

# PRESS RELEASE



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## **PROJECT ENGAGE** **A SCHOOLS AND BUSINESS INITIATIVE**

*Promoting language and culture – the Goethe-Institut strengthens its links with the business and education sectors.*

*"The DfES warmly welcomes the initiative and would recommend it to all LEAs and schools to react positively to project ENGAGE to ensure its lasting success."*

*Dr Lid King, National Director for Languages, Department for Education and Skills.*

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Languages are an important life skill and a key differentiator for developing overseas trade, encouraging inward investment, improving tourism and enhancing public services in the UK. At the same time, one in five exporting companies in the UK state that they are losing business because of language and cultural barriers.

The Goethe-Institut launches Project ENGAGE in September, 2005. This is an education initiative encouraging and fostering three way partnerships between businesses, local schools and the Goethe-Institut. Its aim is to support the teaching of German and modern foreign languages and culture in the UK - at each education stage - through three main channels:

- **Events** such as annual "Career Days" and time specific promotions such as the popular Goethe-Institut "Shoot-Out" challenge, celebrating the World Cup 2006 in Germany.
- **Projects** which promote German at all levels of the curriculum in an innovative and creative way, such as Learning German through Songs, aimed at primary schools. Also the British-German youth portal – The Voyage – which can be found at [www.the-voyage.com](http://www.the-voyage.com).
- **Initiatives** which seek to develop longer term collaboration between schools and businesses such as mentoring, work experience and the Goethe-Institut's own Young Creative Leadership Programme.

The business model envisages close cooperation and support enhanced by comprehensive knowledge sharing of events, projects and initiatives supported by Goethe-Institut approved materials and schemes of work. At the same time business sponsorship opportunities will be developed with the Goethe-Institut's business partners.

Initially, the main focus will be to work with a selection of Specialist Language Colleges – in total, more than 200 throughout the UK - and to supporting their work across the curriculum, links with their primary school feeders, secondary school clusters and the wider community. This includes working with partners to:

- develop authentic resource materials reflecting modern life styles and business practice.
- provide opportunities to open doors between schools and businesses - including work experience, mentoring and specific projects.
- nurture sustainable relationships with education, business and agencies – in the UK and internationally.

Project ENGAGE will develop through a series of Multiplier Workshops and direct contact with partners.

To participate, schools, businesses and education agencies should contact the Goethe-Institut directly – details are shown below.

### **Notes to Editors:**

#### **1. Goethe-Institut, London**

The Goethe-Institut is the cultural institute of the Federal Republic of Germany with a global reach – represented in over 75 countries worldwide. A flagship brand, it:

- promotes knowledge of the German language abroad and fosters international cultural cooperation.
- provides information on Germany’s cultural, social and political life.
- works in partnership with public and private bodies, the German federal states and municipalities and the corporate sector.
- recognises the challenges of globalisation and values cultural diversity as an asset

#### **2. Language deficit in the UK is a barrier to effective trade**

- According to CILT – The National Centre for Languages
  - 60% of British trade is with non-English speaking companies
  - 70% of companies have international contacts
  - **One in five** exporting companies say they are losing trade because of language and cultural barriers
  - Languages are an important element in economic strategies: overseas trade, inward investment, improving tourism and public services.
  - Every 1% increase in exports adds £2 billion to the GDP.

### **Further Information**

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