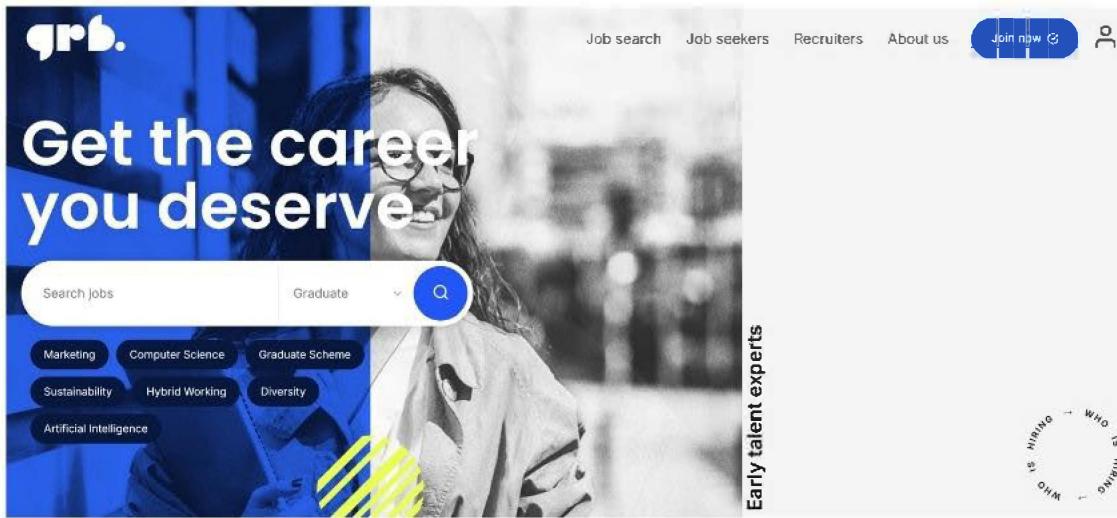


A hand is shown placing a wooden block onto a staircase-like arrangement of other wooden blocks on a teal background. The blocks are light-colored wood with visible grain. The staircase starts from the bottom left and goes up towards the top right. The hand is positioned at the top left, with the index finger pointing down towards the blocks.

OU SCHOOL
FOR LIFE

RESOURCES

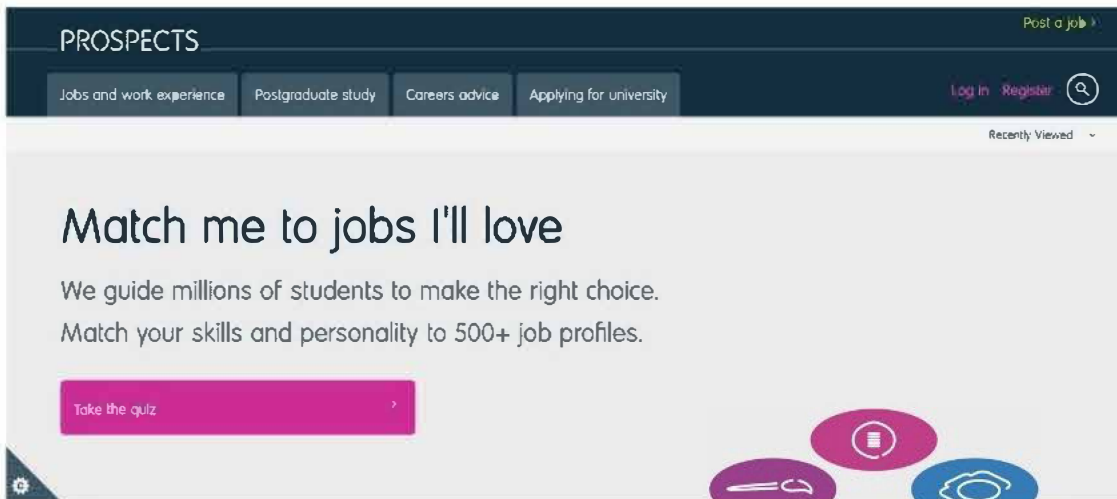
**First Steps: A guide to
starting your career**



