

SharpFutures



ANNUAL REPORT November 2013





Foreword



SharpFutures began life as a voluntary organisation in 2009.

When Sue Woodward first invited us to The Sharp Project, a derelict factory in Newton Heath, and shared her vision for a digital production hub, we knew from that moment we would be going on a very interesting journey.

'I'm building the foundations', Woodward announced in her hi-viz jacket, hard hat and boots from a puddle in the ground. 'And you need to start building the foundations with the community'. With that, SharpFutures was born.

Fast forward to 2012 and after three years of voluntary status SharpFutures was finally in a position to formally set up as a social enterprise and begin trading. We set out some bold objectives in our constitution, namely: to create and sustain careers, to educate, to build capacity from diverse social backgrounds and to produce local economic wealth.

I am incredibly proud of the team to be able to say, we have achieved all of that in our first year of trading.

Over the past 12 months we have faced many challenges, gained incredible insight and knowledge and delivered measurable social impact. Earlier this year The Sharp Project reported an annual GVA impact of £21.4 million via independent research, with SharpFutures cited as a considerable contributor to that achievement, in the same month our first cohort of apprentices reached their 12 month anniversaries as part of their first formative steps along exciting new career paths. These accomplishments and so much more in between, serve to show that the journey we have begun with SharpFutures, is without doubt, one worth pursuing.

Rose Marley, CEO SharpFutures

School activities with SharpFutures voluntary organisation 2009 - 2012





Our aim is to Seed, Nurture & Grow, talent & skills for the Creative Digital sector

This report aims to demonstrate how SharpFutures has delivered on its aims and objectives as outlined in our constitution:

To build the capacity of deprived communities through nurturing, educating and growing talent to enhance and expand the creative and digital sector in the UK.

- To create and sustain careers.
- The advancement of education in Creative and Digital Sectors.
- To build capacity and opportunity across the sector from deprived communities.
- To open access to talent from a wider social background
- To produce local economic wealth and to grow the Creative Digital sector in the UK.

SharpFutures is a Creative Digital Agency that supports young people into employment. As a business, clients include The Sharp Project, NHS Manchester and Jaguar Events. As a social enterprise our aim is to 'seed, nurture and grow' talent and skills for the Creative Digital Sector.

We **SEED** ideas through services for education, we **NURTURE** the best talent we find through employment opportunities and real working experience, and we **GROW** through the sale of our business products and services.

SharpFutures is a Creative Digital Agency that supports young people into employment.

Contents

This Annual Report will detail



1. Context of Delivery



2. Our Services: Seed Nurture and Grow



3. Performance & Evaluation



4. Financial Summary



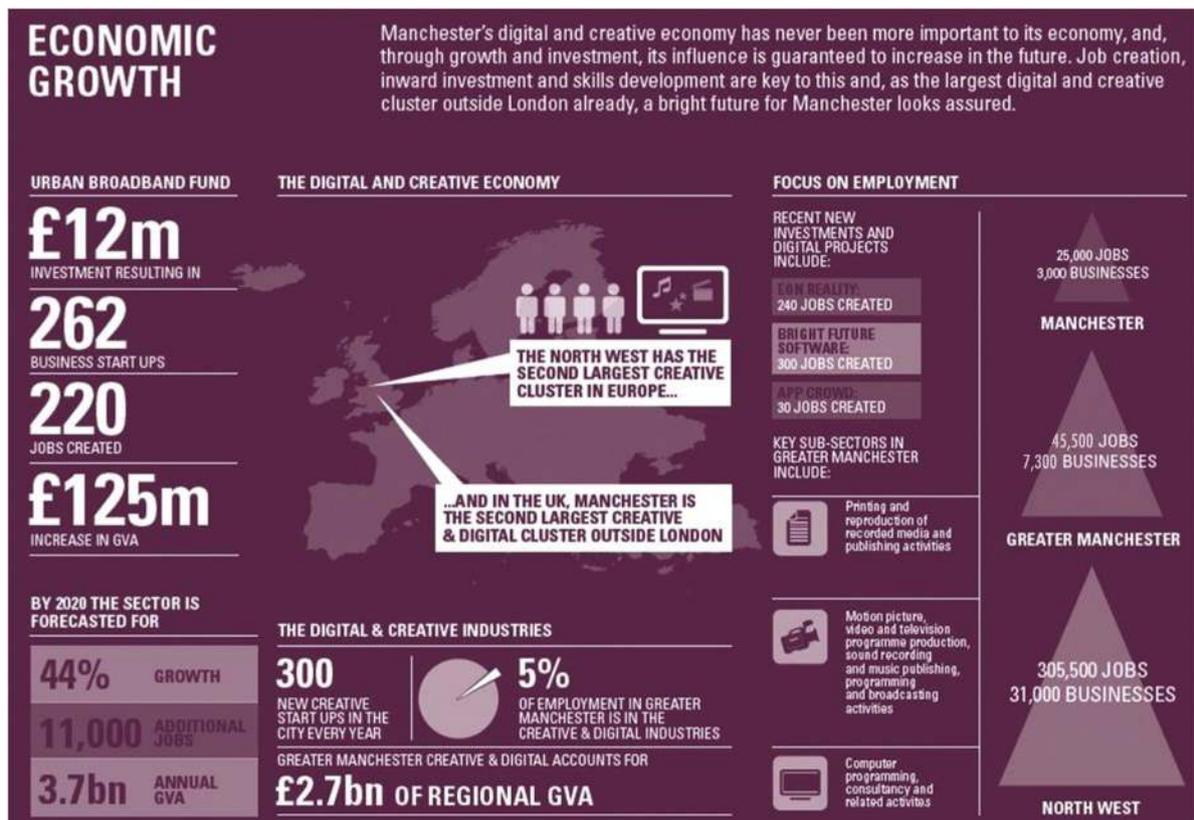
5. The Team



6. Targets 2014

1. Context

Creative Digital is one of the fastest growing sectors in the North West region and Manchester is the largest Creative Digital hub outside of London; there are currently 3,000 businesses in Manchester alone creating 25,000 employment opportunities in this sector. Projected growth for the sector is 44% by 2020.¹



¹ Data supplied by MIDAS

'Evaluating the Economic Impact of The Sharp Project', an independent report carried out in 2013 by Ekosgen, highlighted the importance of SharpFutures in supporting initiatives to directly tackle the need to grow the workforce to deliver on the potential. ²The report highlighted the importance of the sector to the sub-regional economy, employment specialisms and positive growth projections (both in employment and GVA terms).

In 2011 digital industries accounted for 45,776 jobs in Greater Manchester, and generated £2bn of economic output per annum. The City of Manchester acts as the primary digital content & ICT hub within the sub region, accounting for a third of the sector's total employment and over a quarter of businesses. Trafford, Stockport, and Salford also have large concentrations of employment in the sector. There are at least 300 businesses operating in the digital sector in each of the authorities.

