



IMPORTANT PRESS RELEASE

Northern Grid for Learning Finalist in E-Government Annual Awards 2006

Northern Grid for Learning the North East's Regional Broadband Consortium has been selected as a finalist in the E-Government Annual Awards for Excellence in Education for "Public Sector Online or Electronic Educational Services which Transform Learning".

Northern Grid delivers robust broadband connections and high quality interactive learning materials for schools in the North East and works in close partnership with its Local Authorities, other regional and national agencies.

The Awards highlight the UK's best services which improve citizen and business transaction with councils, central government departments and other public sector organisations. 89 finalists have been announced this year over 11 categories.

Finalists include a great diversity and spread of excellence in e-Government and public sector IT right across the UK - Councils, central government departments, non-departmental public bodies and voluntary organisations are all represented in this 'best of the best'.

Mel Philipson, Manager of the Northern Grid for Learning says,

"This is a fantastic opportunity for the North East of England to be recognised as a centre of excellence for ICT development in education. The Northern Grid for Learning has had a national reputation for producing excellent resources and support. It is very exciting to have our work recognised in this way. Northern

Grid provides free online resources for teachers, learners and parents. These can be found on our portal, www.northerngrid.org"

The annual e-Government National Awards have become the UK's highest level commendation for the best e-Government services - services which, through innovative online delivery or IT implementation, have positively transformed the lives of citizens, local communities, business and stakeholder groups.

This year's finalists have been chosen from among the record 345 nominations that were submitted by senior professionals working across the public sector. The winners will be announced and presented with their e-Government National Awards on 17th January 2007 at a black-tie dinner at the Savoy Hotel in London.

Pat McFadden, Cabinet Office Minister with responsibility for Transformational Government says:

"Using technology in reforming our public services to fit around the needs of the citizen is essential. But it is not just central government which has a role to play here, organisations across the public sector all need to provide the best possible service to their users - whether individuals, businesses or whole communities. We support these Awards and in doing so we support the efforts of all those organisations who are committed to best meeting the needs of their customers."

Keith Bannister, Partner, at KPMG Government Advisory, Platinum Sponsor of the Awards and a lead member of the judging panel comments, "KPMG is once again extremely proud to support the e-Government National Awards. Genuine achievement should always be acknowledged and celebrated - not least because it fosters confidence in the minds of the people and organisations at the forefront of the transformation and delivery of public services."

"This year, we have received more entries than ever before, which demonstrates that public bodies truly are embracing the Government's e-agenda. In particular, we have been struck by the calibre of nominees this

year. Once again, the bar has been raised and there is much for us to learn from their collective efforts and achievements."

Christopher Histed, founder of the e-Government National Awards and CEO of PublicTechnology.net says: "The Awards are a yardstick for excellence in innovative government services in the UK, including those enabling local communities to transact with their councils, national online government services for citizens or businesses, specific services for vertical industry sectors, and government services delivered online through intermediaries and the voluntary sector".

On the judging panel were central and local government leaders with great experience of delivering strong services for citizens and stakeholders. The panel includes Peter Ryder, head of ICT at Preston Council and President of the Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM, which represents this involved in ICT management in local authorities). Ryder says: 'It was good to see such a breadth and depth of entries from local authorities, reflecting the excellent work that we know to be going on up and down the country.'

The e-Government National Awards 2006 are supported by the Cabinet Office e-Government Unit, the Office of Government Commerce, the Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM) which represents ICT management in local authorities, and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE), the representative body for senior strategic managers working in the public sector. The Awards' platinum sponsor is KPMG and also sponsoring are O2 and SunGard.

The charitable beneficiary of the e-Government National Awards 2006 is the Charitable Trust of the Information Technologists' Company, the 100th City of London Livery Company, which helps a wide range of not for profit organisations to gain the maximum benefit from their IT, and by so doing, benefit the needs of the disadvantaged.

For more information visit: www.e-governmentawards.co.uk