



# Creating Opportunities Together

The economic imperative of engaging with young people is clear. Young people are your future workforce. Your future customers. Your future success. Young people are Scotland's future. Scotland's success. Creating opportunities together brings many benefits. For them. For you. For Scotland. Get involved now.

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



It's all about a win/win partnership.

You can bring real inspiration and relevance to our young people. You can give young people the motivation, skills and drive needed to create a dynamic and more prosperous Scotland. You can grow your skills and enhance your reputation in the community. You can gain innovation and enhanced product development. You will certainly learn as much from it as you will give!



It's all about opportunity, development and aspiration.

It's about a promising future. For them. For you. For Scotland.

## Bringing learning to life



Bringing life to learning and learning to life is important for young people - it helps to bring context and relevance to their learning and helps them to make sense of their world. No matter where they're learning, you can make it interesting, fun and engaging. You can help to develop their thinking skills; career management and team-working skills; and skills for enterprise and employability.

You can help young people to believe in themselves, to become motivated about their learning and to be more ambitious and confident about their future so they can make a positive transition from school to work, or to further learning or training.



No matter how big or small your organisation is, there's an opportunity for you and your team to get involved.

"The process is mutually beneficial and you can see real bottom line benefits to your business as well as supporting the development of your future employees. Our role is vital and all employers have a crucial role to play in helping develop Scotland's future workforce.

"Enterprise education is laying the foundations to create a generation of young people with a positive attitude to the world of work and the ability to achieve their full potential."

*Iain McMillan, Director, CBI Scotland*

## Supporting young people

“We must forward plan what skills businesses need and translate that knowledge into informing what future job opportunities will exist. As we lead Scotland’s largest business organisation, we are confident that the future is optimistic. We will only achieve the growth and realise the global opportunities providing we all support and invest in our existing and future employees. Let’s work together to ensure this is happening.”

*Liz Cameron,  
Chief Executive,  
Scottish  
Chambers of  
Commerce*

During economically challenging times, the impact on young people can be severe. Employers stop recruiting and young people who are looking to get on the first rung of the employment ladder find themselves competing with others who are more experienced and more skilled. In short, young people – especially vulnerable young people who are furthest from the labour market – get pushed to the end of the queue.

Many young people are choosing learning as a positive alternative to employment, particularly in the face of deteriorated labour market prospects.



This is good news as staying in learning is the best way for young people to ensure their own long-term employability. However, there are many young people who find it difficult to engage in learning; some who disengage early and some who leave school at the first opportunity. These young people often leave school with low levels of skills and little by way of qualifications. This doesn’t mean they lack ability and it’s important that we help these young people to make the most of the opportunities available to them so they can realise their potential.

## Supporting young people



We know that frequent or prolonged spells of unemployment when young increases the chances of unemployment in adult life and negative impacts throughout life. With the right support, these young people can take part, and progress, in learning and go on to enjoy good career prospects.

We all want and need to avoid another ‘lost generation’. A bit of

encouragement from an employer can open a young person’s eyes to what they are capable of achieving and increase their potential for long-term employment. You can help prepare them for work – by developing their communication, thinking, team-working and employability skills. You can also help young people to believe in themselves, to become motivated and more confident about their future.

“Only with active participation from the key individuals who actually deliver success in their organisations right now will young people be able to fully understand what is possible. We believe that enhanced employer links will make today’s young people more work ready and instill in them a can do, will do attitude, whilst re-assuring employers of the fantastic potential of our young people.”

*David Watt, Executive Director, Institute of Directors Scotland*

## Business benefits

This is about creating opportunities together - the aim is a win/win partnership. The benefits to young people are often clearer to see but here are a number of benefits for your business.

- > **Staff motivation** Your staff will get huge personal satisfaction from giving something back. This will feed into levels of staff morale, improve retention and help you recruit the best people.
- > **Reputation** Working with young people will raise your profile in the community and enhance your reputation both within and outside of the organisation.
- > **Recruitment** You will be able to extend your recruitment pool, reaching potential employees who would otherwise be difficult to reach.
- > **Staff development** Involving your employees can help develop areas such as commercial awareness, team working, presentation skills, as well as broad interpersonal skills. Much of the learning is experiential, meaning it will be easier to embed back in the business than many traditional forms of training. What's more, many of the opportunities for involvement are cost-free.

