



Movement to Work  
CEO Summit 2021  
**Insights and impact report**  
March 2021

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## Acknowledgements

Movement to Work (MtW) - MtW is a not-for-profit coalition of UK employers, youth-outreach organisations, training providers and government allies – all aiming to level the playing field for young age people aged 16-30 facing barriers to work. MtW works with employers, free-of-charge, to design and implement brilliant work experience and vocational solutions for their organisation, either in-house or through one of our recommended training providers. We aim to break the cycle of 'no experience, no job' that so many young people face by creating great opportunities to boost their prospects.

Each year, Movement to Work hosts its annual CEO Summit, bringing together senior leaders from business, youth outreach, government and young people, to discuss the most pertinent issues of the day related to youth unemployment. The last CEO summit was held at a point in time when youth unemployment was at a historic low and yet, just a year on, our Summit in February 2021 responded to a radically different context that we never could have foreseen:

- Young people account for 46% of the overall fall in employment
- Young people are bearing the brunt of lockdown – 47% of people furloughed are aged under 24
- Almost 200,000 young people who are out of work have been unemployed for over six months\*
- The unprecedented disturbance to young people's education and the trauma of having their social lives disrupted at vulnerable ages

Given the challenges posed by COVID-19, we hosted the event for the first time online but we were encouraged by the participation and enthusiasm across our network. We were inspired by the stories of young people who spoke boldly about their lived-experiences, and the dedication shown by our key speakers and special guests:

- Olly Benzecry, Chairman Accenture UKI and MtW Chair
- Sacha Berendji, Retail, Operations & Property Director, M&S
- Seb Munden, Executive VP & GM U&I, Unilever
- Liz Williams, CEO, Futuredotnow
- Mims Davies MP, Minister for Employment (DWP)
- Jack Parsons - UK's Chief Youth Officer and Award-winning young entrepreneur and CEO of The Youth Group
- Sam Meakings, Job Coach at the Department for Work and Pensions and MtW Youth Ambassador
- June Sarpong OBE, British television broadcaster and presenter (Event MC)
- Sanjeev Bhaskar OBE, award-winning comedian, actor and television presenter
- Russell Kane, multi-award winning comedian, presenter, actor, author and scriptwriter

We also took this opportunity to celebrate a big milestone for the charity - achieving over 100,000 youth work placements to date. However, this celebration was swiftly met with the call to achieve our next 100,000 faster and stronger than ever before. Young people are facing the toughest circumstances we've ever seen, and so we must rally together to affirm positive action before it is too late. I took away three key things from this year's event:

1. We must see youth employability as a key way to bring true sustainability to life in our organisations – bringing in diverse talent and meaningfully engaging with our communities to bring about social mobility and an economy that works for everyone.
2. We must not rush to think that young people – the so called 'digital natives' – are as tech savvy as we may think they are. We need to continue to navigate the digital world remembering that not all young people have the access to tech and data, not all young people have the appropriate skills-set, and to be mindful that a digital world is not always the best place to foster positive experiences for our young people.
3. If we continue to recruit in the same way, we will continue to get the same results. I call on employers to quickly adapt, to stop recruiting for 'perfection' and to recruit for potential - and - be prepared to develop it. We have to see beyond the classic markers of employability such as strong GCSEs and a well-written C.V. and re-think our strategy so we can cast the net even wider.

The media still talks about the risk of the lost generation – if we act now, boldly, this needn't be the fate of our young people. We can do something about it. As leaders, we have a responsibility to be part of the solution and not the problem. Let's not forget the young people who were already furthest from the workplace, and how COVID-19 has pushed them even further out. We believe that if we continue to have those young people in our hearts and minds as we move forward, our businesses will be stronger and the world will become a fairer place to be.

I hope you enjoy reading the report, and as ever, please do not hesitate to get in touch with a member of the team should you require any assistance.



Sam Olsen  
CEO, Movement to Work  
Wednesday 23rd March 2021

\*As found in *An Unequal Crisis: The impact of the pandemic on the youth labour market*, Youth Futures Foundation (12 February 2021).



