

Smart Futures Stoke 2020-2021

Not everyone in the UK finds it easy to gain access to the opportunities they need to fulfil their ambitions and potential.

The EY Foundation believes that every young person should have a great start to their working life.

[Smart Futures](#) is a 6-10-month programme which includes 2 weeks of paid delivery. Young people will undertake one week of employability skills training and one week of work experience, alongside one-to-one mentoring and a mixture of career-related alumni events.



It provides 16 – 17-year olds from low income families the opportunity to gain quality work experience before they decide what to do after school. The work experience and mentoring will help them as they embark on either apprenticeship, job or university applications.

The programme is specifically targeted to those who are motivated to achieve but lack opportunities and the eligibility criteria is set to ensure we identify those young people.

In preparation for the **Smart Futures programme in Stoke** we are seeking employers' support to host 2 young people during their work experience or/and mentor for 6 months. More information is below.

The programme is managed throughout by the EY Foundation, who undertake all onboarding, payroll, health and safety, pastoral support of young people, evaluation, DBS checks for mentors and training for all volunteers. We make it safe and easy for employers to engage in a quality programme and give their teams valuable volunteering opportunities.

Business (Work) Experience Host: 15th – 19th February 2021 (5 days)

Your role:

Students will be placed at one of partner organisations for 5 days.

The business host will organise and plan the week for the student in terms of what work they will be doing and who they will be working with.

The purpose of this week is to put to use the skills they have learnt during the first week, develop new skills altogether, and get a better understanding of what it is like to work in your organization.

The students should be involved in as many live projects as possible with a variety of team members.

All members of staff involved will be invited to the Graduation event which will be held towards the end of the final week.

Task ideas:

Developing IT skills:

- Gain experience using both basic and more advanced MS Excel tools. This could range from presenting data they have researched, to using how to use formulas or pivot tables.

- Gain skills in formatting documents to a high standard in both MS Word and MS PowerPoint. This could be incorporated by asking them to provide a report on some research they have done, asking for minutes from a meeting, or asking them to present their findings through use of MS PowerPoint.

Research and presentation task:

- At the beginning of the business experience week, you might wish to set the students up with a research project relevant to a business issue or broader industry topic. The research can be refined and verified throughout the week, and presented to a panel at the end. This gives the students experience with time management, working with a team, taking feedback on board and developing their own ideas.

Networking:

- A great and informal session which brings together a number of employers and your team at a networking lunch. This gives you the chance to develop more informal relationships with your team whilst giving the students confidence in a business networking environment.

Task ownership:

- It would be beneficial for the students if they could take responsibility of a task and have the opportunity to work independently at some stage during the business experience week. One example of this could be to perform an Assessment of Service Quality for one of your clients/customers. This would enable the student to learn about service delivery and how organisations take feedback on board to improve their business.

Working on real projects:

- As a key part of your day-today business, it would be beneficial if the students could be involved in some direct contact with any of your clients/customers — on real work. Having co-hosted a 'What makes a great experience of work' roundtable with the Rt Hon Alan Milburn, students told us what they valued most about work experience was real work.
- This could range from taking minutes in phone calls, attending meetings, helping to facilitate workshops, data entry and analysis, MS PowerPoint formatting and audit walkthroughs.

Mentor : October 2020 – February 2021

Your role:

As a mentor you will support your mentee by providing encouragement and advice. Your mentee will identify their own targets in relation to their academic, personal and career development.

The time commitment is 1 hour monthly either virtually or face to face. We encourage virtually until December 2020 at the earliest.

The EY Foundation will provide training and resources including a Mentor Handbook. They will also undertake a DBS check to ensure you are ready to be a mentor. Mentor role commitment: