

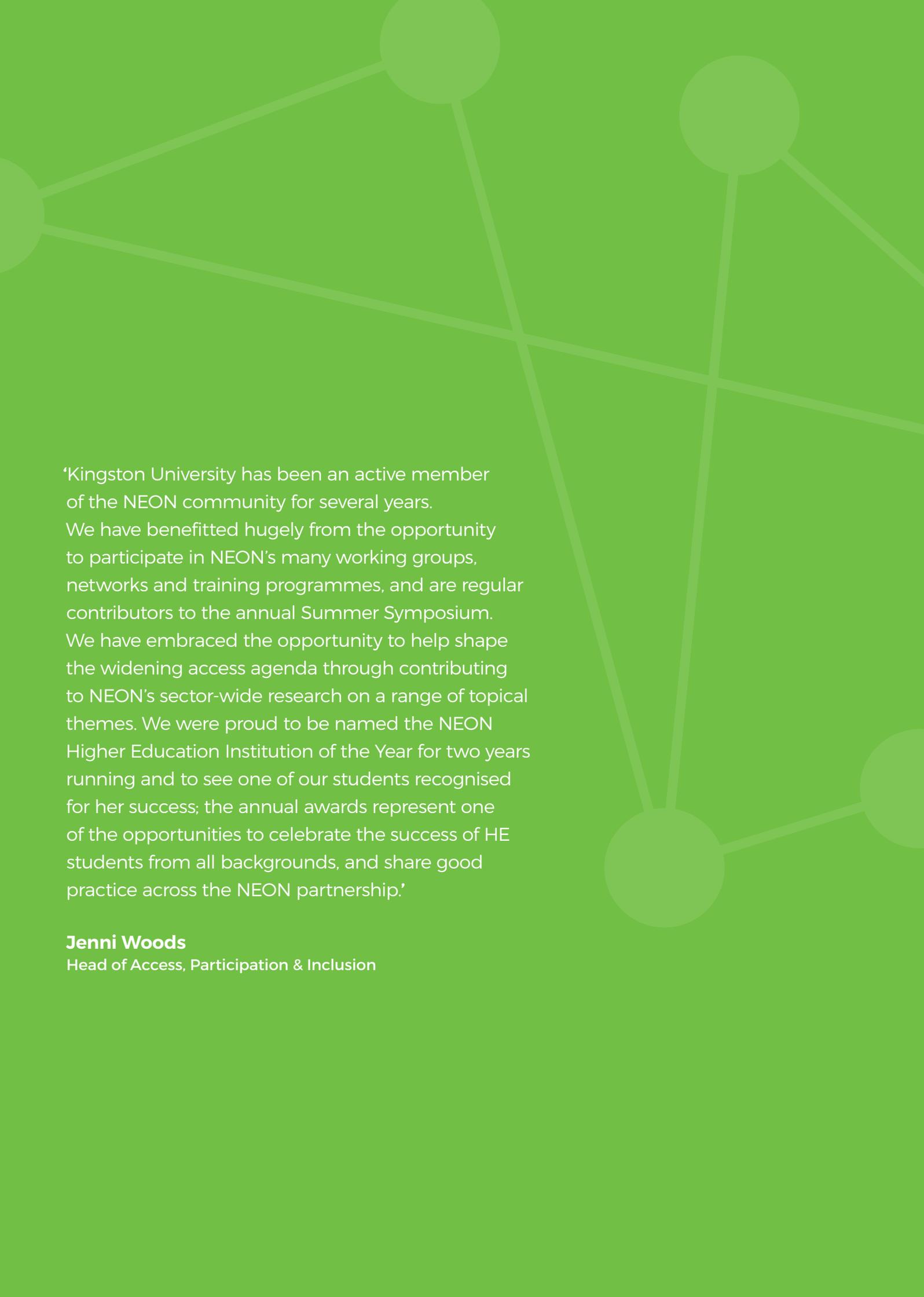


Join NEON

Become a part of the
largest national network
committed to widening
access in higher education

educationopportunities.co.uk





'Kingston University has been an active member of the NEON community for several years. We have benefitted hugely from the opportunity to participate in NEON's many working groups, networks and training programmes, and are regular contributors to the annual Summer Symposium. We have embraced the opportunity to help shape the widening access agenda through contributing to NEON's sector-wide research on a range of topical themes. We were proud to be named the NEON Higher Education Institution of the Year for two years running and to see one of our students recognised for her success; the annual awards represent one of the opportunities to celebrate the success of HE students from all backgrounds, and share good practice across the NEON partnership.'