## Impact: Pledges

We were particularly encouraged by the pledges made by members of our employer network and to see such widespread engagement across social and digital media to help promote best practice and thought leadership. As a result we saw great conversations come to the fore and promising new leads for the Movement.

*"At M&S I'm delighted to announce that next year we will be offering at least 500 of our Marks and Start placements to young people. In addition we are really excited to be taking part in the Kickstart programme by offering 360 placements. At M&S we are passionate and committed to helping those who are most in need and face significant barriers getting into employment".*

Sacha Berendji, Retail, Operations & Property Director  
M&S



*"At Tesco, we are one of the leading organisations to support the Government's Kickstart scheme. We are offering 1000 Kickstart work placement opportunities in 2020/21, whilst maintaining our offer of over 600 sector-based work placements to young people during the coming year. As part of our broader commitment to young people, we will share learnings in targeted forums to encourage other businesses to support young people in most need into employment."*

Natasha Adams, Chief People Officer  
Tesco

*"It is great that MtW is celebrating delivering 100,000 MtW placements and I am pleased that Accenture has been able to provide over 1,000 of those opportunities. However, there is more to be done and Accenture is committed to growing the number of MtW participants joining the firm as apprentices and ensuring these opportunities are reaching even further into underrepresented groups. It is our responsibility to support the workforce of the future and Accenture is committed to playing its part."*

Olly Benzecry, Chairman of Accenture United Kingdom and Ireland (UKI) and Chair of Movement to Work



## Impact: Pledges

*"Diageo will continue to work for an inclusive and thriving hospitality sector and commits to working with our training partners and other industry leaders to maximise the participation of underrepresented or vulnerable groups across the hospitality sector. In the UK we are committed to increasing the participation of young people through our industry leading employability programme Learning for Life, each year for the next decade. As part of our Society 2030: Spirit of Progress global commitments, we will provide skills and resources to 1.5 million people through the Diageo Bar Academy and will improve employability and livelihoods of a further 200,000 people through Learning for Life and other skills initiatives. As part of our wider commitment to Diversity and Inclusion we will ensure that 50% of beneficiaries from our skills and community programmes are women & all our programmes will continue to be designed to enhance ethnic diversity and inclusion of underrepresented groups."*



Ivan Menezes , Chief Executive Officer, Diageo



*"BAE Systems will continue to deliver Movement to Work programmes and will support the Kickstart scheme, which can provide a route into an apprenticeship with the Company, as part of our commitment to support the development of young people across the UK."*

Charles Woodburn, Group Chief Executive Officer,  
BAE Systems

We continue to challenge our network:  
**What is your organisation going to **commit** to  
doing **differently** this year to help more  
young people into work?  
Let us know!**



## Impact: Social and Digital Media

We saw a big increase in engagement across our social channels including over a 200% increase in unique visitors to our pages and hundreds of new digital followers. Please continue to engage with us on social media @MovementtoWork #YoungPeopleWork – sharing opportunities and raising awareness.

**Sebastian Munden** - 2nd  
EVP & General Manager, Unilever UK and Ireland  
1w · Edited · 📎

+ Follow ...

Delighted to host a table discussion at the recent virtual **Movement to Work** CEO summit, where employers came together with young people to crack the chicken-or-egg problem of "no experience no work, no work no experience". We celebrated 100,000 work experiences since the founding of the Movement, and worked together to sharpen plans to achieve the next 100,000.

**Unilever** was a founding member of Movement To Work and we're committed to helping to grow the programme and offering more work experience opportunities with us every year. Over the years a third of young people who have had work experience with us through the scheme now work with us permanently. The virtualisation of our programme last year helped us to support over 100 young people with their job search and this month 40 of our colleagues are already lined up with mentees from our local Job Centre.

If a young person has 4+ contacts or experiences with employers before they finish education they are 86% less likely to be NEET (not in education employment or training). Helping young people to overcome barriers to sustained work is critical. All employers large and small can be part of the movement, and it has never been more needed than now with youth unemployment running at 4x the national average.

