

**Generation
Stevenage**
01 Dec, 6pm

For immediate release: 9 November 2020

GENERATION STEVENAGE: 'A TOWN THAT'S GOT ITS ACT TOGETHER'

Stevenage's leading employers are coming together to raise awareness about the opportunities available for young people to pursue careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths).

MBDA, Airbus, GSK, NHS, Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult with Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst are hosting the virtual event on Tuesday 1 December, 6-7.35pm, for up to 1,000 young people, aged 15-18, their parents and carers.



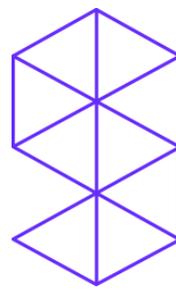
Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Gillian

Keegan said: *"It's never been more important for people to be able to develop the skills they need to succeed. Skills development will play a vital role as we build back better from the pandemic, by ensuring our places and centres of UK excellence can continue to thrive. Generation Stevenage is a brilliant example of a town that has its act together, connecting young people to key sector industries where there is high demand and creating a pipeline for future talent and innovation."*

The event will be opened by Hitchin and Harpenden MP Bim Afolami and Stevenage Development Board Chair Adrian Hawkins, with each employer championing careers within their sector and making a pitch to Generation Stevenage to apply to work for their company.

With the event, first held in 2018, now virtual it is expected to reach even more young people within a 10-mile radius of the town and connect world-class employers to a wider local talent pool. Registration is via Hertfordshire





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Opportunities Portal ([HOP](#)), the premier gateway in Hertfordshire to explore careers opportunities.



Bim Afolami MP for Hitchin and Harpenden, said: *“HOP is a Hertfordshire success story that is set to take the UK by storm. Prior to COVID, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership identified the need to simplify the complex world of careers advice and connect employers to local talent.*

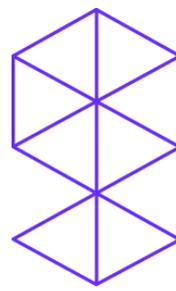
Now, thanks to one easy to use app [www.hopinto.co.uk](#), parents, pupils and residents can access all the resources they need to make informed career decisions and employers can showcase their job, apprenticeship and work

experience opportunities. Digital tools such as HOP play a vital part in the UK’s economic recovery by ensuring we have the skills to meet the needs of our new and changing industries and reduce our carbon footprint by encouraging people to work locally.”

Stevenage Development Board Chair Adrian Hawkins said: “Skills development is central to Stevenage’s Town Centre Investment Plan and its narrative for improving lifelong learning and levelling up in the town. Generation Stevenage sends a very clear message to our young people that they are part of the town’s exciting future with opportunities to work for world-class organisations on their doorstep.”

Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE, Leader, Stevenage Borough Council, said: “Events such as Generation Stevenage, supported by our major employers in the town, go a





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long way to giving our young people a stake in its future development and encourage them to aspire to and seek out high-value local jobs.”

Mark Lewis, Headteacher, The Thomas Alleyne Academy, said: “Educating parents and young people about pathways and aspiration is key. We want to ensure that Stevenage families see the high-tech jobs in Gunnels Wood Road as attainable. We must break down the barriers and make employment opportunities in Gunnels Wood Road accessible for all.”

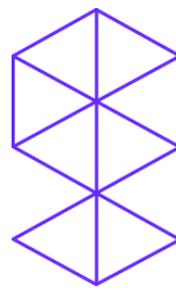
One of the employers taking part is Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult. Stevenage is at the centre of the largest cluster of cell and gene therapy companies outside of the US. The growing cell and gene therapy campus in Stevenage is delivering over 1,000 jobs and is home to over 45 companies, 13 of which are in the cell and gene therapy space.

Dr Stephen Ward, Chief Manufacturing Officer, Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult, who will be taking part in the webinar, said: “We welcome this invaluable initiative to drive further development and progress within the cell and gene therapy sector in the UK. The Stevenage Advanced Therapeutics Campus and the cluster that has formed around it already plays a crucial role in the industry at global level and offers opportunities at many levels. It already accommodates 10 cell and gene therapy apprentices across 5 companies and is the largest cell and gene therapy cluster outside the US; we look forward to continuing this growth through the advancement of more talent and the future innovation which will follow.”

The event provides further support for schools in Hertfordshire Careers Hub and wider Enterprise Adviser Network to enable students to gain valuable insights into the world of work on a very local level. Students will be able to hear directly from employers and employees about the range of STEM opportunities available to them and the different entry routes they can take.

Dawn Bonfield MBE CEng FIMMM FICE HonFIStructE FWES HonDEng Royal Academy of Engineering Visiting Professor of Inclusive Engineering, Aston University and Director, Towards Vision. Past President, Women’s Engineering





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Society said: “Events such as Generation Stevenage show young people that the path to success starts from their own front doorstep. This is crucial in helping students to understand how to move from where they are now to a successful career in a sector which desperately needs their skills and talent.

Students will also be able to listen to apprentices and early career starters about what it is really like to work for these companies, post questions and take part in live polls.

Generation Stevenage is a partnership venture brought to you by Hertfordshire Opportunities Portal, Careers and Enterprise Company, Stevenage Development Board and co-organised by educational charity Stempoint East. It is jointly funded by Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Stevenage Borough Council.

Register here: www.hopinto.co.uk/generation-stevenage

Keep up to date with our progress using #GenerationStevenage. **ENDS**

NOTE TO EDITORS

Hertfordshire Careers Hub

Hertfordshire Careers Hub was established in 2018 to provide local schools with targeted support to develop their careers education provision against key national benchmarks. Employers are vital to the hub model's success, with all hubs required to demonstrate strong engagement amongst local businesses and a clear plan for increasing employer engagement. The Hertfordshire Careers Hub's cornerstone employers include MBDA, Airbus, Morrison Utilities, Roche, Tesco, NHS East & North Herts Partnership and Willmott Dixon.

The hub complements the work of Hertfordshire LEP's 106 school-strong Enterprise Adviser Network, part of the national Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) programme, which links employers with schools to provide greater careers-related opportunities for students, from work experience and mock assessments to employer talks and workplace visits. Twenty six schools in Stevenage, North Herts and Welwyn Hatfield have thus far benefitted from participating in the Hertfordshire Careers Hub during the 2019/20 academic year. These schools will continue to receive support in 2020/21, and the additional funding secured will enable support to be expanded to a further 24 schools in Hertsmere, Watford and Three Rivers which will form a second cluster, also managed by Hertfordshire LEP and its team of Enterprise Co-ordinators. For more information about the Careers Hub and Hertfordshire LEP's wider Enterprise Adviser Network, contact Careers Hub Lead: gareth.dace@hertfordshirelep.co.uk.

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