambitions. There will be a programme of new services rolled out in the coming months, starting with one to help funders make more informed grantmaking decisions."

### ***DSC's Chair, Nick Seddon, says:***

"We are excited about this new venture. DSC has extensive experience and expertise, and GuideStar will enable us to analyse and share both specialised and general information for and about the sector. It fits perfectly with our charitable objects: we believe we will be able to improve everyone's understanding of the sector, we will be able to increase our impact as an organisation, and we will be able to increase our contribution to civil society."

***Buzz Schmidt, founder of GuideStar and CEO of GuideStar International, says:***

“We have long admired DSC for its commitment to fostering an independent charity sector in the UK and its work as connector, facilitator and cheer leader for the many thousands of small and medium sized charities that are the life blood of the sector throughout the country. We are confident that DSC is the right home for [www.guidestar.org.uk](http://www.guidestar.org.uk) and GDS and that it will wholeheartedly advance GuideStar’s mission to promote greater public understanding of the work of charities.”

**For more information please contact Richard Lee, Directory of Social Change by email ([rlee@dsc.org.uk](mailto:rlee@dsc.org.uk)) or phone (020 7391 4881).**

## **Notes to Editors**

For more than 35 years, DSC has specialised in providing information and learning to connect those who fund, deliver or influence social change. Its books, training programmes and conferences are well known to the sector, particularly those looking for funding.

The free to access GuideStar UK website [www.guidestar.org.uk](http://www.guidestar.org.uk) is the most comprehensive online national database of UK charities and DSC is committed to maintaining this resource.

GuideStar Data Services operates The GuideStar Third Sector Database which comprises more than 400 searchable fields of data on 350,000 organisations including charities, social enterprises and not-for-profit organisations. This is the only database for the sector that is compiled by analysing both the accounts and narrative contained in every annual report, which makes this a unique, comprehensive and searchable database which can be accessed by those wishing to support or collaborate with the sector.

Both GDS and GuideStar UK were previously operated by GuideStar International (GSI). GSI is a UK-registered charity, working with charity leaders worldwide to develop GuideStar services for their own countries. GSI supports this growing network through the provision of a shared Common Technology Platform as well as advice and support in

each country's development process. GSI is led by Buzz Schmidt the founder of the original GuideStar service in the US in 1994 and GuideStar UK in 2003.

[www.guidestarinternational.org](http://www.guidestarinternational.org)

This transfer of ownership seeks to achieve a step change in the quality and accessibility of third sector information and DSC is exploring ways in which the data can be more widely used to inform funders, campaigners, policy makers and those delivering services in the wider voluntary sector.

This development will enable GSI to focus its attention on developing and supporting new GuideStar services around the world. DSC's GuideStar UK will continue as a core participant in this growing global alliance.