#youngpeoplework

**Tesco**  
466,678 followers  
2w · 📎

+ Follow ...

Today is the **Movement to Work** to Work #CEOSummit2021 and we are proud to be working with young people, leading employers, youth outreach organisations and government allies to try and help young people overcome potential barriers to securing a job. Our Kickstart programme is just one of the areas where Tesco is involved and our colleagues are now halfway through their programme - gaining valuable work experience and building their employability skills for a better future.

#ProudtoPartner #YoungPeopleWork #Kickstart

**YOUNG PEOPLE WORK**

**CEO Summit 2021**

MOVEMENT TO WORK

101 · 3 comments

**Accenture UK**  
49,546 followers  
2w · 📎

+ Follow ...

Congratulations to **Movement to Work** - delivering 100,000 employment opportunities and helping to break the cycle of 'no experience, no job' for so many young people facing barriers to work. Our young people need us now more than ever. #ProudtoPartner #YoungPeopleWork

<https://accentu.re/3aJ6xdY>

**100K**

Positive Experiences for Young People

**YOUNG PEOPLE WORK**

MOVEMENT TO WORK

82

**100K**

Positive Experiences for Young People

**YOUNG PEOPLE WORK**

MOVEMENT TO WORK

103 · 7 comments

**M&S**  
380,169 followers  
2w · Edited · 📎

+ Follow ...

We're proud to partner with **Movement to Work** to help young people overcome the barriers into work. Through our Marks & Start employability scheme, we've supported over 20,000 individuals with invaluable skills and the confidence to find employment and get onto the career ladder.

#movementtowork #youngpeoplematter #careeropportunities

**YOUNG PEOPLE WORK**

Proud to Partner

MOVEMENT TO WORK

105 · 10 comments

**catch 22**  
16,531 followers  
2w · 📎

+ Follow ...

Congratulations to **Movement to Work** - delivering 100,000 opportunities and helping to break the cycle of 'no experience, no job' for so many young people facing barriers to work. We are #ProudtoPartner with you to help #YoungPeopleWork.

**YOUNG PEOPLE WORK**


Proud to Partner

MOVEMENT TO WORK

42 · 2 comments

**Movement to Work**  
1,636 followers  
now · 📎

Thank you **LondonLovesBusiness.com** for featuring our call to action for business leaders to do more to help #YoungPeopleWork: "During the pandemic, under 25s were more likely than any other age group to be furloughed. The same age group now makes up a third of universal credit claims. Millions of young people are already struggling, and the future looks even more grim, with a think tank predicting that young people are a third less likely to be in employment three years after entering than if the pandemic never happened." Read the full article: <https://lfbk.in/degnmc>



**Movement to Work**  
1,616 followers  
1w · 📎

Thanks for the support **Global Banking & Finance Review** for raising awareness and showcasing the inspirational leaders in our Movement to Work network calling for change:

**Natasha Adams** CCIPD - Chief People Officer, Tesco  
**Charles Woodburn** - Chief Executive Officer, BAE Systems  
**Oily Benzecry** - Chairman of Accenture UK and Chair of Movement to Work  
**Sam Olsen**, CEO Movement to Work

These as well as all our leaders from across the network who have joined the rallying cry to help #YoungPeopleWork including Marks & Spencer, Diageo, Unilever, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), BT, Barclays UK, The Prince's Trust, CBI (Confederation of British Industry), and TUC

Read the full article here: <https://lfbk.in/6EACq9>




Senior leaders call on UK businesses not to fail young people  
[globalbankingandfinance.com](https://globalbankingandfinance.com) · 6 min read

**Movement to Work**  
1,616 followers  
2w · 📎

Thanks to **People Management** magazine for shining a light on **Movement to Work** CEO **Sam Olsen** and the youth unemployment crisis. We hope it inspires more organisations to get involved and help #YoungPeopleWork

<https://lfbk.in/4ZbAUT>



How can organisations help curb rising youth unemployment?  
[peoplemanagement.co.uk](https://peoplemanagement.co.uk) · 3 min read

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# INTRODUCTION

## Executive summary

This report provides a summary of the table discussions and the key ideas that emerged as part of the virtual Movement to Work CEO Summit that took place at the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021. The main theme of the Summit was ‘Safeguarding the Future of the Workplace’ looking at putting youth employment at the heart of the economic recovery and ensuring that every young person has the support that they need to get into work.

