
Identification of good practices:
SMEs active participation in mobility
programmes in Europe.

WELCOME&CO

welcome





www.camaracantabria.com



www.unioncameredelveneto.it



www.upr.si



www.cornwall.ac.uk



www.berlink.eu



www.educantabria.es



www.cifp.es

www.welcomesmobility.com



WELCOME & CO is a transfer of innovation project of the LLP national priority (2012 Call) pursuing “Transfer of mobility strategies in VET in Europe: support for quality mobility, support for locating host partners, maintenance of partnerships with specific involvement of intermediary organization” (...) “to make mobility in VET a rule rather than an exception”.

The general objective of the project is to enhance SMEs active participation as host organizations in mobility actions in VET in Europe, by creating a network of stakeholders, identifying SMEs needs to get involved, and compiling innovative experiences and best practices that can inspire others to participate in mobility programmes.

This booklet contains a variety of best practices identified by the partners of the project; we desire that it is a useful tool for all of you who want to introduce your company or institution in mobility programmes in Europe.

welcome



MODIS

Name of Partner

Berlink ETN GmbH

Other partners/institution involved

Provincia di Trento

Name and website of the programme and the project

MODIS Mobilita' per disoccupati

Financed within the LLP - Leonardo da Vinci Programme

http://www.agenzia lavoro.tn.it/lavoratori/formazione_agenzia/Modis

Countries recipients/beneficiaries

Italy – Participants are unemployed beneficiaries

Duration of the project

Six weeks

1 week of language preparation and 5 weeks
of workplacement in companies

Economic sector(s) involved in the project

Marketing and Tourism

Brief description of the best practice

We have successfully implemented ECVET (European credit system for vocational education and training) with the group of 11 participants, defining an effective process for skills assessment and certification.

In order to ensure quality of assessment of the acquired skills through the mobility experience some common principles and common documentation were shared among the project partners (Provincia di Trento as sending institution and BERLINK as intermediary organisation) in the initial phases of the project drafting, in the aim of defining a joint and agreed assessment procedure described in the **Memorandum of Understanding**.

The agreed assessment procedure focused on evaluating whether set learning outcomes have been achieved or not. The learning outcomes were clearly described in the **Learning Agreement**, clearly expressing what the learners were expected to know and be able to do. The Learning Agreement was used as basis to design assessment tasks and define appropriate assessment criteria.

On the basis of this cooperation framework with the sending institution, we designed two **handbooks**; one for the participants and one for the host companies. The layout was the same for both documents: a weekly diary to describe specific tasks developed and technology used during each working week and a progressive weekly questionnaire, with simple user friendly grids and templates, based on learning outcomes descriptions. Through the administration of these questionnaires we wanted to verify, according to the signed Learner Agreement, the participant's improvement during the work placement.

So, for each set expected Learning Outcome we designed tailor-made questions linked to every unit that we needed to investigate. The questions were exactly the same for the companies and the participants. This process allowed us to check the general improvement week by week from both the companies' and the students' side and to effectively compare the results.

This was particularly relevant because very often things that are important for the companies are not underlined by students and vice versa. It was moreover relevant to invite the students to carry out continuous self assessment activities.

This process has been continuously monitored by us with weekly coaching and monitoring meetings with the students at our agency, via email to host companies and also meeting in the host companies' offices.

At the end of the assessment process we provided a document called **Skills Portfolio**: a final document in which our guidance counsellor compares the 2 handbooks and describes changes in the students' social, linguistic and IT competencies.

The **Europass** certificate was as well issued for each participant.

The results of learners' assessment, documented through the Skills Portfolio, constituted sufficient evidence for the acquired skills and competences and was then used by the sending institution, Provincia di Trento, to certify the acquired learning results.

Results achieved

The main achieved result corresponds to the designed procedure for ECVET implementation.

It resulted in fact to be an effective user-friendly procedure for skills assessment and certification, that met the needs of the host companies (limited paper work) and of the sending institution (simple documents describing the acquired learning outcomes in a comprehensive way and through a process that involves the students in self assessment activities).

Impact on the project

The participants were actively involved in the assessment of their own learning progress and this had a strong impact on their awareness with reference to their personal and professional development.

