

# **The Impact of the National Network** **for Interpreting**

September 2007 – July 2013



**NNI Final Report**

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## Executive summary

### Background

Routes into Languages is a bold initiative funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to increase interest in languages and language-related careers as a response to the national decline in the numbers taking a language to GCSE and A Level in England. The National Network for Interpreting (NNI) is one of two national networks (the other being the National Network for Translation, NNT) and has been led by the University of Leeds, with the universities of Bath, Salford and Westminster as partner institutions and Sheffield and Heriot-Watt Universities as associate partners.

The NNI's activities have been designed to respond to the call from the EU institutions to reduce the shortage of interpreters with English as a mother tongue, a call echoed by other national and international organisations such as GCHQ, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the United Nations. The NNI has offered a programme of events aimed at raising awareness about careers in interpreting but also promoting interpreting as a rewarding way to learn valuable linguistic and cultural skills, as well as technical skills that can be transferred to other careers.

### Activities and Impact

The NNI's goals have been ambitious and the Network's methods to address these have been diverse. Also diverse has been the NNI's target audience, ranging from school pupils from year 8 upwards to undergraduate and postgraduate students, interpreter trainers, and school and university teachers. In order to achieve its goals, the NNI has organised events including careers fairs and talks, interpreting taster sessions, master classes and school visits, which have regularly been supported by practising professionals and alumni of the NNI institutions, professional bodies, city council translation and interpreting services, among many others. The NNI team has organised workshops for teachers to demonstrate how interpreting can be taught at an undergraduate level and used as an engaging language learning activity. The Network has created an informative website containing a wealth of online interactive resources. NNI activities have been organised within its partner institutions (the Universities of Leeds, Bath, Salford and Westminster), by the Network as a whole or in partnership with Routes Regional Consortia, the National Network for Translation and other bodies or institutions.

Apart from events, the main method by which the Network seeks to engage its target audience has been through its website and online resources. The importance of the website in all the NNI's activities must be singled out as most events have been enriched to a great degree by the information and interactive resources available on the NNI website. The two go together. 3,900 visits to the NNI website per month is an impressive success indicator of the web project which in addition

to the resources includes information on careers in interpreting and translation (I/T), links to major employers and guidance on the qualifications needed to enter the I/T job market, details of relevant news and events. One of the largest sections on the website contains a wealth of interactive learning resources on the skills needed in interpreting.

The collaboration with employers has served both the NNI and NNT well as this sector has generously provided support participating in the Networks' outreach events and offering advice to young people about careers in interpreting and translation, the number of languages they should learn and which are the most needed languages in their services. Inviting major national and international employers to the NNI events proved to be an amazing attraction for undergraduate and postgraduate students who could find out about job opportunities first hand.

The significance of the Routes campaign overall in enabling the Networks to mobilise an impressive group of employers cannot be underestimated. Without the allocated funding the Networks would not have attracted such a diverse array of organisations. The Routes programme has provided the platform for world language services and their future workforce to be brought together. Moreover, many former students who are now on staff in various language services have regularly come back to talk about their successful career paths. This has been a major source of encouragement and inspiration for the next generation of linguists.

In total over the six years of the project the NNI has reached over 18,000 students. This translates to over 3,000 students per year. The NNI has carried out surveys and distributed questionnaires and would like to believe that a certain proportion of the 18,000 school and university students that the Network has attracted to its events have joined interpreting and translation training programmes thanks to its outreach campaign.

By the third and fourth years of the project half of the applicants to I/T postgraduate courses had attended Routes and/or Network events. This translates to every three applicants in six interviewed per admissions session in the NNI institutions and compares to only one, or occasionally two, in the second and third years of the project. The figures available for course applications to the NNI partner institutions from 2007 to 2012 indicate that overall there was a 34% increase in the number of English L1 applicants to PG courses.

With regard to EU recruitment, we learned from DG SCIC in 2013 that there was an increase of 30% in English L1 interpreters from partner schools in the period between 2007 and 2012 compared to the previous five years. We, naturally, cannot take all the credit for this because the EU interpreting services have also run their own outreach campaign but we can say that since the pool of graduates with English L1 increased during the period under review more of them have applied to sit an accreditation test and with much encouragement from course providers.

The NNI accepts that it cannot take credit for all those language learners who decided on the interpreting career path while on their BA degree courses or even earlier. But judging from the comments and statistics outlined in this document, as well as the success indicators for increases in English L1 interpreter trainee applicants and successes in recruitment of new interpreters in the EU,

it is fair to say that the NNI's activities thus far have made an impact on the users the NNI has aimed to reach. The Network is extremely pleased with the visible impact its activity has had over the course of the project.

## 1 Introduction

Routes into Languages is a bold initiative funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to increase interest in languages and language-related careers as a response to the national decline in the numbers taking a language to GCSE and A Level in England.<sup>1</sup> The National Network for Interpreting (NNI) is one of two national networks (the other being the National Network for Translation, NNT) and has been led by the University of Leeds, with the universities of Bath, Salford and Westminster as partner institutions and Sheffield and Heriot-Watt Universities as associate partners.

The NNI's activities have been designed to respond to the call from the EU institutions to reduce the shortage of interpreters with English as a mother tongue, a call echoed by other national and international organisations such as GCHQ, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the United Nations. This group of organisations are particularly short of specialists with English as a mother tongue in combination with lesser-taught languages such as Arabic and Russian. The NNI has offered a programme of events aimed at raising awareness about careers in interpreting and this will be discussed in detail in the report.

The NNI acknowledges that not everyone who is considering interpreting as a career will be interested in or have sufficient aptitude for working at the level of international organisations. As a result, the Network has aimed to promote interpreting as a rewarding way to learn valuable linguistic and cultural skills, as well as technical skills that can be transferred to other careers.

This report aims to demonstrate the impact of the NNI against its objectives, both through a detailed analysis of evidence collected (statistics from events, evaluations, etc.), and by considering examples of feedback and case studies, including stories and comments from individuals. We consider the specific objectives of the network one by one, analysing how and to what extent these have been fulfilled.

## 2 Overview of the Network objectives and methods to achieve them

If the broader objectives of the Routes into Languages programme are to increase the take-up of language study among young people in the UK, the NNI's (and its partner NNT's) more specific **aims and objectives have been to:**

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<sup>1</sup> See HEFCE *Routes into Languages* <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/crosscutting/sivs/mfl/routes/>

1. *Address the shortage of graduates in the field of interpreting by increasing the percentage of first language English students on postgraduate (PG) Interpreting and Translation (I/T) courses).*
2. *Raise the profile of I/T professions and increase interest of young people in the professions*
3. *Create greater links with employers.*

The NNI has had ambitious goals and our methods to address these have been diverse. Also diverse has been our target audience, ranging from school pupils from year 8 upwards to undergraduate and postgraduate students, interpreter trainers, and school and university teachers. This covers those who already have an interest in interpreting, who will be looking for further resources, but also those knowing little about the profession and wishing to find out more. In order to achieve its goals, the NNI has organised events including careers fairs and talks, interpreting taster sessions, master classes and school visits, which have regularly been supported by practising professionals and alumni of the NNI institutions, professional bodies such as the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIoL) and the Institute for Translation and Interpreting (ITI), city council translation and interpreting services, among many others. We have also organised workshops for teachers to demonstrate how interpreting can be taught at an undergraduate level and used as an engaging language learning activity. The Network has created an informative website containing a wealth of online interactive resources. Some activities have been organised within our partner institutions (the Universities of Leeds, Bath, Salford and Westminster), others by the Network as a whole and many more activities in partnership with Routes Regional Consortia, the National Network for Translation and other bodies or institutions.

