



ufi VocTech  
Trust

# VocTech

2020

VocTech  
Directory

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# Contents


# VocTech Now

## How Ufi responded to COVID-19

VocTech Now was a rapid response call for proposals from organisations whose learners had been directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Ufi supported 23 projects from training providers across the UK to enable them to pivot to technology-supported learning, using existing platforms and learning systems. A further 10 FE Colleges were funded in a second wave of projects to implement VocTech solutions across all or part of their organisation.

These projects were very different from Ufi's normal portfolio, which usually focuses on developing new VocTech solutions. The challenge here was to support rapid adoption of existing technologies to ensure that learners unable to access their face-to-face programmes could continue their studies with minimum loss of time.

The solutions adopted included the use of videoconferencing technologies, virtual classrooms, Learning Management Systems, e-portfolios and digital assessment tools as well as essential equipment purchase for trainers and learners. The organisations involved migrated content into the new environments and were in that way able to keep some continuity for existing learners and open up opportunities for new learners to enrol where previously they had worked in a more limited geographical area.

Ufi's support included an initial grant of up to £25k, but also access to ongoing specialist support in learning design, blended learning and technology selection to help make the transition to digital-first successful and enduring.

Learners were supported across a range of vocational areas including health and social care, leisure, early years, construction and retail, alongside wider projects upskilling professionals in the areas of housing and homelessness and specialist areas of education. We have learned a great deal through these projects about the effect we can have with this kind of grant. Our future ambition is for our portfolio of funding to include measures to support the ongoing embedding of digital solutions and develop more resilient delivery models.

Additionally, a further targeted fund was set up to allow Ufi to work with a small number of partners to provide immediate advice and guidance on approach, technology and ways of working in the new digital-first learning model. Grants to membership organisations were made to support their members in adopting digital delivery methods to widen access to Ufi's resources to new vocational training audiences.





## 3 Spirit

### Transitions

To transition face to face training programmes in the health and social care sector to an online format for 1800 learners. Using virtual interactive classrooms and supported by a new learning management system, 3 Spirit have continued to support existing learners, extended their range of courses to offer new specialist pathways and enabled greater accessibility improving social impact.



## Northern Training Academy

### Northern Training Academy e-portfolios for apprenticeship standards

To transfer all content for the apprenticeship standards (2&3) onto a LMS to enable 400 learners to access relevant training when it suits them. Northern Training Academy decided to use their own staff to create video course content, to retain the direct, personal links they currently enjoy with their learners in the retail industry.



## FLM Training

### Utilising Digital Technology For The Benefit Of Our Learners

To ensure every Tutor and Learner is competent and practiced at online meetings, participating in online training events and improving functional skills via digital resources. FLM training supported 100 apprentices and 450 learners across a range of Leisure programmes with a new LMS and e-portfolio and gained new business as a result of their enhanced digital capabilities.



## Acorn Training

### Key Workers - Business as Usual in an Unusual Way

To develop a blended learning solution to enable continued engagement of 150 new and 500 existing key worker apprentices and adult learners in the early years, residential childcare and health and social care sectors. Acorn Training equipped a new digital content creation studio and transformed their approach to learning design across the whole organisation.



## Action for People

### Self-employed Key Care Workers Training

To provide self-employed workers access to Ofqual certified training and work with Skills for Care to gain a formal Health Care certificate in recognition of the achievements of 200 learners. Supporting key workers at a very pressured time, Action for People enabled them to maintain their CPD requirements and on-boarded new carers at a time they were desperately needed by the sector, by taking their training completely online.



## Care Training Consortium

### CTC's induction online

To develop an online digital provision to reach their existing 100 learners who are dispersed across rural locations, in Dumfries and Galloway, whilst at the same time retaining the quality of provision associated with the CTC brand. The depth of expertise in the CTC team was transferred to a digital platform to make continuing access to their experts possible. They also collaborated with Ufi funded project Cuppacare to provide additional resources.





## St Monica Trust

### St Monica Trust - Quality Care Online

To video and edit critical training for residential care providers and those joining the profession and reduce the need for face-to-face training for 1200 learners. Using a professional videographer and editor to bring together their content has helped St Monica Trust to launch their new virtual academy with excellent online resources.



## Intraquest

### Digitising IntraQuest CIC Training

Training in Attachment Theory, Key Life skills and Therapeutic skills to 400 professionals dealing with difficult client bases (School Staff, Social Care, Key Workers and Support Workers) via a LMS and to digitise existing face to face training programs. Intraquest chose to tackle the challenge of learning how to create content themselves, producing some excellent, unique resources.



## Shelter

### Transforming Training

Transition to digital delivery of professional training to 5000 key homelessness and housing workers across the UK. At a time when homelessness became an acute challenge, the organisation was able to design and implement a digital-first strategy to move its training and guidance online and ensure their expertise remained available.

## Shelter

## Threshold DAS

### The Life You Want

To provide a learning platform, a vocational learning portal, resources and digital tools to allow 200 individuals who are under skilled, often living in poverty and who are experiencing domestic abuse to access home learning. Threshold DAS have transformed their approach to digital learning and are now planning further programmes to support both their core local users and also a wider community nationally.





## PHX Training

### PHX Transform

To adopt widely accessible, reliable, technologies to provide a platform for remote/virtual delivery for 575 learners. A key aspect of the project was supporting staff and tracking their journey to the new reality. PHX training extended their LMS provision, working with their supplier to create a robust, sustainable solution.

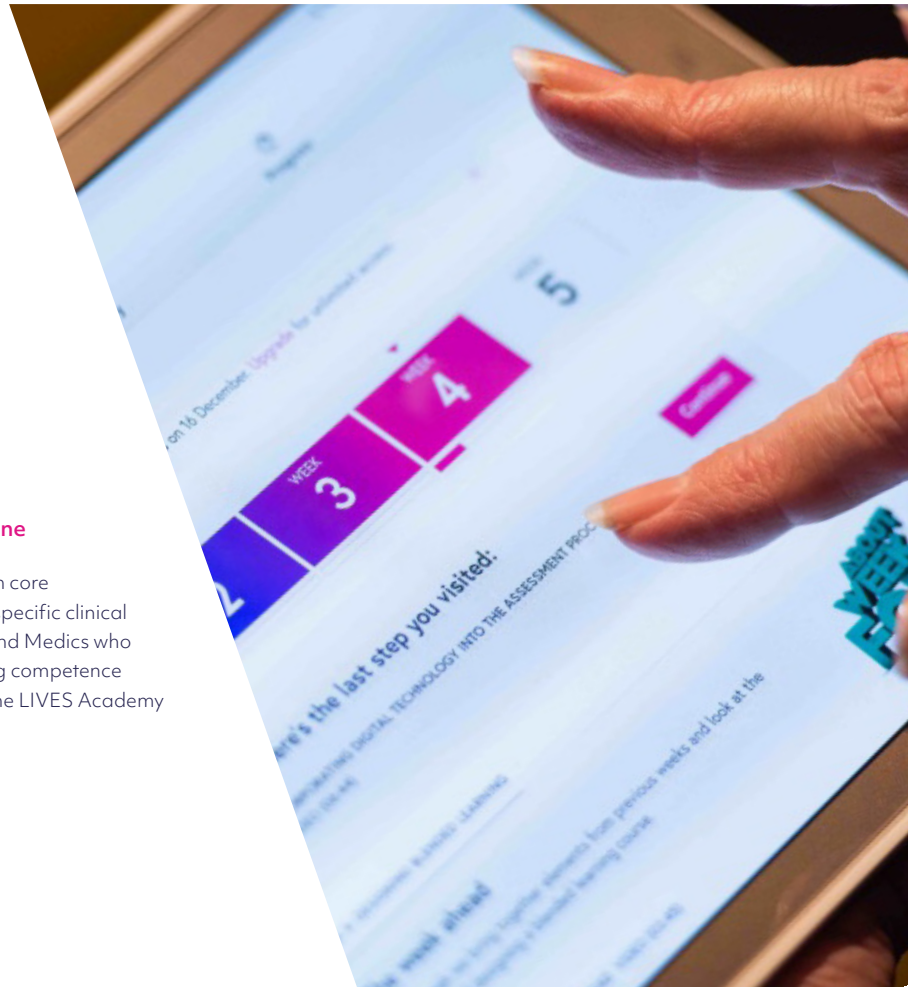


## LIVES

### Bring Lincolnshire's Community First Responders Online

To roll out an electronic multimodal education programme with core monthly e-learning modules and weekly videos which explore specific clinical competencies. LIVES has 500+ Community First Responders and Medics who attend emergencies throughout Lincolnshire, requiring ongoing competence training. Within the short timeframe since the virus outbreak, the LIVES Academy already has 11 courses available and 4 in development.

**LIVES.** SAVING LIVES  
IN LINCOLNSHIRE





## The Engineering College

### Digital Platform for Vocational Training

To develop a new learning design and delivery, in the form of a digital platform for vocational learning, which will complement existing methods used to great effect by the Engineering College. In a short space of time, the team has managed to continue the learning for 250 vocational learners through using the Canvas platform, which will greatly enhance their learning experience.



## The CPC Link Ltd

### Online Instructor Led Course Delivery

To reinstate the delivery of mandatory vocational training for a Periodic Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) to drivers of goods vehicles and passenger vehicles (LGV & PSC's). An app was built to deliver adapted training courses as online, instructor led courses. The app also offers proof of completion and identity to enforcement authorities.



## Appris Charity Limited

### Supporting the Online Training and The Progression of Engineering Apprentices

To provide a long term, sustainable online learning solution for 500 apprentices. Appris Charity Limited are the largest provider of engineering & manufacturing apprenticeships in the West Yorkshire region. The project aimed to enhance and enrich the blended learning of online, off the job and practical training in the training centre in Bradford.



## Proactive Technical Training

### Digital Delivery

Specialising in electrical training, the project was to develop solutions so that training could continue during the crisis and enable more learners to be reached in the longer term. Proactive Technical Training developed an on-line course for a team of engineers within a specific department with specialist engineering requirements. It has now been released with 20 enrolled and an estimated 150 over the next year.



## Mantra Learning

### Job Gym Online

To develop a remote learning offer to continue to train key workers in the logistics sector. Prior to COVID-19, Mantra Learning provided face-to-face training for adults to gain vocational skills that are required in the logistics industry. Mantra Learning proposed to drive a rapid transition to virtual delivery through a blended delivery model, using an outsourced VLE (Virtual Learning Environment), using digital workbooks and Microsoft Teams.



## Open Awards

### Functional Skills – Home Assessments

To scale up remote invigilation of controlled assessments (exams) for Functional Skills assessments to avoid disadvantage to learners and apprentices who were unable to attend school/college/training providers in summer 2020. They used screen share technology in a novel way to enable learners to be remotely monitored by trained invigilators whilst completing their assessments in isolation in their own homes.



## Goodwill Solutions CIC

### My Career in Logistics

To develop on-line learning for potential new entrants into the logistics sector. Their vision was to provide opportunity for people to realise their potential, while also increasing the resilience of the logistics sector. The project developed seven new accredited online courses, with 35 discrete modules. Goodwill have more content, at more levels than they thought possible in April 2020.



## Focus Training (SW) Limited

### The Focus Training Group Virtual Training Project

To engage apprenticeship learners (electrical, gas, arboriculture, management, accountancy and care trades) using an online video platform to allow teaching in real time or to record small sessions that can be sent to apprentices to aide their learning. Focus trained 65 staff remotely using the platforms for CPD and preparation to return to work and delivered over 120 other learning sessions.



## Pembrokeshire County Council

### Futureworks DigiVoc

To provide a rapid response to the immediate changes in the intensive mentoring, centre-based and work placement learning undertaken by young people on the Traineeship programme (16-18) and people engaged in vocational learning on Communities for Work employability programmes (16+). Pembrokeshire County Council developed a virtual open week for students to experience courses before enrolling and supported students through mentoring and providing guidance digitally.



## Barnardo's

### Supporting Disadvantaged Young People to Learn and Achieve Remotely

The COVID-19 crisis significantly disrupted Barnardo's delivery of vocational skills training to some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people in the UK. The project upgraded their systems to a VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) to enable support for these young people on their journey to a positive destination. Barnardo's produced over 300 resources and 50 members of staff were trained to deliver digitally.



## MakeUK

### Digital Training for Manufacturing Trainers

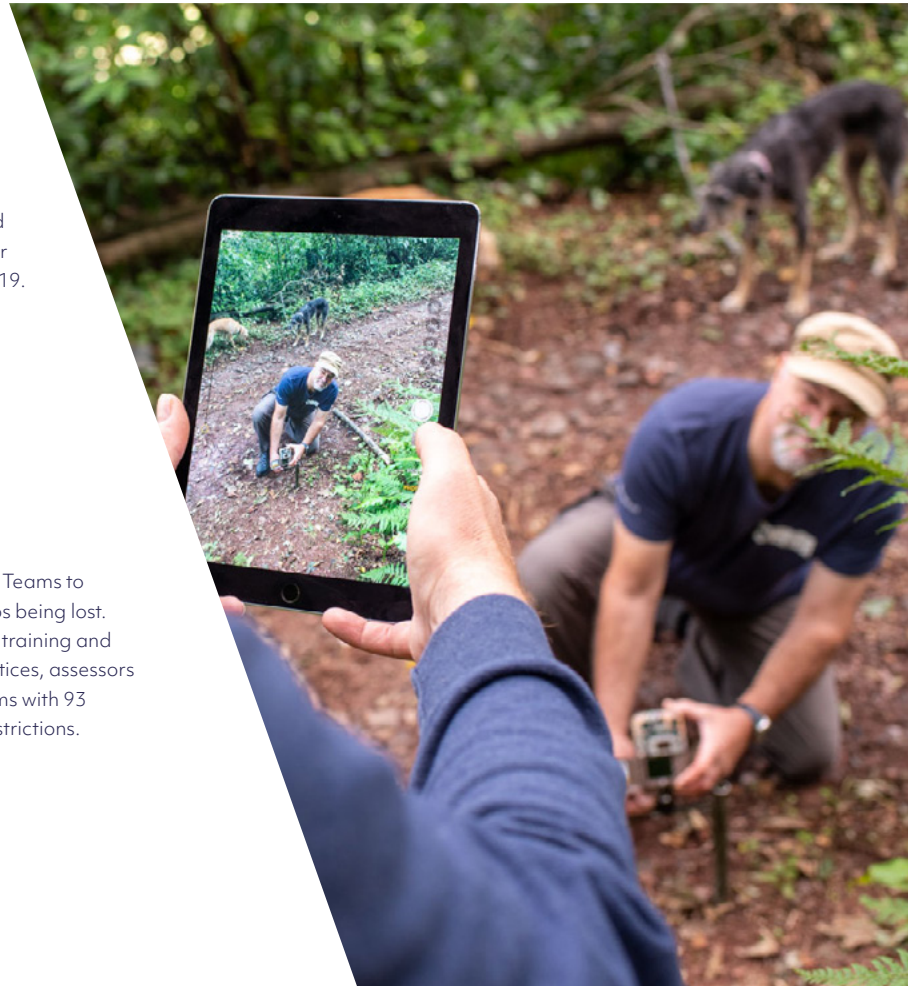
Make UK will be setting up a digital recording facility in their engineering sector workshop and training a variety of staff to use the videoing and editing software to allow students to complete workshop-based activities through understanding and watching live/recorded tutorials to enable them to complete their programmes of learning that have been interrupted by COVID-19.



## Isle of Wight College

### Apprenticeship Teams

To support, motivate and engage apprentices, using Microsoft Teams to enable digital and remote learning and prevent apprenticeships being lost. The project provided a combination of 1-2-1 and group online training and support for the implementation of Microsoft Teams for apprentices, assessors and employers. 235 apprentices were added to Microsoft Teams with 93 actively participating during the summer despite workplace restrictions.



## Burnley College

### Transition to Remote Learning & Training

To convert 25 courses, which currently have no online provision, into a blended learning model on Google Classroom. The College trained 60 staff as Google Educators to assist the transition of specific courses into a suitable online format. 25 current students were supported in becoming Google Certified to enable them to act as Digital Leaders, supporting approximately 500 students.



## West London College

### Food Production Vocational Training and Upskilling

To use Blended Learning Consortium online resources to support 31 low paid, low skilled staff in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and food production vocational skills. This ensured that 2 local, key sector employers could continue to operate throughout the lockdown period, avoiding disruption to supermarket supply chains. 17 out of 48 teachers, trained as Google Educators and supported programme delivery with Trade Union support.



## Lincoln College

### Canvas Virtual Learning

To accelerate the rapid introduction of the Canvas Virtual Learning Environment, together with MS Teams integration into several areas of the college due to the sudden change to remote working. This has involved transforming the college's long-term culture and practice of teaching and learning. More digital delivery also made improvements in analytics and data visualisation to support learner progression and organisational performance.



## New City College

### Effective Virtual Learning for Hard-To-Reach Learners

To integrate their virtual learning environment with MS Teams for vocational curriculum areas and learner groups who had not previously experienced online learning and who face multiple barriers to accessing digital learning. The College adopted a 'train the trainer' model where tutors become experts in eLearning, creating a sustainable model that can be scaled up to be used across the organisation.



## South West College

### From Online to Frontline: COVID-19 Health and Social Care Toolkit

To support students studying health & social care the College developed an online Toolkit to support learners working in the front line. The online Toolkit provided students with critical resources for infection prevention and control and end of life care with guest speakers and links to digital resources.



## Lancaster & Morecambe College

### Lancaster & Morecambe College Digital Classroom

To create and sustain an on-line platform from which to complete the academic year and qualifications for over 200 current learners and provide a springboard to expand future digital delivery across the whole college. At the start of the project, the College had no online learning provision and is now able to deliver live sessions to remote learners across a range of courses.



## Kingston Maurward College

### KMC-TV

To build an online community providing access to unique interactive content for learners and apprentices through a series of video live streamed events. The content developed centres around the rural, land-based sector. It enables learners to gain exposure to technical and subject matter experts which, during lockdown, was missing or extremely limited.



## City of Glasgow College

### VocAcademy

To give vocational teachers the technical and the learning design skills to produce and curate their own short instructional videos. VocAcademy is a growing collaboration between 14 FE colleges, Blended Learning Consortium and Clickview Ltd. The project took the Khan Academy concept for academic education and applied it to support the extension of blended and distance learning in the UK FE College sector.





## Colegau Cymru

### FE Colleges in Wales - VocTalks and Training

The first part was to upskill lecturers through our programme 'What does good online teaching look like?' delivered via real-time online training. The second part comprised of 'VocTalk' webinars focused on a different vocational area each week, with speakers, students, former students and business owners exploring the skills needed for the vocation.



## AELP (Association of Employment and Learning Providers)

### Sector Resources for Distributed Learning

With the national emergency surrounding COVID-19, it has become an urgent imperative for teachers and trainers to make full use of digital resources to mitigate the disruption to learning journeys as much as possible. This project will identify as many such resources as possible by industrial sector and other programme types with content relevant to all providers. It will be available as a free to use resource, set out in an easily navigable fashion for post-16 providers to consider and use as required.

Over a 6-month period a bespoke website will be created and used as a repository of information and signposts that direct providers to digital materials and resources that can be used in technical teaching and training.



## GTA

### Remote Learning Now and Beyond

GTA intends to survey the GTA England network to identify online resources that could form part of blended delivery, deliver three 'emergency remote delivery' staff training webinars (recorded) and provide on-demand emergency support to teachers/instructors implementing learning from the webinars. This will encourage GTAs to use a blended model that combines virtual class delivery and independent learning where apprentices access materials from online repositories that have been shared by GTAs across the network and adapted for use in this way.

To enable this objective, GTA will provide on-going, on-demand support to teachers/instructors; Map and curate (adapted) content from across the GTA network and elsewhere; set up, map and populate a shared content repository; and implement support mechanisms identified in the survey as needed for apprentices and staff.



## Association of Colleges

### COVID-19 Response

This project aims to share best practice from the FE sector to help the sector respond to the COVID-19 situation that has seen many colleges move to deliver their provision online. Qualitative research is already underway across AoC membership to gain insight into colleges' current capacity, infrastructure and concerns around delivering provision online. AoC will also analyse quantitative data from the College IT survey, a recent survey undertaken in collaboration with the Department for Education and JISC.

The project will commission key sector stakeholders to contribute articles. Each article will end with a set of AoC asks to Government, the tech sector and colleges. Articles will be published online and curated into a final e-book publication (published by Amazon). A series of webinars will be hosted around the topics of the Articles.



## Holex

### Building the Digital Capability of ACE Providers

Digital ACE is designed to support Adult and Community Education (ACE) providers on their technological journey, helping to develop digital capability to enhance their offer to learners, while still maintaining their learner-centred and high-quality approach to adult learning. A short review of existing activity will identify good practice, existing technological tools and solutions in use and collect the views of providers on the issues they face and what they think the priorities should be.

Holex will work with educators to help develop content for the following six areas: Underpinning Technology, Developing Materials, Quality Assurance, Safeguarding and Prevent, Supporting Low Skilled Learners, Provider Policy. Following this Holex will organise and run 6 online tutorials, accompanied by written guidance, and drafted in a form that can be adapted and adopted by each service. A group of experts and mentors will also deliver 50 bespoke advice and guidance sessions to individuals and/or services on developing digital solutions in an ACE setting.



# VocTech Seed

VocTech Seed is our test bed where the first spark of an idea can be scoped and tested in the supportive environment that Ufi funding provides.

We fund projects that are at a relatively early stage, helping to prototype ideas and work out the next steps necessary on the journey to long-term success. We encourage ideas which have the potential to transform how vocational learning happens, rooted in a real-world understanding of the problems, issues and opportunities in the vocational sector.

Projects need to show us how the idea is novel – show us that they understand the market they are looking at and why this is better than anything that has been thought of before. We can support ideas for new tech, new markets, new communities of learners and we're happy to welcome new project teams. The emphasis here is on the 'new'. We're okay with risk. This is about sharing that risk and putting in place all the support we can to mitigate those risks we can manage together.

VocTech Seed provides grants of between £15,000 and £50,000 for projects lasting from 3 to 12 months.



**2018**

## Tripping The Thames BLTK Consulting



Did you know that the tidal Thames is the UK's second largest seaport and busiest inland waterway for freight and passengers? With an urgent need for more commercial river pilots to allow an increase in freight traffic, digital learning could be the key to unlock the capacity of the waterways.

This project will create a VR (Virtual Reality) simulation of the Thames based around a 360° video which enables learners to study the river. There is strict regulation of workers using the river and training currently takes 270 hours to complete, which this hopes to reduce.

This tool will have embedded information on key features and provide learners with immediate, safe access to the river at any time, without having to wait for an available vessel or tide. The user will be able to point to specific items, revealing further information drawn from traditional two-dimensional charts and tidal stream data, to provide a personalised guide through their river journey.

Using digital technology, the time required to experience frequent river journeys is greatly reduced, with significant reduction in the cost of achieving 'time to competence' and necessary qualifications and an increase in the rate at which new workers can join working river vessels.



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## Customer Care Training In VR eLearning Studios



What kinds of conversations do customer-facing staff need to handle professionally? Are they currently able to practice difficult conversations in a safe environment? This project will develop a platform to enable vocational trainers working independently, for training providers or corporate organisations, to rapidly develop and build customer care VR training scenarios.

Learners will undertake work-related role play to improve their performance in working with customers. Virtual Reality gives them the chance to experience, and practice dealing with, a range of customer service scenarios in a safe environment without impacting on the business. This helps them to become better prepared for real work situations.

The platform will be customisable to deal with situations in retail, financial services, office and leisure environments. It can be tailored to the specific job situation, and has the scope to develop into any sector where customer care is an important workplace skill.

No programming skills or artist work is necessary, making it easy for trainers to develop bespoke VR content and deploy this on different types of VR headsets.



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## Digital Retail Futures

### retailTRUST

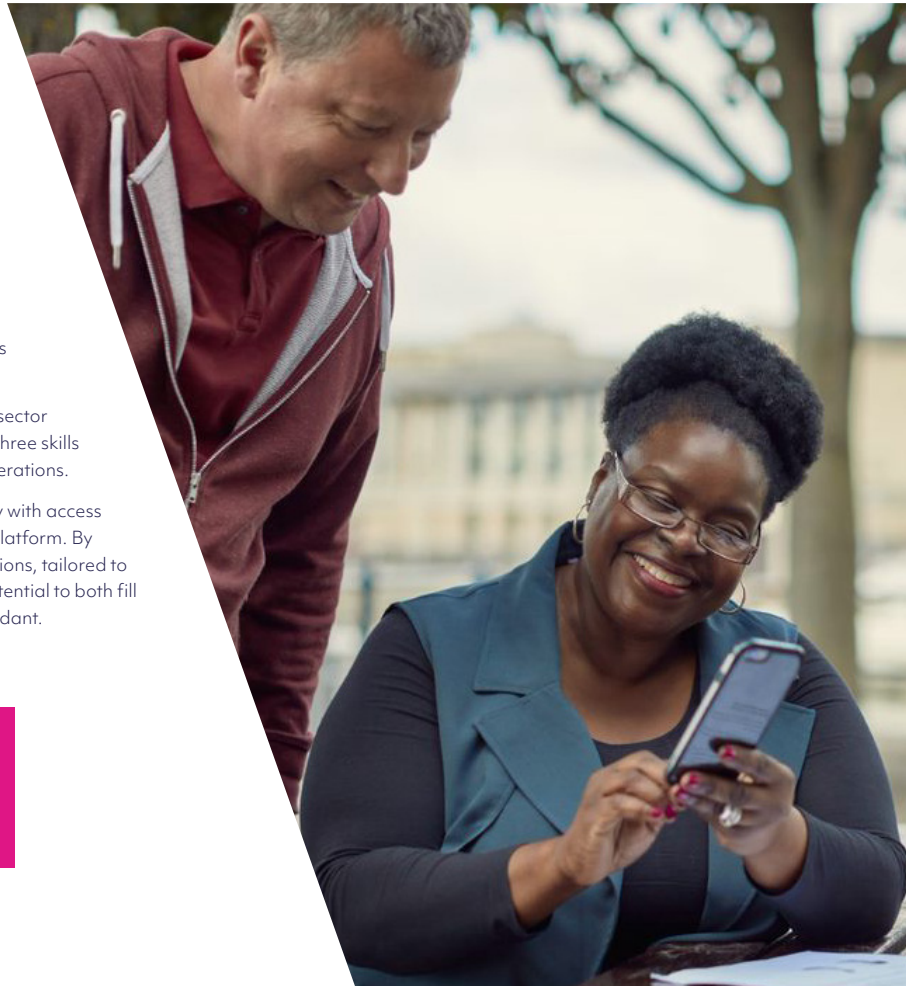
retailTRUST<sup>®</sup>

The retailTRUST's vision is of a retail sector that is future proofed, with a highly skilled and adaptive workforce, economically sustainable and primed for growth. By offering insights into 'a day in the life of' different jobs in the industry, learners can see what other roles entail and what skills they need to acquire.

The UK retail sector is undergoing structural change which impacts on its skills needs. This project will create, test and evaluate a digital learning platform to deliver vocational training to address skills gaps identified by retail employers.

It will target employees at risk of redundancy from traditional retail sector jobs and support them to up/re-skill, with an initial focus on the top three skills gaps: digital marketing, digital customer service and warehouse operations.

The project's long term plan is to provide those at risk of redundancy with access to a comprehensive, flexible, accessible online vocational learning platform. By incorporating a range of providers, courses, modules and qualifications, tailored to meet learner's individual development needs, the project has the potential to both fill employers' skills gaps and avoid the risk of workers becoming redundant.



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## Blockchain, Badging, and ePortfolios for Skills City of Glasgow College



Blockchain technologies hold the promise of a secure, reliable way to record key events and transactions across a wide range of applications.

City of Glasgow College are scoping a platform using blockchain to provide reliable and verifiable digital certification of skills from awarding bodies. Certificates would be owned and controlled by the learners, enabling them to easily provide trusted 'proof of competence' to potential employers, customers or learning providers. The project has been driven by learner and employer demand for easier, more efficient and transparent processes for verifying qualification claims.

The platform will investigate two existing technology platforms: APPII for digital credential verification (recorded securely on the APPII blockchain) and Google for Education for a lifelong learner portfolio. The Scottish Qualifications Authority are engaged, so the project can scope how to micro-credential the components of qualifications in detail, using their existing open online documentation data. Awarding bodies would be able to provide digital versions of trusted certificates, verified by blockchain, for use in a range of digital and social media. This would support better matching with employers' demand for skills, enabling employees to select and demonstrate skills and experience in a trusted and verifiable manner.

 John Casey



 @MySkillsProject



myskills.org.uk



/school/city-of-glasgow-college

## Journey 2 Basic Skills Klik2Learn



Imagine that you are highly skilled in your native language, but it uses a different script (e.g. Arabic or Cyrillic) which makes learning English to be able to work a huge challenge. Journey 2 Basic Skills plans to enable learners to grasp English phonemes, the alphabet, numbers, handwriting skills and digital skills - all on their mobile phones.

Using animation, graphics, audio and games learners progress from level 'A0' to A2 on the Common European Framework for languages. By combining visual creativity, imaginative learning styles and appropriate technology the project addresses a gap in the market for adult learners who need to improve basic English literacy skills to enter and progress in the workplace.

A second group of learners who often face barriers to employment are young native English speakers who do not have the literacy and numeracy skills to enable them to access job opportunities or further training and who will similarly benefit from this adaptive, gamified approach.

The project has worked closely with City College Glasgow to develop the concept and with a wide range of partners throughout the UK, including the Education and Training Foundation, to trial the beta version of the software.

 Ann Attridge



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## Creator Studio & Player

### How Do I?



How Do I? aims to make the workplace more accessible to differently-abled people and make vocational training better for everyone by improving delivery of workplace learning.

Research with employers uncovered ongoing challenges in workforce development, particularly around 'how to' skills that need regular reinforcing, and showed high demand for video, mobile and micro-learning to build these vocational skills. To meet this need the project will develop a content creation platform for employers to create their own instructional video content, without the version control and other issues associated with platforms such as YouTube.

Combining this with an app will enable 'just-in-time' workplace learning. The videos will be triggered by NFC (contactless) stickers placed at relevant points around the workplace and accessible to employees using mobile phones. The user-led nature of the system makes it ideal for people not wishing to publicly ask for additional training to be able to repeat learning until they have comfortably acquired the skill.

The product is aimed at employees working on the shop floor in industries including retail, hospitality, logistics and manufacturing, which have high staff turnover and large numbers of temporary or agency workers and where staff are at risk of being made redundant through automation.

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## Chomp – The Dental Training App

### Blueflame Digital



Watch out for the Chomp Monster! This innovative project will develop and test a mobile, game-based app, focused on teaching the key entry level skill of dental charting in an engaging and fun way. This will provide effective learning for entrants at the start of their training and a refresher for more experienced practitioners. Using bite sized (excuse the pun) learning makes it easy to digest.

Using game mechanics will improve engagement, make the material enjoyable to learn and motivate the learner to repeat key learning points. More complicated learning points will be visualised through interactive 3D visuals and animated sequences. Progress will be recorded and reported, and any weaker areas of the learner's knowledge can be highlighted.

The longer-term ambition is to develop a suite of vocational training games for dental nurse training across the UK, to be used alongside the current training methods, delivering content through game mechanics and visualisations to teach more complicated concepts in a more digestible and accessible manner. The app will be delivered through Apple and Google stores (now available for download) with the potential for roll out widely throughout the UK and beyond.

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## Ada Bolton College



When you are brand new on campus and everything is confusing who can you turn to for help? Need to ask a question about your course but your tutor isn't around? Maybe AI (Artificial Intelligence) can help.

Bolton College identified challenges arising from the nature of their study programmes which means that student often lack 'on-demand' access to staff, including teachers, tutors, mentors, coaches and careers advisors. To address this, they created a digital assistant in the form of a chatbot called 'Ada.' Ada has been assisting students with everyday enquiries since 2017 and can respond to questions about studies and curriculum topics, work placements and employability.

This project will expand the service Ada provides, allowing every student at the college access to Ada via an iOS or Android smartphone, developing an automatic marking service to improve each student's final evaluation of their work placement programme and creating an Ada service for teachers, to demonstrate how chatbots can be used to support teachers by reducing the workload associated with day-to-day tasks required to support students in their care. Eventually, Bolton College hope to offer Ada to schools, colleges and universities across the UK, through an annual subscription service.



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## Signs of Life DESQ



Knowing what to look for when a patient or care home resident is ill can make all the difference in their long-term recovery.

Signs of Life is a game for nurses and healthcare workers to learn medical observation routines. The game is played out in a hospital ward or care home, with patients to be observed and decisions to be made. Players record a patient's vital signs and, as changes in patient's condition happen, they need to decide if and what intervention is required.

To make the experience realistic, the player is interrupted by everyday events and must deal with these distractions whilst keeping track of the observation cycle. The game can be played in short sessions to fit around players' busy work schedules and to emulate the practical reality of observational procedures. The full game will have levels with escalating complexity of clinical problems that need prioritisation, when several problems occur simultaneously.

The project will work with The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, The Royal London Hospital and the Medex Group (care home training providers) to test and evidence that it provides effective, safe learning.



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## Contextual Maths Learning Science



It's true for most of us that the maths we learn in school seems very remote from what we need when we enter the workplace. But in many technical jobs complex calculations are an important part of the daily routine.

Learning Science's existing Smart Worksheet system supports undergraduates taking science-based courses to develop maths skills. The existing Smart Worksheet system helps with understanding of multi-layered calculations and analysis of different data forms. This project will build on this proven technique to develop tools to support newly recruited apprentice engineering technicians with the maths skills they need for the workplace.

The project will research the training needs with the steel company TATA, working with their learners and vocational training staff, and use this research to create context specific Smart Worksheets and test how they work on-site. The project will also create a new analytics system, to report and document learners' progress, strengths, weaknesses and competencies.

The goal is that engineering technicians joining companies from school will gain support and understanding of their maths skills, any new skills they need to learn and how to apply those in the workplace.



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## LoGo – Learning On The Go (now Cognify) Pembrokeshire College



Cognify has the potential to transform the way educators and learners interact with course materials through voice and sound.

The idea behind the Cognify app is to allow learners and teachers to listen to a document (text-to-voice) and dictate comments and answer questions (voice-to-text) in the same document. Having both in the same place will streamline learning and make interactions much simpler.

Teachers can use it for worksheets; learners can use it for dictating their notes into their course materials. Cognify can help learners with additional needs, such as dyslexia, to study and also helps teachers to assess learners' work more quickly.

An early prototype has been tested and this project will respond to user feedback to build the final version.

Cognify is a partnership between Pembrokeshire College and WellSource software. WellSource have a portfolio of voice and text related apps with around 5 million downloads and monthly users worldwide. Pembrokeshire College has been a leader in the further education sector in learning technology for 15 years. The collaboration has the potential to take this technology to the next level.



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## Employability Skills Development Groop Ltd



Wouldn't it be great if all the skills that we learned 'off the job' through volunteering and community projects could be captured and added to your CV?

Groop has developed a prototype online accreditation tool working with a group of young people who have advised on UX (User Experience) and UI (User Interface). They were also involved in co-producing an Employability Skills Award that can be gained through volunteering and social action activities. The prototype accreditation tool is being developed in partnership with Ingeus, with young people being able to achieve Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.

In this project, the tool will undergo full market testing, and a second version that captures skills and competences from Work Experience Placements will be added to the platform.

Both awards will be made available to young people, young adults and other groups, such as work returners who need to develop confidence and update their technology skills. The toolkit will also be made available to other customers who will be able to customise the system to upload their own awards into the toolkit.

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## Readable Playlingo



Readable is fun. And that's really important when you're working with adults who have not had a great experience with language learning up to now.

Readable is an app designed to help adults learn workplace and general English. It targets those in the UK whose first language is not English and need to improve their skills to access work or build their careers.

This project will test the effectiveness of entertaining, short-form texts in improving general and vocational language skills. Readable does this by offering learners short bitesize chat stories in English with support for sectors such as retail, construction and food. But they are stories with a difference, written to entertain as well as teach.

Readable supports learners by combining stories at the learners' level with a word memorisation tool and builds on research into the powerful effect of reading for pleasure on language proficiency.

The project will create the Readable MVP with 25 1000-word stories. It will also produce an authoring tool and dashboard to monitor key metrics including conversion, retention, and engagement as well as words read and new words learnt.

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## Digital SPACE (Support to Promote Apprenticeship Careers and Engagement) Nissan Manufacturing UK



Do you remember your first day at work or college? It can often be very disconcerting to get to know a new environment or start a new learning programme. Imagine that in a large factory such as the Nissan plant and you can see the challenge that will be addressed in this project.

The project aims to develop and test an app that will empower young adults to settle in and progress into sustainable careers. The product will address problems known to be associated with current high attrition rates amongst new starters, such as learner disorientation and anxieties during the on-boarding phase. It will encourage ownership and success of learning using engaging digital interactive activities.

The project will test the concept within Nissan, focusing initially on the UK Nissan Apprentices, Temporary Manufacturing Staff and Placement Students and expects to provide strong metrics to show how digital can have a tangible impact on learner outcomes.

If successful, the app will be rolled out across the business and its UK supply chain, with a view to demonstrating the app to industry bodies such as EEF, SEMTA and Manufacturing Technologies Alliance and showing how digital technology can be transformational in supporting vocational learning.

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## Sparkle VR Iris Speaks



Children who speak fewer than 50 words at the age of two are more likely to be behind their peers in their vocabulary, grammar and reading ability at 17. Identifying 'late talkers' early allows Early Years Professionals to offer language coaching to help speed up children's development.

The project will develop SparkleVR - a mobile app and Virtual Reality speech, language and communication training programme.

The app can identify weak spots in knowledge and focus on those until the learner is achieving advanced levels across every topic. It continuously evaluates progress, intelligently identifying what to learn next as learners make their way up a nationwide leaderboard to score more points with recall speed and accuracy.

The programme also comes with VR goggles which can be used in sessions to check new knowledge in real life situations helping to embed knowledge into long term working memory. Sample assessments for children on their speech and language enable practitioners to understand how to tailor the training to each child with recommended strategies.

SparkleVR will not only show nursery managers the increase in individual practitioners' knowledge over time but also the measurable impact on the children's speech and language as a result.

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## Carevolution West College Scotland



The daily routine of a homecare worker operates on very tight timescales with little time for learning. This project aims to create a prototype mobile app which will enable homecare workers to access training material between visits or at other times that are relevant and convenient to them.

The development will include the creation of a multimedia content library appropriate to the roles and needs of homecare workers, by working collaboratively with various homecare organisations across Scotland. The app will be interactive, requiring workers to respond to visual cues and safely explore the consequences of decisions taken in various settings.

The new tool will deliver timely, cost effective training that will upskill the care home workforce in the West of Scotland. Learners' achievements will be recognised via the use of Open Badges.

West College Scotland will work with their network of over 100 relevant Scottish stakeholders including the University of the West of Scotland, Local Authorities, SSSC, regional Health and Social Care Partnerships and the SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority).



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## Guided Coding Journey Code Your Future



The demand for coding skills across the economy is growing. Jobs in coding are generally well paid and learning to code is relatively easy - making coding an ideal pathway for those who have been unable to acquire the skills needed to find meaningful work in the UK job market.

CodeYourFuture (CYF) is a voluntary initiative which teaches refugees and locally born disadvantaged people to code for free, supports their soft skills development and then helps them to get jobs in the tech sector.

This project will develop a proof-of-concept learning platform designed to extend and sustain the CYF operation as it grows from London into other cities and regions.

To apply for a CYF 8-month course, an applicant needs to complete a series of tasks and tutorials. This process is currently managed back and forth via email. This project with Ufi will automate that process through an online platform.

Learners see a personalised dashboard where they receive instructions, submit work and get feedback and encouragement from the wider community.

Users can find additional support for complex problems through a linked chat system and via workshops hosted by volunteers and the wider community.



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## Emotive Self Injury Support



Dealing with customers and service users displaying challenging behaviours can be difficult without the right support. Emotive will develop a game-based app to enable front-line support staff working in a range of sectors to better understand and work with these challenges.

It is expected that the introduction of flexible, accessible learning in this area will lead to increased staff confidence, lower burnout and lower levels of relationship breakdown with clients, the net effect of which is to improve productivity.

The app will apply real life examples to their learning, improving personal resilience and building on knowledge using a modular approach. The approach brings together skills development, knowledge and reflection on personal practice in an app which will be accessible anytime, anywhere and can be completed in small segments.

The app will benefit learners by supporting them to develop improved skills in supporting clients who behave in challenging ways. There is no training currently available to deal with this specific issue, which is an increasing problem in many settings.

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## Web for Classrooms Wiznoze



Vocational learning is much more effective if learners are offered resources at a reading level that they are confident with. That sounds like a simple and sensible idea, but delivering it is more complicated.

The concept being tested in this project is that providing access to relevant web-based information at the right reading level can improve outcomes in all subject areas. It supports personalised and flipped learning in the classroom and during independent study.

This project extends Wizenoze's previous experience in schools to support learning in UK FE Colleges. By providing access to readable content on a chosen course, Web for Classrooms (WfC) supports students to gain greater comprehension of specific content, leading to improved vocational knowledge and competencies, enhanced employability skills, and eventually to greater career opportunities.

Web for Classrooms (WfC) is a SaaS solution directly targeted at vocational students and education practitioners. This project will test out in real time how appropriate materials can be sourced for a range of vocational areas to support learners across all reading levels. Moving from school level to FE level presents new challenges that the project will explore.

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## Intelligent Mobile Training for the Construction Industry

### Acadmi



New to the construction industry or refreshing your skills? A bot named 'Dean' is your new best friend!

