

## Royal Mail supports '5 Cities Project'

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Five major cities across England have pledged to work with the government to boost diversity in apprenticeships and ensure such schemes are accessible to individuals from all backgrounds. The '5 Cities Project', launched by the Department for Education, will see the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) work with partners in the Greater Manchester, London, Bristol, Birmingham and Leicester areas to promote the take-up of apprenticeships among under-represented groups, including those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) and disadvantaged backgrounds.

Each city has pledged to boost diversity in apprenticeships in their local area. For example, Greater Manchester aims to deliver a 16% BAME apprenticeship representation while Leicester will deliver an increase in

apprenticeships for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) invited Conservative MP and apprenticeships and skills minister Anne Milton to launch the programme along with Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham. Apprenticeship programme manager, Paula Gibson, said: 'Although it's still early days for this project, it was a great opportunity for Royal Mail to be part of this programme.'

National engineering apprenticeship programme manager, Darren Borthwick, who attended the launch with apprentice Jerome Bosman, who is based at Southampton mail centre, said: 'Royal Mail Group is known for its fairness, equality and inclusion - a place where everyone has an equal opportunity to get into work, whatever their circumstances, background or aspirations. 'We are a proud supporter of the Department for Education's 5 Cities Project.'

Source: [Royal Mail](#)