

Case study: **Education Business Partnership West Berkshire**

Background

Facts:

Founded:
1992

Legal form:
Registered Charity
- and social
enterprise

Product/service:
'Inspiring our
future workforce'

Annual turnover:
£500,000

No of employees:
15 part-time staff,
2 full time staff



15 years ago schools and colleges began to make demands on the business sector to support the learning of young people in order that they were better aware of the demands of the work place and could begin the journey of developing the necessary skills for employment. The subject curriculum was no longer delivered in isolation - there had to be some useful insights from the 'real world'. But who should pay for this vital work to up skill young people?

The Education Business Partnership West Berkshire (EBP West Berks)

The EBP West Berks is a local charity based at New Greenham Park, Newbury which promotes and organises a wide range of innovative work related learning activities for young people in education within West Berkshire. Established in 1992, EBP West Berks works closely with all ten of the local state secondary schools along with Newbury College, some special schools and the Pupil Referral Units.

Activities in which the EBP is involved include:

- ✳ Organisation of Work Experience placements for young people aged 14-19
- ✳ Delivery of Work Related Learning Events through activities such as enterprise skills development challenges, mentoring and employer led presentations
- ✳ Creation of mentoring programmes -reading buddies, number partners, business mentors for students, teachers or head teachers
- ✳ Alternative Curriculum support for vulnerable and disaffected young people
- ✳ Projects with primary schools - including citizenship events and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) activities
- ✳ Encouraging teacher and industrial exchanges to raise teacher awareness of the world of work, the work-related curriculum and continuous professional development

Funding and the growth of the business

For about 10 years funds came in from the government to develop some useful employer engagement opportunities. Another source of funding is through business sponsorship, however West Berkshire is a very rural area with 80% small businesses and only the Vodafone World Head Quarters as a major employer for the region. Times have now changed. This is a universal issue however we now expect that schools have to pay for a greater amount of the costs.

In a time now of 'open & competitive tendering', all the government money for this agenda is in the hands of the schools and very few trust funds or even the lottery will invest funds in this essential work of skills development of young people. The responsibility sits firmly in the hands of the schools and local businesses and a huge amount of potential work needs to be done.

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EBP West Berks is therefore seeking funding to help it become more effective in marketing its activities so that organisation will better understand the key role it is playing and commit funds to support its continued growth.

The investment

An investment is required of £50,000 to build on existing activity as follows:

- ★ To build some essential marketing material to promote the work of the EBP
- ★ Employ someone to focus on public relations and marketing, to support the reach for new employers to support the activities of the organisation
- ★ To expand into supporting the more 'hard to reach' students, by developing a skills centre to cultivate essential workplace skills. This will require additional matched funding