

## Experts develop new resources for Deaf people in the media industry

University of Wolverhampton experts have secured a £310,000 grant to develop an online learning tool for Deaf people working in the media industry.

The two-year project, titled Sign Media, will enhance the career prospects of Deaf people working in the media in Europe by providing interactive exercises in written English taught through the sign language of their country. Funding of £310,000 (€367,853) has come from the Leonardo da Vinci programme of the European Union and will be led by the University's Institute for Media Arts with experts from the School of Law, Social Science and Communications Deaf Studies Department and the School of Art and Design. The full project value will be nearly half a million Euros.

Wolverhampton's partners in the Sign Media programme are Klagenfurt University, Austria, University of Turin, Italy and Mutt & Jeff Pictures Ltd, UK, and a launch event for all the partners was held in Wolverhampton in February. Director of the Institute for Media Arts, Samantha Hope, said: *"Sign language in each country is different, and is also distinct from written English. Research has found that Europeans wish to learn written English for work and travel, but some methods of doing this have not proved successful.*

*"The new interactive learning tool on the web will provide exercises in written English, taught through the sign language of each partner country. This will mean there will be three versions of the course, related to British Sign Language (BSL), Italian Sign Language (ISL) and Austrian Sign Language (ASL)."*





**L-R Elana Ochse from the University of Turin and Sam Hope, Director of the Institute of Media Arts at the University of Wolverhampton.**

Research by University of Wolverhampton academics Joan Fleming and John Hay in 2005 showed that around 70% of Deaf graduates are working in arts and media-related industries.

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