At the end of the experience all the participants were in fact able to clearly define their career path expectations and ambitions.



welcome



PON C5

Name of Partner

Berlink ETN GmbH

Other partners/institution involved

VET Schools from Southern Italian Regions

(Sicilia, Campania, Calabria, Puglia):

ISSIS Oreste del Prete

ISIS Crispiano

IS Mario Rutelli

Name and website of the programme and the project

PON C5 Projects in Berlink

The activities were financed by the European Social Funds – Italian National Operational Programme (PON 2007-2013)

<http://pon.indire.it/portale/>

Countries recipients/beneficiaries

Beneficiaries were students aged between 15 and 18 in their vocational training

Duration of the project

3 weeks mobility experience in Berlin

Economic sector(s) involved in the project

Electronics

Mechanics

Hotel and catering

Tourism

ICT

Brief description of the best practice

Italian schools coming from the regions of the FSE Objective 1 (2007-2013) could access funds to finance the organisation of workplace experience abroad for their students.

The duration of the workplace experience abroad could be of 3 to 4 weeks with a week of language preparation. The students involved were aged between 15 and 18 years old. In most cases the PON project was their first experience abroad. They were therefore facing important fears and obstacles before leaving, mainly linked to language barriers and lack of self-confidence.

BERLINK supported several Italian schools in the organisation of such projects, defining a tailor made programme for the specific needs of the students:

- 1 or 2 weeks language preparation with mother tongue teachers and interactive teaching methods and exercises
- 10 hours of training "Preparation to the workplace and to the working environment" with the following format and content:

Methodology: Classroom learning, with team work and role play carried out in the working language of the workplace (English/German).

Training Contents: Module 1) Welcome meeting and explanation of the Workplace Handbook; Module 2) The internship, what is expected from me, behaviour in the company, the tutor; Module 3) Work on the competences, what am I able to do, what do I know about my profession; Module 4) The Curriculum Vitae, the European CV Format; Module 5) The Motivational Letter; Module 6) The job interview, how to behave during the interview, gestures, possible questions, dress code, final role play.

- 120/160 hours (3-4 weeks) workplace in selected host companies and SMEs working in the professional fields of the students.
- Cultural activities during the weekends with visits to the concentration camp of Sachsenhausen, the Gedenkstätte Berlin Hohenschönhausen, the Schloss Charlottenburg, the Museums of Museuminsel to foster cultural awareness and interest in the new cultural environment.

45 students and 18 companies were involved in the overall implementation of the project activities, all sharing very positive feedbacks on their participation.

Results achieved

The main results correspond to the high level of satisfaction registered by the participants. Their comments showed that the project reached the expected impacts on the motivation and the cultural awareness of the participants:

"This was my first experience abroad, away from Italy. The initial impact was very pleasant. I didn't expect that Berlin was a city so fascinating and engaging. For me it was a nice experience, very educational both from the cultural and the professional side."

Antonio – ISSIS Crispiano

"I had a really good experience here in Berlin. I did a lot of things and I met a lot of different people. I feel that my German is better and I would like to stay here longer to improve it more. Since the first day I asked to my colleagues not to speak with me in English but just in German. I worked 6-7 hours a day and I spoke exclusively in German, so for this I am very proud of myself. This experience has been just perfect"

Maria – IS Rutelli

"I think that this experience was absolutely fantastic and constructive for me. I programmed a website in a telecommunication company and this job for a month confirmed me that I love to programme and that I want to become a programmer. The workplacement was great and my tutor and my colleagues were very collaborative, open and flexible. This experience improved my English and allowed me to live for a month in one of the most beautiful city in the world and to discover another culture. I recommend to all students that have such a possibility to make this experience!"

Mirko – ITIS del Prete.

Impact on the project

All the involved schools applied and successfully managed PON projects also the following year.

They moreover built up a consortium to design and submit a joint Leonardo Da Vinci Mobility IVT project – EU MOB submitted to the Italian National Agency under the Leonardo da Vinci Call for proposal, again with the support of BERLINK as intermediary agency.

The project had therefore direct impacts on both the participants and the organisations:

- The participants gained new professional and personal competences, supporting their employability
- The schools investigated their European Dimension and designed a first short term European Development Plan, promoting new mobility opportunities for their students.