“When budgets are tight working with young people is a fantastic staff development opportunity. The training cost saving has been remarkable. We have found that through utilising the talents of young people we have had the opportunity to try new things which has helped us branch into new areas of the market – directly impacting our business. The economy at the moment is providing us with a challenging environment. This is why we are intensifying our work with young people and the local community - it is vital to bring out the ideas of our young people. They are, after all, the next generation of employees for our business.”

*Mike Stevenson, Managing Director, ThinkTastic*

## Business benefits

- > **Leadership** Helping young people enables you and your employees to challenge leadership skills, especially by mentoring young people who need more support to grasp the opportunities open to them.
- > **Product development** Young people can be really creative and have “out of the box” thinking not bound by workplace restrictions. Creative companies can use young people to help them solve real business problems and develop new products.
- > **Personal satisfaction** Making a difference to a young person's life can be personally rewarding. Most of us can look back fondly on the one person who believed in us, who supported us, who impacted positively on our life.
- > **Corporate responsibility** Your business can have a significant impact on the aspirations and career opportunities of young people within your local community. By getting involved, you can help ensure a positive future for Scotland's young people.

“When I come into work normally, I know that if I go into a meeting room, people play by a set of rules. It's very different to walk into a room of children, keep them entertained and keep them active and productive. So it hones my skills – and those are skills I can take back into the workplace.”

*IT Manager, Standard Life*



## Business benefits

“The teacher placements have given me the opportunity to get to know people from the education sector and help bridge the gap between business and education.”

*May Reynolds, Morgan Stanley*

“The work we undertake with young people is a key aspect of our corporate social responsibility goal of striving to be a good neighbour to those communities within which we operate, and keeps us connected to those communities and our customers. It also makes great business sense! By engaging our staff in community activity we gain development opportunities and other significant benefits such as being able to showcase what we do as a business to young people. This means they have more of an idea of what’s involved in working in our industry; the types of roles we offer and the opportunities it can lead to. It very much provides us with a platform to promote our sector and aligns directly into our long term talent pipeline and resourcing strategy.”

*Phil Duffield, Community Liaison Manager, Scottish Power*



## Ways to get involved

You have the flexibility to engage with young people in a way that suits your business. Your time and resources are precious so you decide what level of involvement is best for you and your organisation and how you want to participate.

Want to get involved? Read on to see how you can make a difference and how other employers already have.

- > **Set a group of young people a real business challenge.**
- > **Offer young people a work placement.**
- > **Help with career management skills and career opportunities.**
- > **Provide and/or support work-based vocational learning opportunities.**
- > **Mentor a young person to help them move closer to the labour market.**
- > **Provide a job or apprenticeship.**
- > **Act as a business adviser to a group of young people.**
- > **Support events informing young people about the world of work.**
- > **Partner with teachers and other learning providers to make specific subject lessons more business relevant.**
- > **Support young people who are experiencing difficult circumstances.**
- > **Provide a short placement for teachers and other learning providers to experience your working environment and help them to contextualise learning and teaching back in the class or lecture room.**
- > **Develop a co-coaching relationship with teachers and other learning providers.**
- > **Work with teachers and other learning providers to help develop a range of skills including: thinking, communication, teamworking and employability.**
- > **Support community-based learning and development opportunities for young people who need to take small steps in their learning to bring them closer to the labour market.**

## Case Study



### > Set a group of young people a real business challenge

Young people from Bo'ness Academy recently developed a salad that was sold through retail giant, Marks & Spencer. The project to design the 'Fruity Fiesta Salad' was in partnership with local M&S supplier

Caledonian Produce to encourage enterprise in education. The young people were challenged to create a brand new, healthy side salad which would appeal to M&S's younger customers.



"It was a pleasure to see how the pupils developed over the term of the project - from initially being quite shy about presenting to being very confident in what they had learnt and able to present to some quite senior people both at M&S and the press.

"It was a great experience for me to be able to be involved with enterprise in education and to be able to launch a product where some of the proceeds will directly benefit the Academy in the future.

"This project provided us with a great opportunity to engage with young people and get them excited about what we do at M&S."

*Julia Bradley, Product Developer, Marks & Spencer*

## Case Study



### > Offer young people a work placement

The team at Arnold Clark, Hawkhill have been heavily involved in training and supporting trainees for the past two and half years. They work in partnership with Rathbone, a youth sector organisation, offering tailored opportunities to help young people get ready to move into work or training. The young people undertake a Get Ready for Work programme which

includes a supported work placement with Arnold Clark. This placement enables each trainee to develop the skills they need for the workplace.

