

Search for North East talent

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Talented individuals and groups from around the region are being offered the chance to set the auditorium at the Sage alight by performing as part of a major North East awards ceremony.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) North East's Celebration of Learning and Skills (CoLaS) Awards are taking place at the Sage Gateshead on 20 June. Now in its third year, the event highlights the often unrecognised achievements of individuals and employers who work 'behind-the-scenes' for their own personal development or to improve the skills of others.

No stone will be left unturned in the hunt for top talent to perform at the event, with the LSC staging the region's biggest ever talent contest for groups or individuals.

Competitors will be asked to record a one minute audition film clip of the act they would like to perform at the glittering event, to be submitted by 12th April, and from the initial group of hopefuls, a short list of talent will be drawn up to go head-to-head in live auditions at Newcastle College Performance Academy where an expert panel drawn from local musical circles will determine the winners.

They will get a prize that money just can't buy – the chance to perform live on stage at the iconic music venue in front of a potential audience of 1,200 guests and work alongside TV star Kirsty Gallacher and other professionals.

The search is on for a variety of acts and performers, including:

- Solo performers – singers or musicians.
- Duets or groups - whether a string quartet or the next Girls Aloud.
- Dancers - urban or tap, ballet or ballroom.
- Off the wall - anything from jugglers to comedians, magicians to acrobats.
- World music/dance - Bhangra or Bollywood, country and western or Celtic.
- Grand opening and finale - amazing acts to open and close the show.

Performers at last year's event have acknowledged the positive effect it has had on their development and careers.

Chris Roberts, regional director, LSC North East, said: "Through this competition we are offering up and coming stars in the North East the chance of a lifetime: to perform live at one of the largest and most glamorous events staged in the region. This is a fantastic opportunity for them to showcase their talents in front of more than 1,000 people and perform on one of the most iconic and spectacular stages in the country.

"The Celebration of Learning and Skills Awards are designed to recognise and reward achievement. It seems very fitting that people from the world of art and music should be able to share the spotlight."

Those wanting to enter the auditions or nominate anyone should upload their performance film at website www.lsc.gov.uk/colas08 or send it to The Audition, 87 Jesmond Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 1NH. Include your name, age, category entered, contact address and phone number. The closing date for entries is 12th April.

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Editor's note:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational 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 by 2010, young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country.

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