Nuclear Skills Plan

ATTRACT ◦ RETAIN ◦ ENABLE





Inspiring the next generation to choose nuclear careers

Daniel Cooper / UK Government – Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

THE NUCLEAR WORKFORCE

The UK has ambitious targets for growth in the nuclear sector, across civil and defence, to deliver a resilient future energy system, maintain national security, and boost economic prosperity.

96,000

Current nuclear workforce number across civil and defence*

24,000

Number of new roles to be filled in the sector by 2030*

22%

Of the nuclear workforce is female*

31%

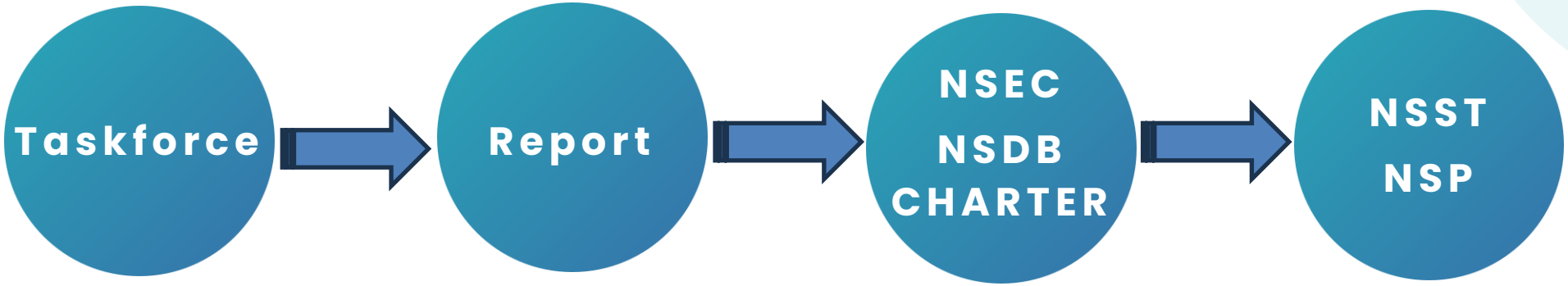
Of the nuclear workforce are over the age of 50 *

*Data taken from the Nuclear Workforce Assessment 2024

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SOLVING A PROBLEM

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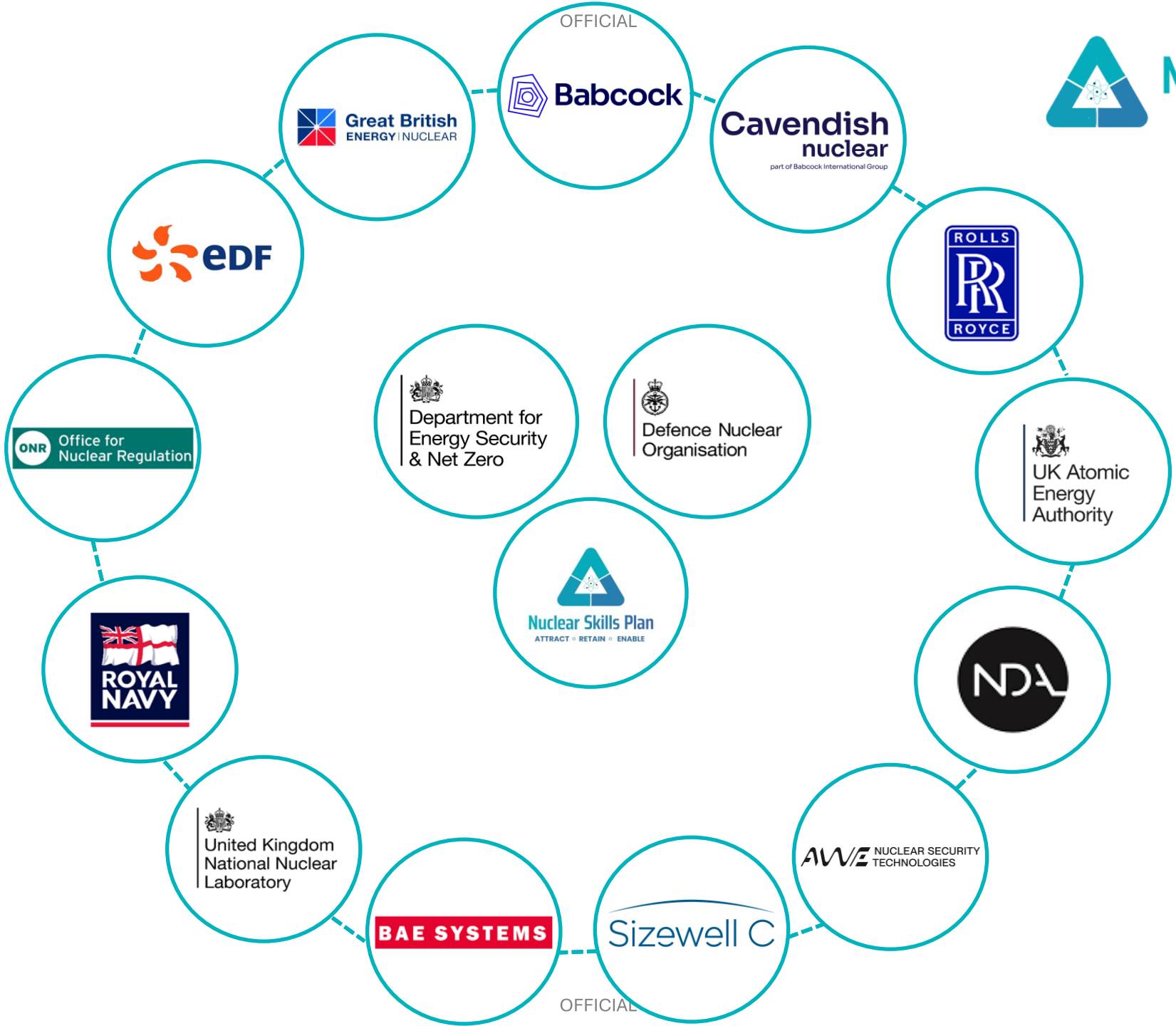
Is there a problem? What does the sector need to do to meet its nuclear ambitions?