Topics covered across the five table discussions were:

- **Table discussion 1: Digital inclusion and digital wellbeing**
  - Key question: *How can we ensure young people have access to the appropriate technology to support their job search and that people have quality experiences in an increasingly digital world?*
- **Table discussion 2: Youth inclusion in broader business strategy**
  - Key question: *How can we ensure that providing opportunities to young people who are facing barriers to work (i.e. socio-economic, care leavers, disability, race, ex-offenders, etc.) is seen as a key priority for businesses?*
- **Table discussion 3: Financial inclusion**
  - Key question: *How do we ensure that every young person, regardless of their socio-economic background, never considers a work employability programme a financial burden?*
- **Table discussion 4: Opportunity awareness and inclusion**
  - Key question: *How do we ensure all young people, especially those facing barriers to work, are aware of the opportunities and resources that are on offer?*
- **Table discussion 5: Bridging the skills gap**
  - Key question: *In a time of skills shortages and emerging new industries, where should we be equipping people with the right skills for our future workforce?*

The Movement to Work (MtW) call to action in 2021 is: *how do we ensure youth employment is embedded into business planning as part of our post COVID-19 recovery?* Namely, challenging the business community to both ‘build back better’ and try to remedy the disastrous situation our young people are facing. We invited young people and leaders from across our network to discuss the most pressing youth employment issues and make plans for tackling them in the year ahead.

It was a unique opportunity to talk honestly and boldly about the concerns at hand, and what can be done to resolve them. Main speeches focused on a celebration of collectively reaching 100,000 work placements, the reality faced by young people looking for jobs today, a strong call to action to business leaders to think differently and to plan for the development of diverse and inclusive talent pipelines as part of COVID-19 recovery and beyond.

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## Recommendations

In order to make our workplaces more accessible to young and diverse talent, the following core recommendations came forward during the 2021 MtW CEO Summit:

- **Regularly review your recruitment methods:** Traditional recruitment practices need to change to give flexible methods of assessment that remove barriers. Not only will this enable young people to move into work, but it will also help to ensure that employers are accessing a diverse talent pool that might be bypassed by traditional recruitment methods. MtW has become acutely aware of staggering detrimental effects on youth mental health as a result of the pandemic and therefore asks employers to see this as another growing barrier to employment, whereby a young person may be bringing an enhanced state of anxiety to interview and the workplace. MtW urges employers to be sensitive to these mental health impacts and to recruit for *potential* not perfection.
- **Thought leadership inspires best practice:** Internally, leaders need to use their leadership role in organisations to drive forward youth employment and skills development when not only building recruitment strategies, but when contracting for new business and procuring new services. Externally, businesses need to do more to promote their commitment to youth diversity and inclusion and showcase their involvement with Movement to Work in their outward facing PR, social and digital media strategy. MtW urges employers to use their platform and influence to promote best practice across the business community and public at large.
- **Be conscious of the digital divide:** When promoting and running employability programmes, businesses need to invest in providing outreach support, digital access and digital training where needed to enable young people whatever their circumstances to access the opportunities. MtW urges employers to continue to be aware of digital poverty and to think 'outside the box' regarding how to meaningfully engage with these young people so they are never left behind.
- **Use the power of storytelling:** Greater use to be made of personal stories and the journey that young people have experienced in struggling to get into work, as well as those who have successfully moved into work, to inspire young people alongside more targeted use of social media to extend the reach and awareness of work and work experience opportunities. MtW urges employers to use their platforms to amplify success stories far and wide.
- **Financial inclusion must always be considered:** When promoting and running employability programmes, businesses need to consider young people living in financial hardship, in desperate need of these opportunities, but sometimes without proper means. MtW urges employers to find ways to make programmes financially accessible and wherever possible, find ways for them to lead onto longer term paid opportunities.
- **Government-backed schemes need to be easier to navigate:** MtW urges government to simplify the current youth employability scheme landscape to make it as easy as possible for business to run youth employment and skills programmes at pace and at scale. Movement to Work reminds employers to reach out to our organisation for support navigating this space free-of-charge.
- **Earlier intervention:** Mobilisation is needed, through schools and training providers, to develop the employability and digital skills of young people aligned with improved careers guidance and advice at an earlier stage. MtW urges employers to consider the ways it can engage with schools and colleges to share insights and inspire the future workforce.