The project will develop an interactive, accessible solution for learning in the UK Construction Industry, designed for use on mobile devices. It aims to deliver a training solution that has media-rich, gamified bite-sized content, tailored to the individual learner's needs and delivered on-demand.

The project will draw on components of Acadmi's current B2B / SaaS Mobile Learning Platform to build and test a training app which will allow employers and training providers to tailor content for their employees.

Featuring an interactive video player integrated with quizzes, assessments and social peer-to-peer assignments as well as user-generated content. Users will be supported by a Bot named 'Dean' to help employees in their access to key information.

Acadmi's web app will intelligently learn about the employee's key strengths and weaknesses - delivering daily / weekly content to improve their training engagement rates and retention of information.

The longer-term aim is to create a marketplace of content from a curated network of training providers, public bodies and employers - all for employees to access a library of content to up-skill themselves, on-demand and on-the-go.



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## Better Skills, Better Jobs

### Learnium



People learn better if they learn collaboratively and understand how those skills are needed for work. That's the concept behind the Better skills, better jobs project.

Learnium's ambition is to develop a new approach to skills development that will engage more learners in upskilling to better paid jobs. The project will focus on hospitality recruitment and training provision to test the ideas. The approach will involve an end-to-end process of learner recruitment, employer engagement, skills training, job placement and onboarding to follow the skills development into the workplace.

The innovation is in building a collaborative training application that provides skills training relevant to the sector, increases engagement, builds collaborative and peer working skills, and engages employers in this process to make sure the skills needs are rooted in real work environments.

The platform's learning design will be to support group activities and collaborative learning to drive better outcomes. Learnium already supports collaborative learning in other educational sectors and will be developing a new product as part of this project suite to meet the needs of learners with different abilities.



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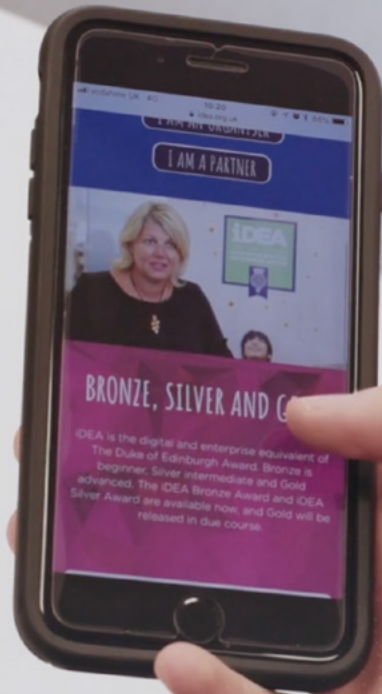
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# 2019

## C.O.P.S TalkOut VR



Gwent Police were looking for a more interactive and engaging way to train new and current staff taking over from the current use of passive video. Enter the COPS.

This new development product, Computer Operated Police Simulator (C.O.P.S), will be used to augment technical and non-technical skills for the UK Police. This project will build and trial a virtual learning platform delivering training in a CAVE (Computer Assisted Virtual Environment). Users will be dropped into various scenarios and allowed to choose different paths as a way to address incidents as they occur in the simulation.

A combination of fixed and random scenarios will be created to deliver specific learning objectives. Simulation has been demonstrated to develop situational awareness and decision making with increased knowledge retention, enabling behavioural change. Simulations in this project will combine the use of CAVEs and Virtual Reality headsets to ensure that users become fully immersed whilst undertaking specific activities.

The prototype platform will be piloted with Gwent Police, combining the company's expertise in creating engaging 3D virtual learning tools with Gwent's knowledge of the learning required for its force.

The project was extended as part of VocTech Now to include additional content to train people to use appropriate PPE for different situations.

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## Spotless Solutions 42



Infection outbreaks are like fires, they don't happen frequently but when they do, the situation is an emergency. They require dealing with promptly and effectively, to prevent catastrophic outcomes of avoidable deaths.

Emergencies like these require practicing actions and developing the skills necessary for containment before the situation arises. This is what project 'Spotless' aims to do.

The 'Spotless' project intends to use scenario-based e-learning, contextualised to the learner's environment (in this instance a care home) instead of just producing compliance e-learning. The learner will find themselves having to immediately decide how they are going to manage the hygienic care of a resident and the surrounding environment, when that resident has vomited in a communal dining area (catchily titled Doris throws up).

Not only will this engage the learners mentally but also collaboratively, as they will begin to consider their local policies, systems and processes as well as the part they play in the outcome and within the team. The learner can choose as they are going through the scenes at what point they wish to access additional learning resources such as video tutorials, job aids, reference links and other guides.

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## Wildlife Skills Delivered by Remote Vocational Training Wild Skills



How do you learn the skills needed to work professionally with wildlife?  
And how can digital learning make the process better?

Wildlife skills is a nature conservation vocational skills training package, delivered remotely into a learner's own environment. Through the loan of wildlife survey equipment, supported by access to enriched online training materials and live training broadcasts, learners can take the time needed to gain competence in specialist professional skills. Those might involve safely catching and monitoring specific species or tracking wildlife in its natural habitat.

This blended approach means that learners can practice and demonstrate their new skills remotely with expert online support. Their experience is enhanced by contributing data to citizen science networks and uploading examples of their work to an online platform to increase community knowledge and share experiences with other learners.

It is planned for this to lead them to quality assured recognition linked to endorsements from employers and professional bodies, either as ongoing CPD for those in the profession or as a way of demonstrating competence for employability.

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## The Open Networking Lab Accessibility Project The Open University



There is an urgent need to enable blind and visually impaired people to gain better access to the job market. Nationally, there are over 2 million people with sight loss, with 360,000 registered as blind or partially sighted. Approximately 25% of those with partial sight loss are employed, but this decreases to 10% for those who are blind. This project will allow visually impaired learners to acquire basic computer networking skills through the use of accessible network simulation software.

To achieve this the project will build upon and extend an established network simulation tool to offer an accessible interface for conducting network simulations, tailored to the needs of this community of learners.

The project is a collaboration between the Royal National College for the Blind (RNC), members of the vision impaired and broader disability community, and accessibility specialists at The Open University (OU) to identify user requirements and test the new developments.

It is hoped that the use of innovative tech will level the playing field for people with special educational needs and disabilities – identifying the technology that best suits individual needs.

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## Citizen Literacy App City of Glasgow College



Improving adult literacy has been a challenge for many years. The first UK phonics-based adult literacy course, developed and operated by City of Glasgow College, has been changing lives across the city and West of Scotland. This project builds upon that success to create a free smartphone app to deliver literacy training in a creative way using smart technology.

The app will feature interactive multimedia gameplay, with handwriting and voice recognition to facilitate user data entry to complete exercises, containing links to local adult literacy training providers.

It can be used to support the delivery of face-to-face phonics-based literacy courses or be used in standalone mode to allow learners to develop at their own pace, overcoming the considerable social stigma that can be attached to low literacy levels.

The main technical component of Citizens Literacy will comprise the development of a smartphone app (iOS & Android) that can be used with or without a user account (to store progress and personalisation). User-generated data can be stored locally or in a cloud database associated with an account. App content will be created appropriate for mobile use to keep user costs down.

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## Gamification In Construction The Manchester College



Getting access to a live, working construction site for a group of students can take considerable time and planning for construction departments. As a result, students can't spend as much time experiencing the real world of construction as trainers would like.

This gamification product aimed at construction learners will engross the most difficult to engage learners, developing their digital and transferable employability skills through tasks and activities set within a real world of work virtual environment.

This project software bridges the gap between education and the real world of construction, giving students the opportunity to fully explore the environment, tools, materials, machinery and building techniques of a virtual construction site.

Through increasingly challenging tasks learners will build increasingly complex structures, from simple single storey buildings (a shed or a bungalow) to super structures. They will be able to realise their constructions through the effective application of skills, such as creative thinking and problem-solving.

Through a range of platforms learners will be able to access the application at home, in college workshops, or at work through their own mobile devices and they will be able to share and develop their outcomes with their peers.

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## The NYA Learning Hub

### The NYA Youth Work Academy



Training opportunities for Youth Workers are currently very limited and the number of qualified people continues to fall, while the need for the specialist skills they require increases at a significant rate.

Added to this there is little opportunity for learning to underpin career progression or to enable the many fantastic volunteers working with young people to gain the skills they need to move into paid employment within the sector.

The NYA Youth Work Academy will provide a vocational learning platform and collaborative learning space for the UK Youth Work Sector. The organisation is looking more widely to see how a 'digital first' approach can change how they work.

The opportunity for social impact from this development is significant, with the increased skills of the Youth Workers rippling out into communities.

This project will combine NYA's expertise in working with young people and understanding the learning needs of those supporting them with the digital expertise of Agylia to develop the underpinning technology. It will be piloted with 100 individuals working with young people from a variety of settings.



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## Tech learning for Fashion

### Fashion Enter



Technology can help bring alive important skills and safety training in traditional sectors.

A major skills gap was identified by Fashion Enter for garment construction and the required technical skills to create garments to the correct client spec. The industry fails to attract newcomers and relies on imported labour mainly from the EU. There has been a net decrease of these workers into the UK and this has had a damaging effect on the revival and growth of garment manufacturing in the UK.

Fashion Flyers interactive resource, within a blended learning programme, will create a bridge for learning that can be remotely accessed. Building on an existing ABC accredited Level 1 Textiles award, parts of the complex technical units will now be embedded through interactive videos.

An interactive resource will be based on the learner understanding how to set up and use industrial sewing machines correctly and safely. Using existing machinists, the script will be developed to ensure that a wide cross section of common mistakes or unsafe practices will be videoed that can be identified by the learner. In order to identify each mistake, the learner must touch the screen at the appropriate place to answer the question correctly.



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## Infinity Generator South Devon College



How many of us asked in maths classes 'when will I ever use this in the real world'? Well there are some vocational roles that require us to use our maths skills every single day.

Responding to this need, South Devon College is developing an interactive teaching and learning tool that hyper-contextualises maths problems related directly to vocational careers. No more theoretical problems to solve – all the solutions here are directly needed in the workplace.

For example, calculating how much paint is needed to cover a wall is a necessary skill that students have to acquire in the painting and decorating courses. Using this example, the learning tool asks questions of the learners that require the correct paint calculations for a positive result. By doing this, learners are importing their proficiency of basic maths skills such as area and coverage, but most importantly understanding why they are needed.

The training will be delivered through the development of an app to be used across a mobile web platform which will ensure maximum accessibility for the end users, including offline functionality.

The next step is to expand this project to make it more accessible to more learners on a wide variety of courses.

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## AutoskillsVR South West College



Beginner mechanics trying to learn new procedures have traditionally learned by using written manuals or by watching an experienced mechanic demonstrate the techniques needed. For many learners this is a less than ideal way to learn the sequences required before attempting the actual procedure themselves in busy, fast-moving environments.

Virtual Reality (VR) training allows for freedom from distractions as the users are totally immersed inside the headset. The theory is that the more engagement and interactivity the user experiences the quicker they pick up the skills needed.

VR also has the advantage of teaching learners potentially dangerous tasks within a simulated environment. If a player becomes overwhelmed or makes too many mistakes, they can easily take off the headset and try again. This makes VR ideal for usage within pressurised environments such as a garage.

Mechanic Matchup is an immersive training system that capitalises on these features and trains players how to conduct motor vehicle maintenance procedures in a competitive Virtual Reality game. Using the latest VR technology the system will use a game-based teaching method to train new and experienced mechanics how to conduct multiple procedures.

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## Animal Care & Welfare Training

Herefordshire, Ludlow & North Shropshire College



Understanding of technical content is far more effective when presented and taught within a real-life or simulated vocational environment or setting.

The College plans to create, develop, deploy, test and share new Mixed Reality (MR) learning resources that overlay virtual objects onto the real-world environment, in a unique approach to the delivery of animal care & welfare education and training within a rural context. This enables the learner to both see and experience issues around animal care.

The mobile nature of the headsets and the ability of the holographic horse (the pilot animal) to be placed in any working space goes well beyond current teaching methods used in college at present.

The solution will use mobile digital technologies to operate effectively in a rural work and training environment. Combining these with the creation of small and highly practical MR objects for learning and assessment takes vocational training to a new level.

Hologram imagery is impressive when viewed from the HoloLens headset. The Mixed Reality Animal Care learning object experience is designed to be compelling and any representations in videos or images cannot faithfully reproduce or replicate the excellent headset experience.



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## Tech for Textiles Blackburn College



The new technologies that are emerging provide opportunities to make learning more engaging and make acquiring new skills easier. If you can see something in real time, it can often make sense much more quickly.

Blackburn College and local employers are working in partnership to develop new approaches for training skills in the Textiles industry. Through the use of cutting-edge technologies in Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR), this project looks to bring core training manuals to life, that illustrate working practices and enable learners to continue developing their skills at a pace that works for them.

Having identified three key areas where skill development in this sector need to be addressed, AR and VR have been identified as possible solutions for developing an interactive learning package. Learners can immerse themselves remotely in the workplace, building their understanding and experience of their potential future job role and improving perception of the modern textile industry.

The new approaches will also enhance in-classroom learning by providing support to teachers and allowing learners to engage in more self-driven learning sessions. Building a bespoke technical solution and making learning accessible from learners' own devices will improve engagement, understanding and employability.



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**2020**

## Neurocare KnowHow University of Sheffield



Care workers supporting people living with long-term neurological conditions need extra skills and know-how to provide high quality, person-centred care. These conditions include Motor Neurone Disease (MND), Parkinson's, Cerebral Palsy, Huntington's, and Multiple System Atrophy (MSA) amongst others. This project will support training needs for care organisations and individual employers of personal assistants, and enable care workers to increase their knowledge base, build their confidence and competence, and support their development in a carer role.

The team will develop a novel online learning platform for carers to develop the specialist skills and knowledge they need. Designed in collaboration with carers and people living with neurological conditions, this easy-to-use resource will provide access to personalised and trusted information during a working day, 'on the go' as and when needed.

