



Foreword



Pitch @ Palace, September 2015 supported by SharpFutures

“

Any start-up business would be proud of closing its year three books in profit and with a strong pipeline, and would rightly celebrate that success. When you consider, then, that SharpFutures operates in the Creative Digital sector, a notoriously inaccessible and difficult environment for new entrants, plus the additional pressures of generating much needed social impact, SharpFutures' success this year – in profit and with that strong pipeline - becomes even more of an achievement. Its success is without doubt testament to the adaptability, energy and hard work of all the SharpFutures team.

SharpFutures' mission and mantra is to 'seed, nurture and grow'. Just as we have seen this approach work with our apprentices, our schools, businesses and community members, who every year continue to develop and shine, so the same approach has worked with our organisational growth – seeding and testing the model in year one, nurturing our social impacts with the support of Creative Skillset and the 'Employer Ownership of Skills' pilot, and now we are able to grow, consolidating our social objectives as clear business services.

And it doesn't stop there. Through 'DISCOVER', we are seeding learning in our community, through 'POD' we are beginning to see nurtured careers hitting their potential, and in year four we will grow our 'ENGAGE' and 'FRAMED' programmes, as we move further away from grant seed funding into full sustainability through traded services.

It's been quite a year. I very much hope you enjoy reading about it as much as we've enjoyed working with our schools, apprentices, businesses and community members, seeing those first sparks of learning, discovery and enterprise, and wholly believing in what might happen next.

And please, do of course let us know if you require any of our services. We are here to do business.

Rose Marley
CEO



About this report

SEED, NURTURE, GROW

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

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.



This report looks at SharpFutures' delivery and performance across 2014/15, its third full year of operation - and a year in which it has more than doubled its financial turnover. The report outlines key projects, details economic and social impacts, and demonstrates how SharpFutures continues to meet its wider constitutional aims and objectives by:

- **Advancing education in creative and digital sectors**
- **Building capacity and opportunity across the sector from deprived communities**
- **Opening access to talent from a wider social background**
- **Producing local economic wealth and growing the Creative Digital sector in the UK**
- **Creating and sustaining careers**

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Context

The UK's creative sector continues to grow at pace, outstripping all other sectors. Figures published by DCMS in 2014 estimate that the creative industries are worth £71.4 billion per year to the UK economy, generating £8million per hour and accounting for 1.68 million jobs.

And there are no signs of that stopping. NESTA's 2015 report on the UK's creative economy states that employment in the creative industries grew at an unprecedented 4.3% per year between 2011 and 2013, over three times faster than the UK workforce as a whole, with particular growth in those jobs 'straddling both the high-tech and creative industries', reported at a staggering 8.0% per year.

The North of England's significant contribution to the creative economy is widely acknowledged, and forms a cornerstone of the government's 'Northern Powerhouse' strategy. Manchester, which has seen over £3.5 billion investment in its creative industries infrastructure over recent years, sits front and centre of the 'Northern Powerhouse' and the devolution agenda.

2015 figures from Greater Manchester's inward investment agency MIDAS estimate that there are almost 2500 Software & Data companies, over 800 E-commerce companies, over 800 Broadcast and Media companies and over 750 Advertising and Digital Media operating across the city-region, with rapidly growing niche sectors in games and augmented reality, sports technologies and e-health.

The Sharp Project continues to go from strength to strength, housing over 60 creative digital businesses, with new tenants including market leaders Brown Bag Films, JD Sport Content Division and ProMotion Hire. The Space Project, opened in spring 2014 in direct response to industry demand, is a £10.6million purpose-built TV production facility, which has already hosted productions from the BBC, Sky, ITV, Channel 4, Sony Big Talk and Tiger Aspect.

As the creative and digital labour market continues to grow and expand, so ensuring availability of the right skill-sets, ready for industry, becomes increasingly paramount.

These are exciting times for the creative digital sector, for Greater Manchester, for our young people and for SharpFutures, which continues to respond dynamically to this ever-changing landscape, and to grow in value and significance.



Services - SEED

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

From creating hands-on experiences in 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 SharpFutures '**Discover**' programme builds on the hugely popular and successful Creative Digital Experience Days, which saw a five-fold growth in demand over two years.