Pictures of the project



welcome



LaborESO

Name of Partner

Cámara Oficial de Comercio, Industria y Navegación de Cantabria

Other partners/institution involved

Partners and Stakeholders:

- Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Shipping of Cantabria. Project coordinator
- High Council of Education, Culture and Sports of the Government of Cantabria. Funder
- One edition was also funded by Equalcrea (through Sodercan)
- Advisers (Cantabria Seminar)
- SMEs, organizations and institutions in any sector of Cantabria
- Students in 4th and 3rd E.S.O

Name and website of the programme and the project

LaborESO project

Web Cámara Cantabria: <http://www.laboresocantabria.es>

Countries recipients/beneficiaries

Cantabria's region. It has been also implemented in other regions: Madrid, Asturias and Navarra

Duration of the project

In Cantabria, since 2006, every academic year, from October to June. Within the school period between November 1st and June 30th, schools set specific dates for completion. The student will be 2 weeks in a company at its regular working time (including weekends, if appropriate). During this period the student will not attend classes at school to perform the working stay.

Economic sector(s) involved in the project

SMEs, organizations and institutions of any sector of Cantabria

Brief description of the best practice

LaborESo is a “working experience” project that allows students of Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO- 4th & 3rd courses) to have an early contact with the labour market.

It is funded by the High Council of Education, Culture and Sports of Government of Cantabria.

Students perform two weeks-stays in a company, allowing them to improve their understanding of themselves, their skills, abilities and interests, and also gain a better understanding of the reality of work, and have direct contact with the labour market.

The experience facilitates the decision-making process that students must perform at the end of the ESO in relation to their academic and professional future. It also contributes to promote entrepreneurship through contact with the business world at a younger age.

LaborESO stages:

STAGE 1:

- The student fills out a sheet indicating their professional preferences.
- The school refers to the Cantabria Chamber through an IT Tool designed ad hoc.

STAGE 2:

- The Chamber looks for a suitable company.
- The Chamber informs SMEs about the project.

STAGE 3:

- The Chamber assigns students to the SMEs.

STAGE 4:

- Schools ask for an appointment with the company to introduce the student and to outline the activities to be performed. An agreement which stipulates that the student is covered by the school insurance will be signed.

STAGE 5:

- The student stays in the company for a period of two weeks at the regular timetable of the company.

STAGE 6:

- Students return to school.
- Evaluation of the experience.
- Diploma's delivery.

Results achieved

2005-2006	58 students, 7 high schools and 50 SMEs
2006-2007	250 students, 28 high schools and 241 SMEs
2007-2008	367 students, 47 high schools and 343 SMEs
2008-2009	454 students, 50 high schools and 396 SMEs
2009-2010	509 students, 58 high schools and 443 SMEs
2010-2011	475 students, 56 high schools and 407 SMEs
2011-2012	485 students, 62 high schools and 425 SMEs
2012-2013	582 students, 67 high schools and 542 SMEs.
2013-2014	627 students, 67 high schools and 517 SMEs

Impact on the project

LaborESO's contribution to SMEs is:

- It allows them to pass on the skills needed for work and employment at a young age.
- It approaches them to the educational world.
- It improves its social image.
- They can actively participate in the adaptation of the educational systems to their new requirements.
- It improves the knowledge that young people have of businesses.
- It helps tying the aspirations of young people to the reality of the business world.

LaborESO's main benefits and impact on students are:

- To help them in their personal and social development, in addition to their educational curriculum.
- To develop basic skills in business and working environment.
- To promote knowledge of their nearest business environment.
- To learn the main differences between a school day and a working day.
- To experience work relationships with colleagues and managers.
- To acquire first-hand knowledge of the organizational framework of a company.



LaborESO's students certificate



LaborESO's Seminar with school counselors and teachers



Student, mentor and businessman signing collaboration agreement



Students performing LaborESO's experience



A LaborESO's participant, performing the experience at our Chamber.



LaborESO, was one of ten programmes selected to participate in the Products Fair, parallel event to the General Assembly held on February 20th, 2007 in Madrid, with the purpose of showing new and innovative initiatives developed by serving as a future model when designing new business services at Chambers of Commerce. Chamber of Cantabria's president with His Majesty the King Juan Carlos I.

welcome



DUAL VOCATIONAL
TRAINING

Name of Partner

Centro Integrado de Formación Profesional Nº1

Other partners/institution involved

Consejería de Educación, Cultura y Deporte del Gobierno de Cantabria.

Companies in the industrial sector of Cantabria.

Cantabrian Cluster of Automotive.

