

TV STAR BEN FOGLE SUPPORTS THE SKILLS AWARDS

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Intrepid adventurer Ben Fogle will be taking a short break from crossing the Arctic Circle, scaling active volcanoes and running across deserts to speak at the South West Skills Awards in Exeter on 24 April 2008.

The awards, organised by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) acknowledge those who have embraced training and have gone that extra mile to achieve great feats. The evening event will be held at Sandy Park Stadium and will feature a speech from Ben.

Last years' inaugural event was attended by nearly 200 people and celebrated the achievements of over 40 outstanding individuals and organisations.

Regional Director of LSC South West, Malcolm Gillespie, said: "On behalf of the LSC, I would like to thank Ben Fogle for supporting this event. We are very pleased to have such an inspirational guest speaker supporting the awards.

"The Awards recognise learners and companies whose achievements might otherwise go unnoticed. We know that the region is bursting with skills stars and we look forward to celebrating their achievements. If you are a skills star, or you know someone who is please enter the awards by 29 February as it could be your chance to shine.

Ben Fogle, renowned for his television work in BBC's Animal Park based at Wiltshire's Longleat, said: " I am delighted to be speaking at the South West Skills Awards and I am really looking forward to congratulating the worthy winners and finalists. I know what its like to train hard to reach your goals and I hope I can encourage them to continue to do so."

To enter the Awards, the individual or organisation must have completed courses or projects that have been funded by the LSC South West in the past year. Employers

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who offer Apprenticeships are eligible for the Apprenticeship categories in the South West Skills Awards and can enter the National Apprenticeship Awards.

The South West Awards application form can be downloaded from www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/SouthWest, by emailing skillsawards@jbp.co.uk or by calling 0117 907 3400 and asking to speak to the South West Skills Awards Team. The closing date is 29 February 2008.

Awards categories include: Apprentice of the Year, Learning Against the Odds, Train to Gain Employer of the Year and Achieving Skills for Life in the South West.

Note to Editors:

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.

Ben Fogle is a television presenter, renowned for his extreme adventures across the globe. He is a keen sportsman, specialising in marathons in difficult conditions and rowing. He has also published three books about his adventures. He lives in London with his wife.

For more information please contact Catherine Fischer, LSC Regional Communications Advisor on 0117 372 6411.