Jenni Woods

Head of Access, Participation & Inclusion

It's time to get involved

Inequalities in access and success of students from different social backgrounds remains one of the, if not the, biggest challenge facing higher education in the UK.

It is a challenge that requires collaboration, professionalism and innovation. The National Education Opportunities Network began in 2012 to enable those from across sectors to embody these values in the work they do. As we enter a new phase for HE particularly in England where the focus is falling equally on addressing access, success and outcomes for learners from underrepresented groups NEON's role has never been more important. We are the only organisation who specialise in professional development in the field of widening access and the leading members based advocacy body in the field.

Over the past seven years we have had over 4000 participants in our training events and summits and produced key research in areas ranging from student finance to the student lifecycle. We have ambitious plans to extend both the continuous professional development we offer and our thought leadership work in forthcoming years, as well as becoming a hub for innovative practice in widening access work.

This brochure outlines our plans for 2018-19. We are keen to work with existing and new members to take them forward. For those who are not yet members of NEON we hope that you can become part of our community and look forward to working with you this year.

Dr Graeme Atherton
Director, NEON

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Cross-sector approach

What is NEON?

The National Education Opportunities Network (NEON) was founded in early 2012 as the professional organisation to support those involved in widening access to higher education (HE) and social mobility.

At the heart of NEON is a cross-sector approach bringing together HE institutions, schools, colleges, the voluntary sector, professional bodies and employers.

NEON grew from the need for a strong, coherent community of professionals that could support learners from under-represented backgrounds to both enter and succeed within HE. NEON is shaped and led by its members.

Vision

Access to and success in higher education should not be related to social background but based on ability and willingness to participate.

Aim

To empower and enable those with a commitment to widening access to HE to affect change in their institutions and communities.

Since NEON was formed over 4000 people have attended NEON events.

Objectives

Development

To increase the professionalisation of widening access work through the development and accreditation of practice.

Resources

To be a research and advocacy resource for those working in access at the local, regional and national level.

Quality

To develop and enhance practice and quality in widening access work throughout the student lifecycle.

Support

To offer input and support to policymakers and government from the widening access community.

81

NEON member organisations

900

Individuals in NEON's network

36

NEON events in 2017-18

A person is seen from the back, holding a tablet and speaking into a microphone. They are addressing a group of people seated in a conference room. The room has patterned wallpaper and a chandelier. A network diagram with circular nodes and connecting lines is overlaid on the image. The text 'Changing practices' is written in large white letters on the left side.

Changing practices

NEON Programmes

Over 1000 delegates attended NEON events in 2017-18



NEON Summits

Our summits are the leading one day conferences in the sector focused on the needs of the widening access community and delivered at a cost-effective rate. We bring together experts from strategy, policy and practice to address the key issues in widening access, participation and success in HE.

NEON summits also feature:

- real examples of leading practice
- new research often produced by NEON
- opportunities to learn from colleagues from a range of organisations

‘The Summit... helped to consolidate various thoughts I have had about my role. It has encouraged me to question current WP incentives and practices and to look at the ‘lifecycle’ of students once at university. Networking opportunities were paramount.’



NEON Summer Symposium

The Summer Symposium is the largest annual event focused on widening access to HE in the UK, attracting nearly 250 delegates each year. Recent keynote speakers have included the Shadow Minister for Further & Higher Education, the NUS, Association of Colleges, Institute of Graduate Employers, Office for Students and the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI). Since 2012 there have been over 150 papers presented at the Symposium, and the papers at the 2019 Symposium held at Lancaster University, will feature in the second NEON book to be published in 2020.