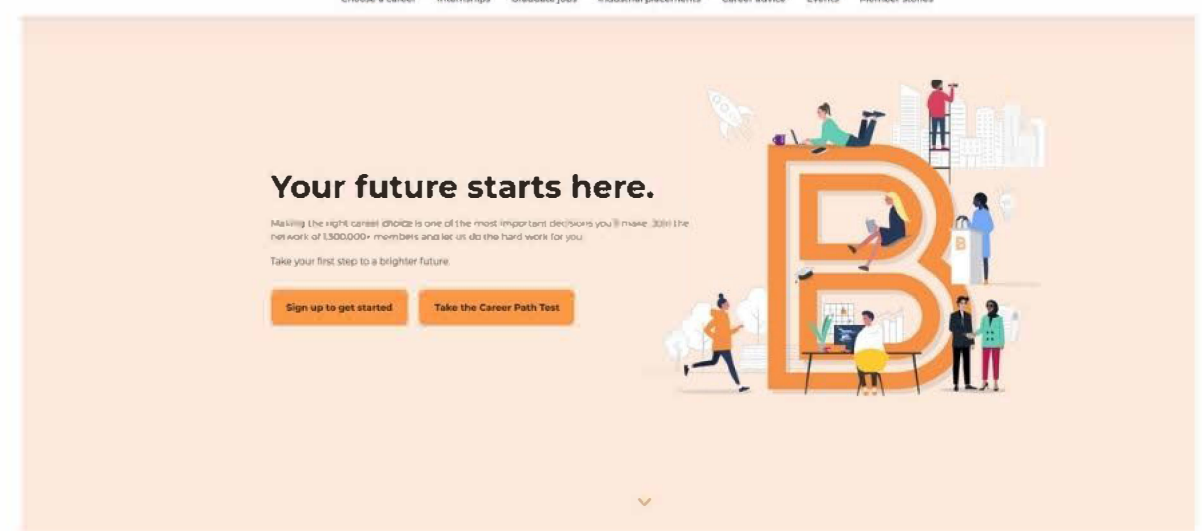
<https://www.grb.uk.com>



<https://www.theforage.com>

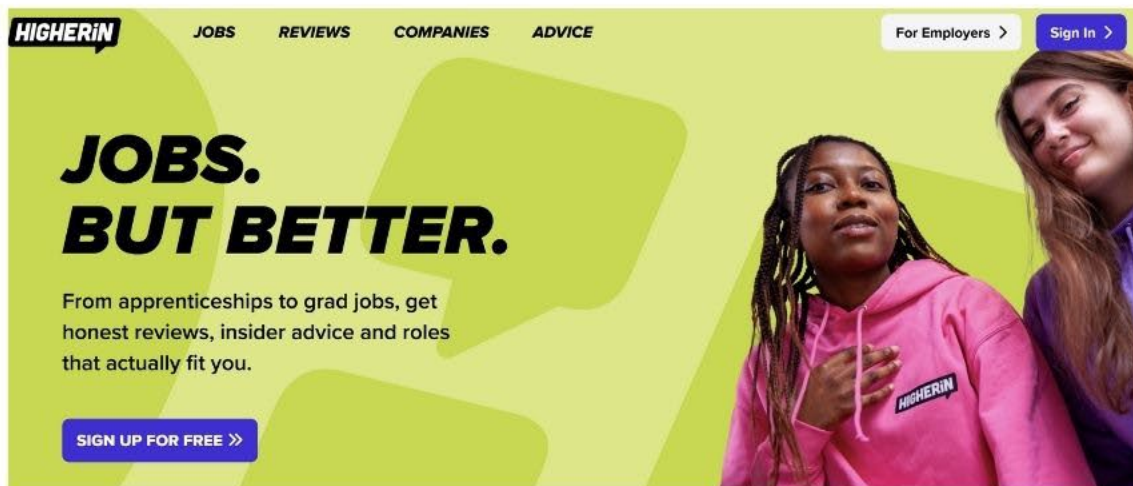


<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/>

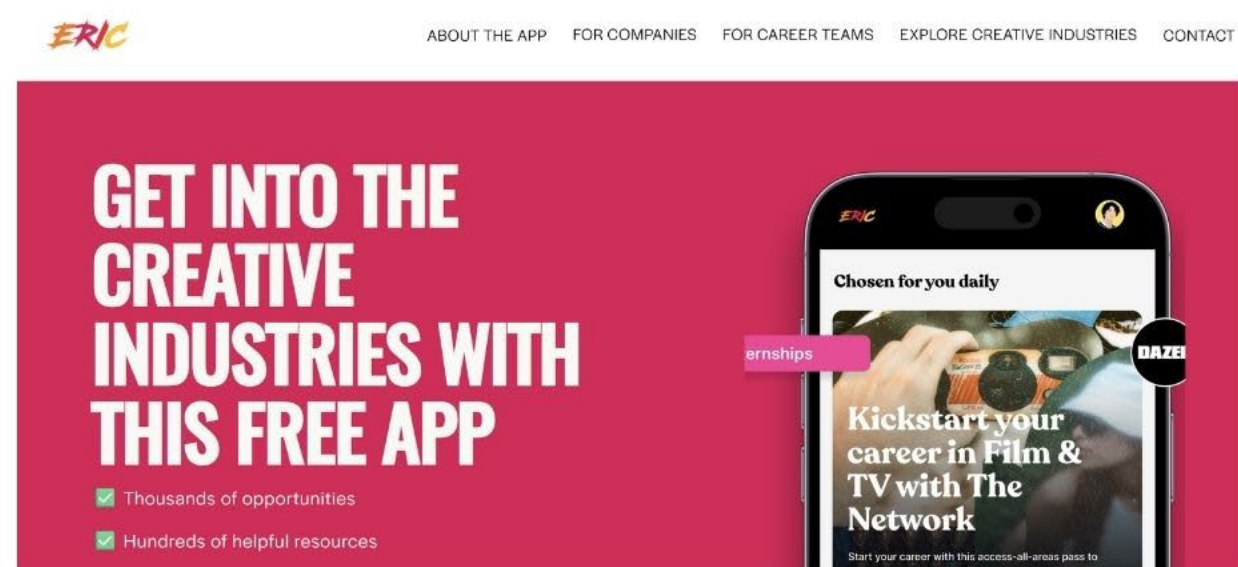


<https://www.brightnetwork.co.uk>

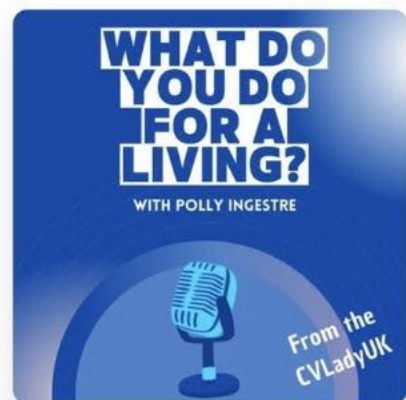
Job searching



<https://higherin.com>



<https://www.meet-eric.com/>



What Do You Do For A Living?

Polly Ingestre

★ 5.0 (12) · BUSINESS ·

Polly Ingestre (a.k.a CVLadyUK) talks to people from all walks of life, exploring a range of different professions, their journey into the workplace and lessons learnt along the way....