Employment and Businesses in the digital content & ICT sector 2011					
	No Employees	% of GM		No Businesses	% of GM
Manchester	14,840	32.4%	Manchester	1,942	26.3%
Trafford	6,830	14.9%	Stockport	1,187	16.1%
Stockport	6,250	13.7%	Trafford	1,055	14.3%
Salford	5,701	12.5%	Salford	620	8.4%
Bury	2,885	6.3%	Bolton	605	8.2%
Bolton	2,630	5.7%	Bury	494	6.7%
Rochdale	2,090	4.6%	Wigan	493	6.7%
Wigan	1,620	3.5%	Tameside	359	4.9%
Oldham	1,580	3.5%	Oldham	318	4.3%
Tameside	1,350	2.9%	Rochdale	303	4.1%
GM	45,776	100%	GM	7,377	100%

Source: Business Register & Employment Survey, 2012

² Ekosgen:- Evaluating the economic impact of The Sharp Project 2013

The opening of The Sharp Project, relocation of the BBC and the associated development of MediaCityUK are each highlighted as drivers of growth in the digital sector. These developments have attracted employees to relocate from London, increased the number of opportunities for Greater Manchester residents and locally based businesses, and created localised hubs of activity.

The increase in activity has also attracted other businesses to locate in the City and across Greater Manchester, and the sub-region is now the UK's biggest centre for digital industries outside the Southeast.

SharpFutures is the social enterprise set-up to run alongside The Sharp Project to support its growth by focusing on talent supply chain and supporting the ecology.

"The Sharp Project has exceeded its target by creating 375 full time equivalent jobs. It is now home to more than 50 businesses, generating an annual GVA impact of £21.4 million." Manchester City Council

Ekosgen: Evaluating the economic impact of The Sharp Project 2013





2. Our Services

Seed, Nurture, Grow



We **SEED** ideas through our services in education

We manage expectations, provide insight into careers, create hands-on experience and inspire new entrants to join our Talent Pool. SharpFutures has created services for schools and education to advance the understanding of the Digital Sector needs.

By offering the opportunity for pupils to visit The Sharp Project, we can create hands-on experiences of the different technologies and disciplines across the Creative Digital sector. Through inspirational talks and have-a-go sessions, SharpFutures provides a valuable insight into the different careers, entry points and pathways into the sector. Our aim is to capture the imaginations of young people and new entrants to the sector, and inspire the next generation to aspire to join our talent pool..



"I enjoyed today at SharpFutures. All of the activities and workshops were interesting and fun. Today made me consider getting a job in media or an apprenticeship."

St Matthew's R.C High School student.

(i) SharpFutures offers Creative Digital Tours & Experiences for schools and colleges for staff and pupils alike. To follow is an outline of the bespoke days created for Manchester Schools:

SharpFutures were commissioned by Manchester City Council to engage with five schools from across Manchester, to deliver a full day experience of Creative Digital Sector at The Sharp Project. The five nominated schools were Manchester Creative and Media Academy, St Peters RC High School, The East Manchester Academy, St Matthews High School, and the Manchester Communications Academy. The pupils ranged from across Years 9 to 11 from a variety of disciplines. The sessions were constructed to reflect the individual group interests and aimed to:



- Provide a sector overview of Creative Digital sector in Manchester and showcase the growth opportunities for young people and their careers;
- Introduce the groups to industry experts who presented their individual specialisms;
- Advise on the apprenticeship opportunities and how they work at SharpFutures;
- Develop an understanding of the pathways and expectations of a career in the sector including mobile knowledge workers, freelance and portfolio careers
- And, engage with school staff to develop their understanding of the needs for future employment across the sector.



“It’s so important that we engage with local young people and make them aware of the thriving Creative Digital Sector in Manchester. There are opportunities out there for them and it’s great that SharpFutures experience days can open the doors to a world that some didn’t even know existed.” **Colin Boulter, Neilson Reeves Photography.**

The sessions were created using a core structure, including a combination of tours, workshops, taster sessions, alongside specialism overviews delivered in conjunction with tenants, campus members and industry professionals. The sessions included a variety of learning styles to reflect the different methods of capturing and retaining the pupils interests. This ranged from context talks about the Creative Digital Sector, presentations of individual technologies, to hands on experience and workshops, including;



- Hands-on / Interactive sessions, for example filming in a green screen studio, stop motion animation and motion capture.
- Team problem solving with Product Designers to create solutions
- Creative team work and dynamics, by creating viral and web campaigns
- Digital presentations of technology application, for example with Digital Forensics.

The schools were also presented with a 3D printed model of their school's emblem to take away in conjunction with the Product Design taster session which they all attended.



"I learned there are many options to choose from like animation, designing and product designing and there are apprenticeships where you get to do what you want."

Brandon, MCMA pupil

SharpFutures have also hosted and developed a series of educational events which aim to create access and an insight into the sector for new entrants and the opportunities for individuals to network and meet peers. To follow is a detailed example of an educational event SharpFutures has developed.



(ii) Digital Teapot

Recognising the importance of role models and champions in a sector where women are underrepresented, **Digital Teapot** was developed by SharpFutures, for International Women’s Week, to boost awareness and inspire women into careers into the Creative Digital sector. The event aimed to introduce and inspire 150 women, aged 16 plus, into careers that utilise Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM), with a keen focus on Creative Digital skills that are underpinned by S.T.E.M. The event was delivered by SharpFutures, with support from Cisco, Manchester City Council and Oldham Council.



The event was hosted by SharpFutures Director Rose Marley who set the scene for the day before the workshops commenced and challenged the audience to utilise the growth of digital technology and the sector to create economic impact starting with themselves. Across the morning workshops were held designed to show how income can be generated by individuals utilising the technology around them. Workshops included ‘Blog your way to Success’, ‘Crowdfund your idea’ and professional networking through social media.



“I learned how to make money by blogging. I also learned how to make social networking act as a business partner.”

Papiya, student

Later in the day 'Byte-sized Biogs' were delivered by ten prolific business women from the Creative Digital Sector. They presented their individual career journeys to the audience, aimed to inspire the audience, and demonstrate how their own careers developed. The wide range of speakers presented careers in Creative Digital that utilised S.T.E.M within their daily business. They included:

- Sue Woodward, OBE
- Jan Collins, Virgin Media
- Nicola Briggs, Helen Douglas, Samantha Horrocks and Michelle Cowan, Cisco
- Sarah Pearson, Wasted Youth PR
- Dr Maria Stukoff, Sony Entertainment
- Lou Cordwell, CEO Magnetic North
- Laura Harper, Ward Hadaway



There was then an opportunity to network over lunch, tea and cakes. Finally there was a debate on 'Barriers facing women in S.T.E.M and the Creative Digital sector and how to overcome them.'

