



Report Presented to:

Manchester City Council

Economic Scrutiny Committee

Date: 22nd June 2016

Rose Marley, CEO, SharpFutures

0161 282 8380

www.sharpfutures.org.uk

rose.marley@sharpfutures.org.uk

We **SEED** ideas through workshops and services for education and learning.

From creating hands-on experiences with different technologies and disciplines to inspirational talks and have-a-go sessions, SharpFutures provides valuable insights into a range of different careers across the Creative Digital sector. Our aim is to capture the imaginations of young people and new entrants to the sector, and to inspire them as the next generation of talent.



The **'Discover'** programme offers schools, students, businesses and community groups the opportunity to experience MCC assets The Sharp Project and The Space Project first-hand. Packages are bespoke, and range from tours and experience days to large-scale events. With up-close access to pioneering creative digital businesses, and benefitting from a first class network of experts across the The Sharp Project and The Space Project and the wider sector. The aim of the programme is to broaden participants' aspirations and unlock their potential through providing unparalleled tasters and career insights into the Creative Digital sector.



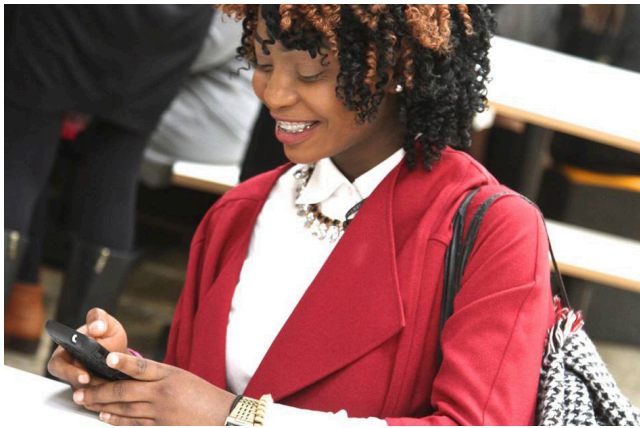
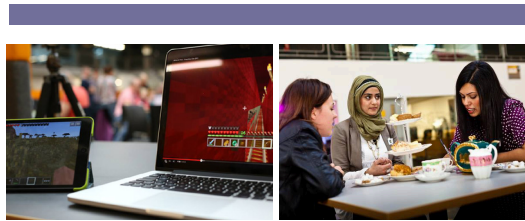
It is significantly important to note that digital skills in isolation are too narrow for the school space and can be negative for some when just presented as 'coding' or software development alone, as they are inherently maths and science based. The Creative Digital sector covers a broader spectrum and SharpFutures 'Discover Dojos' take into account all aspects of the sector and can be tailored to the age group or interests of the visit.



So for example, there is limited value to a person possessing all the technical know-how for digital marketing if they do not understand the basic principles of marketing. Similarly, if we grow an army of coders but no story tellers, project managers, videographers, content makers and entrepreneurs the developers would have nothing to develop.

SharpFutures to date has delivered:

- 60 secondary school visits to The Sharp project.
- 814 secondary school pupils inspired.
- 30 CoderDojos for age 05-18 year olds with over 1000 attendees.
- 400 women attending International Women's Day events based on digital.
- 62 tours of The Sharp Project.
- 10 open days, schools tours and careers days at The Space Project.
- 5 bespoke primary school visits.



DISCOVER QUOTES



The day was very informative - it gave the students good ideas as to what they would like to do in the future.

- Debra Cornick, Cedar Mount



I thought today's trip to The Sharp Project was educational and exciting. I learnt a lot from the four lessons we were taught.

- Romano, The East Manchester Academy.



I enjoyed the whole day today and I learned to create a game and a video which was really fun. I hope to see myself here in a few years because this place is really nice..

- Alex, Cedar Mount



The pupil's learned about the different set up of businesses, freelancers, and the different uses of technology for organisations. it all worked well

- Judith Godfrey, Careers Advisor, Co-op Acadamey



// I loved the session I attended on starting your own online business – I was so inspired I spent the evening coming up with ideas of things I could sell on my website
Charli, Manchester

// Goose bumps all the way through both the #WomenChangeMCR films at @sharpproject

@Social_Lauren

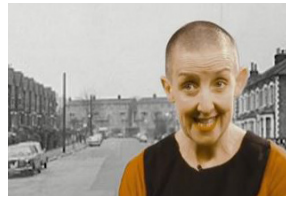
// So inspirational to hear from the young ladies in the room who've been nominated to take part in #WomenChangeMCR @SharpFutures. #IWD2016

@SandyLindsay

// Still feeling inspired from #womenchangemcr @sharpfutures @sharpproject ! Already found 2 projects in the space of a week! Bring it!