The learning tool will provide access to a range of learning resources, including short videos to share peer learning and skills; and mini podcasts to deliver 'knowledge doses'. This is not traditional e-learning - but real stories from the expert perspective of carers sharing their experiences for others to learn from.

Neurocare KnowHow is a collaboration between the University of Sheffield, Optical Jukebox, Ammba Digital Ltd and NIHR Devices for Dignity MedTech Co-operative.



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## Includmi

Wellbeing and Inclusion Training App  
for Special Education Needs and Disabilities



It's a difficult challenge to care for those who aren't always able to easily articulate their own needs. The challenge is even greater, if those being cared for are children. This project will take up the opportunity to make real changes to the way this is done.

Includmi is an app that comes from working with local authorities, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and local health services, schools, early years settings and colleges, groups and networks of parents, carers, children and young people, voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations and others with an interest in ensuring that there is effective local support for young people with SEND. The goal is that everyone involved in that education, health and care will benefit from quality assured, tailored and targeted vocational training so that they can better support the children and young people in their care, and communicate better with each other.

The app will embrace social media functionality to place the needs of the child or young person at the centre of their own care, health and education. Their wellbeing will be monitored in real time, which highlights to the team around them which interventions are having the most impact.



David Paice



includmi.com

## Limbic Whiley & Co



Public transport is relied on by many, including some of the most vulnerable members of society. As frontline staff, effective communication is key, not only for the efficient operation of the bus/coach network but also the health and safety of all onboard. With an estimated 114,000 bus and coach drivers operating in the UK, providing vital services across the country, finding new ways to offer effective training solutions is important to redress the balance in this commonly undervalued sector.

Limbic is an interactive soft-skills training application that can be delivered in classrooms and at home, using both traditional technology and immersive methods of delivery (VR). The project will use the latest graphics and motion capture technology, developed for use in computer games and film to digitally re-create realistic, emotive, and believable digital humans which are then used to form engaging and easily repeatable real-life scenarios.

Through Limbic's engaging approach, drivers will learn to recognise emotional states and the signs of common mental health issues. It will allow them to predict behaviours and empathise, while further learning material will provide strategies and techniques for mitigating or resolving problems.

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## Lean Manufacturing Learning App Sempai




UK Manufacturing isn't improving quickly enough to compete globally. The UK's Team Leaders are hidden in industry and are neglected skills-wise, yet they drive a big part of the solution to the UK's productivity problem. These people, the engine room of our factories, are unsung heroes facing a daily storm of problems, many of which they struggle to solve due to a knowledge gap. Sempai's vision is to transfer true lean capability to the hidden heroes in manufacturing to help them make the right things better.


This project creates an affordable, accessible solution that can be used in real-time on the shopfloor. An engaging and immersive digital learning tool upskills Team Leaders in lean manufacturing, giving adaptive content accessible on the shopfloor through an app on a tablet. The initial 2 modules, through a mix of branched microlearning, videos, photos, simulations & skills diagnostics, enable Team Leaders to "Do" as they "Learn".

Manufacturing businesses will benefit from the tangible improvements that their Team Leaders make from using the platform whilst growing more capable leaders able to progress into bigger roles - and helping to solve UK Manufacturing's Productivity Problem.

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## SITE IT NIACRO



Many prisoners have complex vocational learning challenges including poor essential skills, a lack of qualifications and little work experience. Construction is often a sector of choice to secure employment once they leave prison. SITE IT will develop and test an immersive training experience in construction Health & Safety, to be delivered in the prison environment using Virtual Reality, to prepare them for the workplace.

Learners, selected from the prison population, will move through three distinct learning zones within a virtual building site, undertaking tasks along the way, all forming units of an OCN Level 1 qualification in Health & Safety in a Construction Environment. Delivered through headsets (without internet connection), the application will capture how learners perform in the virtual tasks and a 'debrief' session with a construction trainer will form part of the learners' experience.

The Construction Industry Training Board Northern Ireland (CITBNI) will guide the development process and engage construction employers in the testing to ensure the content is 'fit for purpose' for those hoping to secure work in construction. Post-release work placements will also be offered to the learners.

SITE IT is a collaboration between the software company Sentireal, CITBNI, and NIACRO, with the support of the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

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## Lean Immersive App DAU Draexlmaier Automotive UK Ltd



The term "Lean manufacturing" is synonymous with efficient production. In practice, inefficiency or waste is anything that doesn't add value to the customer but requires an investment of time, money and talent. Idle time, underutilized talent, excess inventory, and inefficient processes are all considered waste by the Lean definition. This project empowers the British automotive manufacturing industry to create a learning culture among employees at the frontline of their operations, focusing on lean principles.

The primary focus will be the development of a functional prototype which is a user-friendly and engaging application to help novice users learn basic lean principles of waste reduction in a simulated production environment. This will allow the development team to test/demonstrate the power of the approach, understand the learners' requirements further to scale up the Application in the future.

The transformation in learning provision will allow vital industry skills to be offered to employees who have been unable to access relevant vocational training. Through this pilot project, Draexlmaier plan to be the first to demonstrate the power of digital vocational learning in Lean to the manufacturing industry to overcome training inequality. The skills training will be delivered in a manufacturing simulation app so learners naturally develop at a time and pace which suits them.

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## Talent Tracker Game Academy



Take a closer look at the skills of the future, forecast by the likes of the World Economic Forum and McKinsey, and video games fast turn into an extraordinary harbour of hidden talent. Strategy games like Civilization encourage an understanding of processes. Multiplayer online battle games like League of Legends are good at encouraging teamwork. There are many other correlations, not least between games and 'meta-skills'.

The vision of Game Academy is for the UK's 30m+ players of video games to make an invaluable contribution to the growth and productivity of our economy.

This project will create the first point of entry of game players to a service that will bring a vital new supply of technically-minded, digital-first talent to the labour market. Game players will share their gaming profiles, e.g. on Steam, Playstation and Xbox platforms. The tracker will then give insights into their skills traits, potential occupations and core motivations. It does this by looking at data such as game choices, traits, time played, achievement and tags, and processing the data with the support of Game Academy's datasets, proprietary and other databases, which will be enhanced during this project.

The Tracker integrates with a larger service that includes online skills courses and signposting to educational and employment opportunities.

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## Bodyswaps BODYSWAPS



Soft skills are becoming ever more important in the workplace. Digital tech can help to offer new ways to practice those skills before young people ever set foot in a real work environment.

The project seeks to transform how vocational learning happens and help people in work, or in preparation for work, improve communication skills to progress better and faster in their career. It will do this by empowering FE Colleges and organisations employing workers coming from FE to practice their communication skills (clarity, confidence, assertiveness, emotional intelligence) by acting out, with their own voice, realistic workplace scenarios in Virtual Reality.

This soft skills simulator - powered by VR & AI - aims to improve students' employability and career progression by enabling FE Colleges and Vocational Training providers across the country to bridge the soft skills gap and complement learners' technical skills with the required soft skills, cost-effectively, remotely and at a time that suits the learner.

Working with pilot partners (Harlow College, South Essex College and Writtle University College) Bodyswaps will also design and develop a Performance Feedback App enabling trainees to save and share simulated performances, and teachers or career advisors to review and feedback on these remotely at any time.

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## Marco The Writing Support App Bridgend College



A significant proportion of post-16 learners arrive at college with a low level of literacy (L1 or lower). And after what may have been difficult experiences at school, they do not generally have much motivation to improve their own writing skills. Consequently, the work that is submitted for their vocational qualification is often poorly written and can be difficult for assessors to award higher level grades to.

The goal of the Marco project is to create a sustainable mobile platform that can provide motivation for learners to improve their spelling and grammar skills, and lead to a behavioural change by encouraging them to check and proofread their work.

Learners will access Marco independently and use it to check the spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG) elements on their written work. This work can be submitted directly in the app by linking Marco to their Google Drive.

By addressing this problem, we hope to see learners will have an improved level of literacy and, in time, see that reflected in their vocational grades too. During this initial stage of building and testing, the team intends to recruit about 100 learners, building to 1000 as it approaches general release into app stores in 2021.



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## The Virtual Librarian Gower College



When learners were asked "Do you use your library resources, collections and services?" less than 10% responded "yes". And while libraries have made attempts to address these issues with traditional methods, to-date none have improved this or had the impact needed. Current methods are not in-synch with how and when students learn.

Both Gower College and the wider library community have seen that vocational, work-based and distance learners have poor engagement with library spaces, library resources, library services as well as librarians as support mentors for their course and research. The answer to the challenge is being tested with the development of a specialised chatbot as a proof of concept with the long-term aim of it being scalable across the UK educational library sector.

The chatbot will address the issue of parity of service for students who cannot physically come into college and students who need assistance outside business hours. The chatbot will address research, study and skills needs and be available across all devices and platforms. For enquiries not being resolved by the chatbot there will be a link to the library's reception desks and/or link directly to campus libraries telephone services where learners can discuss their issues with a member of staff.



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## Passport to Employment in Health Care City of Glasgow College



As of March 2020 there was an estimated 43,000 shortfall in nurses across the UK. Some of these positions could be filled by qualified professional from overseas or qualified immigrant healthcare professionals living in the UK.

The aim of this digital vocational training course is to provide non-native English speaking healthcare professionals with engaging, flexible and high quality training which will enable them to obtain the language and skills needed to pass the mandatory Occupational English Test (OET) and start employment within the health service.

The solution will enable them to improve their spoken and listening skills in authentic scenarios in real time. This project will give learners the option to study online, utilising an innovative tools and software, to create a user journey which focuses on communication skills and maps to the learning outcomes required to pass the OET.

Building on the Ufi supported KLIK2LEARN platform, learners can study at their own pace, either using the tools and technology to guide them on the learning pathway or via a Tutor Supported option which will offer a blended approach.



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## jam.academy Into Games CIC



A 'game jam' gives a live brief to a team of participants who then collaboratively build a game in a short timeframe. They are effective ways of creating 'micro-studio' environments that can replicate many aspects of the workplace and provide a way for individuals to develop essential skills rarely taught in traditional games-related courses. These skills include communication, remote team working, self-analysis and conflict resolution. The creative nature of a game jam also makes for an engaging learning experience that is practical and easy to evaluate.

Users will complete at least one game jam lasting between 1-2 weeks. Learning design will look at what will the learner needs before, during and after the game jam, making clear it at what points support and feedback need to be offered. 20+ industry mentors will be providing remote online support to the groups via a range of 3rd party collaborative tools. The project will create guidance outlines and content for these mentors as part of the programme outcomes.

The programme is supported by a project partners from Abertay University, Access Creative College group and UK games studios Sumo Digital and Creative Assembly to develop a clear understanding of the efficacy of the remote 'game jam' learning experience and have a plan for commercialisation.



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# VocTech Impact

VocTech Impact is our launchpad for projects that have a well-developed idea, can deliver to a large number of learners during the project period, and have clear routes to market after the funding ends. These projects provide large scale demonstration of what can be achieved with digital vocational tools. They are our trailblazers for the 'art of the possible'. VocTech Impact is all about harnessing digital to enable more adults to access the skills they need for work. It's about using technology innovatively to make a difference to how people learn and crucially to increase the number of people gaining new skills.

By creating practical demonstrations of the ability of VocTech to deliver cost efficient learning where real skills are gained, we hope to convince many more employers and vocational learning providers of the advantages of digital delivery of vocational learning - helping us to build a better, quicker, digital future for vocational learning. We welcome ideas from all business sectors, right across the UK.

VocTech Impact provides grants of between £150,000 and £250,000 for projects lasting 18 - 24 months.



**2018**

## AgyliaCare Agylia



There are 6.5 million unpaid carers across the UK who receive little or no training and support in their crucial roles. There is no coherent national training and support strategy for them - current provision is patchy, some through local authorities (reducing due to budget cuts) and some by a variety of charities.

This project aims to change this by using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to identify, trigger and distribute a personalised selection of training materials and relevant task support tools via an App on a Carer's phone, PC or tablet, online or offline. Training will be tracked and can lead to the award of a training certificate.

Agylia will bring together a library of training and support modules, consisting of over 200 pieces of microlearning, optimised for mobile devices, plus over 200 parallel podcasts. The service will also include discussion forums and commenting trails. Agylia are working with Skills for Care, a leading national skills charity for the social care sector.

The project will provide a way for unpaid carers to have their skills recognised, boosting confidence and helping them towards mainstream work after their family caring responsibilities end.



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## Assessing Reality eCom Scotland



The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) have identified that many paper-based skills and knowledge assessments do not fully measure the candidate's capabilities or practical knowledge.

The Assessing Reality project will develop a Virtual Reality (VR) authoring tool that will enable non-technical staff to create cost-effective VR assessments, directly on the web.

VR is ideal for vocational assessment because it will make assessment more relevant to work situations - real workplace settings can be replicated in a safe environment; consistent - assessments can be exactly the same each time; and transparent - tutors, managers or assessors will be able to see exactly what the user can see and measure their reactions in the virtual environment.

This will improve learner engagement and will also provide relevant analytics for assessors.

eCom are now working with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) to plan how VR assessments could be aligned to their course content and assessment requirements. Product testing will be with learners from Fife College, City of Glasgow College, and with social enterprise Edinburgh Forge. All of these organisations are looking at using VR to support their assessment processes.



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## Cities of Learning RSA & DigitalMe



Access to opportunities is not evenly shared across the population, and our ability to engage in vocational learning is often related to prior experiences in school. Those least advantaged are least likely to benefit from important opportunities to build social, cultural and knowledge capital, as well as social and peer networks.

Cities of Learning creates new pathways into learning and employment by connecting formal, informal, and in-work learning opportunities that exist across cities via a system of digital open badges.

The project will develop a place-based model for vocational learning and skill development by creating large-scale, collaborative partnerships with employers, learning providers, city leaders, and commissioners of learning and work provision. This will be done initially in two pilot cities, Brighton and Plymouth. Ufi funding will be used to develop and roll out a scalable digital platform and open digital badges as a mechanism to connect individuals to local learning and work opportunities and narrow skills gaps.

By connecting locally-generated, locally-relevant learning opportunities more clearly to local work opportunities, the project aims to encourage those furthest from the learning and labour market to come back into learning.

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## Engineering Apprentices Mate GTA England



How can apprentices be supported to learn more independently in the workplace or training room? AR may be the answer to quick access to know-how and expert advice.

The Engineering Apprentices Mate is an engaging point and play augmented reality (AR) learning experience for engineering apprentices, using a piece of virtual machinery or equipment to provide the apprentice with individual learning, support and assessment activities. The object appears in space in front of you and you can turn it to see it from all angles. Tags on the equipment trigger content, created by engineering instructors across the GTA network, which is accessed via the app or AR headsets, giving apprentices more control over their own learning during their apprenticeship training as well as supporting revision for end-point assessments.

Away from the workshop or factory floor areas, the app can be used with photographs of the machinery, as well as accessing the non-augmented reality aspects of the app (the gallery, information about the machine provider and contact information).

Group Training Associations (GTAs) are employer led training providers, focused on delivering high quality provision to key industrial sectors through public-private learning partnerships where employers subscribe to off-the-job training centres to provide efficient, expertly delivered skills.

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## EY Smart PACEY



EY Smart aims to achieve a step-change in how Continuous Professional Development (CPD) can support childcare practitioners, using digital technology to enable them to learn for free at times and in ways that suit them, with the assurance that the learning provided is compliant with national requirements.

Regulation is changing for early years providers and childcare practitioners who, in order to be allowed to care for 0-5 year olds, must demonstrate they are meeting Ofsted's new education inspection framework and the requirements set out for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in England, and the equivalent frameworks in Wales.

The EY Smart platform will offer bite-sized modules to help childcare practitioners to understand what the regulatory changes are and how they can support children in their care to reach the underlying developmental stages they need to be ready for school.

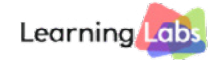
Content will be delivered in small chunks, through video observation of good practice, peer learning, curated searches etc. An e-tracker will help learners to monitor their progress, celebrate milestones and share ideas with colleagues. EY-Smart will create an online learning community with a 'social' approach to learning in which participants can share success with peers and receive goal-based rewards, all with the assurance of content from PACEY - Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years.

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## Flash Academy Workplace Learning Labs



There are 9 million workers in the UK with low literacy, limiting their access to work now, and to further training for the jobs of the future.

With over 100+ native languages spoken by the UK workforce, employers face real challenges in delivering sector specific Health & Safety and technical training for these low literacy workers. New Health & Safety legislation requiring employers to demonstrate understanding and engagement presents new challenges, especially when considering that on construction sites, migrant workers are twice as likely to be killed.

The FlashAcademy® Workplace English App helps employers to overcome these challenges with short burst lessons, virtual tutors and engaging games. Employees also learn using the world's first 'object translator' that works by taking a photo of an object and instantly translating that object into a choice of 59 different languages. All learning is tracked on a dashboard, to enable employers to evidence their employees' understanding and progress, assisting with Health & Safety compliance.

The project is being developed with the support of Make UK, Jaguar Land Rover's supplier network and BAM Construction. Once proven to be effective with initial pilot companies, FlashAcademy® Workplace will be scaled up nationally, initially in the manufacturing and construction sectors.

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## Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award (iDEA)

### iDEA



iDEA badges are short interactive online modules, created in consultation with industry experts that you can access for free. Participants take on a series of challenges to earn points which aggregate towards their Bronze, Silver or Gold Inspiring Digital Enterprise Awards. They can be done by independent learners, or in classrooms and workshops.

iDEA learners are incentivised to become digital all-rounders, with the opportunity to take their learning deeper into specific areas of interest by combining a series of badges. The platform aims to help to plug the UK's digital skills gap, with content designed to inspire people to become digital citizens, workers, makers, entrepreneurs and gamers.

The different learning categories cover diverse topics including cyber security, cloud computing and e-safety, as well as animation, growth hacking, customer relationship management and web development.

The team is now developing the Gold Award level and aims to engage additional Partners from the worlds of business, industry and enterprise as an important route to accessing new learners and to make sure that Gold Award vocational badges are tied to skills needs.



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## Passive Accreditation in Prisons

### Fluence



Currently 47% of prisoners have no formal qualifications and to help overcome this, all UK prisoners are obliged to engage with vocational training as part of their sentence. Learning providers have to address the challenge of delivering training within the complex and transient environment of prisons where learners may be moved to another institution or released before their qualification can be completed.

Fluence has developed a highly accurate, Artificial Intelligence-assisted decision-making engine that emulates the decision logic of educators. Learning providers can input content, such as work assignments, into the Fluence engine, along with decisions made about the content (e.g. grades) and the Fluence algorithm learns to replicate the decision logic of educators on all future content.

Fluence can apply this auto-grading technology to both formal learning and 'naturally occurring evidence' based on the work produced by prisoners on site. It can provide formal evidence of their abilities, as well as assessing them up front. This turns the process of assessment and accreditation into a silent process, happening invisibly in the background, allowing teachers to focus on teaching.

Through this project, the technology has the potential to make a genuine step change in prison education by improving the accreditation of vocational learning for 85,000 vulnerable learners in prisons.



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## Scaling With The Crowd

### Beam



Supporting people who are either homeless or at risk of homelessness is a challenge that digital tech can help to solve.

Beam is an award-winning organisation that crowdfunds employment training for disadvantaged people. This project will enable new vocational learning opportunities for this community. People are referred to Beam by homeless charities, receiving a bespoke training and employment plan and support from a Beam employee. The crowdfunding model is designed to support people into paid work through vocational training that has recognised and accredited quality, and removes other financial barriers to gaining skills, including the costs of childcare and equipment.

Beam has tested the concept with a small group of learners and more than 20 Beam service users are now in paid employment, following training funded through donations. The project will support the move from proof-of-concept to full roll out. This will include developing the website and supporting infrastructure to be able to scale the solution, with a focus on building a mobile UI and UX for homeless members and donors. Innovative support will be improved through a private area of the website with messaging, ability to support each other's progress and testing of peer support and mentoring.



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## Vocational Game-Based Learning

### Applio



There is increasing evidence that people can learn more effectively using games or gamification of content. Creating good games-based learning (GBL) is costly and complex. Although there are games creation tools on the market, it remains largely the domain of professionals. This project aims to solve that problem by providing content and tools to allow low cost GBL development. The project will create a simplified version of the underlying games authoring tool that can be used without specific technical skills and that will bring GBL within the reach of smaller organisations and employers.

This project is a partnership between Applio, who are specialists in designing and developing game-based learning and Birmingham Metropolitan College (BMet).

The GBL resources it creates will be aimed at improving the professional skills of young learners entering the workplace, in areas such as situational judgement, communication, problem solving and team working. These will replace current approaches where learning is delivered face-to-face through expensive, labour intensive workshops or through e-learning which often proves to be less effective. The partners will collaborate to create digital games-based learning resources which will provide learning experiences similar to those of face-to-face workshops.



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## Waypoint

### Marine Society & Sea Cadet Organisation (MSSC)



MSSC currently helps Sea Cadets to achieve more and make a life for themselves, often in very difficult times, through a diverse range of training and development.

Waypoint will transform the Sea Cadets offer, shifting the focus from evaluating outputs e.g. boating hours and towards a focus on outcomes, such as increased qualifications and employment opportunities. It has potential to have a positive impact on those over 16, who are more likely to drop out of Sea Cadets, providing an alternative pathway to college by managing their skills development and vocational training, with the support of their local Sea Cadet group.

The project will develop an interactive portal, accessible via mobile devices, that will give learners clear view of opportunities available to them, the learning journey and what their next steps could be. It will showcase training and career opportunities available nationally in the marine industry (sailing, catering, engineering, etc), provide access to courses available to Cadets based on their career interests, enable Cadets to share information about what they are getting involved in and what they think about those experiences/courses, and enable achievements to be presented professionally in a comprehensive record of achievement and qualifications gained via the Cadet Experience Dashboard.



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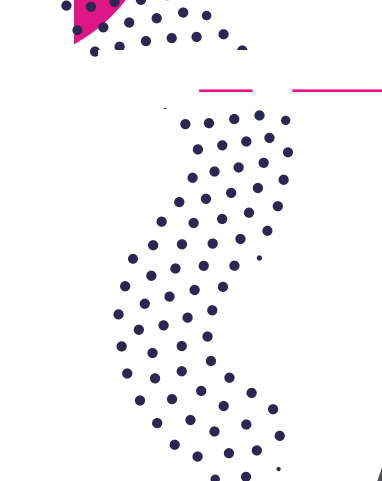
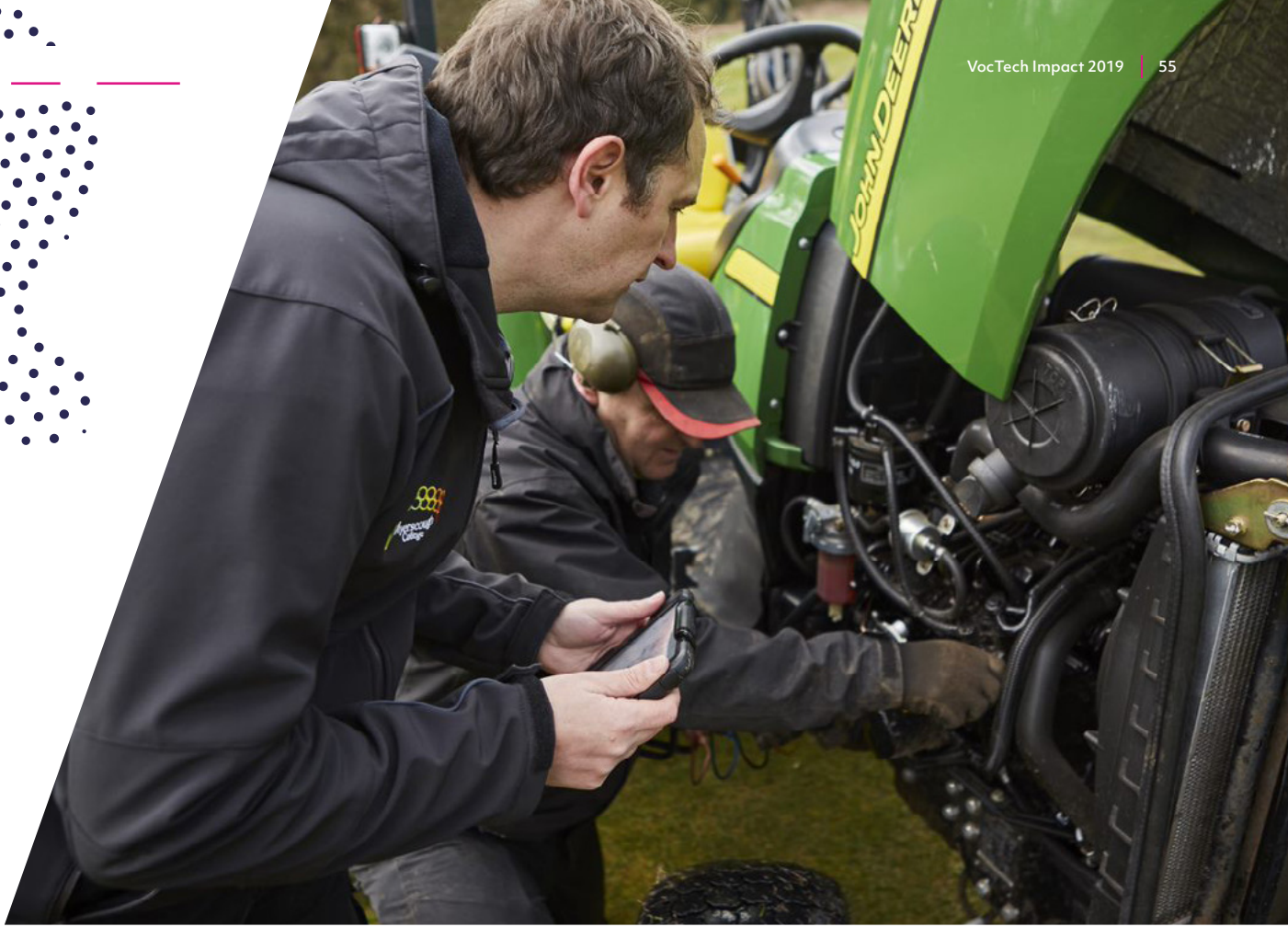
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**2019**



## Augmented Learning For High Dexterity Applications National Composites Centre



Composite materials are used increasingly across many industries because of their beneficial properties, with hand layup - layering the materials manually over a forming mold - being one of their most common forms of manufacture. It is a skill that takes time to learn and with expensive materials, it is important to get it right. Existing skills development relies on a combination of job shadowing and experience gained with time on the job. The project seeks to change fundamentally how composites training is developed and delivered, reducing timescales and costs by using novel augmented reality and digital methods alongside e-learning training content.

In this project, a series of digital training scenarios will be created and delivered as part of an introductory-level course. The scheme of work, lesson plans, and objectives will then be created. Finally, the necessary digital materials for each course will be developed, including e-learning content, simulations, and augmented reality programs. In addition to the training carried out at the NCC, there will be real world college trials with trailblazer apprentices in order to assess the performance of the system and material at an example customer location.



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## Autolive

### North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College



AutoLive provides realistic, interactive and engaging experiences of a production line. Individual learners will be able to develop familiarity with the production environment and key work tasks, practice dexterity control and safe working practices and as a result reduce errors. Groups of learners will be able to work together to develop co-operative working practices, communication, situation awareness and to experience the pace and urgency associated with working on a modern production line. The system uses Unreal Engine 4 to create immersive 3D Virtual Reality and 2D games-based training.

Autolive will provide real time reporting and feedback, allowing teachers and learners to analyse choices and measure progress against assessment requirements. Representatives from automotive sector organisations are supplying apprentices and trainees who will participate in the project trials to assess its effectiveness.

North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College and Coventry University Enterprises have combined their vocational training and technology advancement expertise to take their prototype to the next level. The tool will support the delivery of the L2 Lean Manufacturing Operative Apprenticeship Standard and will support modules for core automotive manufacturing techniques, including assembly, sequencing and procedures with lean manufacturing principles, workplace organisation, health & safety, quality assurance, continuous improvement, problem solving and communication.



