



LONDON, United Kingdom

The Digital Talent Programme

Key facts

To improve the quality and quantity of relevant digital skills, London has started a new programme, the digital talent programme.

Timeframe and funding

The programme consists of several projects with different periods and funding.

City population

Governing body

London City Council

Link

[About the Digital Talent programme | London City Hall](#)
[Educators and employers | London City Hall](#)

Main objectives

London is experiencing a growing digital skills shortage due to a boom in labour demand in digital, creative and technology sectors. The Digital Talent Programme aims to increase the volume and quality of training in digital technology and thus increase digital skills and employment opportunities of young people, especially females, disadvantaged groups and individuals from black and ethnic minority background (BAME).

Content and mode of delivery



The programme consists of a range of projects designed to address several inequalities in the sector:

- 1) Under-representation of female workers (just 17% of Tech/ICT workers in the UK are female, only one in ten females are currently taking A-Level computer studies); under-representation of BAME workers (15% of tech workers are BAME; 8.5% of management are BAME); and under investment in educators. More specifically, IT provides
- 2) Opportunities for 18-24 years old to gain digital skills, career advice and support to set up their own digital business in the technology sector;
- 3) Support for employers and educators to improve digital career guidance for young people and facilitate partnerships with higher education institutions and SMEs; and
- 4) Research, resources and case studies to give insight into the tech and digital sectors.

An example of a project within the Digital Talent Programme is the Tech Pathways London project that seeks to train educators of 11-24 year olds so that they can better support students in developing the digital skills they need to succeed in the workforce. The project links educators with industry partners from across London's digital and culture sectors, provides up to date labour market information and industry insight to educators through a blog and an unconscious bias toolkit. Which seeks to overcome the gap in representation of groups in high-level technology jobs by providing educators with a framework to identify challenges and mitigate potential bias.

Another key example is the Digital Grid Partnership, supported by the Mayor of London and the European Social Fund, which aims to improve the relevance of higher-level digital training through improved university-SME partnerships. The project is delivered by a consortium led by Newham College and with partners such as London South Bank University, Goldsmiths University of London, University of the Arts of London and SMEs in the creative and tech industries.

Stakeholders



The programme is managed by the City of London and consists of different projects with various stakeholders involved, including local businesses and SMEs, universities, training providers and educators.

Key challenges, success factors & transferability



As of October 2020, the programme had exceeded its targets of reaching underprivileged groups. After completing the programme's training, most of the participating learners move on to a work placement or receive financial and mentoring support to start their own businesses. As part of the programme, London also aims to increase the capacity and knowhow of SMEs in providing apprenticeships, with a stronger focus on digital skills.

Contact us:

Tilde.Ussing@oecd.org

Directorate for Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

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