Name and website of the programme and the project

Experimental Programme of Dual Vocational Training

Formación Profesional Nº1: <http://www.cifp.es>

Centro Integrado de Consejería de Educación, Cultura y Deporte del Gobierno de Cantabria:

http://www.educantabria.es/formacion_profesional/fp/fp-dual/que-es-la-fp-dual

Countries recipients/beneficiaries

Cantabria

Duration of the project

The project started in 2012 as an experimental programme. It will last three academic years instead of two years (standard academic programme).

Economic sector(s) involved in the project

Companies and schools in the machinery production sector

Brief description of the best practice

The programme is focused on higher students in the field of 'Production Scheduling in Mechanical Manufacturing'

The dual training system combines study at a vocational school with practical in-company training. A mentor is assigned to the student throughout the apprenticeship to monitor progress and provide support.

The programme offers positive encouragement to the students not to abandon their studies, as it allows them to attend lessons and have a work experience at the same time.

The programme at CIFPN1 lasts three years.

Participation process:

- Companies offer a number of placements in the field of studies.
- The students apply for dual training.
- There is a selection process of students by the school tutors. The criteria to select them include academic performance, class attendance and skills for professional development such as creativity, teamwork, innovation and decision-making.
- The work programme is agreed between the school and the company, defining the training activities to perform each year.
- Assessment is responsibility of teachers, taking into account contributions of the mentors.
- The student receives a certificate stating the nature of the training programme, duration and outcome assessment.

Results achieved

In our school, the programme started in 2012-13, so the first group of students has not finished yet. So far, the results achieved are:

Positive feedback from companies and students.

An increase of the number of companies interested in having dual students from 3 in the first year to 12 in the second year.

Among 15 students' applications, 9 students are involved in the programme.

In the region, since the project has been extended, around 100 companies, 15 schools and 300 students are enrolled.

Impact on the project

A simultaneous process of dual training has been established between schools and companies of Cantabria, enhancing the training, skills and personal development of young people by combining training and learning both at school and at a company.

It has facilitate employment as a result of a closer contact with companies.

It creates better linkages and co-responsibility between schools offering vocational training and companies in the educational process of students.

Other comments

The companies that collaborate with the project are:

EDSCHA Santander S.L.; Nueva Braking Systems S.L.U.; FLYMCA S.L (Fluidos y Mecanicas Cantabria) ; Industrias Jacinto Herrero S.L; Matrican; Talleres Eléctricos M. Serrano; Talleres Oran S.L.U.



welcome



CENTENNIAL

Name of Partner

Unioncamere del Veneto - Eurosportello

Other partners/institution involved

FORTES Impresa Sociale SRL
Regione Veneto

Name and website of the programme and the project

CENTENNIAL

FSE - POR 2007-2013- Obiettivo Competitività Regionale e Occupazione- Asse V –
INTERREGIONALITÀ E TRANSNAZIONALITÀ- Categoria di intervento 80 PERCORSI DI MOBILITÀ
TRANSNAZIONALE E INTERREGIONALE - Dgr n. 875 del 4/06/2013

Countries recipients/beneficiaries

UK, Czech Republic, Spain, Germany, France

Duration of the project

3 Months (12 weeks) – still enduring

Economic sector(s) involved in the project

Cultural and Creative Industry, ICT, Green Economy

Brief description of the best practice

Within the concluded project “CENTENNIAL” (one of four projects followed by FORTES as operating partner on behalf of accredited secondary schools in Vicenza Province, under the auspices of the DGR 875 Veneto Region), we describe the positive example of an internship by Samantha D.D.

The general objective of the project includes the development of vocational and social skills needed to work in the fields of cultural and creative industry. The focus is aimed at the tourism of memory and cultural heritage, linking the themes of the centenary of the Great War with the paths, the history, the culture and the nature of an extremely interesting period from the point of view of tourism.

The educational goal of the project is to acquire professional, networking, entrepreneurial skills to seize the opportunity offered by the centenary of the Great War as a point of strength for cultural and creative industries of the territory. Also to seek innovative solutions and new offers for tourist-receptive as solution for really a small and less well-known town.

Our partner SME is an agency of tourist guides in Northern Ireland; it's the only tour company in Londonderry certified as “Blue Badge” (the most authoritative accreditation in the industry), and it offers guided tours on foot, by bus and by car. The thematic specialization tour lies in cultural tourism with socio-political background in the sites of clashes that have marked Northern Ireland from 1968 onwards (the neighbourhood of Bogside , Bloody Sunday , etc...). Next to this, the agency carefully guided tours of the historic sites, such as the walls of 1600 around the town of Derry.

