



world **skills** uk  
**GO FURTHER, FASTER**

***Annual Review 2017-18***

# Forewords

Carole Stott  
Chair of WorldSkills UK



2017-18 has been another strong year for WorldSkills UK, with continued high performance, growing partnerships and innovative new approaches. All this has been against a backdrop of ongoing challenge and change, including for the businesses, colleges and providers with whom we work.

Through this year I have again met so many impressive young people who, through our skills competitions and experiential careers advice, have made huge steps forward towards successful futures. I have been equally struck by the continuing commitment and energy of the hundreds of employers and partner organisations who have played such important roles in ensuring we have achieved our aims. I am very grateful for all your contributions.

This is my final review as I will be stepping down as Chair later this year. I am truly proud of what has been achieved over the past six years, the recent acceleration in our progress and the strong position it places us in for the future. Competitions are now more embedded in education and skills across the UK, The Skills Show is established as a unique inspirational event and the UK continually achieves the highest positions on the international stage. Further, the organisation is establishing innovative and progressive new product development, which provides a very firm foundation for even greater achievements and sustainability.

Dr Neil Bentley  
CEO of WorldSkills UK



WorldSkills UK has had another successful and impactful year. We achieved our major goals for the year: retaining a top 10 placing in the international WorldSkills Competition; receiving very positive ratings from the high number of young people with whom we work; and upskilling thousands more young people through skills competitions. We have grown our partnership network and successfully partnered with more businesses and training providers than ever before, alongside almost every college in the UK, all contributing to future skills needs. We raised our profile, working with more Ministers and MPs and increasing our media reach. We grew our product range, introducing a series of new thought leadership activities, backed by robust research and evidence, and developed a series of new digital careers resources to strengthen our careers education and advice. We strengthened relations with all Governments across the UK, aligning our work with key public policy goals. We continued to balance core funding from Governments with securing substantial income from hundreds of funders, including commercial sponsors.

All this positions us very strongly for the year ahead, where our focus will include innovative developments around bringing international skills learning back to the UK system alongside further diversifying funding, data digitisation and increasing social mobility, diversity, and inclusion across our work, all enabling us to make an even greater impact so more young people get the best start in work and life.

I look forward to working with you on these next steps of this journey.

# Highlights



Reached over

**100,000**

young people with career advice,  
experience and competitions

**WSUK**  
total resources  
**£13.4m**

Remained in the  
**TOP 10**  
in international  
skills competitions

Worked with over



**2,000**



partners across the UK



**3,270**

registrations for WSUK  
skills competitions

Visitors exceed

**73,000**

at The Skills Show



**94%**

young people planned follow up  
activities after The Skills Show.



Media circulation now exceeding

**126m**



**79%**

said competitions improved  
their career prospects

**31**

Team UK members attend  
WorldSkills Abu Dhabi

**5,000**

young people  
reached by  
Skills Champions



**500**

employers engaged with  
WSUK during the past year

# WorldSkills UK

## ***This review brings together our achievements and impacts and how we have worked in 2017-18***

WorldSkills UK is a partnership between business, education and Governments. We unite experts from across the UK to run skills competitions in key economic skills areas and champion young people's success at our annual National Finals. The top achievers – Team UK – then undergo further intense technical and mindset training to prepare them for international competition. They are trained to world-class standards, bringing back their well-earned prowess to directly benefit their employers.

For 65 years, WorldSkills UK has been a leading player in WorldSkills International. This global movement drives a collective skills agenda to create economic benefit for nations, and increased ability for young people to be able to make career choices. It brings together 78 countries to organise the biennial 'skills olympics'. Recently held in London (2011), Leipzig (2013), Sao Paulo (2015), and Abu Dhabi (2017), the next competitions will take place in Kazan (2019) and Shanghai (2021).

### ***What we do***

We are an accelerator for young people in the start-up phase of their careers: fast tracking their development.

### ***Why we do it***

To change the national conversation so that apprenticeships and technical education are seen as prestigious career routes for all young people.

### ***How we do it***

Research, thought leadership, new tech competitions and using insight into training and employability skills from key global economies to inform new employer programmes.

## **WorldSkills UK headlines for 2017-18, within the context of our five year strategy:**

- Reached over 100,000 young people shaping their futures through careers advice, experience and competitions
- Remained in the top 10 in international skills competitions – recognition of excellence in this global skills benchmark
- Worked with an increasing range of partners across the UK – now over 2,000
- Continued to strengthen and diversify our income sources
- Influenced the national conversation around skills of the future and the prestige of technical skills and apprenticeships through raising recognition of their value
- Contributed to implementing key UK policies regarding technical education and skills, economic development, careers advice and social mobility through actions such as providing careers and skills experiences
- Progressed diversity and inclusivity across our activities, focusing on gender stereotyping and access for BAME young people
- Achieved media reach exceeding 126m
- Enhanced organisational capacity through training staff, and recruiting new team members with specific skills and experiences and a focus on efficiency and impact.

## **Case Studies**

### **NATSPEC**

WorldSkills UK and NATSPEC, the association representing organisations supporting further education students with special educational difficulties and/or disabilities, have been working together to improve access to high quality education and training and raise aspirations. This includes a set of Inclusive Skills Competitions, with UK-wide heats and National Finals at The Skills Show. In 2017-18 the range of competitions rose from five to nine with more than 140 young people participating in competitions ranging from catering and fitness training to media and woodworking.

### **Riverpark Training**

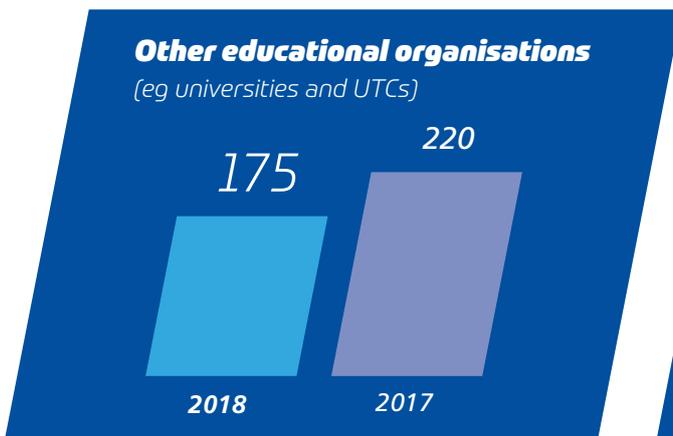
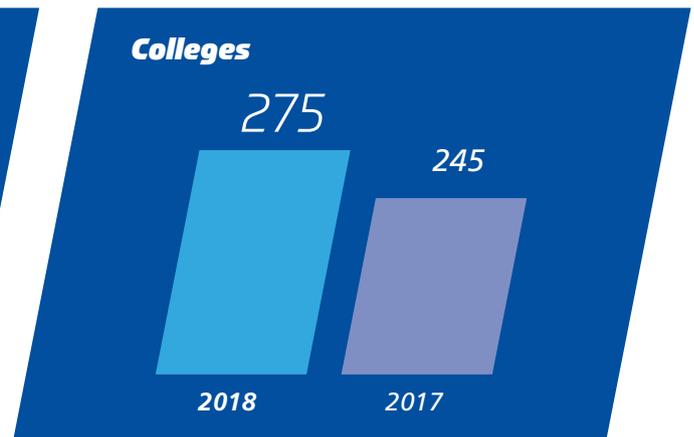
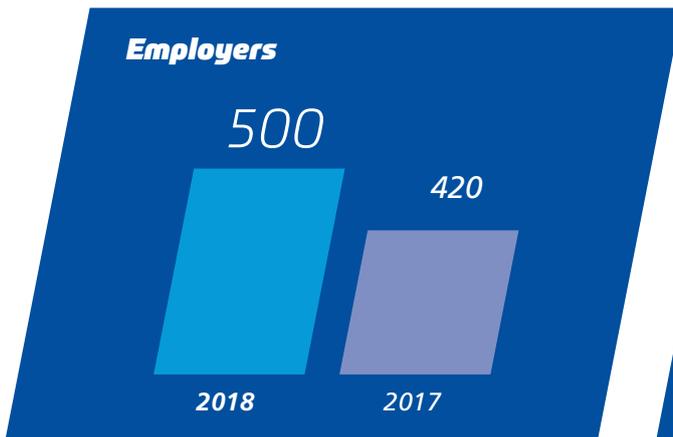
With a strong track record in producing medal-winning role models for the automotive industry, Riverpark Training, based in Northern Ireland, uses skills competitions in training programmes for apprentices. It has had unrivalled success in WorldSkills Competitions, with apprentices representing the UK at every competition since 2013, and two currently in training for WorldSkills Kazan 2019.

