

Can you kickstart the career of a young disabled person?

Matching students with forward-thinking employers



**Change
Now**

**Leonard
Cheshire**

What is Change Now?

Change Now supports young people aged 11-25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in the North East of England and Greater Manchester. With our support and the support of our partner employers, young people will enhance their experience and knowledge of the workplace, build their confidence and be able to make informed choices about their future.

If you're an employer who shares our belief in the positive impact a young disabled person can bring to your business, then we'd love to talk to you about how you can get involved in our programme. Together we can support young disabled people to boost their employment skills and grow in confidence – while at same time helping your organisation to become more disability confident and support the local community.

How does the programme work?

By engaging with local schools and colleges, we identify young people who will benefit from the programme. Our experienced team will then prepare the students for a placement with one of our partner employers. We offer young people 1 day workplace visits, or work experience placements that are either 2 or 10 days long. We also arrange longer-term supported internships of 9 months.

We'll get to know the students and talk to them about their needs and ambitions. We'll also take the time to get to know you and your organisation, and discuss the kinds of placements you can offer. This will help us to make sure we match students to placements that are right for them.

All employers we work with will receive bespoke training from us, which helps to make sure that the students receive appropriate support during their placement. We will be on hand to support you throughout the process and ensure it's a positive experience for everyone involved.



Why take part?

■ **Be more disability confident**

We understand that staff may have concerns around using appropriate language and supporting disabled employees and customers. Our training and support will give staff straightforward advice, new perspectives and confidence.

Participating in Change Now enables you to be recognised as 'Disability Confident Committed' (by registering on their site) through the government's Disability Confident scheme.

■ **Improve employee morale**

Participating in Change Now will send a positive signal to your employees that you're an inclusive and supportive employer. Many organisations already employ disabled people who haven't disclosed their disability.

■ **Development opportunities for your staff**

We provide participating employers with disability equality training to raise awareness and understanding. We also provide ongoing support to staff during placements.

■ **Commercial opportunity**

The 'purple pound' – the spending power of disabled people and their families – is worth an estimated £212 billion a year. Supporting a young disabled person through a placement will give you critical insight to help you engage more effectively with disabled clients.



As a Change Now partner
you will receive:

- Bespoke disability equality training for your staff.
- Ongoing support throughout the placement and beyond.
- Promotion of your participation in the programme through our marketing and social media, plus the Change Now logo to use on your own material.

What will employers need to do?

- Provide work experience for young people, by either hosting a 1 day workplace visit, or a placement of either 2 or 10 days.
- Provide a genuine role – we want people to feel part of the team and get a real experience of the workplace.
- Provide a mentor – someone who can offer support, encouragement and can inspire.
- Before the placement starts, we encourage employers to meet the young person, provide a tour of the building, introduce them to colleagues and give a brief description of the work they'll be doing.
- For our supported internships, we are looking for employers to host longer-term placements of at least 1 day per week, for 9 months.



Want to find out more?

If your organisation is interested in becoming a Change Now partner, we'd love to hear from you:

T: **Greater Manchester** – Tim Dowling 07511 169 083

North East England – Darren Thompson 07892 759 973

E: changenow@leonardcheshire.org

leonardcheshire.org/changenow

Who are we?

We are Leonard Cheshire – supporting individuals to live, learn and work as independently as they choose, whatever their ability. Led by people with experience of disability, we are at the heart of local life – opening doors to opportunity, choice and support in communities across the UK, and beyond.

Supported by

THE CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE
COMPANY

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