Nature of the internship

The participant was included in company handling marketing and promotion of tourism on tourism of memory. She has worked on alternative marketing tools by combining a creative and artistic sensitiveness and digital skills acquired on the spot, producing media as promotion of historical and educational sites of clashes in Londonderry. Videos were targeted to students of secondary schools and universities of the city. She also prepared new social network platforms to advertise wider tour towards sites of interest in Northern Ireland, to disseminate more broadly cultural - social - historical information and to develop more frequent contacts with local stakeholders such as institutions and organizations related to tourist, artistic and social development.

Results achieved

Producing videos to be used in the local secondary schools and University. The participant has moreover opened an autonomous channel of cooperation with the company, so that

both of them are evaluating how to develop a new activity session on these themes in months to come.

Impact on the project

The project impacts on one side on the tourism expenditure, that produces two types of benefits: direct and indirect ones. It underlines how by touristic marketing policies it is possible to increase opportunities for hotels, restaurants, bars, beach services, etc.

But then considering that many SME are not self-sufficient in organizing their offer, and that in most cases they need to trigger a supply chain, the impact of the project goes beyond the typical tourism actors. The sum of the two is important for the overall effect. At a personal level on the participant, the project had the impact to develop a new opportunity of cooperation among Samantha and the SME.



welcome



GYMNASIUM

Name of Partner

Unioncamere del Veneto
- Eurosportello

Other partners/institution involved

Agentschap Ondernemen; Bureau Economique Province de Namur; Brussels Enterprise Agency; Camara de Comercio de Cantabria, Agro Business Park; Innovation Center Iceland, Friuli Innovazione. HITA – Hungarian Investment Trade Agency;

Name and website of the programme and the project

GYMNASIUM

<http://www.erasmus-entrepreneurs.eu>

Countries recipients/beneficiaries

Italy (Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia); Belgium (Bruxelles, Wallonia, Flanders); Spain, Denmark, Iceland, Slovenia e Hungary

Duration of the project

24 months (2014 – 2016)

Economic sector(s) involved in the project

All sectors

Brief description of the best practice

GYMNASIUM

Sixth edition of the “Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Programme”. The project aims to support entrepreneurship in Europe through the implementation of mobility programmes, supporting the exchange of know-how and managerial skills between aspiring and newly-established entrepreneurs and experienced entrepreneurs. The final goal of the project is to enhance the competitiveness and internationalization of European SMEs.

Results achieved

Since the implementation of the pilot phase of the programme, there are some important achievements for all actors:

- Nascent and NEs are provided with a mobility schemes specially designed for them, focused in developing entrepreneurial and managerial skills.
- SMEs of the involved countries can put an eye on other European countries by receiving young entrepreneurs, and there is evidence of commercial and /or professional ties built during the stays across countries.
- A strong networking partnership across Europe has been built to cooperate in entrepreneurship project to support young entrepreneurs.

Impact on the project

As an example of SMEs involvement in mobility projects, Gymnasium has proven that by giving them the opportunity to increase flexibility in the agreements, and by maximizing the visibility of their benefits, a cooperation scheme can be successfully built.



Young entrepreneur from Veneto (Italy) Alessandro Cavalleri, with his Host entrepreneur of Cantabria, Montserrat Peña, Códice Cantabria S.L. (Spain) at the Intermediary Organization, Chamber of Commerce of Cantabria.

welcome



EDDI

Name of Partner

Virtualis Ltd.

Other partners/institution involved

Employment Service of Slovenia, Koper office (Slovenia)

Arbeit und Leben (Germany)

ONECO, STEPS (Spain)

Tellus Group (Italy, UK, Greece)

Eurocultura (Italy)

Green Horizons (Ireland)

Name and website of the programme and the project

EDDI - Evropska dimenzija delovnih izkušenj

No website

Countries recipients/beneficiaries

Slovenia

Duration of the project

2010-2011

Economic sector(s) involved in the project

Various

Brief description of the best practice

The aim of the project was to enable work internships/traineeships to young graduates of EU states, with which they would achieve a greater possibility of employment. The project partners collaborated together in a network of intermediaries, providing assistance with finding employers in foreign countries, which acted as host institutions.

The main goals were raising employability, achievement of new knowledge and skills, language skills acquisition, and the knowledge of the culture of other EU member states, as well as developing personal competences needed for a successful participation in the work market.

26 young unemployed graduates took part in the project.