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# INSIGHTS

## Overview

The main theme of the Summit was '*Safeguarding the Future of the Workplace*' looking at putting youth employment at the heart of the economic recovery and ensuring that every young person has the support needed to get into work. Whilst there were five discussion tables each with different topics, as stated above, this report focuses on the grouping of common themes that were discussed on the day. There was a considerable amount of conversational cross-over from one table to another, therefore rather explaining output table-by-table the report shines a lot on the salient themes across all conversations.

We heard from young people about both the mental health and the financial impact the pandemic has had on their lives and also their future aspirations.

Even where young people have access to the internet at home and have been accessing skills and development opportunities, mental health and wellbeing harbours other causes for concern. In a recent report published by YoungMinds, it was found that 80% of young people agreed that the pandemic had made their mental health worse.<sup>1</sup> The report concluded that "The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have a lasting impact across a number of areas of young people's lives, whether that be related to their education, their experiences with work, their home life or their relationships. Even for those who have adjusted well to the restrictions, the return to a 'new normal' may bring profound challenges."

Linked to recruitment, Diversity & Inclusion was a common topic of discussion at the summit, as was potential. We heard that organisations need to be more flexible in the ways that they enable young people to access work, and to recognise that processes employers have in place may not always help young people enter the workplace.

Youth unemployment has risen from 12.1% to 14.2% since March 2020.<sup>2</sup> The number of people aged 16-64 claiming unemployment related benefits has increased by 271,000 from January 2020 to January 2021, an increase of 120%.<sup>3</sup> Sectors that traditionally employ young people, such as hospitality, leisure and retail, have been forced to close during lockdown and may be slow return to pre-pandemic levels. This will be an ongoing challenge for young people.

### **A few key areas of concern that were discussed in the context of post pandemic recovery:**

- Hospitality and Highstreet Retail – two key sectors where young people get their early work experiences have been hit the hardest. Hospitality sector is going to see the long-tail of COVID-19 impact and will gradually return to normality over the next 24 months, but some business just won't reopen at all. On the Highstreet, although not MtW members, in November 2020 we saw giants like the Arcadia Group fall into administration casting doubt over 13,000 jobs alone.
- There is now a very competitive jobs market. Those without core skills will be competing with more experienced people who have lost their job which will be a huge challenge for so called 'disadvantaged' young people.
- Kickstart has had a slow start in the context of repeated lockdowns. There is a clear need to raise greater awareness in relevant networks and to ensure young people know what's out there. We need to increase the number of Kickstart placements and engage with big employers to enable this, but solid wrap-around employability support needs to be built into this and all related programmes. Skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, attitude, aptitude and digital skills are all important for young people to develop.
- We heard that '*Work Readiness*' of young people is a challenge, it was recognised that many young people still lack the skills that employers expect.

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<sup>1</sup> *Coronavirus: Impact on Young People with Mental Health Need*, YoungMinds COVID-19 January 2021 survey

<sup>2</sup> *Youth Unemployment Statistics*, House of Commons Library, 23 Feb 2021

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

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## Access to Digital Devices / Cost & Debt

Against a backdrop of the pandemic, digital exclusion in the UK can now be clearly seen as one further aspect of the inequalities that exist across our nation. Only 51% of households earning less than £10k have internet access, compared to 99% of households earning over £40k.<sup>4</sup> Ofcom estimates that 9% of children in the UK (between 1.1m and 1.8m) do not have access to a laptop, desktop or tablet at home.<sup>5</sup>