@TeonaTalks

// I enjoyed all the sessions that Digital Teapot offered and it was fantastically put together, as the day unfolded I knew I wanted to pursue a career in social media marketing
Lisa, Manchester



We **NURTURE** the best potential talent we find through employment opportunities and real work experience.

SharpFutures POD is a pool of entry level, eager to gain experience, new entrants with the ability to provide flexible capacity and support to fledgling and fast growing businesses in the creative digital sector.

From apprentices, work experience placements, job seekers and volunteers POD members are recruited and retained on their desire to develop sector relevant skills, SharpFutures POD offers clients the opportunity to bring on board temporary support staff, whilst also playing a valuable part in young people's career development.

SharpFutures recognises that if young people have the right attitude and aptitude for the sector, whether it be through informal education or apprenticeships, if they demonstrate potential and ability, but lack the means or networks to access or develop in the sector on their own then a pathway should be available.

POD members demonstrate four key components that are suited well to the Creative Digital Sector:

- Adaptability
- Fast Learning
- Attention to detail
- Reliability



CASE STUDIES

Full case studies can be provided on request but a short synopsis on some POD members that are successfully developing their career through SharpFutures POD membership:

Martin McGreal 21 Moston



Martin was in the first ever schools tour of The Sharp Project in 2009 whilst a pupil at MCMA and when The Sharp Project was still a building site.

He was inspired by the visit and went on to work experience with SharpFutures which inspired him to apply for a Film Production degree at Salford University. While continuing his degree he is a valuable member of the POD team and regularly booked as a runner at The Space Project whose clients include Dragons Den (BBC), Rovers (SKY), Cold Feet (ITV and a host of other Creative Digital clients.

“Many thanks for SharpFutures’ provision of our additional daily floor runners. The folks we have had are absolutely top class and our AD team are very keen to work with them again on future productions.

The flexibility and quality you offer, especially with the silly short amounts of notice we usually offer, is greatly appreciated and makes my life a lot easier and helps keep things moving quickly and smoothly on set. I look forward to making much more use of your services in future.”

Mark Devlin, BBC/Sky Line Producer

As Martin is in full time education he is not eligible for an apprenticeship or any form of full time work placement so the POD system allows him to cherry pick his hours to suit his course and gain experience and wages at the same time.

CASE STUDIES

Lewis Marsh 20 Miles Platting



Twenty year old Lewis was discovered through SharpFutures' outreach work with West Gorton Youth Project. Lewis joined the SharpFutures apprenticeship team as a front of house 'runner' predominantly based at The Space Project due to the close proximity to his house.

However, Lewis displayed an intense passion and creative flair for graphic design, photography and video content throughout his first year with SharpFutures.

After developing his fledgling skills in his final year at college and becoming a Digital Runner, he has created many of the branded site maps and promotional posters for The Sharp Project and The Space Project, as well as acting as photographer and videographer for a number of SharpFutures events. Lewis is a huge asset to the team and a significant member of the SharpFutures POD.

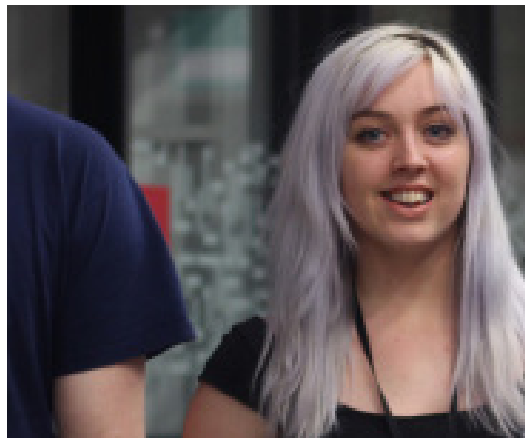
Lacie Houghton 20 Hulme

Lacie joined SharpFutures through a Creative Skillset supported initiative to support more young people entering the sector for a fully paid three month work experience in which SharpFutures specialises in non-accredited, master class learning delivered via industry professionals.

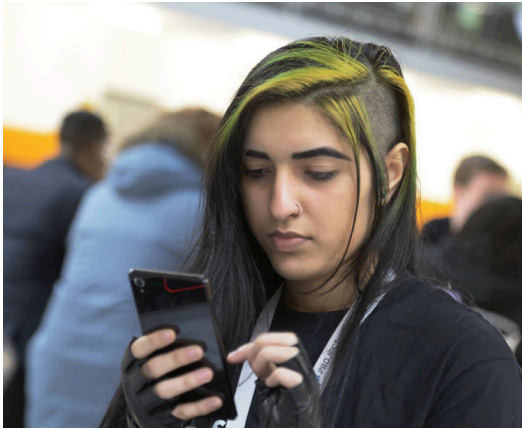
SharpFutures alongside Creative Skillset have developed these placements successfully in Social Media and Digital Marketing, Videography and Content Marketing and App Development.

