

What's happening?

Best Practice on TLP KO2 London Bridge Area Partnership Young Entrepreneurs Project

Overview:

Siemens Rail Automation, Balfour Beatty Rail and Network Rail worked with Southwark Education Business Alliance (a council led initiative, bringing schools and businesses together) on delivering the Young Entrepreneurs Project. The project requires teams of students to develop a 'sustainable' product idea to sell at Borough Market, with winning teams given a budget to create their product and sell at the market. The bi-annual project requires volunteers from local businesses in Southwark to help deliver a series of workshops to the teams at the schools (once a week for 2-3 hours). Workshop topics range from finance to marketing and the volunteers are required to present pre-prepared slides to the students and then facilitate group exercises and discussions. After the workshops have been delivered, there is a judging day where volunteers form a panel to decide which teams goes through to create and sell their product at Borough Market. The project runs twice a year, with winning teams selling products at either Easter or Christmas times.



Participating in such projects allows delivery partners to build links with the council and community. Establishing a relationship with the council's 'business-education' team can help create volunteering opportunities for employees, bringing multiple benefits to a project.



Benefits:

- Helping young people to develop teamwork, leadership and communication skills
- Fulfil section 106 requirements
- Training and development opportunity for volunteers
- Improve CSR and promotes company image
- Build links with educational establishments, gaining a potential employment source (apprentices etc.)

Challenges:

- Time – the short notice of workshop dates given by schools/council affects the recruitment of volunteers
- Location of schools – some schools are not located close to rail stations which makes it difficult for volunteers to attend, especially if travelling to and from office or site

Meeting TLP objectives and targets:

This initiative directly contributes to Network Rail's TLP Sustainability Strategy Objectives:-

- Objective 7 – 'To proactively engage with communities around TLP to minimize negative impact and to work in partnership to maximise our social contribution'