Here is a detailed breakdown of our activities:

## 2.1 Events

- for teachers (e.g. ‘How to use interpreting to engage language learners’ and undergraduate (UG) interpreting tutor workshops on teaching interpreting in the most effective and engaging way)
- for learners and students
  - awareness- and aspiration-raising (e.g. ‘An introduction to interpreting’)
  - interactive taster sessions
  - employability and careers events
- for employers and other stakeholders (e.g. careers promotion, resources forums)

- participation in external events (e.g. schools careers events, online careers forums)

## 2.2 Website

- information (what interpreting is; learner, teacher/trainer and stakeholder information)
- careers advice with case studies of the Network Alumni
- links to useful resources and upcoming events
- past events archive

## 2.3 Online interactive resources

- informative content (e.g. video, information on interpreting and the skills involved, 'day in the life')
- interactive elements (e.g. exercises, quizzes, 'test your knowledge')
  - for learners/interested young people
  - can be used by language teachers at school or undergraduate level and interpreting trainers

## 2.4 Research, publicity and dissemination of information

- awareness-raising, media coverage (e.g. news and journal articles, interviews, school careers publications)
- production of materials (articles in Routes newsletters, brochures, leaflets, postcards, etc.)
- promotion of interactive resources (including through networking with language departments and careers services in higher education institutions (HEIs) nationwide)
- stakeholder conferences (e.g. institutional conferences, public service interpreting (PSI) conference, participation in EU interpreting services' conferences)
- participation in other networks and events (e.g. PSI network, employers' forum - Universities Contact Group (UCG)<sup>2</sup>, International Organisations (IOs) networks)

In the next two chapters we will consider the second and the third objectives - 'Raising the profile of the interpreting profession and boosting the level of interest of young people in the profession' and 'Create greater links with employers' – and will discuss in detail the methods we used to achieve these objectives. The success of these two objectives was measured at interim stages thus focusing on the formative aspects of the operation. The first objective 'To address the shortage of graduates

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<sup>2</sup> UCG will be discussed later in this document

in the field of interpreting by increasing the percentage of first language English (English L1) students on PG Interpreting and Translation courses (T/I)' will be looked at in Chapter 5 and the concluding Chapter 9 as ultimately this objective has been the main success indicator of the overall NNI project. In Chapter 9 we will draw conclusions on our targets and achievements after providing a broader overview of our awareness raising campaign and dissemination.

### **3 Raising the profile of the interpreting profession and increasing interest in the profession**

Since this objective can be seen as one of our overarching aims, our other goals will be very much linked to it. Information included elsewhere in this report will often be applicable to this objective. The quotes from feedback questionnaires and statistics (as well as evidence referred to throughout this document) aim to illustrate an increased awareness of, and interest in, interpreting as a career and above all demonstrate how effective promotional activities have been in their inspirational purpose.

Not losing sight of our main objective — increased interest in interpreting as a profession, we were determined not to undermine the importance of language skills in their broader sense. The following statement is of relevance to the interpreting profession as much as to any other profession where language skills are needed:

'Language skills matter. They are an important enfranchisement in a Europe where there is free movement of peoples, a key to multicultural awareness in our own country and in the world, and increasingly relevant to the prospects of our young people in a world of multinational companies where linguistic skills are valued.'<sup>3</sup> (DfES, Languages Review, February 2007)

Prior to this Review, in 2005, Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS) in their '700 Reasons to Study Languages' report gathered compelling evidence of how many sectors of industry are crying out for language skills in their employees.<sup>4</sup>

It was therefore our deliberate policy to drive home the message of the importance of language skills at all our events. Good language skills are after all an important prerequisite to a successful interpreting career. We therefore had to place a significant emphasis on these too.

Our immediate target audience has been undergraduate language students whose interest in the interpreting profession we have aspired to raise. However, right from the beginning of the project

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<sup>3</sup> <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publication/Detail/Page1/DFES-00212-2007>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.llas.ac.uk/700reasons/reasonsbykeyword/680>

the Networks<sup>5</sup> fully understood that they must also target school audiences to ensure that there was a big enough pool of school leavers to go on to HE and ultimately to PG training. Educating school students about an interpreting career was a particularly rewarding experience as this group have shown a natural curiosity about interpreting. Therefore it has not been difficult to attract them to our events and activities with the help of the Routes Regional Consortia (RCs).<sup>6</sup>

Throughout the six years of the project we have worked closely with the Regional Consortia whose broad aim has been to enthuse language learners. The message 'language skills matter' which RC teams have been delivering in their amazing nationwide campaign, was echoed in our own activities. Some of the big events we organised jointly with RCs had several speakers' panels, including employers and alumni, with the focus on general careers with languages.<sup>7</sup> In addition to graduates who work as interpreters for IOs we invited alumni who completed interpreter training courses but who took up posts in non-interpreting sectors, e.g. media, diplomatic services, finance, commerce, and more. The aim was to demonstrate how transferable skills that our graduates acquired on our courses had helped them to get access to prestigious positions.

Routes into Languages community of language experts accept that in general young people, their parents and teachers, are not aware of the variety and the breadth of careers possible with languages. With regard to how much young people know about the interpreting profession, through our interaction with this constituency we have identified that, although curious, their understanding of what a career in interpreting entails and how varied it can be is vague, at best. In the most recent event at York St John University the comment from one of the sixth form school students was representative of how appreciative young people are to get a better idea of what a career in interpreting involves: 'The information about interpreting was particularly interesting and I learned a lot about it. The event has also made me want to find out more about International Service[s] and other options using languages.'<sup>8</sup> This comment echoed earlier ones from two events in Leeds in 2009 and 2010: "Interpreting: I didn't really know what it was about but after this session I would consider a course in this." (Linguastars, July 2009) "Interpreting - I had never done anything like this before and it gave me the opportunity to see what it was like and consider it as a possible career choice in the future." (Linguastars, July 2010)

We have collected a significant number of questionnaires and submitted 250 pages of annual Activities Templates to the central Routes into Languages (RiL) team. A detailed account of some of our most successful events as well as a webcasts archive from regional events, including videos with messages from employers and our alumni, can be found on the NNI website under NNI Events.<sup>9</sup>

The overall success indicator of our events could be measured by the following figures: among undergraduate students attending some 270 careers events, mock conferences and taster sessions,

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<sup>5</sup> often the reference in this report will be to both NNI and NNT since we have some common goals

<sup>6</sup> About RCs see <https://www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/consortia>

<sup>7</sup> See NNI website Careers with Languages <http://www.nationalnetworkforinterpreting.ac.uk/assets/video/expo09/>

<sup>8</sup> York St John University *Careers Using Languages Conference*, July 2013

<sup>9</sup> See NNI website <http://www.nationalnetworkforinterpreting.ac.uk/index.php/careers/careers-with-languages-expo09>

75 to 80% stated that they would consider a career in interpreting (or translation). The concluding part of this report offers more statistics to measure the impact. The compilation of testimonials, comments and figures in Appendix 1 speaks volumes about the NNI's achievements. This evidence has been collected from various events over the six years of the project from feedback questionnaires distributed to students.<sup>10</sup>

## 4 Links with employers

We can confidently state that we have successfully fulfilled the objective of establishing **closer links with employers**. The collaboration with employers has served both Networks well as this sector has generously provided support by participating in our outreach events and offering advice to young people. This includes information about careers in interpreting and translation, the number of languages students should learn and which are the most needed languages in their services. Inviting major national and international employers to the NNI events proved to be an amazing attraction for undergraduate and postgraduate students who could find out about job opportunities first hand. "I cannot overstate how useful it was to talk to employers face to face. Their stands at the fair, as well as the talks and Q&A sessions were extremely helpful in clarifying details about the job and the application procedure." (See feedback questionnaire, Routes into Language Careers, February 2009). Such comments came in abundance following our careers fairs.<sup>11</sup>

A unique avenue to engage an impressive number of international organisations has been through knowledge transfer schemes, CPD and specialised short courses, run by partner institutions. The NNI group of universities was privileged to welcome delegations of high profile representatives from the UN and agencies, EU Language Services, African Union Commission, OECD, ILO, FAO, WTO, European Space Agency and many more as part of such exchange programmes. IOs shared their knowledge and experience with our students focusing particularly on the skills needed for work in international organisations including conference interpreting, translation, documentation and use of CAT tools. In exchange, IO participants were offered training in the skills where universities have expertise, e. g. retour training for conference interpreters or Machine Translation Evaluation.

