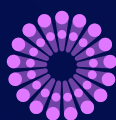


# Inclusive Talent Strategy

## Summary of Talk London Responses



**LONDON**  
GROWTH PLAN

**MAYOR OF LONDON**

**LONDON**  
COUNCILS

# Background

## About Talk London

**Talk London** is City Hall's online community where Londoners aged 16+ can share views on the decisions shaping their city. It enables more open, transparent and inclusive policy development by:

- Providing a safe, moderated space for participation.
- Making engagement activities and consultations accessible to a wide audience of Londoners
- Demonstrating how people's input informs City Hall's plans and strategies.

Through surveys, discussions and idea generation, Talk London helps bridge everyday experience with City Hall policy, encouraging sustained participation from Londoners who wish to shape London's future.

## The Inclusive Talent Strategy

The **Inclusive Talent Strategy** sets out the Mayor and London Council's ten-year plan to build a fairer, more responsive and more inclusive skills and employment system for London. Its goal is to enable every Londoner to gain the skills they need to enter, sustain and progress in good work. At the same time, it will help employers find the talent that drives growth.

It supports the **London Growth Plan** by addressing structural barriers to opportunity and future-proofing London's workforce for economic changes, particularly digitalisation and the green economy.

The ITS is built around three actions:

1. **Putting employers at the centre of driving inclusive growth.**
2. **Ensuring Londoners can find the right training and career path for them.**
3. **Tackling barriers to retaining talent** so that London remains an attractive, inclusive place to live and work.

The Talk London engagement gave a voice to how Londoners currently experience the skills and employment system. They told us what works, what doesn't, and what they most need from City Hall and partners.

## About the campaign

Between **24 June and 31 July 2025**, Talk London hosted [an engagement campaign to gather insights for the ITS](#). The campaign was delivered jointly by the GLA Skills and Employment and Talk London teams. It captured the lived experience of Londoners navigating work, learning and career change. The campaign included:

- A 15-question **survey** on skills, training and work in London.
- A **discussion thread**, *Supporting More Londoners into Good Jobs*, exploring expectations for a future GLA-backed online skills portal.

- Background pages introducing the ITS.

The campaign drew strong participation:

- **473** unique members took part (89% survey completion).
- Ages ranged from 16 to 89; **22%** were under 35.
- **30%** identified as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic.
- **52%** were by male.

Although not a representative sample of Londoners, this provides a crucial perspective to complement the wider engagement informing the ITS.

## Survey findings

### 1. Londoners' appetite for learning and career change

Londoners are motivated to keep learning and adapting their careers. However, many have delayed acting on that ambition due to cost, confidence or uncertainty about where to start. The ITS seeks to address these issues through a more joined-up and flexible skills and employment offer.

#### Findings

- **42%** currently want new skills or to change job/career.
- **81%** have wanted to gain new skills for work or change their job or career at some point.
- **40%** have wanted to learn new skills for work or to change their job or career *within* the last five years (of which a third 33% wanted to within the last year).
- **A further 57%** were wanting to gain new skills for work or change their job or career more than five years ago.
- **59%** are likely to want new skills or to change their job or career in the next five years.

The data underlines widespread interest in lifelong learning but also reveals latent demand: people aspire to access training, yet opportunities can often feel out of reach.

### 2. Accessing support: a fragmented experience

A recurring theme across London's skills landscape is fragmentation. The survey confirms that individuals struggle to find trusted, joined-up advice - echoing the ITS's priority to integrate careers, employment and training support.

#### Findings

- **60%** found it *somewhat or very difficult* to locate suitable support or advice related to work, skills training or careers.
- Only **21%** found it easy to locate advice or support.
- Online channels performed marginally better.

**Barriers cited:** cost, unclear eligibility, age or disability bias, inconsistent information, and poor user experience on official websites.

**Positive experiences** came mainly from employer-funded training, university careers services and community-based charities such as *Room for Work*.

