



## REALISING OPPORTUNITIES

Working Together | Supporting Talent

University of Birmingham  
University of Bristol  
University of Exeter  
Goldsmiths, University of London  
King's College London  
University of Leeds  
University of Leicester  
University of Liverpool  
University of Manchester  
Newcastle University  
University of Sheffield  
University of Sussex  
University College London  
University of Warwick  
University of York

## Access to Professions

[www.realisingopportunities.ac.uk](http://www.realisingopportunities.ac.uk)

- A collaborative programme involving some of the country's leading universities
- Supporting corporate and social responsibility
- Providing professional development opportunities
- Encouraging talented young people to aspire to the professions

# Realising Opportunities Access to Professions

Realising Opportunities (RO) offers your organisation the opportunity to engage with some of the country's most able 16-19 year olds as they take part in a comprehensive programme which develops their skills and ability to progress to a research intensive university.

RO students are amongst the most able students in their age group, but are less likely to have familial, friendship or school-organised access to professions and related opportunities. Through the *Access to Professions* strand of the programme, RO works to provide enhanced access to information about professions and employability skills.

We aim to work with leading UK and international employers to ensure that the guidance given to our students is up-to-date, dynamic and relevant and offers rewarding professional volunteering opportunities that are easily tailored to demanding careers.

If you are a professional who can enthuse young people about your industry or chosen field we would like to hear from you. You can find out more information and complete an expression of interest form at

[www.realisingopportunities.ac.uk/professionals](http://www.realisingopportunities.ac.uk/professionals)

Working with RO you will benefit from:

- Access to leading, research intensive universities.
- The opportunity to engage in activities that can contribute to corporate social responsibility requirements.
- Professional development, including opportunities for staff to develop their communication skills in vibrant, interactive ways.
- Access to bright, talented students to help raise their aspirations to professions related to your organisation.

Read on to discover the low impact ways your organisation can get involved with Realising Opportunities.

How useful it was to talk to students, mentors and RO universities. It has been very good for us and allowed us to reach just the groups we are trying to target. We've found participating very worthwhile so thank you. We should very much like to take part next year too!

Helen Beeston, UKCAT



## What is Realising Opportunities?

Realising Opportunities (RO) is an unprecedented collaboration promoting fair access to higher education and encouraging social mobility for able students from under-represented groups. For the first time, a group of leading research intensive universities have come together to develop a single programme for Year 12 and 13 students (aged 16–19) building upon their collective expertise in widening access to higher education. RO recognises the importance of ensuring that these students have access to information and guidance about careers and employability skills from professionals in the field who can give a true insight into their chosen career.

## The Realising Opportunities Programme:

Through RO students take part in an extensive programme of support, information, events and activities. Successful completion results in students having their achievements recognised when applying through UCAS to any of the participating universities. This recognition, and the support that the programme offers, sets Realising Opportunities apart from any other widening participation initiative.

The programme involves:

- A launch event to get students started on the programme.
- Skills development through an online study skills module.
- Ementoring with an undergraduate from an RO University.
- A National Student Conference.
- An assessed academic element to allow students to demonstrate their potential.
- University events, including summer schools, masterclasses and Open Days.
- Access to careers information from professionals in the field.

## How can you/your organisation become involved?

Realising Opportunities offers simple yet effective ways for organisations to become involved. The only cost to your organisation is staff time. Our opportunities are flexible to ensure that organisations control how they get involved and how much time they commit.

### Our opportunities include:

#### Ask the Expert

There's no substitute for getting an expert's view and who better to ask about a profession than someone currently doing the job! Via the secure RO mentoring portal, students can view a professional's profile and ask questions. Questions are collated by the RO Central Team and forwarded in a batch so the expert can respond.

To contribute you would need:

- To provide a short biography appropriate for our audience of 16–19 year olds.
- Some time to answer our students' questions (the number of questions to be answered can be agreed in advance).

It was a pleasure to be an 'expert' for the Ask the Expert feature. Equal chances for all regardless of social background is very important to me and I am keen to help wherever I can. I received some very interesting questions from some clearly very motivated students. It took very little time and I hope that my small contribution made a difference in informing these students about the legal profession and how to get into it. I wouldn't hesitate to help again.

Jason Wainwright, Equity Partner at Muckle LLP

## National Student Conference

We host two National Student Conferences each year which bring students from across the country together for a day of skills development. *Access to Professions* is a key area for students to explore at the event.

If you are representing a professional association then you may be able to support our conferences by:

- Providing an interactive workshop on gaining access to your profession **or**
- Providing an information stand in the exhibition about your profession.

If you or a colleague would be interested in working with Realising Opportunities, you can find out more information and complete an expression of interest form at [www.realisingopportunities.ac.uk/professionals](http://www.realisingopportunities.ac.uk/professionals)

If you would like to discuss Realising Opportunities and *Access to Professions* in more detail, please contact the RO Central Team who would be delighted to hear from you on 0191 208 8923 or email [info@realisingopportunities.ac.uk](mailto:info@realisingopportunities.ac.uk)

