

Press release

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New inspiration for businesses to champion language learning across London

Regional Language Network (RLN) London has launched a toolkit to share motivating activities and ideas and with businesses and schools who are interested in encouraging language learning. The 'Business Language Champions toolkit for businesses, schools and colleges' is the latest addition to a programme which highlights the value of language skills in the workplace for young people – and which has now been given the thumbs up by the Foreign Secretary, David Miliband.

Samples of tried and tested activities carried out by recognised Business Language Champions have been included in the toolkit, together with supporting materials and advice, which can help in building long-term partnerships. One of these activities came to the attention of David Miliband after students from Hornsey School for Girls, who were partnered with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), produced a prize-winning poster about their event at a celebration to mark the end of the 2008 Business Language Champions programme. Eight girls and two teachers were invited to meet with the Foreign Secretary in June to share their experiences of visiting the FCO.



Students and teachers alike were thrilled to have a personal audience with David Miliband in his office and used the opportunity to talk about their excitement of being in such a grand building and hearing diplomats talk about how they used their own language skills. The Minister shared some of his own experiences of learning French and German at school and was impressed that the girls were already thinking seriously about language learning for their future careers. Their teacher, Ann Reid, felt that the visits had made a real impact on the students. "Even though they live in

London, they rarely, if ever, get the opportunity to see behind the scenes of big London companies or offices. The visits gave the students something to aspire to in the future.”

This is one of the many success stories that have resulted from businesses, schools and colleges working together to demonstrate the importance of languages in the workplace, as featured in the toolkit. Business Language Champions organiser, Pinky Sidhu, commented, “We are delighted with the success of the 2008 programme. With our toolkit and future activities we expect to inspire and motivate more and more partners to get involved and make a difference.”



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Notes to editors

1. Regional Language Network London

Regional Language Network London (RLN London) is funded by the London Development Agency to promote language and cultural skills for the benefit of businesses and communities in the capital. We do this by establishing networks, offering signposting and advice, and by developing and sharing best practice. With the 2012 Games as a key driver, we are working with employers, education providers, language service providers and a range of other partners to promote awareness, take advantage of London’s resident skills and improve the capital’s language and cultural skill capacity.

www.rln-london.com

2. Business Language Champions

The Business Language Champions programme is organised by RLN London with funding from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). Businesses, schools and colleges involved in the programme work in partnership to show young people the value of language skills for their future careers. With support from Comenius London and CILT, the National Centre for Languages, RLN London has worked across the capital to encourage exciting and innovative partnerships and showcase best practice.

www.rln-london.com/champions

3. The London Development Agency

The London Development Agency (LDA) is the Mayor's agency for sustainable economic development. The LDA prepares the Mayor's business plan for London and mobilises the support and resources of hundreds of partner organisations to help build a thriving economy for London's people, businesses and communities. The LDA is dedicated to improving sustainability, health and equality of opportunity for Londoners.

www.lda.gov.uk