The inspirational event presented a variety of careers, and the offer of roles and through a panel 'Q and A' where the speakers were able to answer the audience questions. This was linked to a live Twitter feed which lead to #digitalteapot trending on Twitter.*

"Off to set up a multi-million pound blog. #Digitalteapot"
@Gaynor3792 on Twitter

As a result of the Digital Teapot event, more women became aware of the technology and the evolving opportunities across the sector. There has also been a higher sign up to the Talent Pool volunteer programme.

"It's completely exceeded my expectations and I feel like I'll be leaving here today eager and ready to make a success of myself and passions, not for a day but for life."
Hayley, M6

SharpFutures has developed a number of relationships for the advancement of education. To follow is an example of such a relationship and its benefits.

(iii) CoderDojo

CoderDojo is a global Social Digital network that provides open learning collaborations with young people, especially in programming technology. Presented in partnership with MadLab, the Coder Dojo events are an important way to create a safe and accessible environment for young people and new coders to meet, exchange ideas and learn to improve their skills.



Supported by a network of industry experts who volunteer their time and expertise, the monthly events at The Sharp Project have created a network group of young coders from age 8 – 18 years old. The attendance at these sessions has grown incrementally each time, with more parents and young budding coders eager to learn something new. At the latest event, over 145 people attended, making it the largest CoderDojo gathering in Manchester to date.



“I really enjoyed it. It was fun to spend the day coding with my friends.” Alfie, aged 9

“CoderDojo is a brilliant opportunity for children to learn new skills, we took four kids and they all had a blast learning to build cool stuff like websites.” Rachel, mum to Alfie



We **NURTURE** young talent and skills through our Talent Pool.

APPRENTICES

One of the core objectives of SharpFutures was to recruit and support the first cohort of five apprentices to form the foundation of the SharpFutures Talent Pool.

The concept of the Action Research was to create a 'Talent Pool' of apprentices, who can further develop their careers with the intervention and support of SharpFutures. The cohort of five young people, aged 19 to 22, have a wide set of skills and education levels.

The model that SharpFutures has developed provides the group with:

- the support and training to develop individual interpersonal and work based skills;
- on the job training across a number of work areas;
- brokered education support with the appropriate training providers across the city.

The specialist areas in the group include Social Media, Events Organisation, Front- and Back- End programming and development, Production and Running. The pilot enabled SharpFutures to deploy the apprentice team across a variety of events in The Sharp Project to support the delivery of PR, Marketing, Social Media, Campus and sector events.

In addition, SharpFutures have been able to initiate discussions with the sector about the value of the scheme to address the skills gap in Creative Digital. In response to the shortfall of sector ready entrants, SharpFutures have tested the innovative model of delivering work with professionals across the sector, supported by apprentices to deliver professional services and develop individual working practice.

SharpFutures have tested the innovative model of delivering work with professionals across the sector, supported by apprentices to deliver professional services and develop individual working practice.

The Action Research was constructed to enable SharpFutures to pilot the Apprenticeship scheme and test the model to:

- increase engagement of micro businesses in the development of apprentices;
- increase capacity for micro businesses and SMEs through increased access to supply chain
- to provide valuable work experience and talent development in a sector notoriously difficult to access
- to provide an apprenticeship scheme to support delivery of services to The Sharp Project
- to deliver Manchester City Council outputs against seed grant funding



The selection of candidates was based on the following criteria:

- Ability to do the job
- The social impact of the SharpFutures intervention on the individual's learning
- The suitability and adaptability of the individual to participate and contribute to the action research pilot approach particularly their 'saleability' to SMEs

Five apprentices were recruited in the following roles:

- Communicator - Social Media, PR & Marketing - Danny, Wythenshawe
- Developer Front End - graphics, website front end- Dan, Levenshulme
- Develop Back End - website and app development - John, Benchhill
- Digital Runner - content, graphics and running support -Thomas, Moston
- Organiser - business administration support - Lauren, Newton Heath



APPRENTICE TALENT POOL EXPERIENCES

The Digital Runner, Thomas, MOSTON

“I work beside the Client Liaison Manager at The Sharp Project and undertake a wide range of work such as post runs, creating passes for new tenants and assisting the wide variety of productions on site. I am also tasked with creating and finding content for The Sharp Project’s digital strategy. I am currently working with tenants ABF Pictures. I have been employed by productions as a runner including Mount Pleasant produced by Tiger Aspect for Sky Television”



“It was an absolute pleasure to have Tom from SharpFutures as our on set Runner. He was conscientious to the needs of the cast and crew and eager to be involved. He was a true professional throughout the shoot and we look forward to working with him again. “

Rachel Bradley, Production Co-ordinator, ABF Pictures.

The Organiser, Lauren. NEWTON HEATH

“As The Organiser, I am part of the Front of House team at The Sharp Project. On a day-to-day basis I meet and greet visitors, organise The Sharp Project diary, book meetings rooms and help to solve any problems our tenants may have. I also enjoy booking – keeping for some of the tenants and helping out in The Campus when its busy.”

