

Welcome to our December newsletter featuring a selection of business headlines and funding news in the not-for-profit sector. There is also a list of forthcoming events and training courses.

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Funding available for consultancy on training needs

Funding is now available to businesses with between 5 and 49 employees, through the Small Firms Initiative, to provide a comprehensive and practical review of your company's training and business needs. For more information see:

<http://www.businesslink4london.com/services/theme.cfm?themeID=15&subthemeID=58>

East London top hotspot for new businesses

The capital's economic heartland shifts eastward as a new survey reveals that East London has displaced central London at the top of this year's rankings as the location with the highest number of new businesses.

<http://www.startups.co.uk/YcvCpoxzQSQAQ.html>

National Enterprise Week (15-21 November)

Enterprise Week, which runs from this Monday, is part of a wider national drive to encourage those in their teens and 20s to start new businesses, improve their communities or develop new ideas within their existing organisations.

<http://www.starttalkingideas.org/>

Phoenix Fund receives top marks from independent evaluations

The DTI's £177 million Phoenix Fund has been a resounding success in boosting enterprise in disadvantaged communities according to four independent studies.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=135254&NewsAreaID=2>

(12th November)

£10m new fund for small businesses in London

Businesses in deprived parts of London are set to benefit from a new £10 million funding stream. Created by the LDA and Barclays, the fund will pay out loans of up to £250,000 to organisations seeking growth capital.

<http://www.businesslink4london.com/news/gbnews.cfm?newsID=2789>

(12th November)

Internet law checklist

There are a raft of laws and regulations that you need to be aware of when using the web/email in business. This checklist from Business Link lists the main ones.

www.businesslink4london.com/advice/resources.cfm?tax1=11&tax2=52&resourceID

NCVO launches second round of income-generating initiative

Voluntary sector organisations are being offered up to £150 to meet one another and explore ideas income generation, through an initiative run by the NCVO's Sustainable Funding Project (SFP). Only Connect is a small bursary scheme, sponsored by charity banking specialists Triodos Bank. For more <http://www.askncvo.org.uk/asp/search/ncvo/main>
(10th November)

Voluntary sector encouraged to think proactively about HR issues

A new report says voluntary sector organisations need to be encouraged to budget for the cost of training and development at the time of employing staff. The report gives a wide range of recommendations <http://www.askncvo.org.uk/asp/search/ncvo/main.aspx?siteID=1&subSID=116&SID=8&documentID=116>
(10th November)

Report reveals best banks for small businesses

Three of the high street's major banks - Barclays, Lloyds TSB and NatWest - are under performing in their relationship with small businesses, a report has revealed. <http://www.startups.co.uk/YS1rRzdoHWUGSg.html>
(8th November)

Concerns over IT trends in UK

e-skills UK commissioned the most comprehensive study into IT-related trends and skills ever undertaken in the UK and found a crisis on the doorstep of the UK economy. This study indicates the gap between current skill levels of the UK workforce and the demands that forecast trends will place on businesses is one of the key threats to UK competitiveness. www.e-skills.com/cgi-bin/go.pl/%7Breferer%3Dx%7D/news/news.html?uid=351
(3rd November)

VAT Flat Rate Scheme

Customs & Excise have drawn attention to the VAT Flat Rate Scheme (FRS) for small businesses, introduced in the 2002 budget. The FRS means small businesses with a turnover up to £150,000 can calculate their VAT payment as a percentage of their total turnover. This provides a much simpler way to account for VAT. <http://www.hmce.gov.uk>

The environment in your pocket

Key trends and other statistics on the environment over recent years are presented for easy accessibility in the latest edition of the booklet, The Environment in your Pocket 2004, published by DEFRA. <http://www.gnn.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=133826&NewsAreaID=2>

Best wishes,
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