

## Unleashing London: Comprehensive Spending Review Submission 2021



London Higher is the largest membership body of its kind in UK higher education, representing over 40 universities and higher education colleges across the Greater London region.

Our members represent the full diversity of UK higher education, ranging from large, multi-faculty universities through to small, specialist conservatoires and research institutes – each of which stands ready to contribute to a fair and sustainable recovery both for the capital and country as a whole.

London's universities are local and global in equal measure. While London's higher education institutions educate more home-domiciled students than any other region in England and serve some of the UK's most diverse and disadvantaged communities, the capital's universities also attract the brightest and the best from across the globe, with London's international student population generating [£6.4bn in net benefit](#) annually for the wider UK economy.

Although London is often seen as the nation's success story, the capital is home to [glaring inequalities in pay, housing, education and health](#), most of which have been [exacerbated by Covid](#). With their power to spread opportunity to where it is most needed and transform big ideas into life-changing innovations, our members are key to levelling up the capital's communities and ensuring the benefits of London's teaching and research activities are felt right across the regions.

### Unleashing London's higher education and research potential will:

1. level up some of England's poorest communities and accelerate local and national recovery;
2. turbocharge the UK's international science and education ambitions;
3. ensure more people than ever can access the skills needed to grow our economy sustainably; and
4. reduce health inequalities by strengthening the NHS workforce and community outreach.

### Unleashing London for recovery

London's universities are [lifebuoys in their local boroughs](#), as well as an engine for the nation, [employing 223,000 people and generating £12bn in GDP – more than universities in any other region](#). That's why our members are best placed to lead the recovery, both locally and nationally, and deliver on levelling up through joined-up skills provision with schools, colleges and employers, business support, high-street regeneration and 'civic' impact.

To ensure London's universities continue to create opportunity for all, we ask that Government:

- commit to a 3-year funding allocation for the 'Uni Connect' collaborative partnership between higher and further education providers and schools to allow our [AccessHE division](#) to drive social mobility and educational recovery in the most disadvantaged areas of London;
- recognise Londoners need levelling up too and give London's institutions equal consideration in strategic funding schemes, such as the Levelling Up Fund, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the Strength in Places Fund and other place-based funding sources; and
- consider [reallocating London Weighting resource](#) to London's universities to make up for the [shortfall of funds that the OfS acknowledges will arise from London's higher operating costs](#).

### Unleashing London for "Global Britain"

With local roots and global reach, our members are key to attracting international talent and investment to UK shores and achieving international "science superpower" status for the nation. Each year, London's

universities take in [over 70,000 new first-year international students](#) and research and development (R&D) activities performed in London and the South East account for [over half \(54%\) of all UK R&D, bringing in £9.1bn to the UK economy](#).

To maintain London's global reach and international standing, we ask that Government:

- put London's higher education sector front and centre of future international education strategies and include London Higher and [our "Study London" campaign](#) in strategic discussions and delegations to enhance the lure of London to the outside world;
- protect the current level of resource for London's R&D base to ensure its benefits continue to be felt right across the nation and attract international investment; and
- develop and fund [regional collaborative R&D clusters](#), including for London, to encourage research-led and practice-based solutions to local challenges and community needs.

### **Unleashing London for skills and jobs**

Covid-19 has had a particularly detrimental impact on London's labour market, with [the capital having suffered the largest number of job losses of any UK region](#). While graduates in the capital once enjoyed one of the best employment rates in the country, today's graduates in London need a helping hand to kick-start, or re-start, their careers and match their talents to [the city's skills needs](#).

To help Londoners into good work, we ask that Government:

- develop the Help to Grow scheme so that the capital's [1.1 million small businesses](#) can benefit from flexible graduate internships or industry placements;
- invest in schemes which promote entrepreneurship among graduates, such as the [MDXcelerator scheme](#) or [Westminster Incubator](#), to help to restore London's place as a hub for innovative and lucrative start-ups; and
- commit to fund regional 'green skills' pilots with higher and further education providers, including in London, so that the UK's future workforce can actively contribute to a sustainable 'Net Zero' future, particularly in the UK's cities.

### **Unleashing London for health and wellbeing**

Collectively London's universities train a significant proportion of the nation's keyworkers, with [over 48,000 students in the capital taking courses in nursing, medicine and teacher training](#). Graduates from our [London Health HE](#) members go on to fuel medical and healthcare provision right across the country and, alongside vital [community outreach work from the capital's creative education providers](#), contribute to keeping the capital a safe, healthy and happy place to live for the future.

To enable London's universities to continue supporting our public services, we ask that Government:

- make provision with regional NHS trusts to increase essential placement provision for medical and healthcare students so that London's healthcare higher education providers can increase course capacity and, in turn, bolster the future NHS workforce locally and nationally;
- recognise the valuable contribution that creative education providers bring to developing healthcare innovations, reducing health inequalities and tackling poor mental health, and develop a specialist funding pot for regional arts-based health interventions; and
- remove Equivalent or Lower Qualification (ELQ) rules so graduates can enrol on design courses or similar which may lead to health and education innovations, such as [KwickScreen](#).

In the academic year 2019/2020, London HEIs reached more than a million individuals with music, dance and drama performances, more than any other region of the UK. In addition, more than ten million individuals were reached by alternative forms of events, including consuming television and radio programmes and downloading resources from HEIs' websites.

In the 2018/19 academic year, before the Covid-19 pandemic hit, almost 1.34 million people attended exhibitions run by London HEIs' galleries and museums.

Also in 2018/19, London HEIs reached more than 20,000 individuals with museum education including lectures, workshops and children's clubs.

In 2019/20, London HEIs delivered CPD to SMEs worth over £9.6 million. London HEIs delivered more than 1.8 million days total learner days of Continuing Education and Professional Development training, more than any other region in the country.

In the same year, London HEIs provided support to approximately 3,800 SMEs, 500 other businesses and 1,800 non-commercial organisations, and more consultancy services than any other UK region.

To date during the pandemic, HEIs in the capital have co-delivered collaborative outreach programmes via Uni Connect to over 4,500 Londoners from widening access backgrounds

**Sources:**

HESA HE-BCI 2019-20 Part B Table 2 – Business and community services v1

HESA HE-BCI 2019-20 Part B Table 5 – Social, community and cultural engagement – public events v1