



Tech London Advocates The Road to One Million: The Pledge

On behalf of the UK tech community, Tech London Advocates is launching the Road to One Million, a campaign to harness the power of the private sector to address the shortage of digital skills in the UK economy and create one million tech jobs by 2023.

Despite the extraordinary success of British tech companies over the past five years, the industry is in danger of leaving huge swathes of the population behind. We have 48,297 technology vacancies currently advertised in London (Adzuna), yet women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, the LGBTQ+ community and young people are massively under-represented in the tech workforce.

London's tech companies currently employ 318,480 people in digital jobs (Tech Nation). To reach one million tech employees by 2023, the city needs to be bringing 10,000 people into tech-related employment every single month. This is achievable if the private sector takes the following steps:

Gender

Tech has a diversity problem. 51% of London's population is female, yet only 17% of the city's tech workforce are women.

Bringing more women into tech companies will have a dramatic impact on the scale of London's tech employment landscape.

Tech London Advocates is pushing to achieve 33% gender diversity in the sector within the next five years, essential for unlocking the potential of the entire nation. It has been shown that tech companies now woefully lag behind FTSE 100 organisations for the number of women in executive positions.

Action: We must also increase funding for female run businesses (currently only at 9%), to grow their ventures and inspire more to enter the sector. Encouraging more females to join investment firms will help to attract and identify female entrepreneurs, increasing the likelihood of funding.

Diversity

Too many socio-economic and ethnic groups are underrepresented in the technology sector. Well-designed quotas would bring about transformation at a senior level, forcing a top-down change to the culture of fast-growth tech businesses.

Action: Tech London Advocates is supporting calls to implement diversity quotas for senior leadership teams in tech. The private sector must also commit to funding and engaging with initiatives like UK Black Tech, to bring more BAME talent into tech.

Graduates

London isn't producing enough home-grown tech talent to meet demand. The number of computer science graduates is falling and not enough older professionals are retraining with digital skills. We need to triple London's capacity to produce computer science graduates by 2023.

Action: Tech London Advocates is suggesting that all university students should be given at least one week's coding education to support the digital talent pipeline ready for the workplace and to inspire young talent to develop these skills.





Visas

The tech sector supports the Tech Nation Visa, this route must however continue to allow world leading tech talent to work in the UK.

Tier 2 sponsor licensing can be a costly and cumbersome process especially for tech start-ups. Early stage businesses should be allowed to benefit from third party sponsorship in order to fill critical positions quickly. The government must review the Tier 2 cap and ensure that it does not remain over-subscribed.

The new Start Up Visa is a step in the right direction however the tech sector should be consulted before it is launched to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Action: More must be done to guarantee London attracts world-class international tech talent post-Brexit by expanding visa routes specifically dedicated to tech companies.

Pledge your support

Securing one million tech jobs in London by 2023 will quell the current shortage of talent and facilitate growth within an industry with truly transformative potential. The tech sector can remain Britain's stand out industry and signpost the UK as an ambitious country at the forefront of global innovation post-Brexit.

Please email tla@wearesevenhills.com to virtually sign the pledge and ensure your name is included.



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