Scale of the problem
83k to 123k people by 2030
+
What to focus on
Attract
Retain
Enable

Guiding Coalition
+
Governance
+
Behaviours

Project Team
+
Nuclear Skills Plan (NSP)
+
Targets

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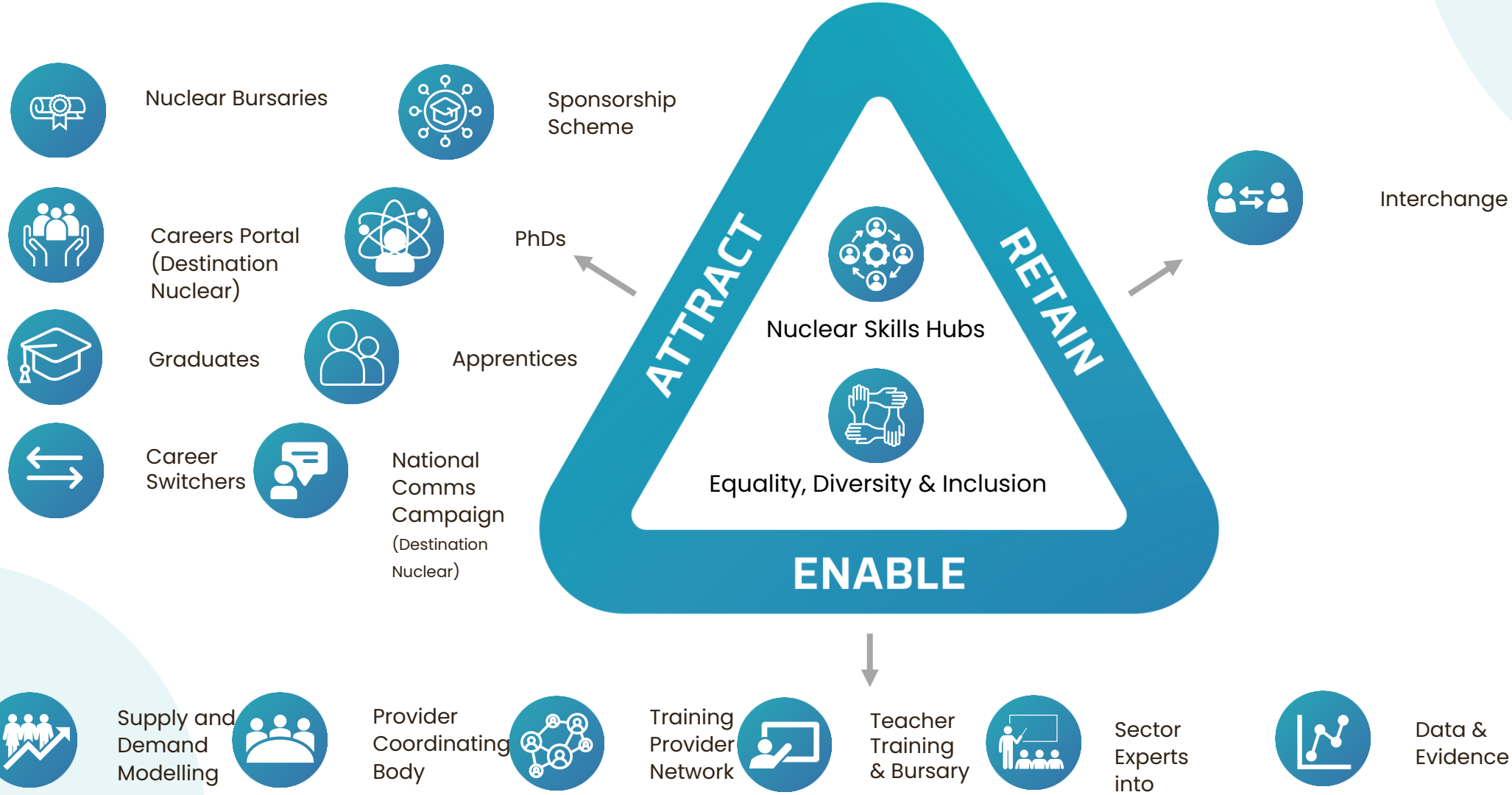
“Together, we will build the nation’s capability for the nuclear sector by growing a diverse and inclusive workforce that is motivated, recognised and inspired, in order to