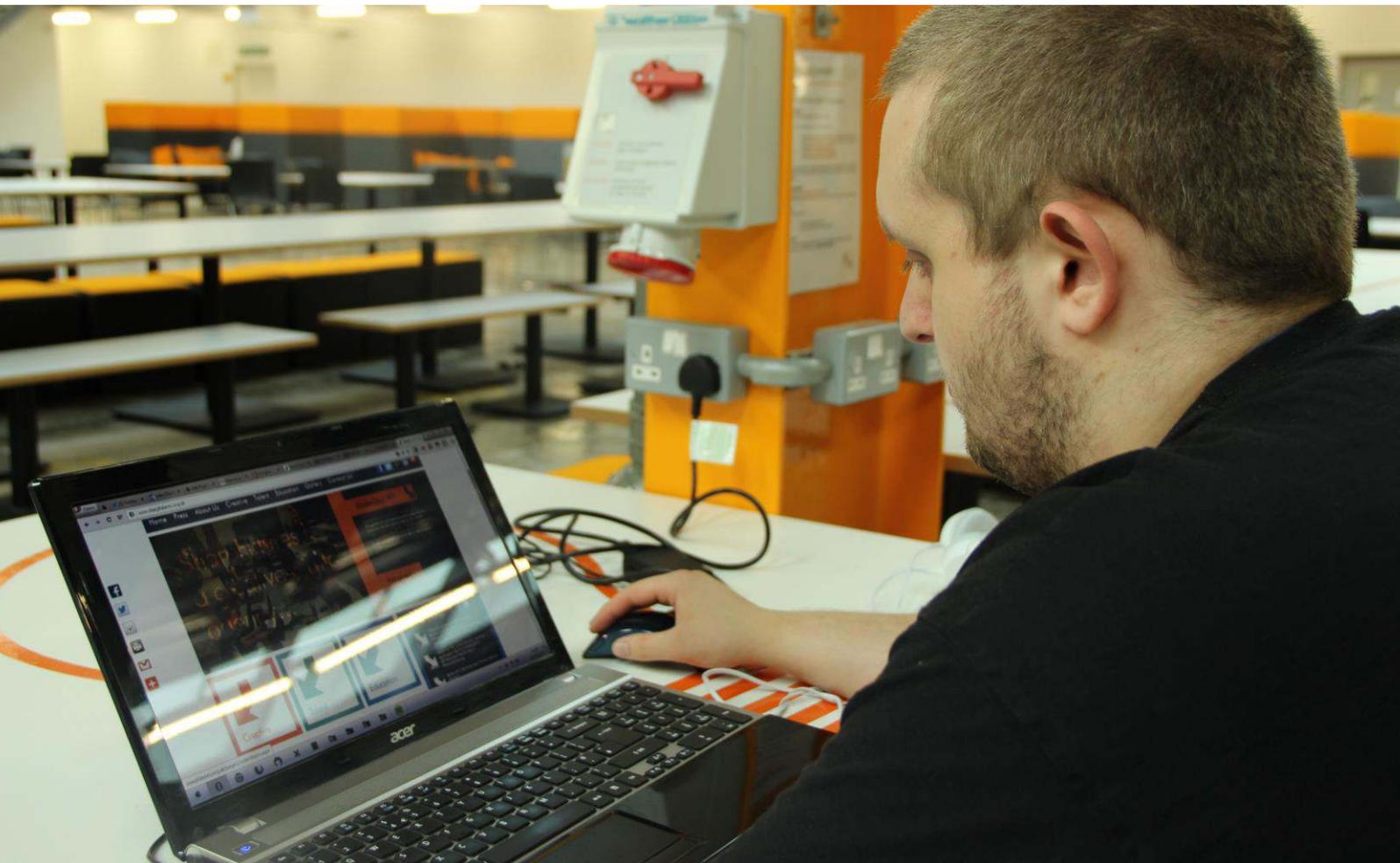


Front End Web Developer and Graphic Designer, Dan, LEVENSHULME

“At SharpFutures I am completing a Web Development apprenticeship, where my role consists of mainly front-end web development and graphic design. On a daily basis I update and maintain our website: sharpfutures.org.uk & thesharpproject.co.uk, and create graphic solutions within The Sharp Project and SharpFutures. I have worked with tenants including Amandas and clients including NHS and Jaguar.”

Web Developer, John. BENCHILL

“At SharpFutures my main responsibility is to develop and maintain the SharpFutures website. I have also become the go to guy when people require assistance with technical matters. I have also worked with the company Touchsoft Ltd helping them to develop an iOS app for the NHS.”



Communicator & Social Media Executive, Danny. WYTHENSHAW

“I am involved in all the Marketing, PR and Social Media activity for SharpFutures and The Sharp Project. My main task is running the Social Media Channels for SharpFutures and their client – The Sharp Project. I do this to enforce brand awareness whilst engaging with the audience. I also run social media campaigns that are related to events taking place at The Sharp Project. I carried out market research for client Ekosgen which was a really valuable skill to learn.”



TALENT POOL

In addition to supplying the core support services to The Sharp Project, the aim of the pilot has been to create a trained and sector-ready talent pool, which can be utilised when the micro-businesses across the sector have a need to expand and retract their delivery teams when responding to client briefs. Currently, many of these roles are for entry level skills across the tenant base at The Sharp Project, and visiting productions, such as Runner, Data Input and Production Assistant. The values of the Talent Pool, and their access to this flexible workforce helps to nurture the sector’s appetite for apprentices, and the investment that SharpFutures are making.

As a result, there are a number of micro-businesses who are aware of, and are newly engaged with the apprenticeship programme. In a two-fold process - to develop skills and experience for young people, and to meet the supply chain demands - SharpFutures offered the Talent Pool to companies based at or affiliated with The Sharp Project on an hourly or project rate.

To date, a total of sixteen Creative Digital companies have worked with or directly hired from the Talent Pool at SharpFutures, both Apprentices and Volunteers including:

- Tiger Aspect (on Sky TV’s Mount Pleasant 3),
- Doodledo Motion,
- Jaguar,
- Neilson Reeves Photography,
- Touchsoft Ltd,
- Aequitas Digital Forensics,
- Digital Ninjas,
- ABF Pictures,
- Mighty Giant,
- Tunafish Media
- 80 Hertz,

The clients are able to choose from a wide skill set, to help resource staffing needs, such as:

- App Testing and Development
- Book Keeping
- Production Running
- Graphic Design
- Roto-Scoping
- Social Media Management
- Film Editing
- Photography



The evaluation from both the business and individuals' experience has been positive. Employers who used this service gave overall positive feedback and cited the flexibility and the micro-billing/booking as the main reason for requesting the support.

"It's cost effective, flexible and on my doorstep; makes my life so easy having such a flexible service."

Employers have also utilised the opportunity to talent spot and develop individuals achieving a main objective to engage micro-business in talent development for the sector in a sustainable way.

"Sharp Futures has provided Aequitas Forensics with a flexible, cost effective solution to its administrative needs. Lauren, in a very short space of time has become an integral and valued member of the Aequitas team".

Glen Siddall, Aequitas Forensics

"Dan was 'extraordinary' it was as if he'd done app testing before. He could really think about how different users might use the app from every angle. Excellent at stress testing."
Richard Wylie, Touchsoft Limited

VOLUNTEERS

It became increasingly apparent to the team that not all hungry new talent presented themselves at pre-apprenticeship level so the aim of the volunteering scheme was to allow access for all to ensure talent sourcing from a wide social background.

In year one SharpFutures has also built a significant pool of Volunteers, who have approached the company for career development and opportunities, attended a SharpFutures event or would like to be a part of a future trainee or apprenticeship programme. The group spans from young people looking to find an entry point into the industry, individuals who are already working as SMEs and would like to expand their experience or portfolio, or local residents who would like to get involved or gain employment in the building. To date, there is a database of:

- 86 volunteers who have signed up to the SharpFutures volunteer program to assist on a variety of events hosted at The Sharp Project
- The majority of volunteers are from the Manchester City Region area, with approx. 20 individuals registered as Manchester residents.
- Those volunteers who are outside the Manchester borough council boundaries, have indicated that they are registered with a Greater Manchester educational institute, such as Manchester College, Oldham College and MMU.
- There are twenty regular volunteers working on the campus events program.
- And there is a core team of volunteers who have graduated to the talent pool who have a mixture of paid casual work and volunteering experience with SharpFutures or other companies at The Sharp Project.