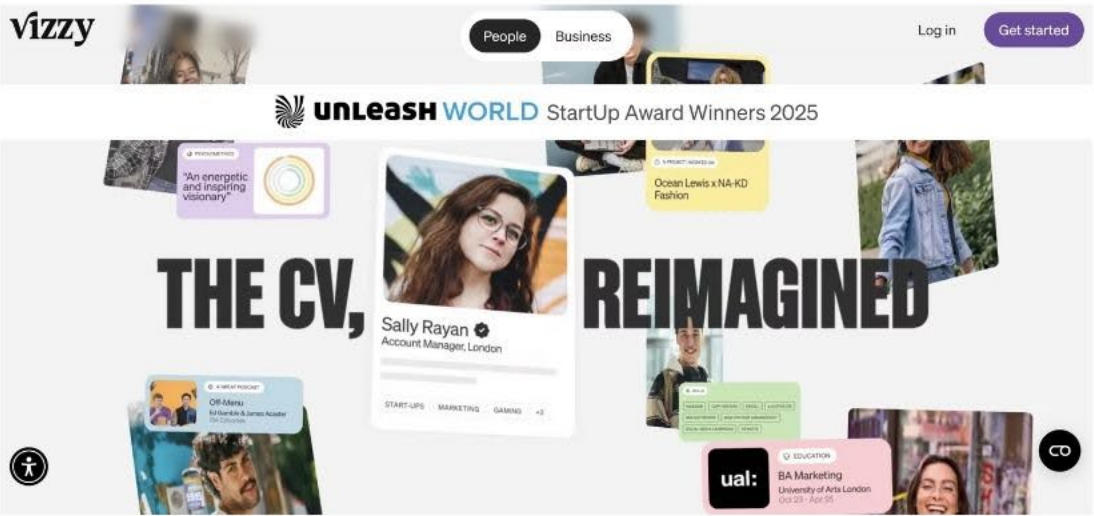
MORE

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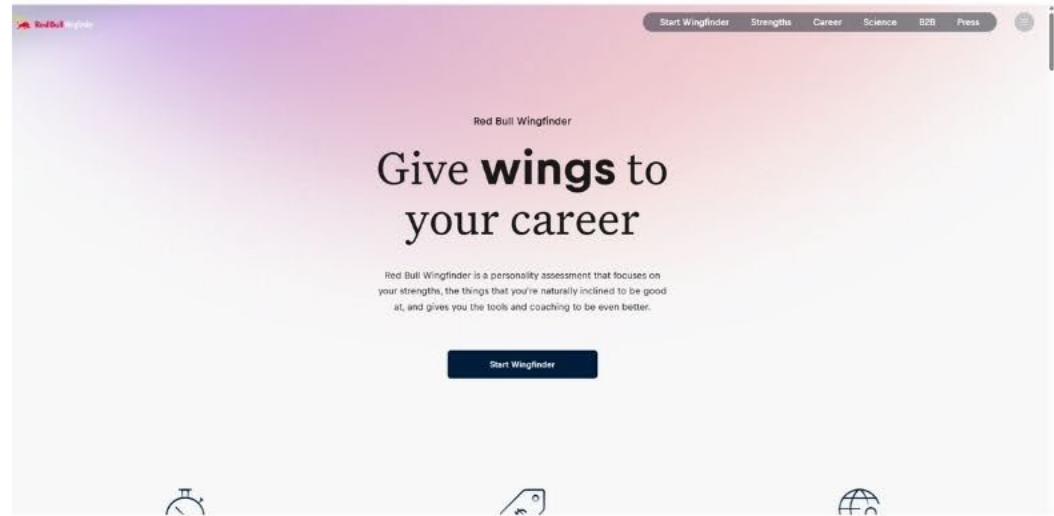
<https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/what-do-you-do-for-a-living/id1774746946>



