

Press Release
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£16m funding boost set to benefit 9,000 of London’s workforce

The London Capital Colleges group (LCC), a consortium of 12 of London’s largest colleges, has secured a £16m cash boost to fund work-based qualifications for an estimated 9,000 adults in employment in a bid to improve skills in the capital.

Following the successful bid led by Newham College, **Skills Support for the Workforce** will be funded through the European Social Fund (ESF) awarded by the Skills Funding Agency and will be used by the training providers within the LCC to give free workplace training and support to help the city’s workforce gain relevant skills and qualifications to advance their careers and boost business growth.

Employees working for companies that employ less than 250 staff will be the winners. The funding will focus on individuals with low skills to give them a better hold in the job market and promote in-work progression onto apprenticeships and further training.

Chair of the LCC and Principal of South Thames College, Sue Rimmer OBE, said: “This funding is great news for the capital and should have a real impact on people’s skills and confidence at work. Colleges can help employers inject vital skills into their workforce, which is essential to survive in a tough climate and a changing labour market.”

Denise Brown-Sackey, Principal and CEO of Newham College said: “This funding is an endorsement of all the great work that the further education sector does across the capital with many thousands of small and medium sized enterprises. London colleges have a fantastic track record of innovative work supporting businesses and employees. This funding will enable LCC to develop and deliver vital training and skills to staff across a wide range of sectors, helping London-based small businesses thrive in a rapidly-changing economic market place.”



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The money will allow the colleges to respond to skills priorities and emerging skills needs, identified by the London Enterprise Panel, within new and existing industries including retail, health and life sciences, low carbon technologies (including waste management), hospitality and leisure, advanced engineering and digital media. Funding can also be used to support learners with intermediate and higher level skills in these priority areas.

Smaller businesses will be encouraged to take up apprenticeships and increased access to higher level apprenticeships will be made available in areas such as science, technology, engineering and math's, retail and hospitality. Employers will receive business support and employees will be provided with high quality and easily accessible information, advice and guidance.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- The purpose of LCC is to ensure that the 'voice' and wealth of experience of large London skills-based colleges is appropriately represented, and to further the profile and focus of member colleges in addressing the skills needs of employers, individuals and job-seekers in London.
- The 12 London Capital Colleges are: Barnet Southgate, City & Islington, Croydon, Ealing Hammersmith & West London, College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London, College of North West London, Lambeth, LESOCO, Newham, South Thames, Tower Hamlets & Westminster Kingsway.
- The LCC is supported in the delivery of this training by Barking & Dagenham, Hackney and Waltham Forest Colleges.
- The European Social Fund (ESF) was set up to improve employment opportunities in the European Union and so help raise standards of living. It aims to help people fulfil their potential by giving them better skills and better job prospects.

The 2007-2013 England ESF programme is investing £5 billion over seven years of which £2.5 billion is from the ESF and £2.5 billion is national funding.

The programme is helping people who are unemployed or at a disadvantage in the labour market to find work and develop their skills. By focusing on people who need support the most, it is helping to tackle poverty and promote social mobility. ESF also trains people in work so that they have the skills that businesses need to compete in a global economy. For more information about the 2007-2013 England ESF programme go to www.dwp.gov.uk/esf

For further information please contact:

Andrew Mitchell
Business Development Manager, Marketing and Communications
Centre for Innovation and Partnerships
Newham College

Tel: 020 8522 5702

Andrew.mitchell@newham.ac.uk