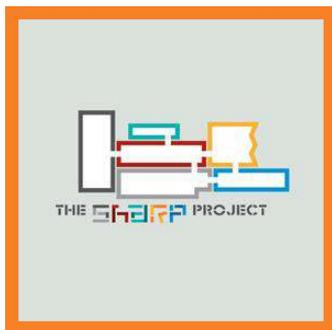


In response to the steady increase of the Talent Pool by increasing the support and pathways for volunteers, SharpFutures are looking to formalise the structures of the Volunteer programme in the future. This will help resource the running of the entry offer to individuals, with core training and introductions to the industry, and a clear assessment process of skills so individuals can be matched to opportunities as they arise.



We **GROW** local economic wealth by building opportunities and capacity in the Creative Digital sector, developing business partnerships, collaborations and increasing profits to enable a sustainable future.

SharpFutures Clients



SharpFutures deliver PR, Marketing, Social Media The Campus Members Club, Events Management, Front of House & support services to The Sharp Project.



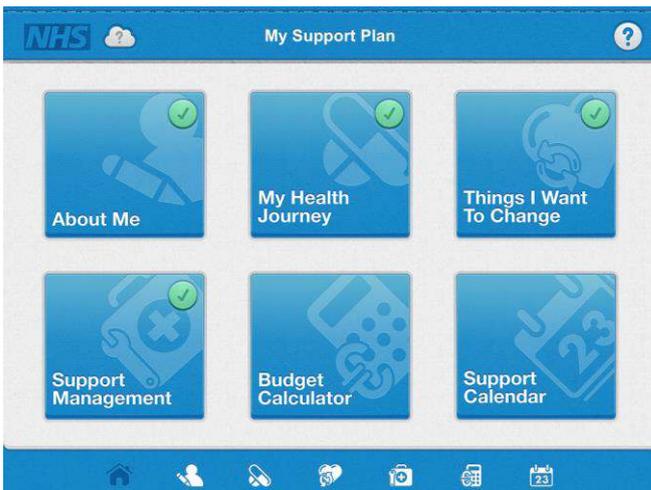
SharpFutures are part of the very ethos of The Sharp Project and have contributed significantly in helping to build a strong community through members events and tenants collaborations, as well as day to day support in the running of The Sharp Project”

John Mariner, Client Liaison Manager, The Sharp Project



NHS Manchester

NHS Manchester: SharpFutures worked with the NHS and The Sharp Project tenants Touchsoft to develop an app version of the 'Personal Health Budget', helping Manchester's Clinical Commissioning Groups deliver a tablet application to streamline budget planning for patients and carers. SharpFutures were tasked with producing a creative brief, proposals & pitch days & worked closely with TouchSoft to provide R&D and Testing services throughout the development process. See Appendix 1 for full press release.



"TouchSoft are delighted to be working in partnership with Manchester Clinical Commissioning Groups and SharpFutures on this project. We're looking forward to the application making a real difference in the quality of care offered to patients."

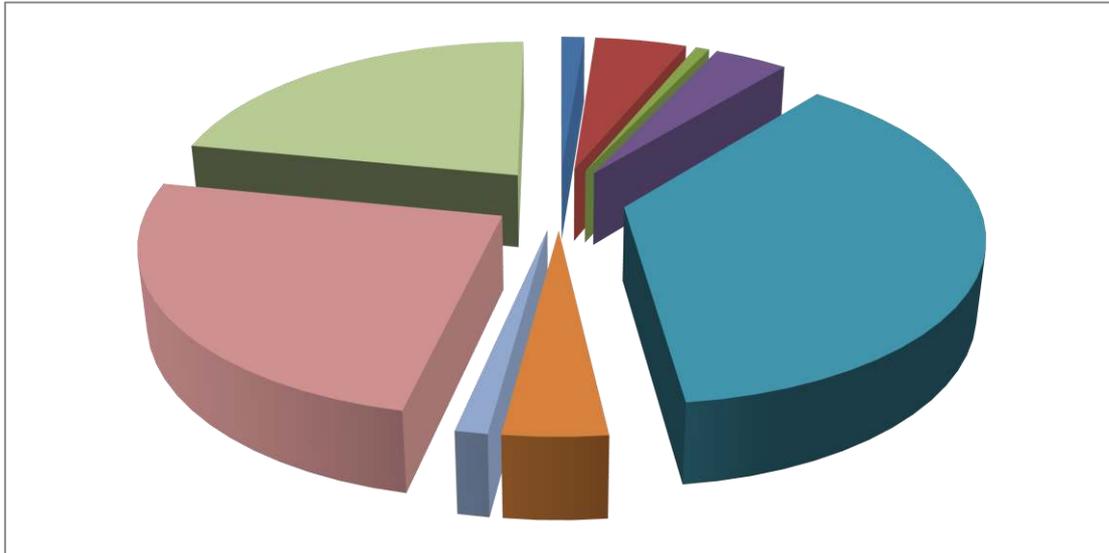
Richard Wylie, Director, Touchsoft,



Jaguar Events utilised the support of SharpFutures to launch the F-Type Jaguar at The Sharp Project. SharpFutures utilised the services of several tenants from The Sharp Project for the event delivery, including lighting, photography and filming. You can view a video documenting the event on the SharpFutures website www.sharpfutures.org.uk



SHARPFUTURES IN NUMBERS



- 5** **Apprentices Hired**
- 20** **Full and part time jobs created**
- 3** **Third party events**
- 16** **Tenants hired Apprentices**
- 150** **Women attended Digital Teapot**
- 16** **Tenants Collaborations**
- 5** **School Experience Days**
- 100** **School children inspired**
- 86** **Volunteers Recruited to Talent Pool**



3. Performance & Evaluation

Output	Target (as detailed in seed funding agreement)	Total achieved at end of funding
Apprentices	To employ a minimum of five Manchester residents as apprentices for 12 – 18 months (including payment) (subject to individual learner’s requirements)	Five Manchester residents from Newton Heath, Moston, Wythenshawe, Benchill and Leveshulme employed as apprentices are in the process of completing their 12 – 18 month contracts as applicable to the individual
	To develop and manage the SharpFutures apprentice scheme	The apprentice scheme has been developed and is managed daily as required
	To develop a Talent Development Programme and explore sustainable opportunities to enable delivery of the programme	A total of sixteen companies have worked with the talent pool to date and have used and continue to request the services of the Talent Pool.
	To engage with and educate the education establishment about the sector	Working Relationships established with: John Edwards, Education and skills MCC John Thornhill/Jack Carney and lecturers at MCC Alun Francis and five departments at The Oldham College Schools and Academies: MCMA, MCA, East Manchester Academy, St Matthews and St Peters Training Providers: Manchester College, MediaSmiths, Chuchrgate Academy/Skills Solutions, Damar Ltd, Pearson Training

Delivery against CIC Statement of Intent

During its first year of business, SharpFutures has created a considerable body of activity in response to the company's Statement of Intent. Adopting a structured, yet organic approach to initiatives, the company has built on the knowledge capital it holds to developing awareness and pathways into the Creative Digital sector, and test key elements during the initial period of Action Research.