Here is a sample of comments collected from students following seminars and workshops with IOs staff:

- it was particularly inspiring to hear positive comments about the fact that we can make it in the future, as those are the messages we need to hear as we approach our exams

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<sup>10</sup> Appendix 3 is our events questionnaire

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix 1

- very helpful to have translators / interpreters from such a wide range of institutions talking about their work from a personal perspective. It was particularly interesting to have experienced freelancers present too
- I was glad that members of the audience actively engaged in debate and asked questions about starting out as a freelance interpreter, the practical advice was very much appreciated
- what made it particularly interesting was that they had all followed very different career paths, demonstrating that there are many options out there.

We must not overlook the importance of the Universities Contact Group (UCG) – the universities’ and employers’ forum. UCG is a liaison between universities from around the world and international organisations. Its aim is to facilitate cooperation in professional language skills training. UCG is part of the International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP)<sup>12</sup> and its Working Group on Training (WGT). In June 2010 members of IAMLADP, namely the heads of language and conference services of 76 international organisations, signed the Paris Declaration in which they expressed the same concerns as the UK Higher Education sector and I/T course providers with regard to the shortage of highly qualified linguists: ‘Facing a global shortage of qualified linguists, the participants [of the Annual Meeting] stressed the need for more awareness-raising in schools and universities concerning the importance of language learning and the career opportunities for skilled language professionals. Without a new generation of trained linguists and professionals with language skills, international organizations will be unable to perform their vital tasks.’<sup>13</sup>

Following the Paris Declaration, IAMLADP has delegated many of its staff, including the heads of language sections at IOs, to the UK Networks outreach activities thus adding significant prestige to our campaign.

UK-based employers have also shown a great deal of support. Our long-standing ties with the Defence School of Languages (DSL), FCO, GCHQ and the British Refugee Council brought their staff to our events with a strong message on their need for English L1 linguists, especially with Arabic, Chinese and Russian. The British Refugee Council, Manchester City Council and other city councils, language service agencies and various public services who use interpreters engaged with us throughout the duration of the project. It is not surprising that our graduates form a considerable part of their workforce.<sup>14</sup>

The significance of the Routes campaign overall in enabling us to mobilise such an impressive group of employers cannot be underestimated. Without the allocated funding we would not have attracted such a diverse array of organisations. The Routes programme provided the platform for

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<sup>12</sup> IAMLADP, chaired by the UN, currently represents all major international organisations (IOs) and is the forum for the Heads of the Language and Conference Services of these organisations. It meets once a year to discuss issues affecting all IOs, such as the status of the language professions, quality management, performance indicators, new technologies, shortages of skills, training and other related issues.

<sup>13</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/docs/paris\\_decl\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/docs/paris_decl_en.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> On average each NNI partner provides between 10-12 references for job applications to Public Services

world language services and their future workforce to be brought together. Moreover, many former students who are now on staff in various language services have regularly come back to talk about their successful career paths. This was a major encouragement and inspiration for the next generation of linguists. Inspiration has been the key element in the events with employers.

Whatever has been achieved in promoting the profession of interpreting (and translation), raising awareness of training standards and fostering the study of languages is all thanks to the strong collaboration of the NNI partners and employers. We do much business together in the areas of training and awareness-raising, and this collaboration is set to continue.<sup>15</sup>

## 5 Increasing numbers of English L1 students of interpreting

As discussed in the previous section, language service providers, including EU institutions and international organisations, are vigorously promoting co-operation with universities as they fully understand that training in language skills starts at universities. The last decade saw many EU and IOs staff take retirement. This departure of staff has created a shortage of language skills and linguists in IOs which has become acute and is likely to become more so in the next decade. Some linguists, for example interpreters and translators with English as L1, are in particularly short supply. Therefore the language services of EU institutions and international organisations embraced cooperation with the National Networks with great enthusiasm.

There have been encouraging developments in the work to attract more English L1 students since the start of the project. Collaborative work with Sheffield undergraduate students produced positive results with 8 Sheffield modern languages graduates applying to join T/I courses in Leeds and Salford in 2009 and 2010. A similar trend has been noted thanks to collaboration between Bath and Bristol. Regular talks and events have often led to expressions of interest and applications from sixth formers and undergraduates. At one event (Starting Work as a Translator and Interpreter, June 2009), around 50 year 11-13 students sought specific advice on what choices would be beneficial in pursuit of an interpreting career.

Comments on the annual master class organised by the University of Westminster for students mostly with English as L1 at the University of Nottingham have been very encouraging: 'The large number of students who attended shows that Modern Languages students at Nottingham are keen to receive information and guidance about careers in interpreting and translation. Many of the questions asked by the students showed an understanding of the professional context, and the answers they provided to questions showed motivation and commitment to careers in both professional areas. We have been delivering these presentations at Nottingham for many years, and the Careers Department there is always keen for us to return and strongly recommends that students attend the talk. (November 2012)

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<sup>15</sup> See David Smith 'Europe needs you', *The Linguist*, August/September 2010

The increases in applications to undertake interpreter training at postgraduate level have been promising (details will be looked at in the final chapter). Although it is difficult to measure precisely the extent to which NNI activity has influenced recent trends, the figures can be seen as extremely positive. One course provider reported an almost 200% increase in applications between 2005-06 and September 2011. One institution reported that as well as applications increasing in number, they were also improving in quality, with 70% of applicants now holding a first class degree.

On an individual level, the following two case studies illustrate how our activities have influenced students to pursue interpreting careers. The first example is a 2012 student with English as L1 who was encouraged to consider interpreting after talking to a European Commission representative at one of our events:

“Last week I attended a talk given by a representative from DG Interpretation, where she gave an excellent synopsis of the benefits and challenges of a career in interpreting. When I spoke with her she was very encouraging and really raised my interest in interpreting - so much so that I am keen to investigate further [...] I was wondering whether you could recommend any intensive interpreting programmes, or whether the PGDipCI is an option? [...] I should also, if this would be possible, love to sit in on a French or German interpreting session, to experience first-hand what is required.”

The second is an individual who had decided to withdraw her application for T/I training, but following an NNI event a year later, decided to reapply:

“I just wanted to say a big thank you for your help and for letting me know about the careers fair; I came up from London especially and found it really very useful and encouraging. I will very probably be reapplying soon so I'm looking forward to hearing from you again soon!”

Comments from students attending the NNI events illustrate that our activities have encouraged individuals to consider I/T postgraduate courses:

“Speaking to [the] UN really highlighted the benefits and opportunities of PG study in Interpreting and Translation.”

**“The whole experience was magnificent, I enjoyed it so much and, of course, it was very well organised very interesting and inspiring, I will apply to the course.” (Could you be an interpreter?, March 2010)**

Several students commented that they would now be applying for postgraduate language study as a result of the talks. (Talks to undergraduates, March 2010)

**“All the best for the coming academic year, and with the NNI - I heard your piece on Radio 4, and found it very interesting and helpful.” (MA in Conference interpreting and translation applicant)**

“The interpreting session...has made me consider pursuing interpreting in further studies at University.” (Linguastars, July 2010)

All of the evidence above (and in Appendices 1 & 2) suggests that the NNI has had notable success in increasing numbers of English L1 applicants. However, an increase in applicants alone does not show to what extent the Network has been responsible for improved interest in the profession. Indeed, while some of the developments just mentioned suggest that our activities have had an impact on applications, interviews with T/I students, prospective students and older language learners in schools suggest they begin thinking about careers as early as Year 11. Most will certainly have decided on a career path before completing undergraduate study.

