

## AI firm Sidetrade announces major tech hub in Birmingham to UK Government officials

**Birmingham, England – 6 December 2019 | Sidetrade (Euronext Growth: ALBFR.PA), the AI-powered B2B customer platform, today set out the case for Birmingham as a thriving and attractive tech city, to UK Government officials.**

While Silicon Valley is set to dominate the global tech scene for the foreseeable future, Birmingham is set to become the ‘Silicon Canal’ of Europe, according to AI firm Sidetrade, who revealed it will open a new tech hub in the city in 2020. The word ‘Canal’ here is a reference to the city’s 35 miles (56 km) of canals.

Rob Harvey, Sidetrade’s director of solutions consulting, shared the news at an invite-only trade mission event by the UK Government’s Department for International Trade (DIT), on Friday 6th December, held in central Birmingham.

The day was attended by DIT investment and trade delegates from 20 countries, executive members from DIT’s Whitehall office, business leaders and academics from the region. The new Sidetrade R&D offices and strategy will be revealed in 2020, led by the company’s Birmingham-based CTO, Mark Sheldon, who commented:

*“Sidetrade’s tech hub in the West Midlands will play a big part in making Birmingham the ‘Silicon Canal of Europe’. The region has a thriving business ecosystem, a strong culture of innovation with the UK’s first 5G connected cities regional testbed, and talented people to meet the skills demand.”*

According to the West Midlands Growth Company, 18,590 new businesses started in the city in 2018, which also boasts 13,900 tech firms and 7,685 international companies with offices in Birmingham.

Rob Harvey leads a global team of consultants specializing in business transformation using machine learning and natural language processing, which takes him across Europe and the USA, where Sidetrade has a number of enterprise clients.

Also presenting alongside Rob Harvey was Robert Franks, managing director of WM5G Limited, leading the UK’s first 5G testbed region; Chris Lane, head of transport innovation at Transport for West Midlands; and Dr Stephen Turner, director of strategy at Birmingham Research Park.

*“WM5G are pleased to be presenting at the TECH DSK Programme. As the largest 5G testbed in the UK based in the West Midlands, we have a key role to play not only to accelerate the benefits of 5G but to drive innovation and real productivity gains for our region,”* said Robert Franks, managing director of WM5G Limited.

### The Code Academy, sign of Sidetrade’s commitment to the AI industry in the Midlands



Launched in Birmingham in October this year, the Code Academy is another key way Sidetrade is investing in Birmingham.

The academy takes a new, rapid, four-week approach to training for graduate level data and software engineer roles. 50 applicants competed for 12 places, with five jobs offered at the end of programme.



Unlike many current bootcamps, Sidetrade’s Code academy is offered tuition-free. It’s run in-house by Sidetrade’s most experienced tech leads, creating a real-world working environment and up to date work-related training.

*“We want to disrupt the current coding scene with something new, which trains for a job, rather than just imparts a skill, in a way that’s more open and inclusive. Most importantly, we’re demonstrating that we’re skilling people from a range of backgrounds for in-demand jobs in the UK’s tech sector,”* said Robert Harvey, Sidetrade’s director of solutions consulting.

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**About Sidetrade ([www.sidetrade.com](http://www.sidetrade.com))**

Sidetrade (Euronext Growth: ALBFR.PA) facilitates growth by laying the cornerstones of the customer journey: prospecting, sales, loyalty and performance. Integrated with your CRM and your ERP, Sidetrade's revolutionary AI system called Aimie, reveals unseen factors that can generate leads, drive sales, improve cashflow and shorten payment delay. Over 1,500 businesses in 80 countries use Sidetrade technology to give their Marketing, Sales and Finance teams a competitive edge.

For further information, visit us at [www.sidetrade.com](http://www.sidetrade.com) and follow us on Twitter [@Sidetrade](https://twitter.com/Sidetrade).

*In case of a discrepancy between the French and English versions of this press release, only the French version should be deemed valid.*