

Top companies help South East young people Reach for Gold

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Cycle power, water pump generators and interactive board games are just some of the innovative ideas from schools and youth groups in the final of Reaching for Gold, a competition supported by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and key partners.

Reaching for Gold challenges South East young people aged 14-19 to develop ideas that will make a difference to their local communities on the themes of Youth, Community or Disability. All projects must include some international collaboration.

Nine finalist groups will each be intensively mentored by managers from one of nine major global companies and by community leaders, helping them prepare for a *'Dragon's Den'* style final at Windsor Castle on 15 December. The winning group will receive a trophy and £5,000 to help them develop their project.

The nine finalists were shortlisted from over 60 entries.

The competition is part of a unique collaboration of nine corporate business partners and voluntary and community sector organisations - known as the South East Corporate Cabinet - which works to support the future of the South East's economy.

Pam Alexander, SEEDA Chief Executive, said: "Reaching for Gold is a great opportunity for young people in the South East to gain a real insight into the world of business and to develop projects with leaders from both community and business.

"We are delighted to be working in collaboration with nine major companies on this groundbreaking project. Each sees the value in mentoring young people, the opportunity to spot new talent and to offer their own staff a unique development opportunity too. Working in partnership is increasingly important at this time and we are delighted to have brought together such a powerful group of business people to lead this exciting challenge."

Reaching for Gold is supported by BT, CISCO, Honda UK, Huawei Technologies, Intel Corporation, Legal and General, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Sony, and Toshiba Information Systems. Groundwork, The Prince's Trust and AbilityNet are partners from the voluntary and community sector.

...ENDS...

Notes to editors:

The finalists of Reaching for Gold are:

City College Brighton & Hove	Develop a 12 week construction course to provide a team of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), with the skills to work with young people locally to deliver a building project in The Gambia.	Brighton
Hayesbrook School	Develop a training programme and on line functionality to bring new young people into volunteering and match volunteers to opportunities.	Tonbridge
Miltoncross School	Design, manufacture and investigate viability of installing small generators in water pipes to supplement electrical energy in the community.	Milton
Young Pioneers	Roll out and internationalise a social leadership programme for young people, giving young people leadership skills and the opportunity to undertake a six month community challenge.	Battle
Aik Saath	Develop a mobile and environmentally friendly Cycling Cinema using mobile cycles to power films in community locations, encouraging people from every background to participate.	Slough
Brockenhurst College	Develop a bicycle refurbishment programme in the UK, including the training of young unemployed people as bicycle technicians, to donate bikes to partner organisations and set up a maintenance facility in Rwanda.	Brockenhurst
Medway Hindu Youth Group	Design and deliver a training programme to improve awareness of learning disabilities in the community and take up of intervention services.	Chatham
Tomlinscote School & Sixth Form College	Develop a multi-functioning online magazine to provide a voice for those with learning difficulties. Develop a training pack that could be marketed and rolled out to other schools and groups.	Camberley
Arbour Vale School	Design and develop an interactive board game to enable children with learning disabilities to learn about finances and commerce, The game would support pupils to learn aspects of running a small business before putting them into practice.	Slough

- Reaching for Gold is a new competition designed and supported by the South East [Corporate Cabinet](#) to encourage innovation and creativity in young people – essential skills for the industries that will lead Britain out of recession. The competition was open to school and college students, and members of voluntary and community groups across the South East.
- The nine teams who have made it through the first round will receive intensive support from assigned business and community mentors. They will also be awarded some of the latest in technology to help them, including a laptop, a mobile notes e-pen, a digital camera and a camcorder. The Reaching for Gold final and awards ceremony will take place at St George's House, Windsor Castle on Tuesday 15th December 2009.

- **SEEDA, the South East England Development Agency**, is the Government-funded agency responsible for the sustainable economic development of the South East of England – the driving force of the UK's economy. Through supporting businesses, encouraging innovation, developing skills and engaging with public and private partners, we aim to create a successful, sustainable future for the region.
- **The South East [Corporate Cabinet](#)** is a groundbreaking approach to collaborative working between corporate companies, SEEDA, and voluntary and community organisations. Reaching for Gold is the first time such a diverse range of partners have collaborated in the South East to give young people, many from disadvantaged backgrounds, the opportunity to develop skills and connect with corporate organisations.
- **SEEDA's support helped deliver the following** over the period 2005-2008:
 - 17,500 jobs created or safeguarded
 - 32,500 people helped to get work
 - 10,000 businesses created or attracted to region
 - 137,500 businesses assisted
 - £638m investment, 45% levered from private sector
 - 200ha Brownfield land remediated
 - 148,500 people assisted in skills development
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- For more information about Reaching for Gold visit www.reachingforgold.org.uk or email: kerenjones@seeda.co.uk
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