Under the banner of the '**Seed // Nurture // Grow**' directive, SharpFutures has worked to create impact and intervention where it has identified a skills gap, or initiated discussion to develop pathways to address issues.

'To build the capacity of deprived communities through nurturing, education and growing talent to enhance and expand the Creative Digital Sector in the UK.'

SharpFutures has continued to work with schools and colleges, to create awareness and meaningful experiences about the Creative Digital sector. The importance of interactive workshops presenting the variety of possible careers, and meeting key inspirational people, is an effective way to capture the imaginations of young people and communities across Greater Manchester. Working with the expertise and knowledge pool across The Sharp Project team and associates, SharpFutures have been able to both create additional economic impact for local business, and open access for young people into industry areas of the Creative Digital community, such as the dynamics of Motion Capture, Rapid Prototyping technology or Digital Forensics.

Key highlights across this first year have included the 'Seed' programme: introductions to the Creative Digital community and workshops with industry specialists; regular programming events for young people across a number of entry level points; and the highly successful Digital Teapot to celebrate and inspire the impact of Creative Digital on women in the sector.

'To open access to talent from a wide social background.'

SharpFutures recognise that to respond effectively to the growing skills gap for the Creative Digital sector, there is a need to induct and train new entrants, so that they are ready for the sector. This Action Research under the 'Nurture' cluster of work, has tested the parameters needed to support individuals into the sector by:

- Enlisting over 80 Volunteers who are able to gain experience with SharpFutures and affiliated organisations. To date, this group have come through the various public facing activities and word of mouth, and range from young people looking to get work experience, to experienced individuals who need to widen and develop their portfolios of work.
- Training and developing an inaugural pool of five SharpFutures Apprentices, across a range of skill areas, to create a response to the immediate skills gaps across SharpFutures and The Sharp Project. This group of young people have demonstrated their core potential of being sector ready with the intervention of the apprenticeship. The model, consisting of work-based learning is supported by accredited training, mentoring within their discipline and a network of support for their pastoral and professional development. The pathway for the group of five, has supplemented the linear, 'results based' model of learning with a bespoke, responsive approach to both apprentice and client.
- Together, the Volunteer group and the Apprentice team have created the SharpFutures Talent Pool – a resource of individuals who can collectively support the 'ebb and flow' nature of staffing needs in the Creative Digital sector. Through an initial skills audit across the group, SharpFutures are quickly able to construct the most appropriate team of skills required. These have ranged from the needs of Digital Runners on productions during filming days; back-end Web Programmer; front-end Graphic Designers; Administration support and Front of House services; Book keeping; Photography and Videography; Social Media campaign managers.

It is the Talent Pool who are able to collectively respond to the needs of SME businesses, and expand the capacity of individual teams when needed without increasing the logistical impact of employing additional short-term staff. Through this development, SharpFutures have recognised the importance of underpinning the Talent Pool with organisational support, for both the individual and the employer.

'To produce local economic wealth and to grow the Creative Digital Sector in the UK.'

The activity of SharpFutures has created a focus for increased investment in the pool of entry-level staff to the Creative Digital sector, and generated income for affiliates who champion the values of the company.

SharpFutures have been able to invest in and build an impressive portfolio of clients in this first year, who have directly bought services and invested funds, to reflect their commitment of working with a socially-responsible model.

As well as providing the core services to the running of The Sharp Project, the management of the tenant network and additional services to visiting productions, SharpFutures have been able to: deliver commissioned services for NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups in Manchester, creating a user-led App for future development and expansion across the health services; and deliver the launch of a new Jaguar F-type with social media hosting and documentation services. The app for the NHS was developed with tenant company Touchsoft, increasing the secondary economic impact from SharpFutures activity.



4. Financial Summary

Financial Summary - 1st Year Trading Apr 12 - Mar 13

Total Income 221,201

Total Expenditure 163,821

Profit for Purpose **57,380**

- SharpFutures Manchester CIC is a limited company by guarantee of members with charitable objectives.
- SharpFutures is registered as a Community Interest Company at Companies House which means that all assets are locked and there are no shareholders or dividends to pay.
- It is set out in the Community Interest Company Statement of Intent that SharpFutures exists: **'To build the capacity of deprived communities through nurturing, education and growing talent to enhance and expand the Creative Digital Sector in the UK.'** This report aims to demonstrate how we achieve this.
- It is set out in the constitution that all profits are to be redistributed back into the company to deliver on the Statement of Intent above.
- Full accounts published December 2013 Companies House.

5. The Team

OPERATIONAL

ROSE MARLEY

Rose Marley is founder and Director of Rose Marley Management (RMM), a creative services and management agency, serving clients in the North West and nationwide. Prior to her social enterprise work, Rose gained wide reaching experience in the music and entertainment industries, starting with her first directorship at the age of 21 as founding MD of Silk Studios in 1995. Rose Marley Management was established in 1997 through the signing of Manchester based recording artists and producers to EMI. By 2003 Silk Studios had also afforded Rose the experience of managing artists for AOL Time Warner, EMI Music Publishing and Warner Chappell, as well as involvement at Glastonbury and events with The Royal Albert Hall. RMM also managed music sponsorship and IP rights for brands including AUDI, Barclays as examples.

Inspired by great social reformers from Manchester, Rose co-founded one of the first wave of Community Interest Companies, MOTIV CIC. MOTIV and Rose Marley picked up several awards including The Women in Ethical Business Awards from The Tridos Bank and The Times, as well as the Talk Talk Innovation in the community Award. In 2009 MOTIV worked with 130,000 pupils in three hundred schools across Manchester, Oldham, Salford, Nottingham and Blackburn.

In July 2012 Rose and co-founder Lee Stanley established the social enterprise SharpFutures Manchester CIC to run alongside and support the management and delivery of The Sharp Project vision.

In March 2013 Rose was named as International Women's Week Business Innovator of the year by Manchester City Council.

Rose is supported by Director Lee Stanley and a small team at SharpFutures who come from Creative Digital backgrounds and are also committed to delivering the vision of SharpFutures and sharing their industry knowledge and insight.

BOARD OF GOVERNANCE

**Ian Kennedy, FRSA, CEng, CIP, BSc(Hons), MIET, MBCS, MIEEE, Chair
SharpFutures Manchester CIC**

Vice President, Technical Operations, Cisco International Limited

In his leadership role at Cisco, Ian has responsibility for 1,500 Systems Engineers across Europe, Middle East, Africa, Russia supporting activities across Service Providers, Enterprise and Public Sector clients with an annual operational budget of £2M.