As a business Arnold Clark has seen the benefits in offering opportunities to these young people who otherwise may find it hard to find jobs in the current climate.



"The young people we have taken on placement have made a huge impact on our business. So far we've had one young person progress onto college and three have been employed by the company and are currently completing their apprenticeships. It has been extremely rewarding to watch our staff support the trainees and play a key role in helping them turn their lives around. The staff who have been involved have developed their own leadership and interpersonal skills, and as a business it has enabled us to nurture the talent of our future workforce."

*Mike Crighton, Manager, Arnold Clark*

## Case Study



### > Mentor a young person to help them move closer to the labour market

Rita McLean, Leisure Benefits and Community Liaison Coordinator at John Lewis has played an instrumental role in developing a tailored mentoring programme in John Lewis, Glasgow. The programme involves working with third/ fourth year pupils at St Roch's Secondary in order to improve their understanding and awareness of business, raise self-belief and motivation.

Over 50 John Lewis employees have participated in the programme since it began and have worked with 70 young people. The mentors are given guidance on the aims of the programme but they use their own experiences to deliver it. Topics they cover range from interview skills training, advice on how to complete application forms, information on retail as a career path and financial management.



“As a business we've gained a number of benefits since developing the programme. We have been able to offer our staff personal development opportunities which have enabled them to learn new skills. Working directly with St Roch's has also enhanced our reputation in the local community.”

*Rita McLean,  
Leisure Benefits and Community Liaison Coordinator, John Lewis*

Alan Barclay, Supply Chain Partner, who was formerly mentored by John Lewis and is now a mentor himself said: “I never thought I would have had the confidence to talk in front of a group of young people but I know first hand the impact the mentoring programme can have which is why I'm delighted to be part of it.”

## Case Study



### > Partner with teachers and other learning providers to make specific subject lessons more business relevant

Design company, BooBoutique has won education and business awards for its partnership with the Art and Design and Business Education departments in St. Ninian's High School, East Dunbartonshire.

During the project; 'Business Brains for a Material World,' BooBoutique visited the school twice a week for

three months, working with teachers to teach Computer Aided Design and to explain how to set up and run a bag design company. The young people were taken through the whole process of setting up and running a business from design to manufacture and given hands-on opportunities to work alongside the company's young entrepreneurs.



“Business Brains for a Material World has motivated the pupils to learn by taking part in enterprising and vocational activities. It bridges the gap between school and the world of work by bringing the design company into the school. It provides pupils with the opportunity to learn about business and creative industries as well as developing the skills that will be indispensable to them in adult life and the world of work.”

*Paul McLaughlin, Headteacher, St Ninian's High School*

## Case Study

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### > Supporting young people who are experiencing difficult circumstances

Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) was given support from Dundee City Council and Barnardo's when the firm decided to address the local labour market issues by investing in young people with more complex needs who required additional help. The partnership recruited young people with diverse needs on the nine month programme called Youthbuild.

Each young person was assigned a Barnardo's key worker who provided one to one support with health issues, personal finance and personal advice, while SSE provided a

mentor responsible for the training, development and support given to the young person 'on the job'. After accredited training the young people received a work placement with 92% gaining permanent employment.

SSE has reported extremely positive feedback from staff about the Youthbuild programme and employees involved as work mentors have chosen to continue in this role after the young person has successfully completed their internship.

“At Scottish and Southern Energy we recognise the need to engage with our community and in particular, young people, as we found ourselves facing a real skills shortage in our area. Through working with young people, particularly those who need an extra bit of help to get into employment, we've been able to provide a mentoring role, help develop their skills, assist them in making the transition to, and managing, working life and develop our future workforce. We believe in investing in our future workforce and from experience, this has resulted in positive and rewarding outcomes for both the young people and staff involved and I would urge all employers to consider giving young people who need more choices and chances that additional support to get them into the labour market and actively contributing to our local and national economies.”

*Colin Hood, Chief Operating Officer,  
Scottish and Southern Energy*

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**Find out how you can make a difference**

Call: **0300 244 6707**

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Visit: **[www.employersandyoungpeople.org](http://www.employersandyoungpeople.org)**