



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **UK Metal Council Launches Peer Networks Programme for business growth**

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

The Black Country Growth Hub, with the support of the UK Metals Council, is launching the Peer Networks Programme for ambitious businesses looking to grow. This programme is part of a government funded peer to peer networking initiative for SME businesses to develop their organisations for future success.

The Black Country Growth Hub provides support to businesses and entrepreneurs of any size, sector or status across Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton. Through this training programme the Growth Hub plans to widen and strengthen the business networks of participants, as well as expand their skills across a range of business areas.

For the metals sector, the peer to peer programme is being run by the UK Metals Council, a representative organisation made up from Trade Associations from the full spectrum of the UK metals industry, which in turn comprises 11,100 companies, employing around 230,000 people and which directly contributes £10.7bn to UK GDP. Many of these companies are based in the West Midlands and for the metals sector the new programme will be called the Black Country Business Growth Network.

The training is based on interactive action learning and will bring together groups of business owners or managers operating in the aerospace, construction, health & care, metals & materials or rail sectors. The training opportunities vary widely including Finance, HR, Sales and Marketing, Business Model Innovation, Change Management, but also highly relevant areas such as adjusting to social distancing, digital technology adoption, use of data to drive value in the business, EU transition, Net zero in relation to the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy.

With trained facilitators, these group sessions will help participants to overcome business challenges, recognise and act on new opportunities and create a trusted support network and improve personal and business performance.

Dr Pam Murrell, CEO of the Cast Metals Federation who are just one of the members of the UKMC said: “We recognise that our member companies, all of whom are within the metals sector, are in a very dynamic business environment and face many challenges presently, so we are pleased to be part of this pilot project which is seeking to share knowledge and inform via a peer to peer training programme, initially within the Black Country region.”

Novel and key to this programme will be the groups self-determination about the areas where they want to focus their learning to heighten the learning for everyone through integration and discussion around individual experiences. Additionally, the training is in a format so that new, long-lasting and engaged business networks are created.

Chris McDonald, CEO of the Materials Processing Institute and Chair of UK Metals Council added: “We know that businesses learning from businesses is the fastest way to spread good practice and improve. In partnering with the Black Country LEP, the UK Metals Council is enabling growth and development of this vital UK manufacturing sector, in one of its heartland areas.”

Tom Jones, CEO from ALFED, agreed saying, “I am optimistic that the added-value that can come from the networking, that is the innovative part of this project, will really enhance what we can deliver to those who participate.”

***ENDS***

## **ISSUED ON BEHALF OF UK METALS COUNCIL**

**Photo caption:** Peer to Peer Network for Black Country SMEs in the Metals Sector

**Link for more information and to register:**

<https://www.theaudaciouscompany.com/online-courses/bcqn>

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**Notes to editors:**

### **UK Metal Council**

UK Metals Council is a representative organisation made up from Trade Associations from the full spectrum of the UK metals industry, which in turn comprises 11,100 companies, employing around 230,000 people and which directly contributes £10.7bn to UK GDP

The UK Metals Council represents the UK metals sector to government. It comprises business leaders from the full spectrum of the supply chain, from primary manufacturing to recycling. Its vision is that by 2030, a modern and progressive UK metals industry will be supplying high-quality, innovative and competitively priced products to a wide range of customers. It will be the principal supplier to the UK's main manufacturers and infrastructure projects, and a leading global exporter.

To achieve this goal, representatives from across the sector are coming together to shape the industry's future. The UK Metals Council comprises stakeholders from the full spectrum of the supply chain, from primary manufacturing to recycling.

A new strategic approach has been developed supporting a clear vision for 2030 where:

- The UK captures the maximum value from its manufacturing, construction and infrastructure supply chains.
- The Metals Industry is placed at the heart of any future circular economy.
- Critical ingredients for long term success, such as skills and innovation, are embraced throughout the industry itself.