

**Growing the North East IT economy**

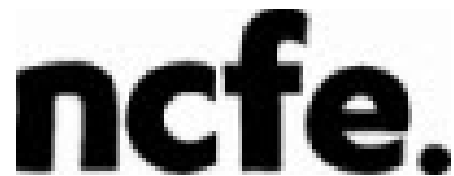
**IT Skills Strategy**

**UPDATE January 2015**



# Skills Strategy Sponsors

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# Background

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The Lord Adonis Report, which has relevance to both LEP areas highlighted a number of key aims, these included:

- more higher skilled and higher paid jobs
- creating better quality opportunities for young people to prosper
- development of strong innovation and growth clusters
- doubling the amount of apprenticeships
- creating four University Technical Colleges
- identifying demand for services in the North East for the “new economy” (Digital Media, Telecoms & Software)

These are all aims that can be related to and supported by the North East IT industry.

Dynamo is the North East industry led IT cluster initiative whose focus is to grow the North East IT economy. Our strategy for growth and skills is in line with the key aims above.



# Dynamo

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Dynamo was set up with four main aims:

- be a focal point for regional IT growth
- promote our region externally
- support regional research and development
- develop skills and education

**This presentation focuses on developing skills and education.**

A recent Dynamo survey showed that over 32,000 people currently work in the North East IT sector and there are almost 2,000 vacancies that need filling.

To ensure the region can continue to deliver a steady stream of skilled employees into the IT sector Dynamo has reached out to various schools, colleges, universities, councils, business support organisations, & IT businesses to create an IT skills strategy for the North East.



# Skills Strategy Aims

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- More women in IT
- More IT Apprentices
- More coding clubs and maker clubs in our schools
- More students choosing IT as a career
- Improved IT skills
- Improving links between business and education



## More women in IT

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Girls don't always see IT as a career option

- Accenture partnered with STEMMettes to host the largest technology for girls event in the UK 'North East Digital Girls' with 300 girls from 31 schools at The Sage Gateshead on Friday 16th January.
- CfBT has produced some [excellent resources](#) showcasing opportunities for women in IT.
- Upcoming 'Women into IT' event in March

**We want to identify and promote good stuff that's happening. Can you help?**

# More IT Apprentices (and make it easier to take on an IT Apprentice)



Navigating the information and process around taking on an IT Apprentice can be a pain, especially for SMEs.

- Dynamo will shortly be announcing its IT Apprenticeship Hub proof of concept.
  - Initially 2 software development apprenticeship initiatives
- We are currently assessing demand for a peer support and best practice network for mentors and managers of IT apprentices.

**We want to identify and promote good stuff that's happening. Can you help?**

# More coding clubs and maker clubs in our schools



Identifying volunteers and finding venues is proving difficult in some areas.

- Dynamo is brokering contacts with [CodeClub](#) and [Coderdojo](#), in particular trying to get more code clubs in Durham, Sunderland and Teesside.
- We're currently looking at how to roll out more maker clubs building on some of the excellent 'Build IT' work showcased in the Dynamites 14.

**We want to identify and promote good stuff that's happening. Can you help?**





## More students choosing IT as a career

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Parental awareness of careers in the IT sector is a particular issue.

- We've developed an IT skills pipeline diagram to help identify key players.
- Dynamo has engaged local careers organisations, started pulling statistics and identifying role models and participated in school careers fairs - we'll be looking at how best to do that moving forward.

**We want to identify and promote good stuff that's happening. Can you help?**



## Improved IT skills

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We need more young people with better IT skills. Schools are struggling with the change to the new computing curriculum as it's coincided with increased pressures on resources.

- We've talked to schools about issues they are facing and are planning a schools IT skills event to bring together schools, CPD providers, coding clubs, apprenticeship providers etc.
- Bob's been involved in a bid for a University Technical College in the Region which has reached the 'last 5' shortlist – we're hoping to hear more about that very soon.

**We want to identify and promote good stuff that's happening. Can you help?**



The IT skills area is complex.

- We're trying to make it easier for you to talk to IT skills organisations, find out about opportunities and raise the profile and recognition for good stuff you're already doing.
- To help us understand the IT skills ecosystem we're pulling together a Dynamo IT skills steering group.

**Can you help?**



## Areas we know we need to do more with

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- Improving links between the IT sector and universities and colleges
  - Internships
  - Curriculum development
  - Advisory committees
  - Guest lectures
  - Supporting projects and research
  - Information about the job opportunities
  
- IT Businesses engaging with schools
  - Develop and support projects
  - Enrich curriculum
  - IT careers advice
  - Mentors for young people

**Can you help?**



## Areas we know we need to do more with

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- Girls and IT
  - More computer clubs for girls
  - Mentoring via Girl Geeks etc.
  - Build on Girls and Gadgets initiatives
  
- Support the development and growth of IT in the third sector
  - Support social inclusion initiatives
  - Upskill voluntary and community groups re IT

**Can you help?**



## Summary

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- To increase the reservoir of young people we need a long term approach to the IT skills agenda.
- We outlined our vision last summer and have had some great responses from businesses and education to our 'call to action'.
- We've been identifying good stuff that's already happening and making links so more of that can happen.

**Can you help?**

## Summary

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- There are still some areas we haven't made as much progress as we'd like.
- We need support from education, business, councils, support organisations (e.g. LEP).

**Can you help?**



# Contacts

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