## **Across our work, WorldSkills UK has focussed on contributing to governments' public policy goals:**

- Technical education and apprenticeships: raising awareness of, and interest in, these routes through The Skills Show and a range of new services, such as employer and youth engagement activities to better understand their skills challenges and perspectives and by raising standards to world-class levels through skills competitions
- Careers advice: providing unique and powerful employer-based interactions at The Skills Show and through our inspirational role model programme in schools and colleges
- UK Industrial Strategy: aligning our work with new economic needs by introducing new skills competitions, responding to skills gaps and showcasing UK skills on the international stage to boost employability, increase productivity and promote UK inward investment
- Social mobility: providing opportunities for key groups to improve their skills and raise their career ambitions, targeting those from disadvantaged backgrounds; young women in STEM skills; and those of BAME origin.

# Partnerships

**WorldSkills UK works with a growing network of over 2,000 partner organisations whose expertise, support and commitment has been critical to delivering our programmes and achieving strong outcomes.**



## Case Studies

### Edinburgh College

Using its involvement in competitions to motivate and stretch its learners, Edinburgh College has won medals both nationally and internationally. Its alumni include Jordan Charters who was awarded a Medallion of Excellence at WorldSkills 2017 and Mark Nevin who won Gold at WorldSkills 2009, both in Painting and Decorating. Mark continues to advise and support competitor development.

### Centrica

Understanding how competitions can drive up standards in apprenticeships, Centrica sponsored the Customer Service Demonstration Competition in 2017. Centrica wanted to showcase the employment opportunities across the whole organisation, not just in engineering for which they are best known. Exhibiting and sponsorship associated with the Customer Service Competition at The Skills Show enabled them to promote their whole business to over 70,000 visitors.

### Severn Trent

Continuing to work with WorldSkills UK to promote its apprenticeship programme, Severn Trent offers opportunities across the organisation. The company will once again exhibit at WorldSkills UK LIVE, where it will be promoting its much sought after degree-level apprenticeships. Severn Trent is also engaged with skills competitions, enjoying national success. Last year, its apprentices won Gold and Silver in the National Final of the Industrial Control Competition.

**Schools including special and PRUs**

880

850

2018

2017

**International partners**

40

15

2018

2017

**Educational and skills organisations**

100

80

2018

2017

**National, devolved or local public/  
Government organisations**

80

65

2018

2017

**Toyota**

Having a strong association with WorldSkills UK Competitions, Toyota enjoys national and international success, with two of its apprentices representing the UK at EuroSkills Budapest 2018. Recognising the importance of competitions in driving up standards, Toyota has worked with WorldSkills UK to embed this activity into its apprenticeship programmes which it promotes through its exhibition presence at The Skills Show.

**Coleg Cambria**

Working with its employer network, including Electroimpact and Magellan Aerospace, Coleg Cambria embeds competitions in training programmes enabling them to spot talent and accelerate apprentices' skill development.

