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**N E W S R E L E A S E**

 **‘Careers Hub’ award unlocks potential for Bucks’ youth**

**Buckinghamshire Thames Valley chosen to become one of 20 areas across England to help boost young people’s preparation for world of work**

[Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership](https://www.buckstvlep.co.uk/) (BTVLEP) is to become one of 20 ‘Careers Hubs’ around England, transforming careers education in schools and preparing young people for the world of work.

The Department for Education announced its selection today (Thursday 12 July), setting in motion a key part of the Government’s Careers Strategy (published December 2017). The Careers Hubs form part of its national Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) network, whose work BTVLEP carries out in this county.

The Buckinghamshire Careers Hub will work together with colleges, universities, training providers, employers and career professionals to implement recognised careers gold standards in 21 local schools.

The CEC is scaling up a model successfully piloted in the North East, allocating £5 million over a two-year period to support the 20 new Hubs distributed nationally.

The Buckinghamshire Hub will have access to support and funding to help its 21 schools meet the eight [Gatsby Benchmarks](https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/schools-colleges/gatsby-benchmarks) of excellent careers education. This includes:

* A Hub Lead to help coordinate activity and build networks,
* Access to bursaries for individual schools and colleges to train careers leaders,

**more…**

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* Central Hub fund equivalent to around £1k per school or college,
* Access to funding for schools to support employer encounters.

Jackie Campbell, Skills Development Manager for the Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership, said: “Securing this additional support and funding for Bucks secondary schools will make a big difference to those schools that are part of the Hub. Significant progress has already been made in Bucks in terms of raising careers awareness and developing skills for the workplace through increased employer engagement in all our schools, and we are now looking forward to

extending the programme. We intend to build a community of best practice that will benefit all schools and colleges in Bucks.”

Claudia Harris, Chief Executive of The Careers & Enterprise Company, said:

"We're excited by the potential impact of the Hubs. If employers, schools and colleges can better prepare young people for the world of work, we're not just benefiting the future economy, but improving prospects for thousands of young people.”

**Ends**

**Photo caption:** *Developing skills for the workplace through increased employer engagement.*

**Notes to editors:**

A competitive and open bidding process was launched nationally in April, and the Hubs will launch in September. A total of 30 out of 39 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas applied to become Careers Hubs.

The Careers & Enterprise Company evaluated bids according to the level of need in an area, the wider benefit of the proposals to the area and the strength of leadership. All bids were moderated by independent assessors.

The [Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership](http://buckstvlep.co.uk/) (BTVLEP) is a business-led ‘partnership of equals’ between local government and the private sector, building the conditions for sustainable economic growth in the County. Formed in January 2012, the partnership balances a uniquely strong collective business voice with a cohesive elected local leadership. Coming together to engineer the conditions needed to drive forward business prosperity in the county and beyond, BTVLEP recognises that an important part of this is to support education and skills providers and employers to ensure our young people have the right skills to meet the needs of the economy, including the growth sectors such as life-sciences, space, creative industries and advanced engineering.

[Buckinghamshire Business First](http://www.bbf.uk.com/) (BBF), is the Growth Hub for Buckinghamshire and is backed by Buckinghamshire based entrepreneurs, thousands of SMEs and Local Authorities.  BBF provides the link between public policy and the business community in Buckinghamshire and works with partners to create a dynamic business environment in the Entrepreneurial Heart of Britain.

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