

Mind your own business: **A young people's conference on privacy, technology and society.**

The Royal Academy of Engineering

5 & 6 March 2010, London

The Royal Academy of Engineering, in partnership with the Y Touring Theatre Company, is holding a unique two-day young person's conference in March 2010 as part of a wider *Theatre of Debate* programme.

During the two days, 30 young people (aged 16 to 19) will be brought together to explore issues surrounding the power of 21st century information technology to store vast amounts of personal information and what this might mean for everyone's privacy.

The conference will put science, technology and engineering within a social context and give young people the opportunity to explore, debate and discuss:

- the impact of science, engineering and technology on society
- who gets access to personal data, including electronic databases
- the use of electronic databases to help wider society.

As well as interactive sessions, electronic voting, workshops and debates, the conference will include a performance of *Breathing Country*, a play which throws open the questions of individual privacy, security and the greater good.

"It was a very valuable learning experience for the pupils. It made them think and consider an ethical scientific question from many points of view. Very well acted and delivered. They were totally engrossed from start to finish".

Nicola Goddard, Biology teacher, Queens College

Students will also get the opportunity to meet and debate with experts from science, medicine and engineering.

Conference details

Day 1: Friday 5 March 10am - 5pm

Day 2: Saturday 6 March 9.45am - 3.30pm

The conference is being held at:
The Royal Academy of Engineering
3 Carlton House Terrace
London, SW1Y 5DG

Carlton House Terrace is just off Waterloo Place, between Pall Mall and The Mall. It is five minutes walk to Piccadilly Circus underground station and ten minutes to Charing Cross mainline and underground stations, or 20 minutes through St James's Park to Victoria. Trafalgar Square, and all bus services through it, are also very close.

Booking

The conference is open to all 16 -19 year-old school/college pupils, and in particular those studying science-related A levels or diplomas in engineering, IT, maths, public services or society, health and development. Pupils are welcome from both local authority funded and independent schools/colleges.

Tickets are free but are limited to 5 students per school/college. One teacher from each school/college is welcome to come to the conference but it is not obligatory for a teacher to attend.

Lunch will be provided on both conference days. Each person attending will be able to reclaim reasonable travel costs.

To reserve places for the conference, or for any further information, please email nicola@herncommunications.co.uk or call Nicola Hern, Hern Communications Ltd, on 01697 352744.

All bookings need to be received by **1 February 2010**.

Evaluation

As part of our commitment to quality and to provide feedback for the event's funders, participating students will be asked to contribute to the event evaluation, which is being led by Laura Grant Associates. This will be in the form of questionnaires or interviews during the event and we would also like to visit a small number of participating schools to conduct focus groups with students afterwards. Your cooperation in this would be appreciated; if you think there may be a difficulty with this please let us know at the time of booking.

Theatre of Debate programme and wider research

Mind your own business: a young people's conference on privacy, technology and society is part of a wider *Theatre of Debate* programme to raise public awareness and debate on the use of personal information and electronic databases and the many questions it raises. This includes exploring concerns over the privacy and security of personal data balanced against the potential benefits for society that the sharing of such information can provide.

Central to this *Theatre of Debate* programme is a new play by award-winning playwright Ben Musgrave, *Breathing Country*, which will be performed as part of this conference. The play has also toured London schools in the autumn of 2009 and will be embarking upon a national tour of schools, community health centres and hospitals in spring 2010. Each performance is followed by a live debate, utilising electronic voting technology, during which the audience is encouraged to explore what they think and feel about the issues posed by the drama.

The findings collected through the play's tour and linked debates will be collated with the attitudes and ideas explored through the two-day conference to create a report on young people's views on the use of personal information, particularly their health and medical records. The Royal Academy will present this report to a range of audiences including (where possible) policy makers and the NHS, to give young people an opportunity to have their voices and opinions heard on this hotly debated topic.

For more information on *Breathing Country* and the wider *Theatre of Debate* programme visit: www.ytouring.org.uk/productions/Trustme.

Funding and Support

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