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## Using Tech to Embed Learning AELP



Cost and connectivity can be real barriers to learning for those in remote settings and reduce the successful completion of learning. Working with manufacturing employers, the proof of concept phase of this project tested and piloted the application of low-cost digital technologies to help improve learner engagement, retention and outcomes. Learners had direct access to bite-sized learning on a VLE (Virtual Learning Environment), via handheld devices. Content, aligned to the manufacturing apprenticeship standards, was accessible in the workplace, triggered by QR codes on equipment or smart posters using AR (Augmented Reality) content to enrich the experience.

The next phase of the project will create an easy-access platform, available to training providers in the Engineering and Manufacturing sectors, optimised to use low-cost VR technology, such as Google Cardboard, and the creation of 360o immersive videos.

The Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) has over 800 members and the learning from this programme will be used to explore whether the approach can be used in a range of other non-manufacturing and service sectors. Partner Gen2 has 900+ apprentices, which gives a solid basis for both evaluation in the testing and rollout phases, and to measure a resulting impact on learning.



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## Formative Assessment Bolton College



Teachers are expected to undertake open-ended formative assessment activities to support and inform teaching, learning and assessment. The burden of work in this area is high and any means of reducing workloads will be beneficial to both teachers and learners.

Bolton College previously had proven the concept of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to analyse short and long form answers and to demonstrate that real-time feedback can be offered to vocational learners as they respond to online open-ended formative assessment tasks. Their FirstPass tool provided an initial introduction to AI cloud computing technologies which are able to support vocational students and their teachers with open-ended formative assessment tasks.

This project will provide further development of FirstPass to ensure that it is effective and robust in use and can demonstrably improve the teaching, learning and assessment experience of vocational learners. It will provide teachers with a richer medium for assessing students due to its ability to pose open-ended questions that can be automatically analysed and assessed by a computer, giving students real-time feedback and the opportunity to qualify and clarify their responses. The revised AI Cloud FirstPass tool will be suitable for use by vocational students and teachers in multiple institutions.



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Mobiles, Skills & Confidence with Numbers

## National Numeracy



The aim of this project is simple – to improve the skills and confidence of 20,000 adults, enabling them to ‘get on with numbers’ and thereby get on at work. And to do this in a way that is accessible anytime, anywhere.

National Numeracy is an independent charity established to raise low levels of numeracy among both adults and children and to promote the importance of everyday maths skills. They aim to enable everyone across the UK to be confident and competent in using numbers and data, to be able to make good decisions in their daily life and at work.

The project will enhance the NNChallenge website so that it provides an engaging experience on mobile devices, enabling adult workers to improve their skills without the need for a PC with wi-fi access. Content will be developed to support adults with lower maths skills, or a lack of confidence and learners will have the opportunity to demonstrate measurable improvements in proficiency.

The team will partner with Health Education England and The Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW) to engage health and social care, and retail and distribution employees to ensure that solutions are effective in settings where staff lack the maths skills and confidence with numbers necessary for their jobs.



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## Cognify Pembrokeshire College



The use of voice-controlled devices continues to increase at a rapid rate and voice will overtake typing as the main search input method by 2022.

Pembrokeshire College has developed the Cognify app that enables learners and teachers to listen to a document, dictate comments and notes and answer questions by utilising text to voice and vice versa within the same document. There are other text/voice solutions on the market, but the ability of the app to work both ways over a range of content is one of its most engaging and innovative features. The app supports multiple content types within a single document including formatted text, figures and videos. Teachers can use it for worksheets and learners can use it for dictating notes into their course materials.

Cognify is already a working app but requires further development of an authoring and sharing platform, an integrated e-commerce engine and integration with recognised tools such as Moodle, MS OneDrive, Google Drive and Blackboard.

The project will be developed at Pembrokeshire College, where there is access to over 3000 work-based learners, and then a wider roll-out to the 126-member colleges of the Blended Learning Consortium. The focus on longer term sustainability is built into the project development and potential future partners have already been identified.



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/company/cognify-voice-assisted-tech

## Digital Change Makers MyBE Awards



MYBE Awards is a niche organisation creating and delivering specialised awards for people who are hard to help or engage for a variety of reasons or who need or want to improve their lifestyles. They focus on providing opportunities for people who have missed out on traditional education to progress and achieve their goals within their capabilities. The Digital Change Makers project is a unique online learning platform, developed from non-traditional learner perspectives, for criminal justice affected learners underrepresented in higher aspirational learning and careers.

This phase of development will enable the online platform to provide learning services more effectively and on learner's terms, providing strong role modelling in an engaging, peer supported way. The project will use a personalised avatar to help engage learners with their programme content and measure progress. Scenario-based content, to make it more relatable, will be supported by motivation and self-assessment tools to give learners a greater sense of control.

The digital platform will work on all types of devices and will offer clear pathways from a level 2 qualification, a level 3 qualification, an apprenticeship pathway with relevance to multiple employment sectors and a completely new Access to HE Diploma qualification aimed at widening participation of disadvantaged learners in Higher Education.



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## Princes Trust Online The Princes Trust



The Prince's Trust supports young people to develop their soft skills and employability skills, breaking down any barriers personal or otherwise, to enable them to eventually find a job or the opportunity to get into training or education.

Now more than ever, young people are facing greater barriers to educational attainment and employment. Currently The Prince's Trust get approximately 100,000 enquiries a year, but unfortunately not all of these young people are able to immediately benefit from the programmes of support offered. The current mechanisms are not as young people friendly as they could be and as a result, there is a fairly high drop-out rate.

With nearly 95% of young people owning a smart phone, Prince's Trust Online will allow more versatility in how and where support can be offered, through both mobile and online learning content. The next iteration of Prince's Trust Online will invite young people to become part of a community from the moment they engage and stay connected through a blended face-to-face and digital platform. This digital on-boarding means they will remain engaged whilst they are waiting for a programme. The project will focus on improving the initial customer experience and improving the digital engagement with young people, which will be offered alongside face-to-face support.



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## Digital Productivity Factory Valuechain



Industry 4.0 - the automation of traditional manufacturing and industrial practices, using modern smart technology is a live issue across all sectors. It represents a significant opportunity for organisations to optimise their use of resources, innovate new value adding products/services and develop a sustainable competitive advantage in the market. At this point in time, many organisations and employers lack the required combination of digital and engineering skills to implement the necessary technological changes successfully and seize the Industry 4.0 challenge.

Valuechain's existing services enable manufacturing companies to compete as world class supply chains. They provide smart manufacturing software that helps organisations to improve productivity, streamline collaboration and generate intelligence. This project aims to extend those capabilities to help organisations develop their future-readiness through the use of personalised development plans in an immersive virtual smart factory environment. The platform will identify skills gaps and then offer learners within manufacturing workforces the opportunity to develop the required digital skills.

Users will undergo an initial assessment and receive suggested training courses to complete in the environment based on their goals and skills. To increase depth of knowledge transfer, each course can be completed in a variety of preconfigured factory layouts and be completed either via the web or through an immersive experience.



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## Using AI in FE to Improve Learning Outcomes CENTURY



Taking English and maths GCSE resits after a less-than successful experience in school is hard – both for the learner and the teacher trying to motivate and support them. FE Colleges were looking for a better way to help learners succeed.

CENTURY is the tried and tested intelligent intervention tool that combines artificial intelligence with the latest research in learning science and neuroscience. It creates constantly adapting, personalised pathways for every student and powerful intervention data for teachers.

Over the past year, CENTURY has been piloting the use of their AI platform to demonstrate its potential to support learning in FE. Their focus is on the impact of AI technology in English and Maths as part of an independent or blended learning strategy for learners who are undertaking resits in these subjects.

Their intelligent intervention tool works with Colleges to stretch and support every student, instantly addressing gaps in knowledge, remedying misconceptions, and providing resources for teacher-led learning sessions. This, in turn, frees up the time teachers spend on marking and feedback to make effective use of classroom time.



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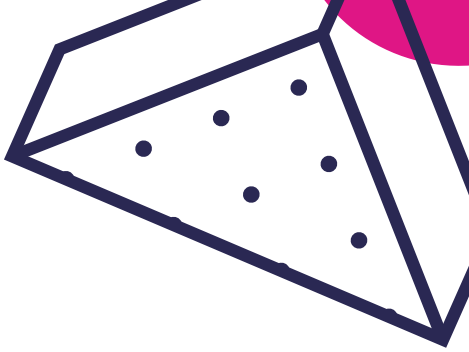






# VocTech Specialist 2019

## VocTech Specialist Discovery Phase



We invited organisations to respond to the Challenge of 'the changing nature of work in the 21st century workplace'. The projects selected for funding were invited to explore their idea using design thinking to really get to the heart of potential users' vocational learning needs and to look at a variety of options for learning design and technology platforms.

10 of the projects successfully completed this phase and were ready to move their idea to the next stage, being offered either Seed or Impact grants.



The following projects all received up to £20k funding under the VocTech Specialist Call 2019 Discovery Phase.

Organisation	Project Name	Project Idea
Boston College	Blended Team Leading Qualifications in the AgriTech Sector	Making learning accessible to a dispersed rural community
WAMITAB	WastED	Transforming learning in the Waste industry
Career Matters	THRIVE	New opportunities and support for learners leaving care
SCU Motorsport	Formula Ed	Virtual training and skills for motorsports engineers
UK Rural Skills Ltd	Grow Skills: Upskilling Farm Staff Online	Understanding the future skills needs of the agricultural sector
First Step Trust	SMaRT Pathways	Practical, flexible learning for people with learning difficulties
The Data Place	Applied Data Skills	Creating a new career pathway using data skills
Barking & Dagenham College	Applied Data Skills	Creating a new career pathway using data skills

Organisation	Project Name	Project Idea
Contented Brothers	Skilling Me Softly	Soft skills development to improve career prospects for non-graduates
West College Scotland	The Critical Engineer	Understanding how Industry 4.0 impacts the future of work
Digital Unite	DCN Enable	Creating digital champions amongst people with learning disabilities
Socrates Software Ltd	Way to Work	Pathways into work for people leaving prison
Skills for Logistics (2015) Ltd	Flow	Training the next generation of learners in the logistics industry

## Digital Unite Digital Aspire



People with Learning Disabilities who can work but are unemployed and would like to find new roles in the 21st Century workplace are the target learners for this project. Digital Unite are building on their specialist online learning platform and successful 'Digital Champions' model to support learners to develop their digital skills and confidence.

Most workplaces now require a level of digital literacy, if only for completing administrative processes, and many are asking for wider IT skills. Those with learning difficulties face multiple challenges in being able to upskill to prosper in the new digital world. As well as providing routes into employment, the project is creating a 'champions' training model' to empower people with learning difficulties to develop their soft skills and other specialist employment-led skills.

The Ufi funding for Digital Aspire will help to create a stepping stone into work by equipping users with confidence and skills, opening opportunities for a more independent life. The Discovery Phase underlined the challenges for this group of learners and built some exciting new partnerships that will help Digital Unite to create lasting change in the digital confidence of their learners.



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## Barking and Dagenham College Future DomCare



Social care workers are the backbone of the social support system for many elderly or infirm people living at home or in sheltered environments. Whilst they perform a vital service, there is currently no pathway that allows them to progress their skills, unless they choose to move into management. Future DomCare – E CARE will create a mobile platform for virtual learning to increase domiciliary carers' understanding of anatomy and physiology to enable them to use digital tools to undertake clinical measurements.

Their focus is to give social care staff the skills and confidence to use digital tools whilst working with their patients and to work collaboratively with doctors and other health professionals. In this way, they can be quicker to spot deteriorating health and prevent acute illness. In the long-term, this learning tool will enable learning and progression for staff, enhancement of social care services and better outcomes for the people they serve.

The Discovery Phase was enlightening in understanding the needs of users, and their desire to stay at the 'coal face' of the profession, but better skilled and with more prospects. Barking and Dagenham College are working with Care City as key delivery partners for this project.



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## WAMITAB WastEd



Training in the Waste industry is critical to ensure the safety of all workers. WAMITAB are leading the development of a social learning application for the waste and resource management sector, combining the benefits of peer-to-peer learning with the engagement and popularity of social media, gaming and on-demand news. It will support workers in high risk environments to overcome barriers to learning, gain confidence and develop new skills.

Using the design tools they learned in the Discovery Phase, the team were able to identify the 'pain points' of their learners' experiences with traditional learning methods. Many were unconfident in the classroom and ensuring compliance training was completed to industry standards was a challenge. The organisation enthusiastically used the Discovery mentality to look at their core business and reimagine it for the future. In response, a platform is being created with free to use basic functionality, but with potential for individual employer-sponsored additional learning modules and games.

The application will benefit micro, SME and large waste and resource management businesses in the UK, connecting employees across organisations to share best practice whilst they learn.



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## First Step Trust Smart Pathways



First Step Trust has worked over many years with the long term unemployed to provide a safe learning space that will enable them to develop confidence and demonstrate skills and competence in a practical workplace environment – motor vehicle and catering being their two main areas.

Many of the workforce members live with issues such as anxiety and poor literacy which disadvantage them in accessing meaningful employment opportunities. Smart Pathways is scoping a 12-module programme, initially in motor vehicle maintenance and collaborating with the Institute of Motor Industry awarding body and Halfords to break down barriers in this employment sector through the prototype of the Virtual Garage. The Discovery Phase confirmed that many of the workforce members had difficulty with understanding written instructions and proving their competence through written tests.

They also lacked significantly in confidence in their learning. The proof of concept that is being developed will incorporate VR (Virtual Reality), video, AI (Artificial Intelligence) and other vocational technologies to develop a training tool that allows users both to learn and to demonstrate success without requiring high levels of literacy. The long-term aim is to enable those furthest from the labour market to show that they have the skills to succeed in stable employment.



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## West College Scotland The Critical Engineer



What happens when the industry you have worked in for many years is disrupted by new technologies? West College Scotland are developing a 'playbook' called The Critical Engineer which will enable existing engineers to develop skills needed to thrive in an environment of exponential technological growth and change.

