

University and partners take on \$ multi-billion global leather industry

Published Thursday 15th September 2011

The University of Northampton has joined forces with The UK Leather Federation (UKLF) to provide a new vision of skills development, education and branding for leather.



The leather industry is worth over £800 million in the UK alone.

A new [UKLF-led strategy](#) was unveiled to a select audience at The House of Lords (Tuesday 13 September 2011). Over 60 people attended, with invitees representing retail, students, manufacturing, the technical and fashion sectors, MPs, livery companies, trade associations and academic experts.

While the UKLF represents the national interests of the leather sector, The University of Northampton has a unique heritage in being the only higher education institution in the UK to offer a unique range of leather-related degrees and industry-recognised skills training.

This is in addition to internationally-recognised leather and materials research, and the University's state of the art on-campus tannery, which has benefited from an £800,000 investment in improved facilities, co-financed by the Leathersellers' Company (another strategic partner).

Reg Hankey of UKLF, stated:

Today marks the launch of a new strategy for industry and education, and it is unashamedly about the development of manufacturing that in turn creates wealth. Twenty billion square feet of leather goes into a range of clothing, fashion accessories, footwear, upholstery and other products every year. This equates to \$40 billion in trade.

The strategy addresses research and development; the environment; brand; sustainability; raw materials; education and people. Leather offers career opportunities across the globe for talented young people in areas including science, technology and design.

Reg Hankey

Professor Nick Petford, Vice Chancellor of The University of Northampton, commented:

The University and its forebears have delivered high quality education and training in leather technology, in Northampton, for over one hundred years. We are developing novel and innovative models of course delivery to meet the professional development and employment needs of the industry.

Our Institute for Creative Leather Technologies builds on this tradition and descends directly from the Leathersellers' Technical College established in Bermondsey in 1809. The University will continue to be a global leader in education and research for high quality, efficient and effective tanning and manufacturing which is environmentally sustainable, and committed to reducing its carbon footprint.

Professor Nick Petford

To find out more about education and career opportunities in leather, see [Leather at The University of Northampton](#).