Research has shown that not all young people have access to digital devices and may not be as digitally savvy as assumed.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, the need to share devices, pay for data, have internet access or particular software, may also impact on a person's ability to use digital devices. Without device access, there is an increased risk that young people will also be unable to access education, training or work, or be able to keep in touch with friends or family. Government research estimates 82% of jobs require digital skills.<sup>7</sup>

For business, recognising and helping close the digital divide and the skills gap is key to ensuring a resilient and healthy workforce, as well as a new generation of young workers properly equipped for the challenges of a digital world. Those that step forward now and support the most disadvantaged and vulnerable will be well placed to thrive, as they attract and nurture the talent of the future.

It was discussed how digital inclusion is not simply about giving a device to a young person, but rather it's about having a device that's accessible, affording the data cost; and having the skills, time and space to use it effectively. Even working households may deprioritise devices due to debt. We heard how for some it's a choice between "data or dinner".

We heard from our youth outreach partners that there is a challenge in identifying where the greatest need is and how best to support including access to data packages.

## Social Mobility / Disadvantage / Barriers

In a more competitive job market as a result of global economic downturn, there was an acute awareness that COVID-19 was going to negatively impact social mobility by pushing those with pre-existing barriers even further from the workplace. Financial exclusion and poverty can impact on the opportunity for young people to find work and engage in employability programmes. A recent report by the Prince's Trust & Tesco found that almost a quarter of young people (23%) do not feel confident about their future work, while more than half (54%) say it is now harder to ask for employment help as "*everyone needs it at the moment*".<sup>8</sup> In addition to lack of employment, connectivity also has a bearing on wellbeing and can help to combat feelings of isolation by connecting people of all ages during lockdown. While, throughout the pandemic, this has meant that many people can work and learn from home, at the same time, those in poverty have struggled to learn effectively and search for work and support.

There was a call for employers to create entry level roles, particularly those that do not require qualifications experience. An increased focus on bridging the gap between school and work was discussed, supporting young people with the transition.

It was identified that the knowledge gap in recruitment teams still exists when it comes to understanding of the challenges NEET (those "Not in Education, Employment, or Training") young people can face. This alongside low ambition regarding the prioritisation of placements and consideration of the real depth and

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/Research/Start-Year/2017/building\\_better\\_opportunities\\_new\\_horizons](https://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/Research/Start-Year/2017/building_better_opportunities_new_horizons)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-55573803>

<sup>6</sup> *Children & Young People's Mental Health in the Digital Age: Shaping the Future*, OECD 2018

<sup>7</sup> *No Longer Optional: Employer Demand for Digital Skills*, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, June 2019

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/about-the-trust/news-views/tesco-youth-index-2021>

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complexity of diversity & inclusion e.g., thinking about ex-offenders, refugees, care leavers and young carers etc.

We heard how debts from education/university can exclude people from employability programmes where upfront costs exist or where participation impacts on universal credit payments.

There is a need to offer youth employability programmes, especially to those who are facing barriers, but help them to seize these opportunities without ever feeling a financial burden.

### Recruitment / Skills Education / Qualifications

60% of Chief Finance Officers say there is a shortage of financial skills in the UK<sup>9</sup>, there are over 50,000 nursing vacancies open in our health service<sup>10</sup>, demand for Mental Health-related skills is increasing annually and demand for technical and coding skills is on the rise. Healthcare workers, social workers, HGV/LGV drivers and teaching assistants were amongst the top 10 job roles facing shortages in the UK in 2020.<sup>11</sup>

Young People are the future of our country's workforce – they could and should be the answer to this skills demand. In order for our young people to be successful in the workplace in the future, we must equip them with the tools, access, funding and support to build the relevant skillset. As business leaders and delivery partners, we are in a unique position to influence and drive change.

We heard how young people need support to gain relevant employment skills, to learn what these basic skills are and why they are important alongside training and learning opportunities.