‘NEON events have allowed us to develop a bank of resources in widening access – allowing members to discover how others are developing their work. NEON’s online resources include keynote speeches, with over 150 presentations available online.’

NEON Programmes



Access Academy

NEON's Access Academy focuses on the professionalisation of widening access work via skills development. Academy sessions are interactive training days limited to 30 participants led by experts in the field of widening access, education and HE. Since 2015 there have been over 500 participants in Access Academy events.

Topics for 2018-19 include:

- Planning and delivering an effective summer school
- IAG Skills for WP Practitioners
- Establishing an effective mentoring scheme

'... I found the mixture of research, policy and practical information and sharing was really useful. Lots of information to take in and take back to my institution.'

Delegate from a NEON's Access Academy training day.



NEON Awards

Put your institution forward as a leader in widening access to higher education and social mobility by participating exclusively in the greatly anticipated NEON Awards. The Awards are now in their 6th year with the reception hosted at the Palace of Westminster. Categories include widening access HEI of the year, school/college of the year, best outreach and success/retention initiatives and the coveted student of the year award.

The transformative power that HE can have on the lives of its learners is best captured by widening access work and the awards aims to celebrate this.

NEON Programmes



NEON Working Groups

NEON Working Groups are a network of national communities of practice bringing together members to shape their work collaboratively exchanging knowledge, sharing practice and developing materials and resources that help all members make a difference. All members are updated about their progress via our website and our weekly newsletter, NEON News.

The following Working Groups meet four times a year and members benefit from FREE participation in these national communities.

- Access and outreach for disabled learners
- Mentoring to widen access
- Addressing differential outcomes for BME learners
- Supporting BTEC students
- Outreach for primary age learners
- Establishing evidence and measuring impact
- Widening access for mature learners
- Widening access for refugees and asylum-seekers
- Students Unions and widening access



Supporting NCOP

NEON will continue to work closely with the National Collaborative Outreach Project (NCOP) consortia in 2018-19. We have delivered bespoke training to 5 different partnerships, and are working with over 25 schools via the NEON 'Schools for HE' programme that is using a data led approach to understand how schools can integrate HE progression work into learning and teaching across the school. We will also be convening another national event to bring NCOP practitioners together, and helping consortia contribute to the shaping of NCOP into a next phase after 2018-19.

A woman with dark hair, wearing a light-colored top and a name tag, stands at a podium holding a microphone. She is addressing an audience. In the foreground, the backs of several audience members' heads and shoulders are visible. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. A network diagram consisting of white circles connected by thin white lines is superimposed on the image. The text 'Changing policy' is written in large, white, sans-serif font on the left side of the image.

Changing policy

NEON's work

NEON is the premier membership based organisation advocating for policies which support greater diversity in the student population. NEON has nurtured close relationships with policymakers and produced a number of influential research reports. These include:

The 'Does Cost Matter' series — over 3 years in excess of 3000 young people were surveyed on the impact that the student finance regime was having on their HE choices. The series received extensive coverage:

'more recently the National Education Opportunities Network (NEON) have consistently been advocates for earlier intervention by the HE sector with targeted groups of young people, encounters that can play a vital role in sparking aspiration for their futures post 18.'

The Independent - Gordon Marsden MP, Shadow Minister for Higher Education, Further Education and Skills - August 2018

'Evidence from the National Educational Opportunities Network suggests that fears about the cost of living are preventing some university applicants from selecting their ideal choice of university or course.'

The Guardian, May 2018

Our latest research, '**The financial concerns of students**', conducted for Universities UK by NEON and Portland Communications, released at a parliamentary roundtable in June 2018, found that the available information on tuition fees and the student loan system in England is often inaccessible and unclear, and that students want more information on how universities spend tuition fee income.

