

SKILLS AND TRAINING ON THE AGENDA FOR LONDON'S CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

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London, 16 March: Arts Council England, London and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has partnered with Creative & Cultural Skills, Skillset and the National Skills Academy for Creative & Cultural Skills, to host a skills and training seminar at Sadler's Wells Theatre. The event will explore the latest developments in a number of major skills initiatives such as Apprenticeships, Train to Gain and Skills for Life, whilst looking to demystify how these relate to the creative industries.

Commenting about the event, David Hughes, LSC Regional Director for London, said: "Many businesses find it difficult to track down and access training because they don't know where to look or they don't have the time or the money. However, Train to Gain brokers offer advice about training and ways to access available funding. The right kind of training can make a real difference for employers in the creative sector and the services showcased at this event demonstrate how investing in skills can make businesses fitter and stronger to survive and prosper even in the current climate."

The creative sector is becoming increasingly important to the UK economy, generating over £21 billion each year and employing over half a million people in London alone. With employers who fail to invest in training more than two times more likely to fail than those that do, having the right skills has never been more important. This event is a recognition of the sector's increased importance and seeks to highlight the role skills investment can make to the success of a business now and in the future.

Keynote speeches will be given by Moira Sinclair, the Executive Director of the Arts Council in London; David Hughes, Regional Director LSC London; Munira Mirza, Director of Arts and Culture Policy for the Mayor of London, and Pauline Tambling, Executive Director of Creative & Cultural Skills. They will stress that with recessionary pressures bearing down on London's economy, now is the time to invest in training in order to take advantage of new opportunities when they come.

The event will include panel discussions about how arts and cultural organisations can get involved Train to Gain, Apprenticeships and the new Diploma for the creative and media sector. The session will look at how to access additional funding for training and how the programme has been adapted to be even more flexible and responsive to employer's needs.

Moira Sinclair, Executive Director of Arts Council England, London, said: "Our creative industries are one of the country's modern success stories - employing over half a million people in London alone and generating more than £21 billion a year. Their value is at once both artistic and economic, and their continued growth provides an opportunity for our creativity and ideas to become national assets. This event highlights new skills initiatives which will allow these industries to grow. We want to ensure that arts and creative organisations can both contribute to and benefit from our creative economy."

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Notes to Editors

Learning and Skills Council

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

Train to Gain

Managed by the Learning and Skills Council, Train to Gain is the government's flagship service to support employers in England, of all sizes and in all sectors, to improve the skills of their employees, unlock talent and drive improved business performance. A key element of Train to Gain is the skills brokerage service which offers free impartial advice, and helps find the best training solution from high quality and responsive training providers to meet business needs.

To find out more about how Train to Gain can help, employers should call 0800 015 55 45 or visit traintogain.gov.uk. Alternatively, individuals and employers can access the information they need on skills via a dedicated phone line and website. The phone number is 0800 011 30 30 or website: lsc.gov.uk/inourhands

Arts Council England works to get great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people's lives.

As the national development agency for the arts, we support a range of artistic activities from theatre to music, literature to dance, photography to digital art, and carnival to crafts.

Great art inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves, and the world around us. In short, it makes life better.

Between 2008 and 2011, we will invest £1.3 billion of public money from government and a further £0.3 billion from the National Lottery to create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.