The '**Discover**' programme offers schools, students, businesses and community groups the opportunity to experience 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 UK, 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. The programme also enables visiting businesses, schools and education providers to gain a better understanding of the creative digital sector, its challenges, opportunities and needs.

This year, SharpFutures has hosted 14 schools and over 260 pupils through the **Discover** programme.

Experts from leading companies including Neilson Reeves Photography, Original Content, Soho Editors, Zemap and Aequitas Forensics - have led masterclasses and workshops for the programme, focussing on a wide range of roles in the sector such as UX Design, Copywriting in Advertising, Film Editing, Green Screen Journalism, Digital Forensics and 3D Games Design.



Schools working with SharpFutures 2014/5:

Burnage Academy for Boys	-	Burnage
Co-operative Academy	-	Blackley
Gorton Education Village/Cedar Mount	-	Gorton
Loreto High School	-	Moss Side
Manchester Academy	-	Moss Side
Manchester Communication Academy	-	Harpurhey
Manchester Creative and Media Academy	-	Blackley
Newall Green High School	-	Wythenshawe
Parrs Wood High School	-	East Didsbury
St Matthews RC High School	-	Moston
St Paul's RC High School	-	Wythenshawe
The Barlow RC High School	-	Didsbury
The East Manchester Academy	-	Beswick
Trinity High C of E High School	-	Hulme
Whalley Range High School for Girls	-	Whalley Range
William Hulme Grammar School	-	Whalley Range
Wright Robinson High School	-	Gorton



Thank you for such a great day. The visit was really informative and extremely well planned. The boys certainly got a lot out of it."
Helen Roberts, Careers Advisor, Burnage Academy for Boys.



The pupils gained guidance on careers options, ideas of computing beyond the curriculum, and starting points for coding. The workshops and tours were very good."
Tahira Ali, Head of ICT, William Hulme Academy



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 Academy



I thought today's trip to The Sharp Project was educational and exciting. I learned 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."
Siyam, Burnage Academy for Boys



It has made me think about my own future and if to go into an apprenticeship."
Connah, Loreto High School





Digital Teapot 2015

On 12th March 2015, SharpFutures held the third annual 'Digital Teapot' event at The Sharp Project, in celebration of International Women's Day. 'Breaking through Barriers' #DigitalTeapot15 focused on the statistic that 86% of Creative Digital roles are male occupied (IPA Census, March 2014). The event opened the doors to The Sharp Project and the wider Creative Digital sector for 154 women from across Greater Manchester.

This free event was aimed primarily at young women from economically challenged areas, specifically from the Greater Manchester area, who might otherwise find access to the Digital Creative sector limited, and struggle to break through.

The event featured 'Digital Toolkit' sessions in Coding, Content Creation/Blogging, E-commerce and Social Media in the morning, and expert-led workshops in the afternoon, designed to demonstrate the flexibility that digital careers can offer women, with topics including:

- How to set up an online shop
- Social Media Do's and Don'ts (led by an attendee of 2014's Digital Teapot event)
- Break through the Code
- Content Writing

The day featured a series of inspirational talks from 'Teapot Speakers' and a full-house Q&A event on 'The Future of Creative Digital careers', with a panel of industry experts including:

- Christine Bellamy, BBC Future Media
- Alison Vincent, UK Chief Technology Officer, Cisco
- Elizabeth Clarke, CEO Dream Agility.





Manchester Coderdojo

The ever-popular Manchester Coderdojo, hosted monthly by SharpFutures at The Sharp Project, is a volunteer-led community group for young people learning to code and make things.

Part of the global Coderdojo network, Manchester Coderdojo sees over 150 young people, adults and mentors coming together on a monthly basis, and is one of the largest regular code clubs in the world.

The event offers the perfect place for parents and young people to explore and learn about new technology together in a cutting edge location far removed from the traditional schools environment.

Manchester Coderdojo prides itself on the fact that the monthly events are entirely run by and based around the hard work of volunteers, whose passion and enthusiasm for coding shines through. Activities encompass a range of ages, experiences and abilities through workshops, group coding sessions and special activities such as robotics or building a Rube Goldberg machine.