Businesses discussed the nature of 'traditional' recruitment on qualifications and heard about the barriers this can create for people who for a variety of reasons do not achieve traditional qualifications and may not perform well in interviews, but could perform well in the workplace. Alternative models were discussed and the importance of using user led design in methods of assessment to include aptitude, attitude and potential. Recruitment practices should not be a '*one size fits all approach*'.

Examples discussed were – 'blind applications' with no name or educational background, a direct application (e.g. for Kickstart) the teaching of application skills and the digital language of applying for jobs on-line at school.

We heard how outreach is a crucial element in recruitment to improve opportunities for those furthest from the labour market.

Businesses were challenged to consider recruiting for potential and being prepared to develop it i.e., a greater emphasis on hiring for soft skills first and then train people to gain technical skills.

### Diversity & Inclusion / Potential

Employing young people with diverse life experiences breaks homogeneity in the workplace and brings in fresh perspectives. Recent 'Young Innovators Award'<sup>12</sup> winners, such as using seaweed to replace plastic, and a 'plug pull' suitable for weaker hands, are just two examples of the problem-solving and creative talent young people can offer. Of the 64 young people who applied to these awards, 49% of the winners are female; nearly a third are Black, Asian or from an ethnic minority background; 17% have a disability and the

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<sup>9</sup> <https://dorsetchamber.co.uk/skills-shortages-in-the-uk/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.nursingtimes.net/news/workforce/governments-50000-more-nurses-target-insufficient-for-growing-demand-09-12-2020/>

<sup>11</sup> *Skills shortages in the UK economy*, Edge Foundation, June 2020

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.ukri.org/news/young-inventors-working-for-a-better-world/>



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projects cover all regions across the UK. Young people thinking, creating and learning to become our leaders of the future are ready and willing to contribute.

Over the last 5 years, the UK Government has published a Shortage Occupation List.<sup>13</sup> The December 2020 update highlighted a repeat of prior years - a skills shortage in 27 work categories, with a further 11 in healthcare and education. However, at the same time, 589,000 young people aged 16-24 were unemployed in October-December.<sup>14</sup> Those furthest from the job market, such as care leavers and ex-offenders are being pushed even further away.

To create true diversity in the workforce, we need to recognise that many people from complex backgrounds do not achieve Maths or English GCSE's. We need to shift away from technical abilities and to recruit for potential. School outreach programmes are important element in bridging the gap between school and work.

We heard from businesses focusing in on inclusivity in their recruitment practices and removing barriers. It was said that businesses need to proactively build partnerships and diverse entry pathways to reach a diverse talent pool. Equally, from a long-term talent pipeline perspective, young people are increasingly looking to work for ethical employers and want to be a part of workforces that look like them.

### Social Media / Influencers

Young people looking for a job have been dealt a particularly bad hand by the pandemic, with many sectors that traditionally take on young people such as hospitality, leisure and retail badly affected - hospitality alone saw more than 600,000 jobs lost in 2020.<sup>15</sup> Young people with barriers to work are facing more challenges than ever, with ongoing restrictions having an impact on mental health and wellbeing. Around 1 million young people could be 'locked out' of education, employment and training creating a pandemic generation of lost opportunities.<sup>16</sup>

Young people are the future of our country, our organisations and our communities. So being able to easily access the right opportunities and in the right way for their needs is critical. There is a potential disconnect between how employers and government make opportunities available with how and where young people consume information. Even pre-pandemic, Gen Z were engaging with 10 hours of online content a day<sup>17</sup> – the challenge is to ensure that this is a positive and not detrimental experience for these young people, alongside being aware that the digital divide is wider than ever with the pandemic amplifying the challenges those in digital poverty experience.

The subject of how young people get their news, who they trust and how to make them aware of opportunities open to them was discussed. Young people talked about their use social media to get their news, for dating and to access most information but also seen as a teaching tool where young people increasingly go for educational content.