Their commitment was recognised in 2017 when college director Rona Griffiths won a WorldSkills UK Local Heroes award for her great contribution to developing learners through competitions and the college became WorldSkills UK's Organising Partner for beauty competitions.

# Achievements

## WorldSkills UK increasingly operates a year-round programme of activity.

Alongside the annual cycle of competition activities and The Skills Show<sup>1</sup> in November, we provide a range of opportunities for young people to build their understanding and experience of career and skills options and works with employers and partners to better understand and address skills challenges.

### April – June

- 3,270 registrations for WSUK Competitions 2017, managed by 24 Competition Organising Partners

### Over 250 regional competition heats in 58 sectors across the UK

- Ministers and senior MPs in all UK nations supported Team UK in preparation for world competition
- Active membership of All Party Parliamentary Groups and the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network (ADCN) secured
- Information guide disseminated to help embed skills competitions in apprenticeships and technical education
- Over 4,000 young people from 24 schools and colleges took part in a local skills and careers event in Peterborough.

### July - September

- UK took part in an international exchange programme where competitors practised and tested their skills against the best in other nations
- Inaugural annual Local Heroes programme<sup>2</sup> launched

- Second year of Skills Champions programme<sup>3</sup> launched

- 700 students from 24 schools and colleges attended a local careers event in Northampton.

### October - December

#### WorldSkills Abu Dhabi

- 200 stakeholders attended the Team UK send-off reception held in the House of Commons
- 34 Team UK members and coaches took part in WorldSkills Abu Dhabi representing the UK in 31 skills – securing 10th place in the medal table

### Media circulation of over 39m achieved

- UK Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Anne Milton attended WorldSkills Abu Dhabi.

#### UK National Finals and The Skills Show

- 58 National Final skills competitions (including 5 new skills areas) involved 460 competitors
- New national competitions in Lab Tech and Customer Service successfully piloted
- Nine inclusive skills as part of National Final skills competitions

<sup>1</sup> The Skills Show will be known, from 2018 as WorldSkills UK LIVE

<sup>2</sup> The Local Heroes programme recognises people championing skills competitions behind the scenes

<sup>3</sup> The Skills Champion programme provides inspirational role models in schools and colleges and at skills events

- Over 73,000 visitors at The Skills Show
- Show media exposure reached 31.2m

### 145 Squad members selected from national finalists to train for international competition

- Inaugural WSUK Youth Summit held for 70 young people to share their views on careers advice
- 410 volunteers performed vital roles at The Skills Show.

### January - March

- 1,200 career planning toolkits<sup>4</sup> disseminated; to more than 850 schools and colleges in the year
- CEC supported research released showing that continuation of gendered stereotypes in employment
- Digital careers resources for schools and colleges produced to share the journeys of Skills Champions<sup>5</sup>
- 2018 competition cycle launched with 23 Competition Organising Partners, in 65 skills (including nine inclusive skills competitions - for learners with SEND)
- Three new STEM-based skills competitions launched including Cyber Security, Cloud Computing and Rail Tech

- Local roadshows to enhance participation in skills competitions by young people in BAME communities were held in London, Bristol, Leicester, Birmingham, and Manchester

### Over 5,000 young people inspired by Skills Champions in the year

- CEO spoke to City of Glasgow College on Scotland's skills competitions future and to the Westminster Employment Forum on diversity
- New evaluation with Edge UK released showing the value of skills competitions in driving up standards, building employability skills and enhancing career prospects
- WorldSkills UK thought leadership programme launched.

## Case Studies

### Yogdip Raghvani

A former student of the College of North West London, Yogdip, 23, now runs his own digital agency in London. Yogdip won Bronze in the UK National Web Development Competition in 2013 and, went on to win Gold in Mobile Robotics in 2014. He launched his first business while at college and is now a successful entrepreneur with a global client base. He is a Skills Champion and is passionate about promoting technical skills and apprenticeships to young people and advocating to stakeholders.

### Nikita Harron

Ex-competitor, Nikita Harron is now a neonatal nurse, a Skills Champion and a Coach for Team UK. Unsure of her career path after GCSEs, she studied health and social care at Btec level 3 and then Level 4 and 5 HND at college before studying children's nursing at Queens University, Belfast. Now in her dream job, supporting premature babies and their families, her journey demonstrates how competitions can help young people raise and achieve their aspirations.

<sup>4</sup> The career planning toolkit is a practical resource to raise understanding of technical skills and careers

<sup>5</sup> Skills Champions are past WSUK competitors for young people

# Outcomes and impacts

## UK achieves world-class skills

Team UK retained  
**TOP 10**  
place in the world



20  
medals/medallions  
achieved by Team UK  
on international stage



Two thirds of the team  
achieved a world-class level

**78%**  
of Team UK were or had  
been apprentices.

## Young people gain through competitions

**79%**  
said competitions improved  
their career prospects

**86%**  
gained technical and  
employability skills

**60%**  
of ex-competitors surveyed  
use the skills developed  
through skills competitions  
in their work

**93%**  
recommended the National  
Finals experience

## Young people make more informed career decisions

**100k**  
young people reached  
by WSUK

Young people's knowledge  
of technical education and  
careers increased by **12%**  
points between arriving and  
leaving the Show, and by a  
further **19%** three months  
after the event

**94%**  
planned follow up  
activities after the show

**60%**  
of young people were likely  
to consider technical education  
and careers after visiting  
the show

**75%**  
said the show helped them to  
understand the world of work  
and skills needed at work

**85%**  
learned more about  
apprenticeships from the show

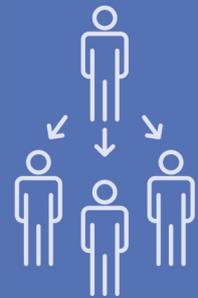
Over **6,000** young people  
reached by Skills Champions

**83%**  
were inspired by meeting  
a Skills Champion

## Future business skills needs supported by WSUK

**54%**  
of competitions are now  
in STEM and digital sectors

Over **70%**  
exhibitors discussed  
apprenticeships with visitors



**85%**  
said that they had positive  
interactions with young  
people at the show

**74%**  
will make new links with  
colleges or schools after  
the show

**500**  
employers engage with  
WSUK each year (including  
200 businesses at  
The Skills Show)

### Career education and advice strengthened by WSUK

Two thirds (65%) educators were more able to advise young people about technical routes after the show

**89%**

educators thought the show empowered young people to consider technical education and careers



**99%**

educators planned follow up activity to the show

**94%**

educators had encouraged young people to consider apprenticeships three months after the show

**84%**

parents/carers believed the show improved young people's perceptions of technical education and careers

Two thirds (62%) parents felt more able to advise young people after attending the show

### Pan UK engagement in skills competitions is high



Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland had higher shares of competitors in the 2017 cycle than expected for their populations; 15%, 12% and 8% respectively

These nations also performed well in the Finals with 14%, 9% and 9% of all awards going to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively



The top three colleges in the National Competition Finals were from Scotland (two) and Northern Ireland

**95%**

of FE colleges are involved in skills competitions; 94% in England and close to 100% in each of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

## Case Studies

### The Careers & Enterprise Company

WSUK and CEC have been working together since 2016; to raise young people's aspirations and knowledge of technical skills and careers through employer interactions. Activities this year have included; developing former competitors as inspirational role models; helping over 5,000 young people towards key careers decisions, and carrying out research into gender bias in careers advice, demonstrating the persistence of some surprisingly traditional ideas on jobs and career progression.