Taking this fact into account, it is interesting to note that when applicants to the 2009-10 session were questioned, one third had attended Routes and/or Network events. This rose to half of 200 applicants for the 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-2013 academic sessions.

For this proportion to be seeking careers in I/T at least partly due to Network activity has been extremely promising; it should be remembered that these applicants would have come into contact with the Network at a late stage in the decision-making process. This bodes well for the impact on younger language learners, since the NNI has been targeting students from around year 8 upwards. While it has been difficult to predict what proportion of them will continue studying languages with a view of taking up a career in language services, we can see any enthusiasm on the part of younger learners as a positive step toward reaching our goals.

Partners will continue to monitor our ‘conversion rate’ by asking how candidates heard about our courses, a form of assessment that can be continued beyond the end of the project.

Another positive result of Network activity has been an increased interest in Public Service Interpreting. Many I/T students have applied to work as freelance PSI interpreters following related careers talks. Also, five practising public service interpreters who attended an event in 2011 entitled ‘Introduction to Interpreting’ subsequently expressed an interest in undertaking training with one of our partner institutions. Raising standards in this area, though not an initial objective, is something that we have been committed to as a Network. By organising stakeholder meetings, being active in new and existing groups and networks, showcasing the profession and encouraging training we hope we have contributed to a greater professionalization of this particular kind of interpreting.

## **6 Awareness raising**

### **6.1 Using interpreting to promote languages**

As mentioned earlier, the NNI has been part of a wider initiative to increase the take up of language learning in the UK. As such we have not only been interested in interpreting as an end for our activities, but have also seen it as a useful means of engaging language learners, demonstrating to them that languages are exciting, fun to learn and useful in terms of possible careers. Many of our

events and activities aimed at achieving this goal have been undertaken in partnership with the Routes Consortia, which we find a very successful arrangement for reaching both parties' objectives.

One case study highlighting the effectiveness of interpreting as a language promotion tool is the response of a year 8 group from Wombwell School. The group took part in an interpreting taster as part of a school Languages Day. Before attending the event 55% of students stated they would definitely carry on with a language or were at least considering it and 33% stated that they were not planning on continuing with a language. After attending the event 77% stated that they would now like to continue with a language and only 5% of pupils stated that they were still not planning to continue with a language. When asked what made them change their mind, pupils' responses included, "the information that was given," "learning about interpreting," "employment opportunities" and "languages were fun".

At a later event, interpreting was used again to inspire a group of students who would have had little opportunity to learn about the profession otherwise. A short talk on sports interpreting (specifically for the football world) was given to 30 male year 10 students as part of a wider event linking sport and languages. The event was organised by the Leeds Routes team. Feedback was extremely positive and indicated raised aspirations and interest.

Many of the quotes already included above are also clear evidence of an increased interest in languages. Some additional comments can be found below:

60% of attendees indicated they would be interested in studying languages and interpreting further. Almost the same proportion identified having the chance to interpret as the best thing about the day. The accompanying teacher reported that two attendees subsequently changed their university course applications to study languages, having decided they would now like to pursue a career in interpreting. (Speak Up! VI form conferences, March 2010)

**The event encouraged 67% of participants to consider a language-related career (Could you be an interpreter?, March 2010)**

"The kids really enjoyed the talk, and it really made them dream.... They still talk about it and I know of at least one girl who your talk motivated to choose French next year. So, I would say yes, it did have an impact" (Teacher, Careers with languages, March 2010)

"Even though I attended the session without the full intention to pursue a career in interpreting (and probably still don't), I have certainly gained new skills that will benefit me in other aspects of professional/academic life. Thank you very much!"

"It was challenging but very fun and the relaxed, friendly atmosphere allowed me to make the most of the information given and the chance to learn new skills" (Taster session, York, June 2013)

“The information about interpreting was particularly interesting and I learned a lot about it. The event has also made me want to find out more about International Service and other options using languages.” (Careers Using Languages Conference, York St John, July 2013)

Further pupil, teacher and organiser feedback from events can be found in Appendix 2

We have been particularly pleased with the responses we have had to our events and online materials from pupils and teachers in schools. These have confirmed our belief that interpreting is an exciting and hands-on way of inspiring and motivating language learners.

## 6.2 Producing engaging website and interactive resources

Apart from our events, the main method by which we seek to engage our target audience is through our website and online resources. The importance of the website in all the NNI’s activities must be singled out as most events have been enriched to a great degree by the information and interactive resources available on the NNI website. The two go together. 3,900 visits to the NNI website per month is an impressive success indicator of the web project which among other things includes information on careers in I/T areas, links to major employers and guidance on qualifications needed to enter the I/T job market, details of relevant news and events. One of the largest sections on the website contains a wealth of interactive learning resources on the skills needed in interpreting. Our multimedia skills map allows visitors to discover the transferable skills involved in interpreting in an exciting and interactive way. Our most recent addition to the Learning Resources section of the website is a link to the multilingual Speechpool website which is a branch of the NNI web project. Although it is a resource for interpreter trainees, Speechpool is a fantastic tool to enhance listening comprehension, general knowledge or oral summary skills in a foreign language. Currently Speechpool has resources in 10 languages and more will be added. Also it is self-sustainable through the crowdsourcing principle. The team also aims for the NNI website as a whole to be self-sustaining.

A clear sign of success of the web project and its dissemination was the high level of NNI participation at the September 2010 ‘ALT-C’ conference, the largest e-learning event nationwide with an annual attendance of around 500. Firstly, the Interpreting Skills Map resource was commended in the Jorum Learning and Teaching award, and was listed in Jorum’s October 2010 newsletter as one of the most-viewed resources featured on their site. The note-taking exercise was a finalist in the ALT/Epigeum Award for Most Effective Use of Video 2010, and lastly, the NNI resources were presented during one of the conference sessions<sup>16</sup>. To be involved in three different capacities can be considered a notable achievement.

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<sup>16</sup> See reports at <http://www.nationalnetworkforinterpreting.ac.uk/index.php/nni-at-alt-c-2010>

We have carried out evaluation sessions for these resources, with evaluations being completed by students at partner and associate partner universities. Some of the comments obtained in the evaluations are listed below. (Comments included responses to the website in general, the interactive skills map and the activities for some specific skills.)

What do you think overall?

Very different, not seen anything like this before, extremely useful

**Excellent and varied range of exercises**

Brilliant, very useful and the layout is very clear

What did you like best?

Examples of people working in the field, their opinions

**The parts with interactive video activities; testing my knowledge and seeing where I need to improve - e.g. knowledge of Europe / current affairs**

Skills map- gives a very good idea on what to focus on to be successful

**The skills map and "Alison's story", which comprehensively covered working for the European Parliament and interpreting as a career.**

Test yourself section - interactive, makes it enjoyable and interesting

Did you learn anything?

Yes, how important your mother tongue actually is when interpreting.

**Yes, insight into working life of an interpreter.**

Qualifications needed, how to find work, etc.

**Yes, the note-taking section was invaluable, I had no idea how notes were taken - extremely useful!**

Do you think this is an effective way of promoting interpreting?

Yes. It makes it more 'real', gives a clearer idea. You can spend hours and days on it

**Yes. Encourages you to learn foreign languages and to improve in your mother tongue**

Yes, information is clearly laid out and well explained.

**Yes, definitely. There are not many websites that promote careers in interpreting; this is definitely one of the best that I have seen. I will be returning to the site to find out more!**

Yes, raises awareness, I wish I had known about it when I was younger...

Based on responses at these evaluation sessions, and in line with our own self-evaluation, the website was redesigned and restructured in spring 2010 (and further in spring 2013), in order to simplify site navigation, accommodate a growing bank of resources and highlight key materials. A survey was then created to assess the effectiveness of the redesign. 3/4 of respondents found the new site clearer and more useful, and all participants felt it was easier to navigate and said they would recommend it to a friend.