Software used includes Minetest, Scratch and Python. The attendees use laptops, tablets and Raspberry Pis donated by Google, to develop their skills by learning through making whilst socialising with their peers.

The social aspect of Manchester Coderdojo events is a key factor in its continued popularity as like-minded people with similar ideas have the chance to combine and share their coding creations with each other. The average age of participants at Manchester Coderdojo is just over 10 years old, with a 60:40 split between boys and girls.

Every session is oversubscribed, with places booked up as soon the tickets go live and an ever-growing waiting list to attend. As a result, a number of volunteers have set up additional Coderdojo events across the Greater Manchester area including popular sessions in Bolton, Burnage, Wilmslow and Wythenshawe.

December 2015 sees the third birthday of Manchester Coderdojo with plans to continue its development and expansion into 2016 and beyond.



It's a great day out and a real credit to its enthusiastic army of volunteers. Aimed at children, accompanying parents will enjoy it too"
Manchester Coderdojo parent attendee



It's incredible how quickly the Manchester Coderdojo has grown and how popular it has become. We have a waiting list and could easily have 500 attendees at each session"
Manchester Coderdojo co-founder Steven Flower





Services - NURTURE

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



SharpFutures' **POD** is a 'people on demand' new entrant service to support the ever-changing needs of creative digital business. **POD** builds on the successful 'Talent Pool' programme, now re-branded and expanded to provide a clearer, more targeted service for both entrants and businesses.

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.

With members recruited and retained based on a 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.

Recruitment is key to **POD**. The programme aims to create maximum impact and intervention value by recruiting young residents from across the Manchester City Region, and specifically those who demonstrate potential and ability, but lack the means or networks to access or develop in the sector on their own.

POD members require four key skills:

- **Adaptability**
- **Fast learning**
- **Attention to detail**
- **Reliability**

SharpFutures has developed the "Join Us" recruitment campaign, designed by the apprentice team with support from leading graphic designer Malcom Garrett, to identify and recruit apprentices and work-placements for 2014/15.



Creative Skillset is part of the government's 'Employer Ownership of Skills' pilot. It empowers the Creative Industries to develop skills and talent by influencing and shaping policy, by ensuring quality and by securing vital investment for individuals to become the best in their field and for businesses to grow.

As the industry skills body for the Creative Industries, Creative Skillset works across film, television, radio, fashion, animation, games, visual effects, textiles, publishing, advertising, marketing communications and performing arts.

Working with Creative Skillset, SharpFutures has developed employer-led skills development programmes in three areas: apprentices, paid work experience and volunteers.

THE WHITE ROOM

The White Room are specialist digital training providers working SharpFutures and some of the largest brands in the digital media sector. These include SONY, News UK, and BSkyB. For the past 5 years, The White Room have been delivering Digital Apprentice Training. They were the first in the UK to design and deliver Web Design and Development Apprenticeships at Level 3 and have since developed their provision to cover Creative, Technical and Digital Marketing. The White Room are the only apprentice provider to concentrate solely on the digital media sector and as such are recognised as leaders in their field.

Apprentices

Over the last year, SharpFutures has employed 9 apprentices across a range of skills areas in response to immediate skill-gaps and business needs:

Dominic Corry	20	New Moston	Digital Runner/Writer	Apprentice Level 3
Lewis Marsh	18	Miles Platting	Digital Runner/Graphic Designer	Apprentice Level 3
Kerry Parker	22	Newton Heath	Digital Runner/Social Media	Apprentice Level 3
Sophie Hukin	17	Failsworth	FOH Co-ordinator	Apprentice Level 2
Sam Wagster	21	Fallowfield	Production Runner/Social Media	Apprentice Level 3
Barney Warburton	17	Leigh	IT/AV	Apprentice Level 3
Tom Rothwell	22	Moston	Production Runner/Social Media	Apprentice Level 4
Danny Moore	23	Wythenshawe	Social Media	Apprentice Level 4
Dan Walsh	24	Gorton	Graphic Designer/Social Media	Apprentice Level 4



Apprentices

As well as delivering their day to day work roles, apprentices are available to hire 'on demand' as runners at The Space Project, providing a valuable additional service at the facility for a number of clients.