deliver the UK’s priorities for national security and energy resilience.”

The Nuclear Skills Charter

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NUCLEAR SKILLS PLAN
OBJECTIVES BY PROJECT

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OBJECTIVES BY PROJECT: ATTRACT

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Sponsorship Scheme

Nuclear Bursaries

PhDs

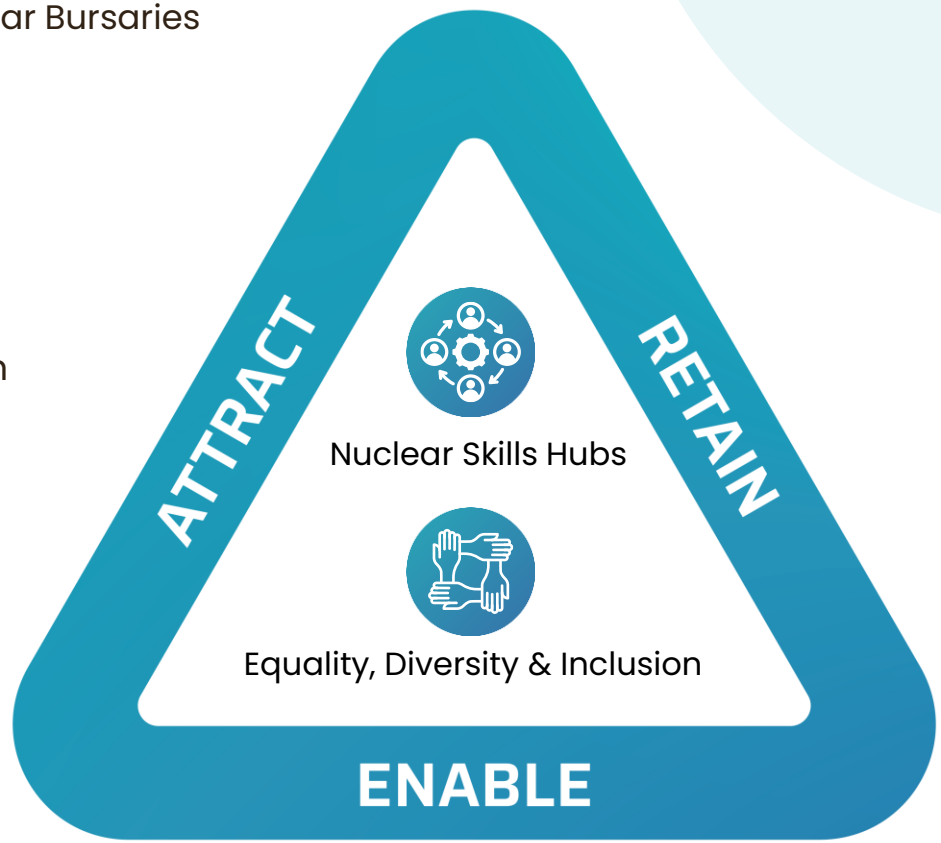
Careers Portal (Destination Nuclear)