Over 2018-19 NEON will be increasing its research and advocacy work focusing on:

- Developing with UUK and other stakeholders a student finance advisory group
- A national survey of HE providers looking at the progress made in addressing inequalities in participation for white working class communities
- In-depth analysis of how schools can integrate HE progression into the organisation
- Research into widening access student lifecycle strategies amongst our members
- Launching the NEON Widening Access Scorecard
- International research on what works in widening access

By joining NEON you are providing your organisation with a unique chance to shape policy and the widening access research agenda.

'As the evidence submission from NEON stated... such differences do not imply that working class people lack aspirations, either for themselves or their children.'

Class Dismissed - The Poverty Commission Report
NUS - April 2018

The background of the page features a blurred photograph of a group of people in a meeting or classroom setting. Overlaid on this image is a network diagram consisting of several circular nodes connected by thin lines, creating a web-like structure. The overall color palette is a warm, monochromatic orange.

Be a part of NEON

Under the current fees system, any English university wishing to charge tuition fees of over £6,000 must have an 'access agreement' approved by the new higher education regulator. Universities must submit annual plans setting out how they intend to recruit and retain the number of students from traditionally under-represented groups, including BME students and those from deprived backgrounds.

Join NEON

Be part of NEON and show your institution's commitment to widening access.

All NEON members receive



25% off all events including:

Access Academy Training
NEON Summits
NEON Summer Symposium



Unique opportunity to be part of NEON's research



Weekly updates on the widening access landscape via NEON News



Discounted attendance at events with NEON partners



EXCLUSIVE participation in the NEON Awards



FREE participation in NEON resources including:

NEON presentations
NEON best practice guides
NEON Working Group materials



FREE attendance at any of our NEON Working Groups:

Access and Outreach for Disabled Learners
Establishing Evidence and Measuring Impact
Mentoring to Widen Access
Widening Access for mature learners
Outreach for Primary school learners
Addressing Differential Outcomes for BME Learners
Widening Access for Refugees and Asylum-Seekers
Supporting BTEC Students
Student Unions and Widening Participation

Types of membership

Higher Education Institution

Membership

£490 per annum

Premium Membership

£800 per annum

Further Education College

Membership

£390 per annum

Premium Membership

£720 per annum

Charity / Voluntary Org / Partnership

Membership

£330 per annum

Premium Membership

£670 per annum

Premium Membership includes an additional 3 NEON event credits – worth £149 each.

Private Sector Organisation

Membership

£660 per annum

Local Authority

Membership

£330 per annum

School / Sixth Form College / Students Unions

FREE Membership

Upcoming NEON Events

For information on NEON events visit: educationopportunities.co.uk

2018

Sep

24 **Labour Party Conference**
NEON fringe event

Oct

2 **Conservative Party Conference**
NEON fringe event

24 **Planning and delivering an effective summer school**
Access Academy Training

Nov

16 **IAG Skills for WP Practitioners**
Access Academy Training

Dec

3 **Engaging with key influencers – models of best practice**
NEON Summit

4 **Establishing an effective mentoring scheme**
Access Academy Training

2019

Jan

23 **Evaluating Outreach Work**
Access Academy Training

30 **Addressing attainment gaps in HE: What can be done?**
NEON Summit

Feb

26 **Evaluating Outreach Work**
Access Academy Training

tbc **Access to Higher Education, white young people and social class: Are we making any progress?**
NEON Summit

Mar

20 **Evaluating Outreach Work**
Access Academy Training

tbc **Widening access to HE for HE admissions professionals**
NEON Summit

tbc **Developing effective access and participation plans - meeting the requirements of the OFS and meeting the need of students**
NEON Summit