### BAE Systems

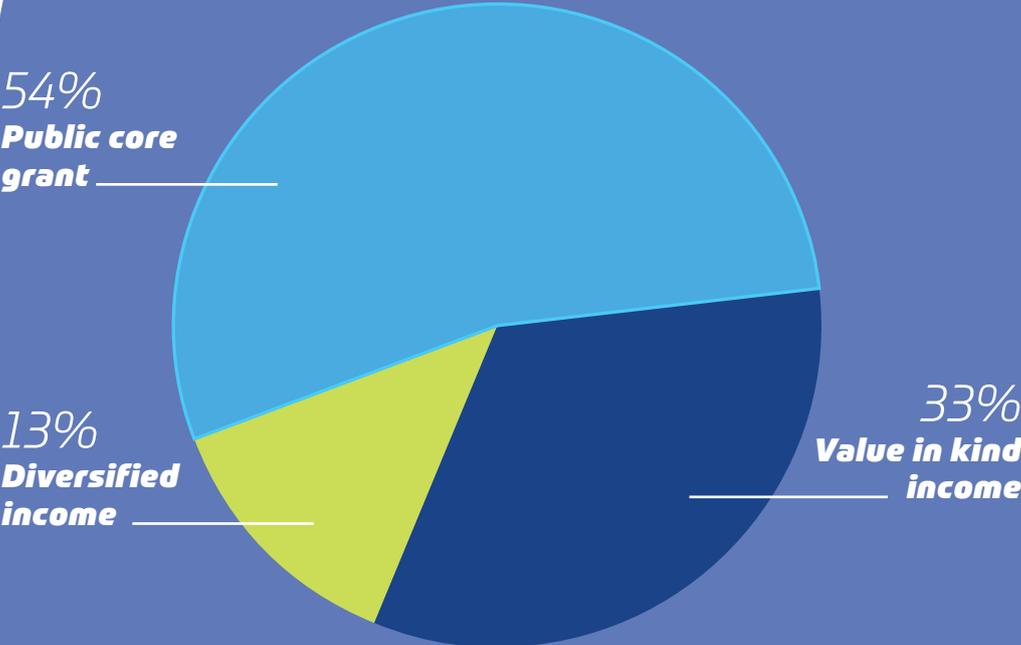
A long-term supporter of WorldSkills UK, BAE Systems is developing a future-facing perspective on skills development in the engineering industry through being an Industry Partner at The Skills Show. BAE Systems regularly enters apprentices into skills competitions, achieving great success nationally and internationally. Shane Carpenter, a BAE Systems apprentice, won a Medallion of Excellence at WorldSkills Abu Dhabi 2017 and the organisation currently has three apprentices in training for WorldSkills Kazan 2019.

### Festo

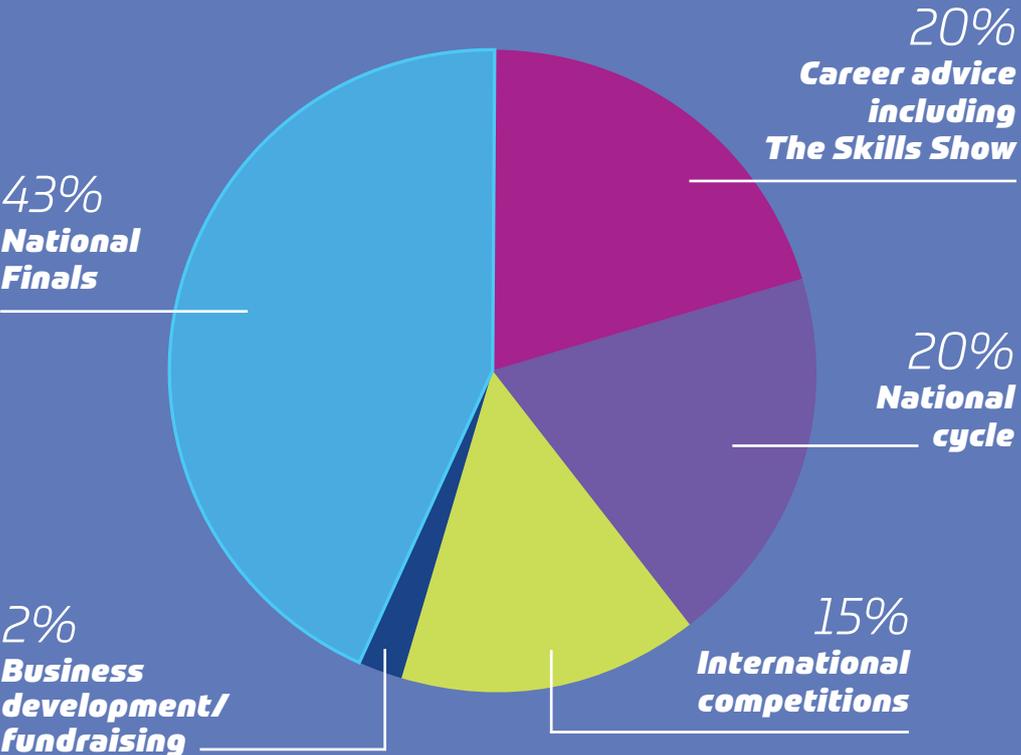
Having worked with WorldSkills UK since 2011, in a partnership which helps support the promotion of its industrial training and education programmes, Festo provides value in kind sponsorship for competitions, and has helped devise competition content and also hosted National Qualifiers. Festo also supports the training of those preparing to compete in international competitions by providing training at no cost.