To close, statistics from Google Analytics highlight website traffic levels since its launch in December 2007:

- 59,729 individuals reached online
- 193,462 page views on the main website
- Over 16,580 video views from the NNI YouTube channel
- An average of 3,920 page views per month, with monthly figures rising throughout the project.
- 56% visits from new visitors, 40% from returning visitors

### 6.2.1 Ensuring resources are useful and enjoyable for all target audiences

There would be little point creating resources and organising events that did not appeal to our target audiences, and that were not considered enjoyable as well as useful. One of the challenges we face in our work stems from an ambition to reach an extremely wide and varied audience; this aim makes pitching our activities and materials at the right level a difficult task.

We are very conscious of this, however, and feel that we have been able to put together a series of informative, fun and inspiring online resources and that our events have always suitably tailored to our target groups. The comments received through our evaluations support this fact.

Below are some examples following events and extracts from website feedback that suggest the NNI is having success in reaching this objective.

Examples of feedback from undergraduate students on interactive resources:

“It’s useful to students of our age because it gives examples and makes you do quizzes as you go through so you’re not just expected to read a whole load of information on the topic and then process and understand it.”

**“Definitely useful for me and others on my course. It brings to light what you would need to identify as an interpreter. Before I didn’t necessarily think about register and the way in which something is said but now, especially after these exercises, I would.”**

“I thought it was well-presented and easy to navigate.”

**“I liked the combination of listening, participating and thinking, and the examples that were used to make comparisons between the formal and the informal registers. It really clarified it for me. I particularly found the quizzes useful so perhaps even more of those would improve it further.”**

“It is fun to discover new learning tools and have a play around exercise.”

**“I am glad I did it as it did expand my thinking on a few matters.”**

“It is quite fun and more productive and interesting compared to book learning as it stimulates the brain more!”

### 6.3 Training language teachers

The NNI provides resources that interpreter trainers and language teachers alike can make use of in their teaching. As well as this, we have participated in events where teachers in particular could be supported in their work, and inspired to use interpreting as a language teaching tool. Comments from participants of such training can be found below, and reflect the typical reception these activities receive.

“Interpreting session. Can you come to my school to do this with my kids? As you suggested, I will organise an extended assembly – Why learn a language?”

**“The session was great. I will definitely look at incorporating some of the ideas into the new business language course we are running from Sept 08”**

“Thank you so much for this. I will enjoy looking at it and following the links during the holiday. I worked with [a fellow participant] again last week and we were talking about how much we had gained from attending your workshop... so thank you!” (Email from attendee following receipt of further information. ILRC)

**“I am writing to thank you again for your contribution at CILT’s 14 to 19 National Conference. We have now had the feedback from the delegates and wanted to pass on the some of the positive feedback that we received about your session.**

**‘Marvellous session led by Catriona with plenty of interactive ideas. Her enthusiasm shone through and her depth of knowledge about how to make the role of the interpreter real.’ ‘Excellent – the speaker was very enthusiastic and the session was very interactive. I was very impressed with the work the Network has done on producing resources. A wonderful session, the most enjoyable of the day (reconsidering becoming an interpreter!!)’ Many thanks again and we wish you all the best for your ongoing work.” (December 2009, Language Teaching Adviser, 14-19, CILT)**

Following the presentation two schools [requested] follow-up talks. (NNI presentation, SSAT North West Annual meeting, 23 June 2010)

Many of the articles and reports we produce are aimed at teachers and trainers. Examples include:

- *Engaging tomorrow's interpreters* online interactive report. For language teachers and undergraduate language and/or interpreting teachers.
- Article for the Scottish Language Review, Autumn 2010 issue. For language practitioners in schools, colleges and universities, as well as staff in local authorities and government.
- CILT ezine and website. For teachers in adult and further education.

In November 2011 LLAS invited the NNI to run a workshop for MFL lecturers or tutors who are teaching, or would like to teach, interpreting at undergraduate level. The event's aim was to demonstrate the difference between interpreter training at an undergraduate and postgraduate level. It also aimed to review the skills that are essential for undergraduate students to progress to a professional level of training. The aim was also to demonstrate that, with the right approach, interpreting can be an engaging way to enrich language learning. The participants took part in a range of practical exercises which they could offer to the students they teach.

Following the workshop we received excellent feedback, both informally on the day and in subsequent correspondence. Participants requested materials used on the day and said they would recommend the NNI website to undergraduate students. Slides and handouts were made available on the LLAS website. 100% of respondents found the presentations or resources relevant, planned on using the resources and expected to pass them on to students or colleagues. The questionnaires were collected by LLAS but emails with enthusiastic feedback followed the workshop and are on record.

A similar workshop entitled '*Interpreting as an engaging language learning activity*' was organised on 18 March 2013. The presentation of interpreting activities by the NNI demonstrated that interpreting exercises can serve many useful purposes and lead to a variety of learning outcomes including

- improving listening and analysis skills, both in the student's mother tongue and a foreign language
- understanding the importance of a good command of the mother tongue
- learning the skills of good public speaking
- developing good research skills and creativity

Positive feedback was given by teachers after the workshops aimed at MFL lecturers and tutors who are teaching, or would like to teach, interpreting at undergraduate level.

Below are some of the comments given in response to the distributed questionnaires:

‘I liked the idea of using it [the interpreting exercise] to teach vocabulary, to make students compare the best way of translating something into the target language.’

‘Good techniques in ‘Public Speaking’ are essential to pass the message through into the target language.’

‘The skills taught in the workshop are transferable skills that should be learned by students in any discipline.’ ‘It was a very worthwhile event. Many thanks.’

## 7 Fostering inter-institutional collaboration

The NNI has contributed to a great deal of inter-institutional collaboration. From careers events and conferences, to production of resources and taster sessions, our joint work within the Network, with associate partners, with the NNT and with the RC has enabled knowledge transfer and sharing of good practice, as well as avoiding duplication of efforts.

Links with the Regional Consortia have been particularly strengthened during the second half of the project. We have organised events alongside Capital L, Routes Yorkshire and the Humber, Routes North East, Routes South West and Routes West Midlands. Throughout the course of the project we have also worked with other interpreting and translation course providers (University of Central Lancashire, London Metropolitan University, University of Sheffield, University of Middlesex, Heriot-Watt University).

At the October 2009 ‘Routes 2 Years On’ conference a speaker from Routes Leeds gave a presentation on the effectiveness of joint RC/NNI events in helping reach our shared goals. Extracts from that talk can be found below.

Generally we find that pupils are unsure as to what languages to study to be able to work in interpretation; if we reach them at a younger age through Routes events we can educate them in making the right choice. Teachers also perceive interpreting as a subject that could be quite difficult for their pupils, but wrapping it around a Routes event means that we can inform both the pupils and the teachers of its relevance and accessibility.

Some of you may wonder how interpreting is relevant to someone in Year 8. Often interpreting or translation is an excuse to talk about languages in a fun and interactive way. It is becoming increasingly obvious from the feedback we receive not only from pupils but our undergraduates that these kind of interactive sessions inspire them to seriously consider language learning in the future.

Working with the NNI also helps us forge better links with teachers, giving us an authority because we are providing them with the opportunity to meet someone studying or successfully employed in translation and interpreting. Also the NNI has

links with high profile institutions such as the European Parliament, and it allows our pupils to gain access to that opportunity.

In May we had teachers from schools across Leeds and Wakefield attend an options for linguists evening. Teachers were given the opportunity to discuss current school liaison activities and projects and hear about the University admissions process. An NNI speaker then discussed careers for speakers of modern foreign languages. Many of the attendees were keen to participate in a regular group and feedback suggested teachers felt a greater understanding of this, which they could then filter back to pupils.

