

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate release

The Legacy of Industrial Textile Enterprise (LITE) Exhibition launched.

Community Education Academy of Leadership (CEAL) officially launched Heritage Lottery Funded *The Legacy of Industrial Textiles Enterprise* (LITE) at Soho House Museum, Birmingham, West Midlands on Thursday 21 June 2018. The event attracted over 70 guests from the Midland Counties who for the first time, had the opportunity to witness such a significant, historic heritage event.

The exhibition which is planned for July to October 2018, aims to record, document and interpret the ‘forgotten’ histories of African, Caribbean and South Asian communities’ contribution to the textiles industry during the 1950s-2000. The project’s geographical focus is Birmingham, Sandwell and Wolverhampton. This unique exhibition showcase features textiles-related artefacts, photographs and other memorabilia seen for the first time, along with heritage legacy banners created by 9 different organisations including Eden Boys School, Birmingham. The exhibition highlights the journeys of former employees and employers whilst displaying their respective industry sector competencies.

In his opening remarks, Chair of CEAL, Dr Christopher A Johnson, who is also an award-winning author, set the historic context for the event. He explained that prior to the UK’s decline in manufacturing due to a policy of out resourcing labour overseas, the textiles trade contributed to the cultural, economic and social lifeblood of thousands of communities across England, especially. The LITE exhibition therefore, is the first initiative of its kind, to capture migrant communities’ unsung contribution to this vital area of industrial manufacturing.

Key Founding Member of the Lotus Community TV, Mr Manohar Lal Birdi, complimented the exhibition, emphasising that “CEAL has made an incredible effort to bring to the forefront the social, cultural and economic value of what the first generation of migrants brought to bear”.

CEAL’s Project Manager, Harminder Kaur Bhogal, said that “By bringing the exhibition to the public, we are highlighting the importance of the economic contribution that sections of the society made to the British textiles history in the last century. Finally, many people including young people, will take an ownership of the heritage legacy surrounding textiles”.

Editor’s Notes: Community Education Academy of Leadership (CEAL) is a Charity and a Limited Company by Guarantee based in the West Midlands. The LITE project is funded by Heritage Lottery Fund a commenced in July 2017-30 September 2018.

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