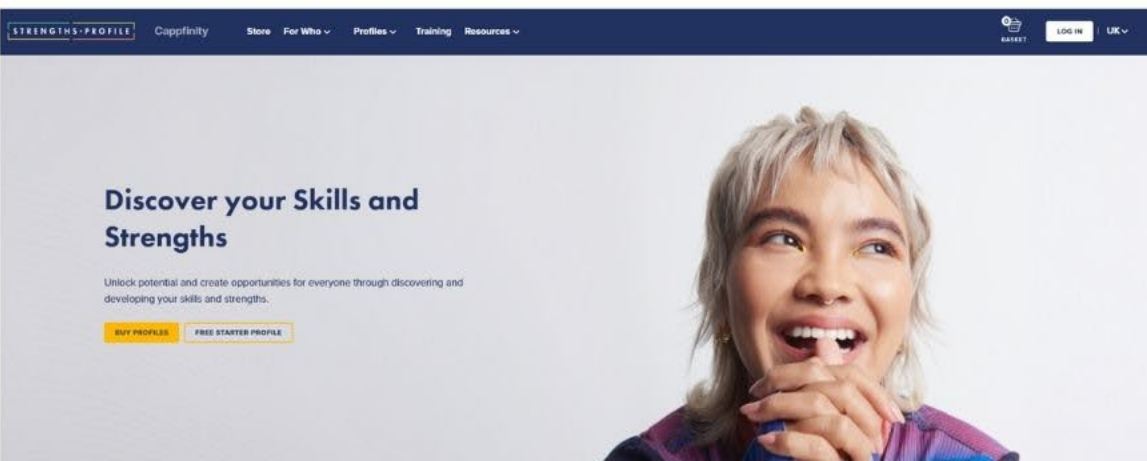
Job searching



<https://vizzy.com>

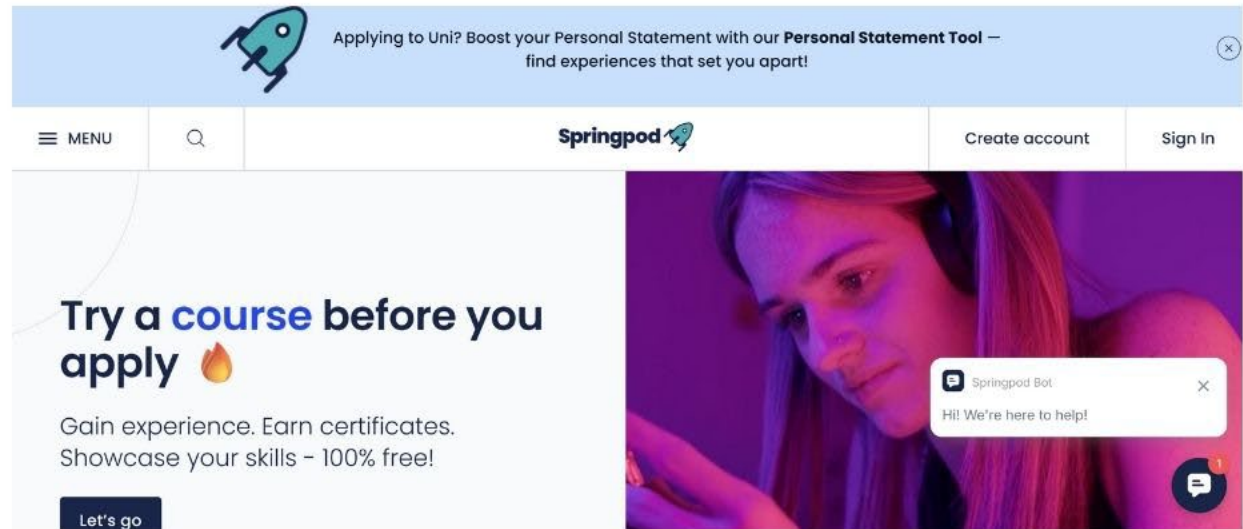


<https://redbull.com/int-en/wingfinder>



Discover the Right Profile for You

<https://strengthsprofile.com>



<https://www.brightnetwork.co.uk>

Understanding and Presenting yourself

Prompts that you can use AI to help you with

For Career Exploration & Direction

- "What careers align with someone who enjoys [your interests/strengths]?"
- "What's the day-to-day reality of working as a [role you're curious about]?"
- "What are emerging fields in [industry] that might be good for recent graduates?"
- "I'm torn between [X] and [Y] career paths - help me think through the tradeoffs"

For Interview Prep

- "Give me common interview questions for [role] and help me craft strong answers"
- "I have an interview at [company] - what should I research and prepare?"
- "Let's do a mock interview for [position]"
- "How do I explain [gap/weakness/concern] in interviews?"

For Job Search Strategy

- "What entry-level roles should I target if I want to eventually work in [your goal]?"
- "How do people typically break into [industry] without direct experience?"
- "What companies are known for strong graduate programs in [field]?"
- "Help me create a job search plan for the next 3 months"

For Skills & Development

- "What skills are most valuable for breaking into [field]?"
- "Suggest a 3-month learning plan to make me competitive for [role]"
- "What certifications or courses would strengthen my candidacy?"

For Application Materials

Share your resume/CV for feedback and refinement

- "Help me write a cover letter for [specific role/company]"
- "How can I frame [this experience] to be relevant for [that role]?"
- "What stories from my background best demonstrate [skill they want]?"

For Networking & Outreach

- "Help me write a LinkedIn message to reach out to [person/role]"
- "What questions should I ask in an informational interview about [career]?"
- "How do I follow up after [networking event/interview]?"

Remember you want it to reflect you - don't ever just cut and paste!

JUN - AUG

Summer Prep

Research careers, update CV. Banking applications may open in August.

SEP - OCT

Peak Season Opens

CRITICAL: Most programmes open. Apply immediately for best chances.

OCT - NOV

First Wave Deadlines

Banking & consulting close early. Most competitive roles fill fast.

DEC - JAN

Main Deadlines

Final chance for most programmes. Apply by Christmas to maximize success.

JAN - FEB

Assessments Begin

Psychometric tests, video interviews, first-round assessments start.

MAR - APR

Assessment Centres

Final interviews and assessment centres. Some late schemes still open.

APR - JUN

Offers Made

Graduate scheme offers sent out. Remaining vacancies still available.

SEP - OCT

Programmes Start

Most graduate schemes and internships begin. Your career starts here!

Key Tips for Success

- ✓ **Apply Early:** 55% of top employers use rolling recruitment - positions fill before official deadlines
- ✓ **September-January is Critical:** This is your main application window for final year students
- ✓ **Investment Banking Opens Earlier:** Often August-October deadlines, much earlier than other sectors
- ✓ **Law Has Separate Timelines:** Solicitors and barristers follow different recruitment schedules
- ✓ **Don't Wait for Deadlines:** Even "open" applications close once quota is met
- ✓ **Start in Summer:** Use the summer before final year to prepare CVs and research employers
- ✓ **Rolling Deadlines ≠ All Year:** While 55% have "ongoing" recruitment, most expect applications by Christmas
- ✓ **Can Apply After Graduation:** You can still apply to graduate schemes after finishing your degree

Rough timelines for applications