**PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Sheffield Basic Income Pilot proposal to launch this Saturday**

An event this Saturday in Sheffield is bringing together activists from across the UK campaigning for the idea of a basic income. Some argue this scheme, where everyone would get a regular payment of money regardless of if they were working or how much money they had, could replace most of the benefits system. Proponents of the scheme argue it would be a fair way of sharing wealth and could guarantee minimum standards of living.

The event will also see the launch of a proposal to pilot the scheme in Sheffield. Dr Mark Bryan, from the University of Sheffield, explained:

“Doing a pilot in Sheffield would provide the first evidence in England (and possibly the UK) about the effects of a basic income. Pilots have been run elsewhere in the world, but in very different contexts to the UK and Sheffield.”

“We hope to collect detailed evidence on how a basic income might affect peoples' lives in many different ways: for example the options they have in their working lives, their health and wellbeing, and their activities outside work, including in their families and communities. Some other pilots have focussed mainly on employment but we want to cover a much broader range of activities to explore the full potential of a basic income.”

UBI LAB Sheffield, a group bringing together several different organisations in Sheffield, is looking to discuss the proposal with politicians to get backing. Whilst some other pilot proposals have been put forward, the Sheffield proposal has some special features the group hopes will inspire decision makers, and at least prompt more discussion about how the current tax and benefit system works. Dr Mark Bryan explained more:

“Two of our pilot options will explore the potential effects of basic income on the community. For instance, might basic income free people up to do community work and foster a sense of community cohesion? Might people decide to pool some of their basic income to support community projects?”

“As well as collecting evidence, a pilot is important for testing out the practicalities of basic income and identifying any teething problems or unanticipated consequences that might be a problem if it was implemented nationally”

The working paper will be published online and available at <https://www.ubilabsheffield.org/resources>. For more details about the event on Saturday March 9th, see <http://north.ubilabsheffield.org/>.

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**Notes for Editors**:

UBI LAB: Sheffield is a collaboration between multiple organisations and individuals, seeking to explore the potential of a Universal Basic Income and the possibility of a pilot in the city. Organisations involved include Opus Independents, Sheffield Equality Group, Centre for Welfare Reform and the University of Sheffield.

<https://www.ubilabsheffield.org/>