Results achieved

Out of 26 trainees involved in the project, 17 were employed in the course of the next three months, which is an approximately 65,4 % success rate.

Impact on the project

The EDDI project could work as a good practice in terms of collaboration between project partners and their involvement with host institutions. In a matter of one year the consortium managed to develop 26 collaborations, out of which 17 achieved immediate results in a very short time after the finish of the project (3 months).



welcome



CREATE-IN

Name of Partner

High School for Design Maribor

Other partners/institution involved

Institute Prava poteza

MyHairDressers.com (United Kingdom)

The Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia

Stichting Reflexion (The Netherlands)

SŠ Studio

Name and website of the programme and the project

Create-In

<http://createin.eu/>

Countries recipients/beneficiaries

Slovenia

Duration of the project

2011-2013

Economic sector(s) involved in the project

Creative industrie

Brief description of the best practice

The aim of this project was to teach, facilitate and enable job seekers (students, already employed and unemployed) to prepare a creativity e-portfolio as a tool for presentation of their skills, knowledge, creativity and products. E-portfolio system that we prepared enables creative to present with digital contents, preferably active (movies and recordings) that show the level of skills and creativity that the job seeker has conquered. Potential employers can independently of the time and geographical limits evaluate the work of job seeker and decide whether to invite him/her to personal meeting or even directly to work.

Results achieved

Main project product is Create-IN website which enables creatives to prepare their e-portfolio with purpose of seeking work and employers to also present their businesses and to search employees. Web site also includes detailed instructions on how to prepare e-portfolio and 11 pilot e-portfolios that serve as an example of efficient presentation.

Impact on the project

The project has a similar aim as Welcome&Co., trying to connect workers with employers (although only in the field of creative industries, mainly hairdressing). Its main goal is to build a database of e-portfolios, which would be accessible to registered users (mainly employers), thus making possible the approach (connection) between employers and future employees. The database had a milder resonance and there were portfolios which achieved success.



welcome



UNLOCKING
POTENTIAL:
GATEWAY

Name of Partner

Cornwall College

Other partners/institution involved

Combined Universities Cornwall

Name and website of the programme and the project

Unlocking Potential: Gateway (Graduate work experience placements)

<http://www.gradcornwall.co.uk/employers/gateway>

Countries recipients/beneficiaries

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

Duration of the project

(2 years ESF funding received)

1 Gateway project= 20 to 60 hours per Graduate.

Gateway support entitlement per graduate= Up to 120 hours work experience over 2 projects.

Economic sector(s) involved in the project

All (SME focussed)

Brief description of the best practice

Facilitating paid, short term projects in businesses in Cornwall, Unlocking Potential's Gateway programme helps graduates get the work experience they need to find on-going employment.

Each graduate benefits from a wealth of expertise via mentor support, access to training and networking opportunities facilitated by Unlocking Potential throughout their Gateway placement. Gateway offers graduates the opportunity to explore job options and possible career routes. In developing relevant skills and broadening their C.V., a Gateway project bolsters a graduate's career prospects and, most importantly, gives a graduate the chance to show what they can do.

Unlocking Potential's programmes work together to support graduates and promote business growth. For example, Graduates benefit from Unlocking Potential's 'Stand Out from the Crowd' course which provides graduates with the employability skills required to build a strong foundation for job-seeking. Following the course a natural next step for a graduate is a Gateway placement.

The website, www.gradcornwall.co.uk acts as a one-stop-shop for advertising and applying for graduate level jobs and careers in Cornwall. Regular job updates and newsletters are sent to graduates, and social media postings, further support and promote the Gateway programme. Feedback from graduates and businesses involved in the programme is always requested and used to improve the programme.

Unlocking Potential's networking events capitalize on the opportunity to bring both graduates and businesses together.

Results achieved

In search of some graduate-level work experience to complement his degree, graduate Steven George completed two excellent projects at Cornish companies; Blue Flame and Radix Communications. Making a real contribution to both of the businesses, Steven represents the essence of Gateway success. His achievements were recently awarded at Unlocking Potential's Celebration Event.

By demonstrating motivation, commitment and the desire to make the most of his abilities, Steven relished the opportunity afforded to him via the Gateway placement. Taking to the stage to accept his Gateway award he addressed the businesses in the audience who have not yet experienced the benefits of a Gateway placement, urging them to 'set graduates high goals and then allow yourselves to be impressed by what a graduate can do'.