Social media influencers are trusted by young people. Micro influencers and group chats can reach people that normally can't be contacted by other means, including those furthest from the job market. Lived experiences have the power to inspire, so businesses were challenged to make better use of influencers who

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-shortage-occupations/skilled-worker-visa-shortage-occupations>

<sup>14</sup> *Youth Unemployment Statistics*, House of Commons Library, 23 Feb 2021

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.thecaterer.com/news/hospitality-job-losses-650000-fourth>

<sup>16</sup> *Unleashing talent: Levelling up opportunity for young people*, Youth Commission report 6, Learning & Work Institute Dec 2020

<sup>17</sup> <https://marketingtechnews.net/news/2018/feb/09/gen-z-engaging-10-hours-online-content-day/>

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The use of social media highlighted a disconnect between the platforms that employers use, the language utilised and the expectations of young people when looking for jobs. Employer webpages can be intimidating and too corporate, jarring in comparison to how they normally absorb information

### Careers Advice / Work Coach Support

Careers advice for young people and Work Coach support was raised throughout the table discussions. Common themes were as follows:

- At school young people are taught to work hard, get a good grade and then get a job. But sometimes this is not the reality. Rejections are not something that young people are prepared for, we discussed how to build resilience and building it into a careers advice service.
- LinkedIn and social media are often used to portray an idealised picture of success. Real examples of routes into work and roles models would help demonstrate the art of the possible.
- While DWP Youth Employability Work Coaches are focused on helping young people build the right skills and are involved in outreach into schools, a lot of school leavers do not receive this support in-school, but more is needed. The right information needs to be put in the hands of Work Coaches to enable them to find the most suitable options for young people.
- COVID-19 has jeopardised work experience opportunities and hit youth sector employment. Encouraging employers to provide work experience and careers advice alongside this, is now of paramount importance.

### Youth Policy Value / Apprenticeships / Government Policy

While partners, individuals and organisations participating in the Summit all had a keen interest in youth employability, a number of elements were discussed that identified areas where improvements could be made.

- There is universal agreement that the apprenticeship levy needs to be more flexible to ensure effective delivery.
- The apprenticeship levy in the hospitality industry has not been used due to lockdown, with additional flexibility this could be used for extra or future training.
- A call for the government to be more joined up in supporting youth employment, particularly across BEIS, DfE DWP and the Treasury.

A huge **THANK YOU** to our sponsors and members of our network who enabled a rich and powerful conversation. For more information related to these discussions and key themes please get in touch: [info@movementtowork.com](mailto:info@movementtowork.com)

# Let's get to work

## Join the Movement

If you are not already involved with Movement to Work, consider joining today:

- FREE to join – no cost for you or your organisation
- Receive bespoke advice from industry experts
- Access additional funding with experienced guidance
- Unlock diverse talent and boost CSR
- Be part of a community sharing best practice and thought leadership

## Share the success

Please put us in touch with your Comms, PR, Marketing or events teams, so that we can join-up and raise awareness for the great work we're doing together.

## Case studies

We are eager to learn about the remarkable stories and the journeys the young people have been on before, during, and after their placement. We have a template to help you have this conversation with a young person. Please do share these with us once completed as they can serve as measurement and evaluation tools, as well as authentic marketing material so we can inspire more people to join MtW!

## Blog with us

As a Movement to Work partner, we want to hear from you: your experience of working with us, how it has positively impacted your organisation, and most importantly, how you've seen it help young people to flourish. If you would like to write a short piece for our website, please get in touch!

## Social media engagement

Please Follow us, Like, and Share on all our social media channels, and tag us in content that you want us to see! Here you will also see the latest updates from the Movement to Work network and how you can get more involved.

## Become a Youth Ambassador

Do you want to be part of a new growing community of young people who have been through a Movement to Work related programme, and who are now committed to inspiring more people? Become a Movement to Work Youth Ambassador! Find out more:

[www.movementtowork.com/youth-ambassadors](http://www.movementtowork.com/youth-ambassadors)

For more information on any of the above please contact: [info@movementtowork.com](mailto:info@movementtowork.com) or via your Movement to Work account manager.

[www.MovementtoWork.com](http://www.MovementtoWork.com)

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Aisah Naseem, IBM  
MtW Youth Ambassador