## 8 Publicity and Dissemination

Our activities have received much media attention. Articles on the NNI have appeared in language publications<sup>17</sup>, interpreting and translation bulletins<sup>18</sup>, and national press and radio<sup>19</sup>. Other examples of publicity-related activity are:

- participation in conferences (such as LLAS events, ‘Supporting students’ learning outside the classroom’, May 2010 or ‘Languages for the 21st Century’, September 2010, presentation at the LLAS e-learning symposium, January 2011<sup>20</sup>, and the Articulate conference, May 2011; presentation at an international conference in Vilnius, October 2011; presentation at Routes Dissemination events, June 2012 and 2013)
- exhibiting at events (e.g. the October 2009, 2010 and 2011 Language Shows; international PSI conference, ‘Critical Link’, July 2010; Working Together for Languages, RiL, June 2012)
- a major showcasing for the NNI resources at an international conference in Prague (Charles University) in October 2012
- Our online resources have been viewed over 140,000 times since the launch of our website in December 2007 (page views). See section 2.d) for further statistics on web usage.

<sup>17</sup> See MacLeod, Catriona, “Getting engaged” in *The Linguist*, October 2010; Bloom, Tamara, “Engaging tomorrow’s interpreters: Conference report” in *Scottish Languages Review* (issue 22), <http://www.strath.ac.uk/scilt/slr/iss/2010/22/> November 2010, [accessed 20/12/2010]; Carsten, Svetlana, ‘Classroom Without Walls: online open resources for conference interpreter training’, with Llewellyn Smith, S. and Perret, M., *The Linguist*, 2012, 51/5, p.7; Carsten, Svetlana ‘In Defence of Interpreting’, *The Linguist*, 2013, 52/1 pp 16-17

<sup>18</sup> See Carsten, Svetlana, May 2008 & September 2011, *Institute of Translation and Interpreting Bulletin*; Tipton, Rebecca, March 2008, *North-west Translators’ Network Bulletin* (issue 4); October 2008, *International Association of Translation and Intercultural Studies Bulletin*

<sup>19</sup> See Kingston, Peter, 29 January 2008, “Wanted: English speakers with fluency in sarcasm” in *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/jan/29/furthereducation.tefl> [accessed 20/12/2010]; Purves, Libby, 4 February 2008, “Shortage of Interpreters” in *The Learning Curve*, BBC Radio 4, [http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/factual/learningcurve\\_20080204.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/factual/learningcurve_20080204.shtml) [accessed 20/12/2010]

<sup>20</sup> Bloom, T, ‘From Word to Web: when linguists and technicians learn to speak the same language.’ See the presentation at the conference <https://www.llas.ac.uk/video/6342>

Further publicity has been secured through Routes into Languages and other partner and stakeholder organisations. Examples include updates in Routes newsletters, promotion through a CILT ezine and their online case studies<sup>21</sup> and publicity through the EU 'Interpreting for Europe' facebook page<sup>22</sup>. The Network has also been involved in three Guardian Careers live online Q&A sessions (on T/I careers and careers with languages), providing responses to participants' questions and pointing them in the direction of NNI resources. These discussions remain accessible on the Guardian Careers website long after the event<sup>23</sup>.

Two of the NNI's most successful awareness-raising efforts were its online resource presentations at an international seminar *Online Resources: opportunities and limitations* held at the University of Leeds, 21 November 2008<sup>24</sup>, and a forum *Engaging tomorrow's interpreters* held at the University of Westminster in June 2010<sup>25</sup>. Around 50 participants from all levels of language and interpreting pedagogy heard presentations on the project's resources and how they can be used in language teaching. The day was followed up with an interactive report; this was circulated to attendees and interested parties, and remains accessible on the NNI website. Of the respondents to a subsequent event questionnaire, 100% said they found the presentations and resources relevant, that they planned to use the resources, and that they would pass them on to students and/or colleagues. Comments included the below.

Great to see the new look website, lots of ideas on how we can use it in the new format

**A really good update on opportunities in the field**

The whole day was fascinating and of great relevance. I have spent some time looking at the website since then and would be keen to be able to download the 'skills' chart

**Very useful information that I can pass on to students**

I will refer undergraduate language students to the website if they are thinking of an interpreting career

**...Resources will be on our careers website**

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<sup>21</sup> October 2010, "Fresh, Flashy and Fun - interactive online resources to inspire language learners from the National Network for Interpreting",

[http://www.cilt.org.uk/further\\_and\\_adult\\_education/teaching\\_and\\_learning/case\\_studies/national\\_network\\_interpreters.aspx](http://www.cilt.org.uk/further_and_adult_education/teaching_and_learning/case_studies/national_network_interpreters.aspx) [accessed 21/12/2010]. (Also accessible through: 13 October 2010, [http://www.strath.ac.uk/scilt/news/newsarchive/october2010/headline\\_334216\\_en.html](http://www.strath.ac.uk/scilt/news/newsarchive/october2010/headline_334216_en.html) [accessed 21/12/2010])

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Interpreting-for-Europe/173122606407> [accessed 21/12/2010]

<sup>23</sup> See <http://www.nationalnetworkforinterpreting.ac.uk/index.php/guardian-careers-live-qa-22-july-2010>

<sup>24</sup> See conference proceedings: <http://www.nationalnetworkforinterpreting.ac.uk/index.php/e-learning-tools-in-interpreter-training-university-of-leeds-21-november-2008>

<sup>25</sup> See our interactive report at <http://www.nationalnetworkforinterpreting.ac.uk/tasks/past-events/Engaging-tomorrows-interpreters/engage.html>

I shall be alerting students to the website at the start of term ... I have also passed on to graduates information about interpreting in Strasbourg/Brussels given at the conference.

### **A good insight to a successful joint project**

Many thanks for very interesting and thought-provoking day!

The internet has also proven to be an effective source of publicity, with a large percentage of NNI site visits coming from external site referrals. According to Google Analytics, referrers include partner and stakeholder sites (e.g. partner institutions' main web pages, routesintolanguages.ac.uk, the 'Interpreting for Europe' facebook page, languageswork.org.uk, iti.org.uk) and independent blogs (e.g. interpreter.wikispaces.com, bootheando.com). The NNI events portal served as a point of contact for events booking and has proved to be a very effective channel of communication with all those who wish to book the NNI team to run events.

## **9 Targets achieved**

The Network has reached large numbers of students across the country. By December 2009 we had almost reached the target level agreed for the project length; a year later all targets had been far exceeded. Regional activities have reached many pupils and teachers in schools and universities, national events have attracted attendees from across the UK, and the website, online resources and streaming of live events have reached users nationally and beyond the UK.

To demonstrate the scale of some of the regional careers events, the annual 'Careers in Interpreting and Translation' event at the University of Bath attracted over 800 students in the six years of running, and the annual 'Routes into Language Careers' at the University of Leeds received an estimated 1300 regional university and Year 11-13 students. Two Leeds events were streamed live on our website and watched by over 100 people across the UK and Europe. Our national NNI/NNT joint events such as *Expo* in November 2009 and our careers day in Bristol, March 2010<sup>26</sup>, saw up to 500 attending various talks. Exhibitors at the *Expo* careers and course provider fairs commented with enthusiasm on being able to reach such a large number of students (estimated 600 in total). Attendees came from Sheffield, London, Nottingham, Durham, Manchester, York and Leeds among other places. One speaker commented,

*"Congratulations to the organisers for such a good, fruitful and useful event. We much enjoyed meeting the students, teachers and course leaders and trust that the follow up will be positive for us all."*

(Helen Campbell, [former] Head of Section, DG SCIC, European Commission)

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<sup>26</sup> See <http://www.nationalnetworkforinterpreting.ac.uk/index.php/825>

The January 2012 Careers event at the University of Westminster hosted nearly 200 sixth form school, undergraduate and postgraduate students; Careers in Languages in January 2013 and the annual 'Meet the Client' events saw over 300 participants. Leeds and Salford careers events in February and March 2012 and 2013 attracted more than 300 students and young language learners. Most found these events informative, enjoyable and inspiring.