Londoners indicated that a single, trusted entry point to system would be useful. The ITS sets out an ambition to do this, including a 'digital front door' for London's skills and employment services.

### 3. Trusted places and preferred support channels

Confidence in where to seek help strongly influences participation. Londoners prefer familiar, credible environments over remote or commercial ones.

#### Findings

- **55%** felt most comfortable accessing employment and skills support through **colleges or training centres**.
- **53%** via **job websites**.
- **39%** via **charities or voluntary organisations**.
- Community centres (26 %) and councils/jobcentres (21 %) were secondary options.

Open comments highlighted trust in **professional bodies, libraries, universities** and **VCS organisations**. People value a human touch and clear signposting, principles that the ITS will embed across local and online provision.

### 4. Barriers to accessing skills and employment support

Many of the barriers to accessing skills and employment support are practical (time, cost, caring duties), but psychological and systemic factors are equally important. The ITS aims to tackle both by simplifying access and ensuring flexibility.

#### Findings (top-ranked barriers)

- Knowing what support exists: 58%
- Individual time available: 40%
- Childcare or caring responsibilities: 38%
- Uncertainty that it will help: 38%
- Affordability: 38%
- Timing of when support is available: 33%
- Health or disability: 31%

Participants repeatedly described **information gaps, financial strain** and a feeling of **falling between systems** (e.g., too qualified for funded help but unable to afford private training). Addressing these requires stronger coordination and inclusive practices, which are core ITS commitments.

## 5. Readiness for labour market shifts: Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the green economy

Technological and environmental transitions are reshaping work. Londoners are aware of this but do not feel prepared. The ITS has a focus on readying Londoners for these big shifts in the labour market.

### Findings

- **Changes to the job market from AI:** Only 34% feel prepared; 44% feel unprepared.
- **Green economy changes:** 39% feel prepared; 26% feel unprepared.

Some requested clearer information on emerging roles and short, affordable routes into the digital and green sectors.

## 6. What would help Londoners feel more prepared for future job opportunities

People want practical, experiential learning and targeted guidance - not just more qualifications. This has influenced the ITS emphasis on building pathways into work.

### Top requests

- Chance to practice skills and gain experience: 51%
- Help identifying suitable jobs or careers (either jobs they would be good at or jobs they would like): 47%
- Understanding future trends: 39%
- Career-change guidance: 38%
- Free support services: 34%
- Interview support: 32%
- Support with digital skills: 27%
- Affordable housing / childcare or support with caring responsibilities: 30%

Respondents also stressed support to gain hands on experience, fairer employer practices and support for people managing health conditions or career breaks.

## Next Steps: Implementing the Inclusive Talent Strategy

The Inclusive Talent Strategy sets out a ten-year ambition to build a simpler, fairer and more connected skills and employment system for London. Over the next decade, it will guide how London Government and its partners invest, collaborate and design programmes. This will ensure that all Londoners can access the learning and support they need to progress in work and life. The focus will be on creating a system that responds quickly to change, works closely with employers, and removes the barriers that hold people back from opportunity.

In the first year, delivery will focus on establishing the building blocks for this change. This will include strengthening coordination, deepening partnerships with employers and testing new approaches that make it easier for Londoners to find and use support. Within three years, these foundations will develop into a more joined-up and accessible system, shaped by evidence and experience. As the strategy is rolled out, there will be further opportunities for Londoners to share their views through platforms such as Talk London. This will ensure that their voices continue to shape its direction. Together, these actions will help make London a place where everyone has the chance to develop their talents and contribute to the city's success.

The strategy mirrors the London Growth Plan targets on raising the household income for the lowest earning Londoners and increasing London's employment rate. The strategy monitors the success of the strategy through the economic outcomes for Londoners, including the number of Londoners earning below the London Living Wage. The full list of targets and metrics that will be monitored are set out in the [executive summary of the evidence base](#).