The Discovery Phase was used to challenge those in the industry to articulate their learning needs faced with the pace of current change. As well as confirming some of their initial ideas around the VocTech solutions that could be used to help engineers change their practice, the deep-dive into the lived experience of engineering companies gave some invaluable social and economic insights into the work of a 21st Century professional in this field.

The playbook will allow users to utilise a variety of media including video, podcasts and digital badge content which enables engineers to make progress in 3 key metaskills, identified by employers, to enable an innovative mindset. West College Scotland recognises the importance of developing a culture of innovation and flexible routes to training so that a sector that is changing rapidly can upskill its workforce.



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## Socrates Software Way to Work



Socrates Software is working with probationers to tackle unemployment and help reduce reoffending rates. The challenges around this sector are immense, and getting people into meaningful work in a constantly changing modern environment is complex, particularly if they have not worked for some time. Way to Work is using Ufi funding to build a platform that will offer detailed job pathways, with up to date, personalised information about jobs and the skills and qualifications required for them.

Relevant learning and training content will also be included within the pathways. These pathways will be linked to real job opportunities with partner employers, who will also be able to provide their own training modules and other content for candidates.

The Discovery Phase enabled the team to look in depth at what was currently being delivered in prisons and for those transitioning back into work. The information uncovered highlighted a significant gap where learners needed much more support as they moved from one system to another and lost continuity in their learning. It also built partnerships that will help Socrates to effectively support these hard-to-reach learners at a critical time in their lives.



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## Skills for Logistics Flow



The logistics industry is a fast growing sector which has had particular challenges during 2020. It has historically had very low uptake of the apprenticeship levy since, once training for compliance has been delivered, there is limited time and budget to be spent on training for additional but non-essential skills.

Workers can enter the industry with low basic skills and opportunities for progression tend to be limited, creating a vicious circle of low career prospects and staff turnover. The Discovery phase enabled Skills for Logistics to identify in more detail issues around the quality and accessibility of learning, which they had anticipated at the start of the work. In addition, their research uncovered opportunities for greater workforce planning and CPD across the industry.

Their chosen solution, Flow, is an online 'talent growth platform' that is working to enable the transport and logistics sector to provide engaging micro qualifications and learning tools for employees to increase overall levels of learning. It also encourages a collaborative way of working amongst the different stakeholders and employers to upskill the sector as a whole.



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## Career Matters Thrive



Project Thrive is developing guided support for care leavers via a new vocational skills platform, which offers personalised layers of support for learners. Thrive connects care leavers and employers to improve vocational outcomes and opportunities.

The interactive platform will provide insights into vocational occupations, skill sectors, online learning, career coaching and work experience to help learners make informed choices. Machine learning will help to identify those who require deeper levels of support and gather information on what works best to shape future service design. The Discovery Phase was a real adventure for the project, starting from first principles with a mountain of evidence that those who have been looked after in the care sector have, longer-term, relatively poor career and life chances.

The team are passionate about making a difference and levelling the playing field so that all young people entering work or seeking progression can have the same chances. The challenge was to find a starting point that was practical, deliverable and had strong industry support. The discovery phase reaffirmed that intervening early with mentoring and using VocTech solutions to improve confidence and opening up real pathways into work have the potential to transform life chances.



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## Boston College

Personalised Leadership and  
Management Training for the AgriTech Sector



As a College in a rural area, Boston have first hand experience that working at different levels across remote rural communities is challenging for employers, learners and trainers in terms of time and cost. The team used the Discovery Phase to explore with learners and employers the challenges they have in accessing classroom-based learning in order to understand better what VocTech solutions might help to solve those problems.

In response, they are developing a learning programme that not only tackles contextualized learning for the Agri-Tech sector but delivers personalised learning pathways that adapt to the individual's needs as they progress through the course. The VocTech supported learning programme will encourage users to progress onto Level 3 Leadership and Management qualifications, enabling learners to develop in their careers and local SMEs to be supported in their growth. All of this in an accessible fashion to meet the challenges of time and distance.

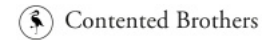
The College as a whole has benefitted from involvement in the project, taking time to look in detail at their experience with blended learning and how that can be expanded, with the potential for the roll-out of more VocTech solutions into other areas of their work.

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## Contented Brothers Skilling me Softly



The 'soft skills gap' is a challenge faced by many employers. Emotional Intelligence has been identified as a key factor in determining long term employability and career progress and needs to be nurtured from the early stages of a career. Contented Brothers are working with L'Oreal to create an immersive experience using VR (Virtual Reality) technology, making it easier for young people to develop the skills they need in a controlled environment so that they gain confidence right from the start of their working life.

Targeting non-graduate recruits who would not usually be considered for employment, the team are developing a VR training platform that will enhance the recruitment processes of larger organisations, opening up opportunities for learners from more diverse backgrounds. The Discovery Phase took the opportunity to work with the target user group to determine the likely user acceptance of using a VR experience to learn skills in this way.

They also explored further with larger employers what their recruitment practices were and what the blocks were to recruiting from a non-graduate pool and discovered that there were many perceived benefits of having a more diverse workforce if a way could be found to build those bridges.

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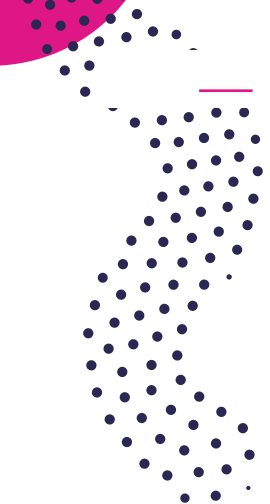
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# VocTech Ventures

VocTech Investments is our seed investment funding. Our typical first investments are £150,000 as equity or debt, and we may make follow-on investments up to a maximum of £1m invested in any one company. We identify investment opportunities guided by our investment thesis, and companies may make a proposal to us at any time throughout the year by contacting the Ufi Ventures team.



## Nursery Book Ltd trading as Kinderly 2013, HQ in Newport Wales



There are c270,000 early childhood education practitioners in the UK who are not using digital tools to support and develop their practice. The wider UK childcare market comprises c80,000 childcare settings which cares for more than 2.4 million children under the age of 5. Low usage of digital tools in this sector leads to more time spent on administration, less frequent and lower quality training and development opportunities and ultimately less time available for the children. Kinderly offers two software products to address this challenge.

Kinderly Together makes it quick and easy to digitally capture the early years learning journey, allows childcare providers to enhance parent communication and helps to improve the home learning environment. It also provides reporting and tools to better manage childcare provision by viewing developmental progress of all children at a glance with progress tracking, effective planning and reporting via a personalised dashboard.

Kinderly Learn helps early years practitioners to manage their own Continuing Professional Development. All the learning has been designed to be engaging, bite-size, accessible and affordable.

Ufi invested in the company in December 2019 alongside Development Bank Wales and several individual investors. This investment fits with our focus on the opportunities to invest in VocTech for the care and education sectors.



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## Enternships Limited trading as Learnerbly 2016, HQ in London



People in work want to feel that they are developing in their career. When they do, this helps companies retain and attract great people, and upskills the workforce. Learning content, a learning budget, personal development plans are all important aspects of a strong learning and development offer but sourcing and organising training for a diverse range of learners and managing tight budgets across a business can be complicated. Fair and equitable access to training can be a real issue and these are challenges that VocTech can help to address.

Learnerbly encourages self-directed learning by empowering employees with personal learning budgets and a personal development plan; guiding them to resources based on what and how they want to learn. They select from curated learning opportunities including books, coaching, courses, conferences, podcasts, and videos. This personalised approach leads to industry-leading levels of engagement and turns the fixed cost of enterprise-wide e-learning/training licenses, with limited utilisation into a variable one - minimising waste of Learning & Development budgets.

Ufi invested in the company in December 2019 alongside Triplepoint, Frontline Ventures, Playfair Capital and several individual investors. This fits our investment focus on VocTech that aligns impact for employees with business value for employers.



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## SonicJobs App Ltd

2016, HQ in London



60% of jobseekers search for roles via mobile devices while employers' application processes are often optimised for desktop technology. In 2019, only 4% of candidates that clicked on a job on mobile ended up completing the application. Job seekers often struggle to recognise and articulate the skills and experience they have, don't explore the full range of jobs that they are suited to or need help to communicate with potential employers. There is a mismatch on both sides of the market.

SonicJobs mobile app helps jobseekers recognise the skills that they have, find and apply for relevant high-quality jobs, and develop new skills to improve their employability and career progression. SonicJobs has brought on over 350,000 candidates and over 200,000 jobs.

It supports workers to build careers in a range of sectors including health and social care, driving and warehousing, office and admin, hospitality, retail and customer services. Over 33,000 applications are made per month - a candidate applies through SonicJobs every 80 seconds.

Ufi invested in the company in June 2020 alongside JetSynthesys and the British Business Bank. This investment fits with our focus on investment opportunities which help people to navigate the retraining and recruitment market especially in sectors and roles going through radical change e.g. retail, transport.



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## Learning Labs Ltd

2012, HQ in Birmingham



The UK needs to radically improve access to high-quality essential skills training as it seeks to rebuild the labour market after COVID-19. There are 9m workers in the UK with low literacy, limiting their access to work now, and to further training for the jobs of the future. VocTech can help to bridge some of those gaps.

Learning Labs' mission is to make language accessible to everyone. Learning Labs' FlashAcademy® uses a proven combination of lessons, games, flashcards, tutor videos, and object translation to support people in becoming more confident in using English where it is not their first language. FlashAcademy® Workplace was developed with Ufi's grant funding to accelerate learning of technical and non-technical vocabulary in the workplace. For employers, workplace learning helps ensure quality delivery through training and understanding of compliance matters such as health and safety.

Ufi invested in Learning Labs in July 2020 alongside Midven and several individual investors. This investment fits with our focus on investing to help people in the UK to build the essential skills needed for work, now and in the future, including literacy, numeracy, digital skills, interpersonal and problem-solving skills.



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## JCR Group Ltd trading as Bodyswaps 2016, HQ in London



Many sectors are going through significant transformation through automation and digital innovation, not least those which have traditionally been labour intensive such as retail or transport. In this new realm, companies increasingly depend on employees' soft skills to add operational value. Therefore, rapidly developing the soft skills of the workforces is critical.

Virtual and augmented reality has very high potential to enable access to soft skills training at scale.

Bodyswaps is developing a Virtual Reality (VR) learning platform and content library offered as a service to businesses that uses VR and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to provide soft skills training similar in performance to expert coaching and role-playing, but close to the cost and scalability of eLearning. The platform empowers learners to safely practice their skills and measure their progress through a library of VR role-play simulations.

With Bodyswaps, organisations of all sizes can boost and scale their training programmes with affordable learning experiences far more effectively than with traditional online exercises or even facilitated role-playing.

Ufi invested in Bodyswaps in September 2020 alongside Haatch Ventures and a group of private investors. This investment fits with our focus on investing to help people learn the essential skills needed for work, now and in the future – including interpersonal skills.



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## Investment Partnership The Resolution Foundation



The Resolution Foundation is an independent think-tank focused on improving living standards for those on low to middle incomes. The Foundation's established work programme focuses on incomes, inequality and poverty; jobs, skills and pay; housing; wealth and assets; tax and welfare; public spending and the shape of the state, and economic growth.

They are pioneering the UK's first social investment programme aimed at developing and growing ventures seeking to harness technology to improve the prospects, power and career choices of workers – particularly those on low pay or in insecure employment. Their pilot 'workertech' programme has backed innovative start-ups using digital technology to advance the prospects of those workers.

Ufi is now partnering with the Resolution Foundation to provide funding for seed-stage ventures that meet our joint objectives and focus on vocational technology solutions that will be announced in 2020.



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major-programme/ventures



# Supporting the Market

Our aim is to equip vocational education and training professionals (VET) with the skills and confidence that they need to adopt 'digital first' into their practice so that they can themselves spread best practice in VocTech pedagogies and better support vocational learners.

Our strategy plans to do this by: investing in and commissioning projects that offer professional development across all aspects of digital supported learning; transferring innovative practice from other ed-tech sectors (in particular secondary and higher education) so that vocational learners can also benefit from those new approaches; maintaining a community of practice so that developers, trainers and all working in the adult education community can develop the confidence to utilise the most appropriate tech to support teaching and training; celebrating the positive impact of VocTech and sharing evidence of impact.







## VocTeach Open University



2020 has brought into sharp relief the need for trainers and educators to have access to great online resources to enable them to support their learners at a distance or in blended learning situations.

VocTeach will deliver a pilot online resource platform for vocational education practitioners. The platform will enable them to access and share information about digital resources which have been mapped to their specific needs, to enhance their teaching. These resources will include curriculum-relevant content, generic skills materials and software tools for use with learners. The project is not about creating new content, but making it possible for VE professionals to share what is already being used, and creating a 'showcase' for that content.

Educators will be able to see which resources and tools are being used by others, and how such tools could be valuable in their own teaching. The platform will achieve this by encouraging reviews and recommendations of resources. Initially, VocTeach will focus on materials to support educators to teach English and Maths Functional Skills.

The pilot will also test how to engage with the core communities of educational software developers, content providers and end-user teaching practitioners.

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## Communities of Practice ALT



The goal of this project is to establish a successful 'community of practice' (CoP) where vocational teaching staff are able to acquire, develop and share the digital, and digital pedagogical skills they need to thrive in vocational education, in collaboration with the VocTeach platform.

This project will have the following steps:

Carry out a sector audit to provide current data of existing networks and communities that will inform the next stage of the project and provide useful input for wider developments. This initial design, audit and analysis will conclude with the publication of a report for the sector.

Set up a community of practice, informed by the results of the audit and the needs of stakeholders identified. The number of potential users for this network will run into the 1,000s over a 5+ year period, and initially the project plans to engage with 500 pilot users.

Support the community of practice for a one year test period, with a focus on community engagement and networking. The CoP will parallel nine months of the VocTeach marketplace concept-testing phase to get maximum benefit from both projects.

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