# Funding and resourcing

Total resources  
**£13.4m**



## Expenditure



We delivered against a further 12% reduction in our public core grant between 2016-17 and 2017-18.

We spent 98p in every pound of our charitable income on the delivery of charitable objectives and made 6% efficiency savings (£800,000).

We continued to leverage significant funds from commercial partners and public funders including Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC), Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and Welsh Government. Diversified income reached £6.2m (including value in kind).

Our focus on commercial investments resulted in over £1m of direct cash sponsorship income in the year.

We again secured over £4.4m of value in kind from commercial partners, in resources, materials, equipment and time, in particular to support the national competition cycle.

After three years of a successful partnership and funding relationship with the Education and Training Foundation, WSUK prepared to move to a closer relationship with the Department for Education with core funding transferring to be routed via ESFA from April 2019.

Significant further financial and resource contributions towards competition activity were made at local level across the UK by colleges and employers and by Governments through projects in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

WSUK has a strong foundation for further diversification of funds, across both commercial and public sources, over the next five years. We have built a better understanding of the market to aid future commercial product development.

# Looking ahead

**Building upon previous successes and looking ahead for 2018-19, we will grow our reach and impact, working to answer six key questions.**

**1** How is WSUK influencing the career decisions of young people to ensure they achieve and act on higher aspirations?

**2** How does WSUK contribute to improving the employability and prosperity of its competitors?

**3** How is WSUK contributing to increasing recognition of apprenticeships and technical education in the UK as prestigious routes?

**4** How is WSUK using evidence and learning to improve its practice?

**5** How is WSUK increasing its sustainability and diversifying its revenue streams?

**6** How do WSUK activities contribute to improving UK productivity?

**Goals for the year to evidence our achievement of these questions will include:**

- Expanding our reach to over 130,000 young people, working to 1m over five years
- Retaining our top 10 position in European competition in Budapest
- Expanding our Skills Champions network to inspire more young people in technical skills
- Improving access to competitions for all groups of young people, whatever their background
- Retaining our high levels of positive feedback from young people across our offers
- Further strengthening our brand position and profile including introducing WorldSkills UK LIVE
- Investigating key skills and careers issues in relation to new technologies, using this as a platform for thought leadership and transformational action
- Enhancing our partnership work including closer links with business and devolved administrations across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Building and testing resources based on international technical skills standards and employability growth to advance their use in youth workforce development
- Further diversifying our income base to enhance sustainability
- Digitising our data systems to improve efficiency and partner support.

# Core supporters





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Charity number 1001586, company number 02535199, VAT registration number GB945610716.

Supported by



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