Our original target for students reached during the first three years of the project (2007-2010) was 7,000. In our 2010 report we registered just over 10,000. This meant that on average we reached over 3,000 annually. The number remained the same over the following three years. However, the funding for the Networks in the last three years comprised only 40% of the funding of the first three years apportioning greater financial commitment on the partner institutions. In total we have reached 18,000 students over the six years of the project.

Table 1 below illustrates the extent of NNI activities to July 2013. Further facts and quotes illustrating the success can be seen in Appendices 1 & 2.

### NNI Achievements against Routes SMART targets

Category	Agreed targets for the initial phase of the project to September 2010 plus further agreed targets for the extension of the project to July 2013 (NB August 2010 to July 2013 funding comprised 40% of the previous 3 years)	Progress to July 2013
1. Number of website hits	Phase 1 - 14,000 Phase 2 - 15,000 Total - 29,000	59,729
2. Number of students reached through events/ activities	Phase 1 - 6,750-7,000 Phase 2 - 9,000 Total - 16,000	18,000 (3000 in 2012/13)
3. Number of interactive resources developed	18 self-contained skills consisting of template modules, which provide resources for students and guidance for trainers/teachers PLUS the following website sections: "What is Interpreting?", "Careers for Linguists", an events repository with recordings of talks delivered and "Useful Links". Taster session plus DVD	Materials developed for all 18 skills (more resources to be added) PLUS content for all sections mentioned including videos, links, interactive resources, event highlights etc. E.g. - NNI @ the European Parliament - Mock conference guidance for teachers - Interview with John Leech MP ALSO creation of YouTube channel
4. Total number of events	Phase 1 - 110 Phase 2 - 135 Total - 245	270

Table 1, NNI activity

We have carried out surveys and distributed questionnaires and we would like to believe that a good proportion of the 18,000-plus school and university students that we have attracted to our events have joined our training programmes thanks to our outreach campaign.

As discussed in Chapter 5, by the third and fourth years of the project half of the applicants to I/T postgraduate courses had attended Routes and/or Network events (three applicants out of every six asked). This compares to only one, or occasionally two, in the second and third years of the project.

The statistics below reflect the Network's achievements with regard to our first objective, '*to address the shortage of graduates in the field of interpreting by increasing the percentage of first language English students on PG Interpreting and Translation (T/I) courses.*' The figures available for course applications to the NNI partner institutions from 2007 to 2012 indicate that overall there was a 34% increase in the number of English L1 applicants to PG courses.

PG Interpreter training applications data:

**University of Bath:** 32% increase in applications overall between 2008-09 and 2009-10, with a 12% increase in English L1 applicants. This rose to a further 55% increase between 2009-10/11 and 2011-12.

**University of Leeds:** 34% increase in English L1 applications between 2007-08 and 2008-09, followed by 49% increase between 2008-09 and 2009-10. (This can be compared to an average yearly increase of 7% from 2003-04 to 2007-08.) A further increase of 25% between 2009/10, 2010/11 and 30% in 2011-12.

**University of Salford:** 47% increase in applications between 2009-10 and 2010-11.

**University of Westminster:** 19% increase in applications from English L1 UK nationals each year between 2009-10 and 2010-11.

With regard to EU recruitment, we learned from DG SCIC in spring 2013 that there was an increase of 30% in English L1 interpreters from partner schools in the period between 2007 and 2012 compared to the previous five years. We, naturally, cannot take all the credit for this because the EU interpreting services have run their own outreach campaign but we can say that since the pool of graduates with English L1 has increased during the period under review, more of them have applied to sit an accreditation test and with much encouragement from course providers.

## 10 Conclusions

We are fully aware that we cannot not take credit for language learners who decided on an interpreting career while on their BA degree courses or earlier. But judging from the comments and statistics outlined in this document, as well as the success indicators for increases in English L1

interpreter trainee applicants and successes in recruitment of new interpreters in the EU, it is fair to say that the NNI's activities thus far are making an impact on the users we aim to reach. The Network is extremely pleased with the visible impact our activity has had over the course of the project.

Both Networks have to face a longer term challenge—how to maintain the interest in our activities, resources and in the profession/s in general. This challenge has been summed up in the Routes SQW external evaluators' report of 2011 as follows: '[The] issue about the longer term challenge for the professions is a very important point, which the languages community must take on board. The National Networks have done much to tackle the issue and to stimulate demand for Translation and Interpreting, but when Routes funding ends there is a real risk that the longer term message will be lost.'<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> [https://www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Routes%20report%20FINAL%20SENT%20230611\\_0.pdf](https://www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Routes%20report%20FINAL%20SENT%20230611_0.pdf)

## Appendix 1

### Testimonials, comments and statistics highlighting interest in interpreting

“I wanted to thank you- really interesting talking to you yesterday- I have been inspired into considering an interpreting career!” “I hadn’t considered interpreting before but I definitely would now!” “I may consider interpreting now. I hadn’t really thought about it before today.” (Routes into Language Careers event, December 2008)

“I cannot overstate how useful it was to talk to employers face to face. Their stands at the fair, as well as the talks and Q&A sessions were extremely helpful in clarifying details about the job and the application procedure.” (Routes into Language Careers, February 2009)

**Many of the [year 10] students said they would consider a career in interpreting in the future; “It was fun and definitely something I would think about studying”. (Starting work as a Translator and Interpreter, June 2009)**

“I have struggled for a very long time in finding useful information on how to become a translator or interpreter as there is not much help out there – this one day has answered hundreds of questions that I needed help with.” “Very interesting and inspiring speeches. I am very enthusiastic again to persevere in my translation career instead of giving up”. (Starting work as a translator or interpreter, June 2009)

**(In response to a question regarding the most enjoyable part of a language residential)**

**“Interpreting: I didn't really know what it was about but after this session I would consider a course in this” “Opportunity to experience other aspects of studying languages, enjoyed the practical work in the interpreting session.” “Interpreting I had never done anything like this before and it gave me the opportunity to see what it was like and consider it as a possible career choice in the future.” (Linguastars, July 2009)**

“[I enjoyed] hearing about British Sign Language - I know very little about it and it was great to listen to somebody who is so passionate about their job.” (Careers with Languages, November 2009)

**“The interpreting session was brilliant. It gave me a chance that nobody like me gets to do very often. It has made me consider pursuing interpreting in further studies at University.” (Linguastars, July 2010)**

“I’m sure now I want to try and study interpreting.”

**“More likely to do a Masters in translation and/or interpretation to increase my chances of getting into translation/interpretation as a career” (Careers in Interpreting and Translation, February 2012)**

“Really enjoyed the workshop and definitely considering a career in interpreting after today” (Interpreting taster session, June 2012)

**In response to a question regarding the interpreting taster session at a GCSE revision day: “I enjoyed testing my Spanish and finding creative ways to say things.” “I enjoyed it more than I thought I would!” (December, 2012)**

“The speakers were amazing. I have genuinely been encouraged to look at interpreting”. (Interpreting taster session, University of York, June 2013)

**“I found the event interesting and I enjoyed learning about different careers available through languages, particularly the interpreting session.” (Careers Using Languages Conference, York St John, July 2013)**

### **Comments following mock conference attendance:**

“I found the experience very useful and felt that I have been given a much better idea of what interpreting is and what training is like.” (Undergraduate student, mock-conference)

**“Thank you for showing me the facilities available for interpreting at the university. Before viewing this conference I felt that interpreting was not something that I would wish to pursue in the future due to the need to immediately translate what is being said. However, I thoroughly enjoyed what I was able to listen to and now feel that it is something that I would wish to explore in the future. I have to say I did feel it would seem to last for a long time but the hour and a half that I did watch went really fast!” (February 2012)**

“Thank you for answering my questions and showing me all the facilities on offer. It has really helped me to decide what I may do in the future.”

