

## **Metals Manufacturing: the Skills Landscape 2008 and Beyond**

**26<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

**Members of the AEMFC Sector Group** recently attended and supported the Namtec (National Metals Technology Centre) Metals Manufacturing Event which was held at the Rotherham Advanced Manufacturing Park on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

Organised by the Special Metals Forum, this year's event focused on skills and training. The development of industrial skills and the provision of focused training are recognised as a problem area by many different parts of the special metals sector. There are not enough young people entering the sector and those that do, often lack the required skills. The increased use of technology makes it all the more important for companies to maintain training throughout their employees' careers. The training and skills provision for the engineering sector at all levels is extremely complex, with a range of private and public organisations providing services. The aim of this event was to give companies an overview of the skills landscape from schools through to engineering institutes.

The metals sector directly employs around 450,000 people in more than 30,000 companies across the UK. The sector is around twice the size of the UK's automotive sector. With an annual turnover of £38 billion, the sector contributes £15 billion of extra value to the UK economy – equivalent to 10% of all UK manufacturing. Importantly, services all sectors of the economy.

With attendance assistance provided by the WYLLN's staff development fund, the delegates heard from key stakeholders, ranging from Stephen Garwood of Rolls-Royce who provided a keynote speech on Investment, through to Neil Trigwell of Bodycote who presented upon their Foundation Degree collaboration with Bradford College's metallurgy and materials department. The emphasis for the interactive day was to bring together local stakeholders, presenting a backdrop to and demystifying the complicated framework of qualifications, skills, and knowledge, together with training and support organisations, currently available within the region.

Further objectives for the day comprised: Gaining an insight into progression routes and how they operate; Acquiring an understanding of the Sector support schemes available; and finally, Knowing how to access funding and support, and importantly from whom.

Bradford College's Richard Brown and Bruce Stafford commented, "In this time of great industrial challenge, making the most of our local partnerships is a fundamental key, both for now and our collective future – working together in improved collaboration".