Apprentices

Graduates

National Comms Campaign (Destination Nuclear)

Career Switchers



ATTRACTING TALENT



APPRENTICES & GRADUATES

- To meet sector demand, we are increasing pathways into nuclear careers.
- Between FY2024/25 and FY2025/26 NSEC organisations recruited over 2,000 Graduates and 4,000 apprentices.
- Additional sponsorships, bursaries, and internships are already providing financial and professional support for aspiring nuclear professionals.

NUCLEAR BURSARIES

- Launched in 2025, the Nuclear Bursary scheme provides cost of living support to graduates from lower socio-economic backgrounds.
- In FY2024/25, 33 bursaries were awarded, with plans to issue 20-30 more in FY2025/26 to meet demand for critical skills.

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ATTRACTING TALENT



CAREER SWITCHERS

- We have launched training programmes for mid-career entrants, particularly in critical engineering professions.
- Following the successful rollout of Radiation Protection and Project Planning Controls programmes in 2024, we will expand the programme in 2025 to include Engineering, Welding and Safety Case courses.
- These programmes will directly address the 11 critical skills gaps across the sector.
- We will also broaden this workstream out to consider how we recruit, train and retain, people both within and outside of the nuclear sector.

NUCLEAR SPONSORSHIP SCHEME

- Launched in 2024, the Nuclear Sponsorship scheme has supported 49 sponsorship students from lower socio-economic backgrounds in its first 2 cohorts.
- Sponsored by employers, students receive a fully funded degree, summer placements, additional bursaries, and a guaranteed job upon graduation.
- This year, 10 students will be sponsored.

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DESTINATION NUCLEAR

Destination Nuclear is a 6 year comms campaign to attract and retain a skilled workforce for the nuclear sector.

Over the next 12 months, the campaign will continue its reach through television, radio, and digital gaming platforms, raising awareness of nuclear careers to a range of audiences.

The careers portal will continue to develop new features to better connect candidates with opportunities and is expanding into the nuclear supply chain to increase the range of roles available.

Impact as of 1st August 2026

473,000
Positions viewed on the portal

64,000
Clicks on APPLY

27,000
Job adverts closed





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SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS



- The deep science and engineering skills base that underpins our nuclear capability is fragile, with a high percentage of the existing workforce of highly qualified Subject Matter Experts set to retire over the next decade.
- PhD graduates were identified to fast track the next generation of subject matter/technical experts.
- The Nuclear Skills Plan set an ambitious aim to quadruple cohort-based PhD training output.

Progress to date:

2024 – 2025

- £2.9million additional Government investment in nuclear fission PhDs, funding an additional 21 PhD studentships

2025 – 2026

- £5.1m secured through the Nuclear Skills Plan to support two existing nuclear Centre's for Doctoral Training, SATURN, and Nuclear Energy Futures, supporting an additional 55 PhD students.

2026/27 – 2029/30

- £65.6 million was awarded in March for a bespoke nuclear Doctoral Focal Award, match-funded by industry and delivered through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). The investment will support to seven new doctoral training programmes.
- Over the next four academic intakes, these programmes will train more than 500 doctoral students at universities across the country.

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Resources

Follow the Nuclear Skills Plan LinkedIn page for updates and events

Visit the nuclearskillsplan.com website



Promote and support Destination Nuclear

Promote apps, grads and career opportunities on the Destination Nuclear portal

ANY QUESTIONS?



THANK YOU



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