

National Award for EmployAbility scheme

National Grid skills scheme nets national accolade

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- **Internship scheme boosts work skills for young people with additional needs**
- **National Grid urges other businesses to take part**

A scheme involving youngsters from special needs schools in Hinckley and Nuneaton has scooped a national award.

"EmployAbility – Let's work together", is a supported internship scheme based on partnerships between schools including Hinckley's Dorothy Goodman School and Nuneaton's Oak Wood School and Hinckley employer National Grid. It beat off competition from companies across the UK to be named Community Initiative of the year at the prestigious Utility Week awards.

Now National Grid are hoping to use the success to encourage other businesses to take part.

Dave Tilley, who leads the scheme at Hinckley on behalf of National Grid, said: "We're incredibly proud to win this award. In the two years "EmployAbility – Let's Work Together" has been running across Hinckley and our other sites we've been able to improve the work skills of more than 50 young people who might otherwise have not been given a chance. Some of them have gone on to get permanent roles.

"However, that's just the tip of the iceberg. There are lots more capable young people who are unlikely to find jobs because the way companies traditionally recruit puts them at a disadvantage because of their disability. We're looking for more local companies, big or small, to come on board. We can provide support to these companies, show them how the scheme works and they'll soon realise the value these interns can bring to their business."

Janet Thompson, Headteacher of Dorothy Goodman School, Hinckley, said: "We are incredibly proud of our involvement with National Grid's Employability Scheme and are thrilled to see it has been recognised with this national award. Employability has given our students a fantastic opportunity, we have seen their confidence, self-esteem and sense of achievement grow daily.

"National Grid and the job coaches thoroughly deserve to be awarded for the support and dedication they have shown the interns and we hope that other businesses see the worth in giving young people with additional needs a chance to shine in the work place"

The scheme works by giving interns from the schools experience working in a number of roles. Job Coaches from the schools work with the business to learn the roles, then support the students to do the work, before gradually stepping back and letting the interns do the job for themselves.

The hope is that eventually the interns can get a permanent role with the company, but if that's not possible they will have gained a wealth of work skills and personal confidence that boosts their job prospects.

Companies interested in finding out more about EmployAbility or see it in action should call Rebecca Watson at National Grid on 01926 655256 or email Rebecca.Watson@nationalgrid.com

Photocaption: pictured front centre – graduate intern Megan Moran proudly holds the award, flanked by National Grid's Dave Tilley and Sophie Woolham, and surrounded by new Employability interns, graduate interns from last year's scheme who are now working at National Grid's Hinckley site and job coaches Gail Thompson and Louise Green



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Notes for editors

Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

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