Apr

tbc **Access to Higher Education for Academic Staff**
Access Academy Training

May

1 **Evaluating Outreach Work**
Access Academy Training

tbc **NEON Awards**

tbc **The future of student finance**
NEON Summit

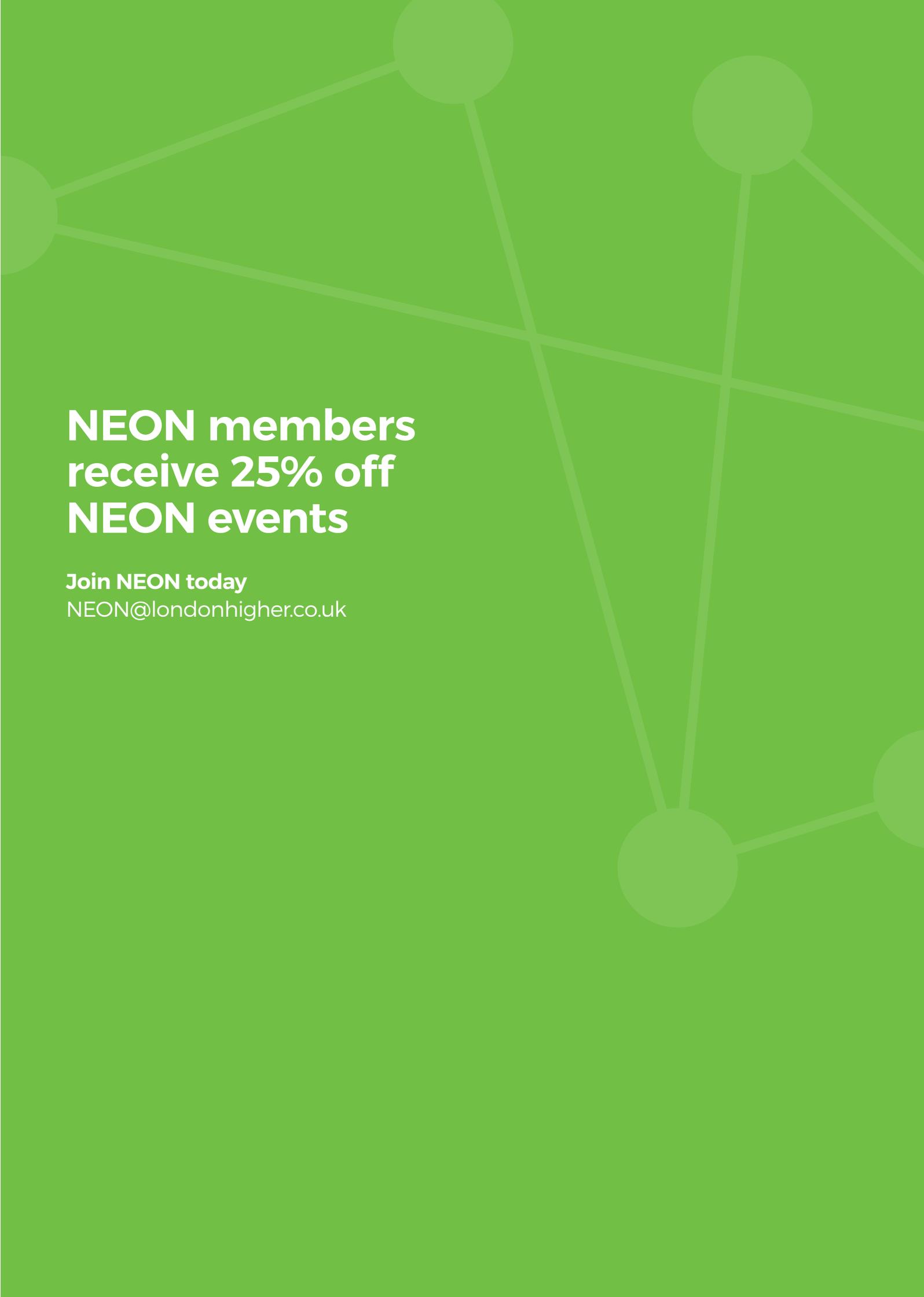
Jun

tbc **How can schools support HE progression?**
NEON Summit

13 & 14 **NEON Summer Symposium 2019**
The third age of widening access

Jul

tbc **Ensuring a successful transition to higher education**
NEON Summit



NEON members receive 25% off NEON events

Join NEON today
NEON@londonhigher.co.uk



'NEON provides the opportunity to learn about the work taking place nationally. Discuss what does and doesn't work – and reassures you that you're not on your own.'

Delegate at a NEON event

Join NEON today
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educationopportunities.co.uk

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