

EDUCATION

Colleges join forces to boost graduate job opportunities with federation launch

A federation has been set up to help people into graduate-level job opportunities which aims to include all colleges across east London.

The East London Skills and Employment Federation has held its initial launch by the University of East London to work with schools, colleges, local authorities and companies to tackle employment challenges.

"The federation idea is to help shape east London's future workforce," UEL Vice-Chancellor Prof John Joughin said.

"This is the first of many opportunities to develop ideas to address challenges people face around access to graduate level employment."

Job opportunities with degree qualifications are projected to rise in the next 20 years - while those with lower-level qualifications are expected to fall dramatically,

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according to the Department for Education's 'East London further education' report.

The UEL's federation aims to address the gap by developing education and employment pathways, knowledge and specialism sharing among its members and exploring how apprenticeships can bring businesses and federation members together to improve employment for students.

Founder-members of the new UEL federation include Tower Hamlets New City College, Newham Further Education and sixthform colleges, Barking and Dagenham College and Havering Further Education and Sixth Form colleges.

But the federation aims to expand to include more

education establishments such as schools, employers and businesses throughout the east London boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Newham, Waltham Forest, Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Havering - and as far out as Thurrock in Essex.

A number of workshops were held at the launch earlier this month, looking at curriculum development, apprenticeships, how to retain students and raising people's aspirations.

One college principal at the launch, Eddie Playfair, said: "Our challenge is to create a framework to benefit everyone. Educators from different backgrounds are supporting students across east London to develop their knowledge, skills and 'employability'."

Among proposed benefits being considered are pathways to selected UEL degree courses.

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Crowdfunding bid

A £63,000 crowdfunding campaign has been started to turn an empty basement at a Poplar block of flats into a training centre teaching how to create products from waste.

The aim is to turn the basement at Carrredale House in St Leonard's Road into the 'East London Maker

Space' to learn the recycling business.

The crowdfunding by Rejuvenate UK, a not-for-profit organisation at Trinity Buoy Wharf in Blackwall, has backing from Poplar Harca housing which runs Carrredale House and from Tower Hamlets Council, according to organisers.

"We want to teach

youngsters to make viable products from scratch and putting them into production, using upcycled materials," Rejuvenate UK's Tim Barklem said. "We train them to be able to set up their own businesses or social enterprises."

The organisation hopes to take on other unused spaces across east London.

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