Lacie joined the social media placement in March 2016 and has increased her learning three-fold. She is currently delivering social media for the European Youth Capital Initiative through Manchester Council through the POD service and recently completed a pitch for digital business 'Aequitas'.

We expect Lacie to successfully continue to gain experience and opportunity through POD and to eventually gain full time employment.



CASE STUDIES



Aleena Sharrif 20 Cheetham Hill

Having completed a level 3 with the Playground Squad Aleena wanted to broaden her skills from gaming when she was unable to access work after the Playground Squad Apprenticeship.

She joined the SharpFutures team as a full time apprentice in digital marketing and delivers all the social media for The Sharp Project, The Space Project and SharpFutures.

She is a critical team member on a full time wage and is occasionally booked through POD to offer her expertise and broad experience, for example to JD Sports social media team.

Aleena also regularly attends and supports HIVE initiatives so that she can volunteer at Coder Dojo.

“SharpFutures not only introduced us to the client to make an app but also supported the capacity for Touchsoft to deliver to the client through the POD service. We could not have delivered this app without SharpFutures beyond doubt.”

Richard Wylie, MD of Touchsoft

“I met Lewis on the production of Tiger Aspect’s ‘Boy Meets Girl’ for BBC and quickly realized what an extraordinary talent he has. He is also polite, courteous and a pleasure to be around.

We have invited him to the Mr Bean animation studio in London and I am very confident this young man will excel in his career with SharpFutures and beyond.”

Iain McCallum, Tiger Aspect

GROW

SharpFutures believes that to meet the priority the strategy needs a long term approach starting at primary school with a talent pipeline leading through to trade organisations and business.

Manchester has a unique opportunity to become the standout 'City of Digital Learning' in the UK for three reasons.

1. Devolution – the opportunity to make significant changes in education starting with schools and into young adulthood to create a large volume of interest and greater pool of talent.
2. Manchester, unlike any other council has two significant assets for Creative Digital The Sharp Project and The Space Project which are populated by commercial companies from Sky/BBC/Channel 4/ITV to gaming Companies and tech start-ups. These assets were created in part for the future of our young people and can be utilised to incredible affect across careers guidance.
3. Manchester has heritage and is growing the creative digital sector. We're first off the block (outside London) and can capitalise on this to attract and develop talent to our city.

SharpFutures recognises that if young people have the right attitude and aptitude for the sector, whether it be through informal education or apprenticeships, if they demonstrate potential and ability, but lack the means or networks to access a pathway that should be made available to them.



GROW

Additional Recommendations to support Digital Skills Strategy priority.

As well as supporting the changes in national curriculum to improve digital skills Manchester pupils and students to be given extra advantages by prioritising initiatives including:

PRIORITY 1

“To ensure that there is a pipeline of enthusiastic well skilled young people we need to.”

1. Every school pupil in Manchester to visit and be inspired at least once by The Sharp Project and The Space Project to create greater volume of interest and awareness.
2. Parent Engagement is key.
3. Join up CEIAG through a ‘Digital Skills Passport’ that employers also understand and recognise.

PRIORITY 2

“Increase ‘on the job’ experience for learners at all levels with focus on higher skills.”

1. School work experience programmes co-ordinated across the city rather than ad-hoc.
2. to ensure higher level apprenticeships are connected to employers through work experience.
3. POD (people on demand) working with Universal Credit rolled out across the city / sector to ensure meaningful experience is gained. Supported by Universal Credit a ‘New Deal for Digital’.



“I think the POD scheme in particular is such a new idea. I don’t know whether you have done it elsewhere in the country but it seems like something we could transfer to other industries and other parts of the country.”

Nick Boles, Minister of State for Skills

GROW

PRIORITY 3

“Up-Skill digital workforce including teachers and lecturers.”

1. SMT in primary and secondary schools to attend ‘Discover Dojos’ for teachers dispelling myths, giving confidence, wholly integrating our educators into the process and providing CPD for the City’s educators.

PRIORITY 4

“City of Digital Learning.”

1. We shouldn’t lose the Creative element of Creative Digital.
2. Wholly encompassing – Councillors, Chief execs, Parents, Lord Mayor’s competitions to International Women’s day. Everybody in the city should be aware we are UK’s stand-out city for digital learning.
3. Digital Passport to join up the strategies.

Additional Barriers to access include:

- Employing Millennials brings new challenges.
- Lack of awareness and CEIAG.
- Apprenticeships not always well suited to sector to meet sector requirements (therefore access routes through Universal Credit / POD).
- Existing graduates are currently ruled out of apprenticeships.
- Employers continue to say they cannot find the people they require to run their business/education system and workplace gulf.

Recommendations to grow:

- Invest in Capacity
- Join up the strategy with unifying engagement
- Do more – The Sharp Project and The Space Project