Steven has been employed by Radix full-time and is an inspiring example of the results achieved by a Gateway placement.

Impact on the project

91% of businesses involved say that the experience of taking a grad from Gateway has encouraged them to think about taking a grad on in a more permanent capacity.

100% of the businesses fed back that they would use the programme again.

Of **45** graduates have completed the programme to date:

90% of those wanted to find employment rather than continue with study

Of those **90%, 93%** have secured employment or become self-employed since the programme with an average starting salary of c. £17222

Other comments

For more information about Gateway work experience and Steven George's Gateway success please view our video at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adZbqNnjRe4>

welcome



UNLOCKING
POTENTIAL:
GRADUATE
PLACEMENTS

Name of Partner

Cornwall College

Other partners/institution involved

Combined Universities Cornwall

Name and website of the programme and the project

Unlocking Potential: Graduate Placements

Countries recipients/beneficiaries

South West, including Cornwall & I.O.S.

Duration of the project

(3 x 3.5 years of European funding received).

Project length per graduate: 6-9 months per graduate

Economic sector(s) involved in the project

All (SME focussed)

Brief description of the best practice

Graduates gain invaluable experience, new professional skills and a competitive salary by getting a foot in the graduate job market with a 6-9 month project through the Unlocking Potential Graduate Placement programme. Businesses benefit from the programme too as it enables them to access graduate talent to catalyse growth.

Via a graduate training and mentoring budget and support from an Unlocking Potential Business Development Manager, the graduate, and in turn the business involved, benefit from Unlocking Potential's investment.

The website, www.gradcornwall.co.uk acts as a one-stop-shop for advertising and applying for graduate level jobs and careers in Cornwall. Regular job updates and newsletters sent to graduates, and social media postings, further support and promote the Gateway programme.

Feedback from graduates and businesses involved in the programme is always requested and used to improve the Gateway service.

Unlocking Potential's programmes work together to support graduates and promote business growth. Their networking events capitalize on the opportunity to bring both graduates and businesses together.

The successes of graduate placements are recognised and celebrated at an annual Awards event hosted by Unlocking Potential. The event further highlights the impact of the programme on graduates and the business community.

Results achieved

Common to the outcome of Unlocking Potential Graduate Placements is the employers' belief that their graduate has applied fresh insight and skills to bring real change and enable business growth.

For example, Lucas Brimson's placement as In-House Developer at Richfords Fire and Flood, a damage restoration firm, was a true success. Prior to 'The Lucas Solution' Richfords had, on most days, intense disruption of their computer system. Lucas fully integrated existing and modern systems, then designed and built a new IT suite (including remote tablet technology) which has brought huge benefits to Richfords. The project resulted in reduced IT issues, increased efficiency and accuracy of communication, expanded geographical working range and improved staff morale. Lucas Brimson's knowledgeable I.T. support enabled the business to grow through its busiest period ever, with ease. Recognising this, Steve Richford, founder and Managing Director of Richfords Fire and Flood, feels his company has been invigorated by the graduate placement scheme and said:

"I think it brings stability, direction and a valuable resource to the company, recognised by everyone in the company. Everyone feels the benefit of Lucas's work and is aware of the contribution he is making... from the role model he offers us in his determined approach to problem solving, to the courageous way he approaches demanding situations".

Lucas too is enthused by his placement and continued work with Richfords. He is committed to the company's growth:

"It feels now that I am no longer a graduate. There's still a lot to do at Richfords and I will continue to grow in my role while creating an increasing impact on the business".

Lucas's personal and professional development is clear and having made such a valued contribution to the business, Lucas was offered a permanent role.

As result of the Unlocking Potential's Celebration Events interest in the scheme is heightened. Sarah Trethowan of Trac Services in Pool employs Kirsty Cotton, winner of the Individual Achievement award in 2013 and fed back to U.P. following the Event:

"Yesterday was a great event which should have inspired everyone who attended. It's brilliant to have the opportunity to recognise the significant impact graduates are having in businesses across Cornwall. After yesterday no one could question the value in employing a graduate".

Impact on the project

A thousand graduates have been supported by Unlocking Potential's Graduate Placements.

Following a graduate placement 8 out of 10 graduates gain permanent employment. The average starting salary is £19,500.

Other comments

For more information on the impact of Graduate placement projects please see Unlocking Potential's Youtube channel for video evidence from both graduates and businesses: <http://youtu.be/bcbzbOUb0mc>