Ian has supported SharpFutures through its voluntary status and became the Chair once incorporated. His motivation for engaging with SharpFutures stems from the realisation that new approaches to addressing skills shortages across the digital sector needed to be taken.

Leading the systems engineering function for a global high technology company it is becoming increasingly difficult to acquire talent, especially at the graduate level. Competition is fierce and graduate numbers in the disciplines required are not increasing at the rates required. Similar situations exist for companies of all sizes across the digital sector. There are a number of interventions that can be leveraged; one of the most significant is the development of apprenticeship schemes as a way to attract young people into vocational training regardless of their social backgrounds or formal education. The opportunity to develop a unique apprenticeship model servicing small businesses who themselves are in the vanguard of job creation was too important to miss. Since joining SharpFutures it has become very clear that there is a significant population of highly talented young people with a major contribution to make across all aspects of the digital sector and it is essential that the SharpFutures model is given every opportunity to grow and evolve.

David Sharrock – Financial Director SharpFutures Manchester CIC

Group Finance Director of WRG Creative. WRG Creative is a £70 million Creative Agency that specialises in creating unforgettable experiences. It has 170 staff Worldwide and is owned by LDC private Equity House. It is located in Manchester, London, Doha, Abu Dhabi, Hong Kong and New York. It is now looking for acquisitions in China, Central Europe and North America.

Having worked for the Guardian Media Group for 12 years, David has an interest in the development of digital media sector, particularly in Manchester where he has spent most of his working career. He recently spent time working with AXM Venture Capital helping them to make a number of investments as part of their North West Fund supporting the Digital and Creative Sector.

Susan Woodward, OBE - Director of The Sharp Project

Susan is the Creative Media Champion for Manchester and Project Director for The Sharp Project - a digital media development in East Manchester which will focus on growing the digital and creative sector utilising the Project's unique combination of space, power and broadband connectivity. Sue is a member of the Manchester Partnership Board. Originally a journalist, she became an award winning TV producer (News and Documentaries) before being appointed Director of Broadcasting then Managing Director, ITV Granada. Susan was the Creative Director for the 2002 Commonwealth Games responsible for content, management and budget of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, and all media and marketing campaigns.

She was awarded the OBE by the Queen for services to Broadcasting, and the Commonwealth Games. Following this she was appointed Creative Director for the city of Liverpool and wrote the creative bid for Liverpool which secured the City the title of European Capital of Culture 2008. She established the Liverpool Culture company to deliver the year's events.

Sue created the vision for and implemented the delivery for The Sharp Project and is committed to the principle that buildings only continue to thrive if people and skills are delivered to occupy them and therefore became a founding Director of SharpFutures to ensure that the ecology is able to grow.

Malcolm Garret,

Malcolm Garrett is one of Britain's best-known graphic designers, noted for his pioneering work in the arts and in interaction design.

Collaborating with the likes of the Buzzcocks, Duran Duran, Peter Gabriel and the London Symphony Orchestra in music; Peter Greenaway, Jonathan Ross and Sam Taylor-Wood in film and TV; the Design Museum, the Science Museum and the Crafts Council in exhibition design; Michael Clark in stage production; Brian Eno, Peter Phillips, Denis Masi, and the Royal Academy in art publishing, Malcolm Garrett's designs have offered cultural reference points for succeeding generations.

Lou Cordwell – Managing Director Magnetic North

Paula Crosby, Company Secretary – PA to Cllr Sue Murphy, Deputy Leader / Team Leader

PRO BONO SUPPORT

SharpFutures are grateful to be supported by Ward Hadaway, Sedulo and Phil Coen, CEO Social Capital Network and Judith Watson.



SharpFutures received a grant from Manchester City Council in 2012/13 to seed fund the organisation





6. Targets

ANNUAL Targets

The activity and impact of SharpFutures in its first year, has set the foundations for an inherently innovative and socially responsible model of practice in supporting young people into employment in the sector.

With a keen eye on the parameters needed to capacity build a 'sector ready' workforce, there is a clear mandate for SharpFutures to build on the distinctive position between industry and workforce development agencies.

Looking forward, SharpFutures aims to build on this knowledge capital, and capacity-build the reach and impact of the Talent Pool as the key target for 2014.

SharpFutures will continue its income generation, with a mixed economy model of commissions, public sector initiatives and 'earned' income. SharpFutures recognise that there are some key actions that need to take place at this time to capture and realise the details of the next phase of activity. This includes:

- **To continue to offer Educational tours, experiences and events**
- **To nurture the Talent Pool increasing the number of apprentices, job seekers and graduates providing greater capacity for the SME community**
 - skills audit of the Talent Pool, to define the areas where support and development can be offered by the Talent Pool, and capacity build 'real' pathways to the industry;
 - invest resources to develop the Talent Pool, talent development program which may take form of a core, sector specific programme of training and masterclasses. This aims to build the foundations skills needed to succeed in the sector and range from statutory requirements, project management, administration, and industry specific skills;

- create an awareness campaign to potential clients / champions of these services across the Creative Digital sector.
- **To continue to deliver commercial projects that deliver profit for purpose**

SharpFutures has quickly established itself as a key 'cog' in the development of building cohorts of new talent, by offering relevant and ambitious pathways that individuals and affiliate organisations can navigate through in a seamless way. Its success to date is embedded in the offer of relevant and pragmatic solutions to a) the needs of the sector, and b) those individuals who are looking to develop sector ready skills.

These actions will refine the 'resources' SharpFutures have to deliver its objectives, and enable a more streamlined and efficient method of:

1. increasing the Talent Pool supply chain;
2. establish a Talent development program including traineeships as a programme as a pre-entry to the Apprenticeship and pathways for graduate placements.
3. consolidate the offer to the volunteers (job seekers and graduates) joining the Talent Pool;
4. develop the nature of the discussions with industry partners who support the delivery of the programmes to schools, colleges and the Apprentices, and
5. explore models of mixed economy income to support activity

Currently, the Apprentice cohort 001 will be retained beyond the grant period, to either progress to the next level training in their careers, or through employment with The Sharp Project. While this is a magnificent output from the first year, SharpFutures does need to capacity build the offer with industry, so that the pathways for future cohorts are developed for a similar outcome. SharpFutures have been commended by National Apprenticeship Service about this retention rate and have been invited to apply for the Future Employer Awards.

