

'Writing my way to Paris' – a competition for blind and partially sighted budding authors

Friday 23 May, 2014

Blind and partially sighted 11-18 year olds living in areas surrounding Heathrow airport can win an exclusive trip to Paris by entering a creative writing competition organised by the RLSB (Royal London Society for Blind People) and supported by the Heathrow Community Fund and British Airways.

The competition has been launched to celebrate the new 'RLSB West London Social' a new free group for blind and partially sighted young people living in West London.

Dr Tom Pey, Chief Executive of RLSB said;

"RLSB is delighted to be launching our latest social group in West London with a fun competition and we are grateful for the grant of £25,000 from the Heathrow Community Fund to enable the group to happen. We want to offer blind and partially sighted young people a chance to make new friends and learn new skills. Being with other people and having opportunities to build confidence are key to tackling the isolation and depression that are all too often a part of their lives."

To enter the "Writing my way to Paris" competition, budding authors need to type or record a 700-word story based around 24 hours in the French capital that begins with the opening line, "As our BA flight took off from Heathrow Terminal 5...."

The author will be the central character in the story that can be a crime thriller, romance or surreal time-travel adventure. Creative writers have 700 words to wow the judges – one word for each kilometre that makes up the 700km return trip to Paris.

Caroline Nicholls, Director of the Heathrow Community Fund went on to say;

"We want our grants to work hard at helping as many young people as possible in the Heathrow area to develop their skills, support their ambitions – and our partnership with RLSB will help us do just that. At the same time, with BA's support, we can create the opportunity for an exciting trip away for a lucky winner."

As well as the return flights for the long weekend trip donated by British Airways, the winner will be given £750 spending money. Prizes will also be awarded for second and third place.

Entries from should be submitted online at rlsb.org.uk/paris by Monday 14th July and the winners will be announced on Monday 25th August. Entrants must live within the West London boroughs of Ealing, Hillingdon and Hounslow or in Richmond, Runnymede, Slough, South Bucks, Spelthorne, Windsor or Maidenhead.

'Writing my way to Paris' will be judged by a panel of three judges including best-selling children's author, Marcus Sedgwick; Steve Ronald, Chair Heathrow Community Fund and a young person from RLSB West London Social.

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