**“After the mock conference I attended last month, I would like to apply for the Masters course in interpreting and translation.” (March 2012)**

Many participating in one form of Network activity go on to express an interest in other resources and events. Interest in our mock conferences has been shown by school teachers whose pupils have attended the Language Enrichment Days, and by students attending Careers in Interpreting and Translation events. Sixth formers attending school talks have since attended Careers events, and publicity talks delivered in schools lead to an increase in traffic on the NNI website.

**All attendees stated they had found the experience useful and said that it had given them a much better idea of what interpreting is... (Mock Conferences, 2010)**

### **Other evidence highlighting interest:**

“Undergraduate student ambassadors also enjoyed the event and said they would like a similar activity to be run for them specifically.” (Wombwell School event organisers (Routes Leeds) about interpreting taster, June 2009)

**“The response from this age group is always excellent and several students enquired about interpreting courses at the end of their stay,” Linguastars organisers (Routes Leeds), July 2009**

“However, many said they were not aware of the opportunities learning languages offers, and were particularly interested in hearing that their mother tongue would also be valuable for working as an interpreter or translator” (Newham VI form conference, October 2009)

**“We had letters from schools thanking us for taking their students and underlining how much the students enjoyed the interpreting sessions and time spent chatting to current students and tutors about studying languages at university.” (Colleague, work experience placements)**

“Brilliant talks, eminently useful!” “Very well organised event” “It was a pleasure being here” “Very useful and enjoyable” “[It] boosted [my] confidence in trying to find a job” “Fascinating hearing about BSL interpreting and [speaker’s] passion”. Over 220 feedback forms were collected over three discussions, with participants generally rating all three talks and the fairs very highly. The average rating for the course provider fair was 4.4 out of a possible 5, with 100% finding it useful. 80% said it had encouraged them to pursue a career in T/I, and the same proportion that they would recommend it to someone interested in those professions. 76.8% indicated that the talks had encouraged them to consider a career in languages and particularly T/I. The average rating for the course provider fair was 4.4 out of a possible 5. (Careers with Languages, November 2009)

**The workshop inspired 92% of pupils to consider becoming an interpreter (Curriculum Enrichment Day, March 2010)**

For the most part students had not appreciated the difference between interpreting and translation prior to the talks. Several [stated] they would now be applying for postgraduate language study as a result of the talks. (Talks to undergraduates, March 2010)

**14 of 22 respondents stated that they were more likely to consider a career in translation/interpreting following the event (7 were as likely as before). (Joint NNI NNT careers event, March 2010)**

One student commented that she would not have considered a career in interpreting and translation before taking part in the event. (Interpreter taster session, April 2010)

**Extremely successful event with huge amount of interest in interpreting careers... Over 90% of delegates [rated the day's activities as] good to excellent. (RIL NE's Beat the Rat Race, June 2010)**

The National Network for Interpreting ran an informative and interactive session in which the team explained the difference between translating and interpreting and invited discussion about the skills needed to be an interpreter. Several students were then chosen as guinea pigs to try out an interpreting exercise, and some even had the courage to perform it in a foreign language. (Careers Using Languages Conference, York St John, July 2013)

## Appendix 2 – working with schools

### Pupil, teacher and organiser feedback from events

100% strongly agreed that the quality of the interpretation session was good. 23 of the 29 pupils wrote that they enjoyed the interpreting/translation classes most of all. (Linguastars, July 2009)

**Teachers requested details of future events, highlighting their desire to work with universities and for these days to take place (Language Enrichment Days, June 2009)**

Students also requested a longer day with more speakers. There was a general request made by students, sixth formers and MFL teachers alike that more events for languages are run throughout the year. (Careers in Interpreting and Translation, October 2008)

**“Majority should be in foreign languages” “It was amazing! Great lectures!” (AS enrichment day, Introduction to careers in interpreting and translating, July 2009)**

Immediate follow-up from the School to say how inspirational the students had found the talk (Careers in interpreting school talk [year 10], October 2009)

**“It was a good experience that helped me think about a possible career in languages.” (Yr10 student, schools talk)**

“We had letters from schools thanking us for taking their students and underlining how much the students enjoyed the interpreting sessions and time spent chatting to current students and tutors about studying languages at university.” (Colleague, work experience placements)

**“Thanks to all the panel for such helpful replies,” “Hello everyone, what a splendid idea to have this discussion - full of great people and most useful advice! Thanks a lot for all contacts and links so far.” “What a fantastic discussion. Some really interesting comments and information here. Thanks to everyone who took part in today's Q&A.” “Thank you to everyone who posted a question and a huge thank you to our excellent panel for all the high-quality advice.” (Users and organisers, Guardian Careers Live Q&A session on T/I)**

“Useful information came thick and fast – Great! Thank you!” (Teacher, Starting work as a translator or interpreter, June 2009)

**“I have found some very useful links in this forum. Thanks everybody,” “Thanks everyone for your positive replies and website links,” “Thank you all for your advice; it’s definitely helped me to focus my ideas.” (Guardian Careers Website online Q&A, July 2010).**

## Appendix 3 – events questionnaires

### Events with Employers

**Your details:**

- a. Level of study:       PG                       UG finalist                       UG other
- b. Subject area:
- \_\_\_\_\_
- c. University:                       UoL                       Other
- \_\_\_\_\_

**How did you hear about this event? (Tick all that apply)**

- Department / member of staff       Careers centre
- NNI website                       Routes into Languages website
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Were you considering a career in translation/interpreting before attending?**

- Yes                                       No

**With 1 as the highest rating and 5 as the lowest, to what extent did you find the event:**

- d. interesting      \_\_\_\_\_                      useful                      \_\_\_\_\_
- e. informative      \_\_\_\_\_                      enjoyable                      \_\_\_\_\_

**What particularly stood out to you as positive/a highlight in this event?**

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Was there anything that could have been improved?**

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**Did this event change or influence your views on translation or interpreting as possible career options? Please expand where possible.**

Yes  No

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**If you have further comments on the publicity, organisation or content of these talks, please include them below.**

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**Thank you for taking the time to fill out this form, your feedback is appreciated!**

**General Routes into Languages Events (focus on careers with languages and interpreting and translation)**

**We hope that you have enjoyed your day at the Routes into Language Careers Event and we would be grateful if you would take a couple of minutes to give us some feedback on the event.**

Name (optional)

Name of School or University.....

**The event was interesting and enjoyable**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

**On a scale of 1 – 5 (5 being most interesting/useful, 1 being least interesting/useful), what were the best aspects of the event?**

Keynote speakers from EU institutions, national and international organisations (interpreting, translation, editing and documentation)	
Talk about MA programmes	
Taster session on interpreting and tools in translation and subtitling	

**Why?**

**The event has / has not encouraged me to think about continuing my language study at degree level.**

**OR The event has / has not encouraged me to consider a languages-related career (such as interpreting).**

**Comments, suggestions for improvements:**

## Appendix 4 – Glossary of terms

ALT	Association for Learning Technology
CAT	Computer Assisted Translation
CILT	Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (the National Centre for Languages)
CloL	Chartered Institute of Linguists
DfE	Department for Education
DG INTE	Directorate General Interpretation, European Parliament
DG SCIC	Directorate General Interpretation (SCIC) at the European Commission
DGT	Directorate-General for Translation at the European Commission
DG TRAD	Directorate General for Translation at the European Parliament
DSL	Defence School of Languages
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
GCHQ	(UK) Government Communications Headquarters
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
IAMLADP	the International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOs	International Organisations
I/T	Interpreting/Translation
ITI	Institute of Translation and Interpreting
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
LLAS	Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages

MoD	Ministry of Defence
NNI	the National Network for Interpreting
NNI	the National Network for Translation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation
PG	Postgraduate
PSI	Public Service Interpreting
PSIT	Public Service Interpreting and Translation
RC	Regional Consortia
RiL	Routes into Languages
SSAT	Specialist Schools and Academies Trust
T/I	Translation/Interpreting
UCG	Universities Contact Group
UN	the United Nations
WGT	Working Group on Training
WTO	World Trade Organisation