Skills Minister unveils new investment in skills for key industries

Thursday 7 June, 2012

Skills Minister John Hayes today announced the release of funds totalling over £2.4m from the Growth Innovation Fund (GIF) to the nuclear and creative and cultural sectors.

With a Government investment of more than £920k, the National Skills Academy for Nuclear will expand its activities into nuclear manufacturing to help UK manufacturers take advantage of the opportunities offered by the new nuclear build programme.

The NSA for Nuclear will collaborate with SEMTA and the Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre, based in Sheffield, to create a focal point to boost companies capability to develop skills.

Within its first three years the expansion aims to deliver a more skilled workforce, with an increase of 3,500 learners taking up NSA recognised programmes, including more than 500 apprenticeships.

The National Skills Academy for Creative and Cultural will receive around £1.5m to extend its operations and open up opportunities for more than 1,200 new apprenticeships and craft training for young people across the jewellery, design and cultural heritage sectors.

The NSA Creative and Cultural also plan to reach around 1.2 million young people through their careers information, advice and guidance material over the next 5 years.

It will work in conjunction with a number of leading organisations and employers, including the Goldsmiths Company, Holts Academy and the British Jewellers Association, the Design Council, Tate, V&A, Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The creative and cultural industries contribute over £36.5 billion (in Gross Valued Added) a year to the UK economy.

In both cases Government funding will be matched by business and delivered over three years.

Mr Hayes said:

It is businesses themselves that are best-placed to identify the skills they need to drive growth. This investment is very good news for the UK nuclear and creative industries and will help them to overcome the skills gaps that stand in the way of them meeting their full potential.

The new centre for excellence for nuclear manufacturing will increase the number of opportunities for technicians and skilled workers and ensure that UK firms can source the skills they need to grow their market share in an expanding market.

The National Skills Academy for Creative and Cultural has already demonstrated its success in working with more than 200 employers in the theatre and live entertainment business. I am delighted that investment will allow them to increase opportunities in the design, cultural heritage and jewellery sectors.

Energy Minister Charles Hendry said:

The nuclear new build programme and existing decommissioning activities provide a substantial opportunity for UK manufacturers to expand and create highly skilled jobs across the country.

The expansion of the National Skills Academy for Nuclear to include nuclear manufacturing through work with Semta SSC and the Nuclear AMRC is an excellent example of skills bodies working together to improve the provision of nuclear related training to ensure that the UK workforce can take full advantage of the job opportunities that will be created by a new build nuclear programme.

Meeting the skills demand for the nuclear new build programme will be a challenge, and to this end, the Nuclear Energy Skills Alliance (NESA) exists to facilitate collaborative working amongst all skills bodies related to the nuclear industry.

Jean Llewellyn OBE, Chief Executive of the National Skills Academy for Nuclear, said:

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The opportunities for the manufacturing supply chain in this area are considerable from the UK alone, running into many millions. Combine this with the global market share manufacturers in the UK could access and the importance of this sector in delivering high value exports becomes apparent.

Working in this strong and effective collaboration with the Nuclear AMRC and Semta SSC provides a really unique opportunity to provide the right support for the sector in a clear and collaborative approach. The nuclear manufacturing expansion of the National Skills Academy for Nuclear will support the UK supply chain to ensure it is well placed and has the skilled workforce required to gain maximum value from this global renaissance.

Paul Latham, Chairman, Creative & Cultural Skills, said:

We have been building our skills academy for the last four years through our initiatives for theatre and music. It is only through the strength of our existing partnerships, our founder colleges and our industry members, that we were able to make the case for this extension project, which will enormously enhance our offer to young people and strengthen the skills base of a range of creative businesses, individuals and organisations.

With this funding, we can now support the further development of higher-level, industry-led apprenticeships, careers guidance, specialist education and training, and new professional standards for all those working in the creative sector. We look forward to working with a wide range of partners in this new three-year development period.

The GIF was set up to help employers overcome barriers to growth within their sectors and industries. The National Skills Academies for Nuclear and Creative & Cultural Skills were both successful in submitting expressions of Interest to the Growth and Innovation Fund in 2011.

So far the Government has committed over £15 million to boost innovation and productivity, enable industries to set new professional standards and support new or extended national skills academies. Sectors that have benefited include; health, science-based industries, environmental industries, renewable energy, employment services and hospitality.

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