In addition to these internal developments at SharpFutures, there are a number of external actions that are in development:

- SharpFutures has confirmed the delivery agreement with The Sharp Project until March 2014, and is in discussion regarding future service delivery across the existing site and the future sites in the portfolio.
- Creative Skillset have confirmed funding for 2014/2015 to further support and develop the Talent Pool in region of £200k through the Employer Ownership of Skills pilot (subject to contract).
- Both private and corporate sponsorship is being sought to match and capacity build the delivery of the 'Nurture' programme.
- SharpFutures is working with Talent Match (Big Lottery Fund to support NEET 18 to 24 year olds) to increase the capacity and impact of the SharpFutures Talent Pool on the local economy and workforce.
- SharpFutures will continue to work with the National Apprenticeship Service to support deliverer of traineeships across the Creative Digital sector.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – APPRENTICE CASE STUDY: LAUREN

APPENDIX 2 – CASE STUDY: NHS MANCHESTER

APPENDIX 1 – APPRENTICE CASE STUDY: LAUREN



Lauren was the first SharpFutures apprentice recruited, living with her parents in Newton Heath, she heard about an opportunity at The Sharp Project via training provider Damar Limited. After leaving school, she first embarked on an accountancy course at College and whilst she enjoyed the study, found that College life wasn't for her:

“I enjoyed the course and was very interested in the work I was learning, but the structure of college didn't suit me. I found myself getting bored as my college timetable was only part time and I would be in college for no longer than three hours, four days a week. I wasn't gaining full advantage of my education.”

Lauren examined different pathways before deciding that an apprenticeship would be the way forward for her. She originally came to work with the team aged 17 via her Level 2 Business Administration apprenticeship with MOTIV CIC. Admittedly shy to even answer the phone, her confidence through her apprenticeship grew and when MOTIV became a voluntary organisation, Lauren seized the opportunity to interview for the role of the apprentice 'Organiser' with SharpFutures via a Customer Service Level 2 Apprenticeship.

One of Lauren's favourite aspects of working with SharpFutures is the interaction and buzzing environment of The Sharp Project – an environment in which she has wholly integrated with and as a result has gained a lot of confidence, experience and career opportunity. Lauren's social circumstances would not typically reflect those working in media facilities and Lauren's knowledge of Creative Digital sector prior to her appointment was extremely limited. Lauren's career ambitions now are to have her own portfolio of clients for which she delivers business services.

As well as her main role on the Front of House desk at The Sharp Project, Lauren currently enjoys book keeping for tenants Aequitas Forensics Ltd and is also in high demand for employment from several other Sharp Project tenants due to her talent and enthusiasm.

As a result of her progression with SharpFutures, in December 2012 Lauren was nominated for the Junior Chamber International 'Rising Star' award and was shortlisted in the top three out of hundreds of entries including junior partners of law and accountancy firms.

Sue Woodward OBE and SharpFutures client stated why Lauren was nominated for the award:

“Lauren is a Manchester rising star - within less than three months in her Sharpfutures apprenticeship she has proved to be a valuable asset to The Sharp Project, and is in much demand from the digital companies here who want to utilise her talents and enthusiasm. More importantly, she has been a great Ambassador for the youth of Manchester. When the Government’s Digital Zsar visited, Lauren was asked to give an impromptu interview; her ability to clearly articulate the position that hundreds of young Mancunians find themselves in was delivered calmly, with poise and with great clarity given her age. Within eight weeks she found herself in a similar position being questioned by the Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls and again, she presented an extraordinarily positive image of East Manchester talent in front of the shadow chancellor, his advisors and senior councillors, national and international journalists. So much so that the same night she was whisked off to MediaCityUK to do the same interview live on BBC Radio Manchester.”

APPENDIX 2 – CASE STUDY NHS MANCHESTER

Case Summary of the innovative SharpFutures model of professional delivery of App Development for NHS Manchester supported by talent pool learning experience:

Patients can go digital with NHS in Manchester and SharpFutures Creative agency & social enterprise 'SharpFutures' responsible for talent and resource coordination central to the project

Manchester's Personal Health Budget scheme is taking on a digital dimension with help from tenants and apprentices at The Sharp Project in Manchester.

This unique trial brings together The Sharp Project tenants TouchSoft Limited and social enterprise SharpFutures to help Manchester's Clinical Commissioning Groups deliver a tablet application to streamline budget planning for patients and carers.

The free app is designed to help patients with long-term health care needs who may struggle with paper forms due to their physical conditions. When launched, it will enable them to use a tablet application to film or record themselves answering questions and help plan their budgets for their own long term care.

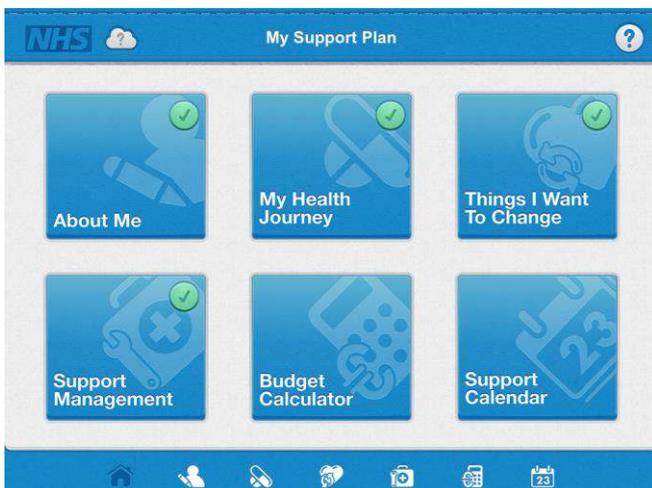
Personal health budget lead Matthew Fairhurst says: "It is early days but we are really excited by the new digital element to the project. Detailed calculations and thorough responses are required from the patients and carers before we can provide them with their own funds and filling in forms can often be a hurdle. We therefore came up with the idea of a support planning app designed to ease the process whilst making the system more robust."

In addition to the impact that the team hope to make on the lives of patients, there is also a valuable social value to the appointment. Working with a social enterprise such SharpFutures ensures maximum social impact in a public private sector arrangement, and will include the training of apprentices from the SharpFutures talent team by tenants TouchSoft Limited.

SharpFutures CEO Rose Marley praised the decision, saying: **“The Clinical Commissioning Groups’ relationship with The Sharp Project means they can use of one of the most cutting-edge digital resources in the North West for their app. SharpFutures also supports young talent development by working with apprentices. This has considerable social and economic impact when it comes to creating employment opportunities for young people in Manchester.”**

The software application will be freely available for use by patients taking part in the trial by December 2013.

Richard Wylie, Director of Touchsoft, commented: **“TouchSoft are delighted to be working in partnership with Manchester Clinical Commissioning Groups and SharpFutures on this project. We’re looking forward to the application making a real difference in the quality of care offered to patients.”**



"TouchSoft are delighted to be working in partnership with Manchester Clinical Commissioning Groups and SharpFutures on this project. We're looking forward to the application making a real difference in the quality of care offered to patients."

Richard Wylie, Director,
Touchsoft,

SharpFutures



SharpFutures

