

RAISE YOUR PROFILE GLOBALLY

INTERNATIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIPS

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WHAT ARE INTERNATIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIPS?

International Skills Partnerships bring together skills organisations from the UK and overseas to share their knowledge and expertise.

By working collaboratively, partnership organisations in sectors as diverse as beauty, engineering and finance are able to develop innovative approaches and find proven ways of overcoming challenges. Our experience shows that partners derive mutual benefit from working together and gain valuable international experience. Organisations that internationalise benefit in a number of ways, from improving their offer to learners and building their staff capacity to developing long-lasting partnership opportunities.

The British Council provides comprehensive guidance and support to the partnerships at every stage of the process. We help to match partners with similar challenges and priorities, and we work to ensure that partnership projects deliver maximum benefit for the organisations and countries involved. The British Council is on the ground in more than 100 countries across six continents, which gives us unrivalled local intelligence and understanding of the issues faced in different parts of the world.

With our support, International Skills Partnerships deliver real, sustainable change that can be scaled up to support national education systems and improve the life chances of hundreds of thousands of young people around the world.



International Skills Partnerships are central to our mission to internationalise vocational education and training and enhance employability of young people. They support collaboration between UK skills organisations and their counterparts overseas, helping to develop lasting sustainable partnerships, drive innovation and lead to positive change.

Tracy Ferrier, Global Skills Lead, British Council



THE BENEFITS OF BECOMING AN INTERNATIONAL SKILLS PARTNER

Our International Skills Partners have reported a number of benefits, including:



- learning from the experience of international partners facing similar challenges
- devising innovative approaches to skills development which benefit their learners, staff and communities
- supporting a strategy of internationalisation, which can enhance the culture, profile and reputation of their organisation
- forging positive relationships with other organisations, including employers
- creating unrivalled staff development opportunities
- building a presence in the partner country, which can lead to a whole range of development and partnership opportunities
- informing the development of national skills approaches with the potential to impact the skills and employability of millions of people.

Westminster Kingsway College is proud to have been involved in two International Skills Partnerships in Vietnam. The college has benefited significantly from these projects, developing invaluable relationships and exposure in a new market. In addition, this experience has contributed to staff motivation and development through sharing best practice.

International Skills Partnerships provide a unique opportunity to form relationships with key stakeholders in an international market, while contributing to government priorities. I would encourage any organisation looking to work in a new market to consider the prospect.

Kirsty McLaren, International Partnerships Project Manager, Westminster Kingsway College



LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER ACROSS THE WORLD

Over the past six years, we have delivered over **80 International Skills Partnerships** in more than **30 countries**. These have produced a range of different outcomes, including:

- new models of employer engagement
- joint curricula
- new apprenticeship programmes
- quality assurance methodologies
- careers guidance programmes
- new approaches to institutional leadership and management
- transferable skills training.

Harrow College has successfully delivered seven International Skills Partnerships projects since 2010 through the British Council. This experience increased our reputation internationally and in the UK, and led to a sense of pride in the work achieved, as well as an increase in morale and confidence among our staff and students. To give an example, one of our career-advice colleagues developed and delivered training to over 60 delegates in Tunisia. This experience had a great impact on her both personally and professionally.

On another project, a group of students at Harrow College worked with our Tanzanian partner's students to develop an enterprise toolkit. Both sets of students found this experience life-changing. These achievements would not have been possible if it hadn't been for our involvement with the British Council International Skills Partnerships.

Afshan Baksh, Associate Director, International Development, Harrow College



BRINGING THE LEARNING HOME

Our annual *Bringing the Learning Home* seminar is designed for our established international partnerships and other organisations from around the world interested in addressing skill challenges through international collaboration.

Alternating between the UK and major international cities, the seminar brings together policymakers, employers, senior leaders of educational institutions, as well as representatives from sector skills organisations, awarding bodies and skills agencies in the UK and overseas. The idea is to link skills policy and practice through inspiring plenary presentations, interactive capacity-building workshops, college and industry visits and outstanding networking opportunities. The event also sees the unveiling of our International Skills Partnership awards, recognising the achievements of our most outstanding partnership projects.



WHAT OUR INTERNATIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIPS HAVE ACHIEVED

TRANSFER OF EXPERTISE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Proskills UK, the Sector Skills Council for the materials, production and supply industries, has worked with PETRA, the Enterprise TVET Partnership (ETP) for the creative industries in Egypt, to develop a new standards-based vocational training programme. To date, it has supported more than 2,500 job seekers and helped to develop the technical capacity of teachers, trainers and assessors across Egypt.

The achievements of this partnership include:

- developing high-quality education that meets the needs of industry and improves the links between education and industry

- 130 job seekers starting new print careers
- 1,228 students and employees across 76 companies undertaking industrial print training
- 6,600 job seekers to receive information, advice and guidance on careers in the creative industries
- a new print training centre established in Cairo
- the first adult apprenticeship programme of its kind in Egypt
- the British Council International Partnership of the Year Award.

CREATING CHANGE IN MOROCCO

In June 2014, the British Council launched an International Skills Partnership that brought together five institutions from the UK and Morocco (Coleg Gwent, Coleg y Cymoedd, West Lothian College, AIDA and al Bayti) to provide young people from disadvantaged backgrounds with the right skills to meet the needs of their potential employers.

The partnership initially consulted local employers, which gave them an opportunity to

share their expertise and insights and also explore where skills training would be most accurately targeted. As a result of this collaboration, the partners developed a pre-employment curriculum piloted simultaneously in Morocco, Wales and Scotland. A commitment from the Moroccan Ministry of Youth and Sport to expand the programme will lead to a wide-scale systematic change and potentially transform the lives of thousands more young people.

We learned a lot from our Moroccan counterparts – how they liaise with employers and how the training providers stay with the young people after the course has finished to ensure that they are properly bedded into their job. We have adopted some of these approaches and it has really made a difference to our outcomes.

Daniel Evans, Head of Commercial and Enterprise, West Lothian College



WHO CAN APPLY?

International Skills Partnerships are open to:

- awarding organisations
- employers
- government ministries
- quality assurance agencies
- sector skills organisations
- skills agencies
- training providers
- vocational institutions (e.g. further and higher education providers).

Multilateral partnerships involving a consortium of organisations have proven to be an optimal and sustainable collaboration model with long-term benefits.

If we are going to prepare our students for an international market, they need to be able to operate in a business world in other cultures and we saw this partnership as a way of achieving that.

Barbara Brodigan, Head of International Operations, Doncaster College



WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Visit our website to sign up for our newsletter and learn more about grant funding, international partnerships and current opportunities.

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/skills-employability/partnerships>

If you would like to have an informal conversation about international skills partnerships opportunities, please contact us at: skills@britishcouncil.org and we will set up a time for discussion.



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