Many thanks 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 give, 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 Line Producer

Apprenticeships have been taken up across a wide-range of disciplines within the sector, including administration, graphics, event support and copywriting.

Digital Runner Dominic Corry was given the opportunity via the POD Service to utilise his talent for creative writing. With the help of SharpFutures, he was engaged to work with Digital Ninjas, writing the entire programme for their cover-band festival, 'BoltFest'.



Dominic's flair and ability to convey atmosphere and excitement in his writing - make him stand out as someone who has great potential as a copywriter. We were extremely thankful for his copywriting contributions to our Boltfest festival"

Jools Taylor, Digital Ninjas

* Profiles of a selection of the SharpFutures 2014/5 apprentices are attached as appendices to this report.



Placements

Working with Creative Skillset, SharpFutures has created 12 paid work experience placements, each of 3 months duration. Placements included developing digital content, production and editing work, training as runners at The Sharp Project and The Space Project, and taking part in expert-led masterclasses and workshops.



SharpFutures Placements 2014/5:

Production

Adam Gardyne	22	Failsworth
Aimee Speed	17	Bury
Callum Critchley	24	Blackley
Javier Borrás Anta	22	Ancoats
Lucy Kirwin	21	Salford
Natalie Potts	33	Failsworth
Nick Wood	30	Chorlton
Dan Tiernan	18	Didsbury

Support

Rachael Rothwell	24	Moston
Shu-Ling Li	24	Moston
Becky Fell	18	Bury
Sally Hirshman	24	Chorlton





SharpFutures
Framed

JD Sports content division worked with SharpFutures graduate placements to produce digital content, showcased at the **FRAMED** event on 10th March 2015

The main brief, running across the duration of the placement, was to develop a concept of their choosing within the brief guidelines and to pitch it to an industry panel.

The group were given a title - "Report on a local scene that is of interest to a youth audience" - to respond to, research and develop, whilst being trained and mentored in production processes, to the point of producing a fully distinguished product of work.



View Content at: sharpfutures.org.uk/framed/



Masterclasses

SharpFutures' 2014/5 Placements benefitted from 24 expert-led masterclasses, including:

- **Report on a scene/ Making things happen**
- Terry Christian
- **How to get your Films to Cannes**
- Endeavour Productions
- **Photography Skills: Composition/ Visuals/ Lighting**
- Neilson Reeves Photography
- **Production Resource: Camera/Lighting/Sound**
- Zemap Productions

A full list of masterclasses in conjunction with professionals based at The Sharp Project and The Space Project is included in the performance section of this report. (Page 27)

Being on the placement with SharpFutures quite rapidly starting to make me wonder why I bothered with University, these placements are much, much more beneficial."

Lucy Kirwen



It's easy to get overwhelmed when starting out. The vision or idea of what you want to achieve might seem like a million miles away, but hearing other peoples' stories show it might not be that far away when you break it down."

Nick Wood



What an asset! Rachael has been with us a week and is already demonstrating what an asset she could be to the sector. Her previous experience in retail and restaurants has ensured her customer service skills are excellent and she has a thoroughly organised approach to the tasks she is given. These are the kind of young people we are keen to work with and grow to deliver world class production facilities."

Colin Johnson - General Manager (Group)





Volunteers

SharpFutures offers a series of voluntary opportunities, which are not accredited or designed as formal training or work experience, but which can often be the critical 'first step' in accessing the sector.

A case in point is the story of Kyle Bell, who, after supporting an in-house event with The Sharp Project's new tenant JD Sports on a voluntary basis, was offered the opportunity to pitch his skills directly to the JD Sports Production Team, and as a result has secured employment with them as an Assistant Video Producer.



Services - GROW

We **GROW** through the sale of our business products and services with clients who are looking for a socially responsible product with

SharpFutures Clients



SharpFutures continues to deliver PR, Marketing, Social Media, The Campus Members Club, Events Management and Front of House services to The Sharp Project and the newly opened Space Project (since its opening in Spring 2014), in support of high profile events including:

- Manchester Youtube Creators
- RSA
- Pitch @ the Palace



Production Services

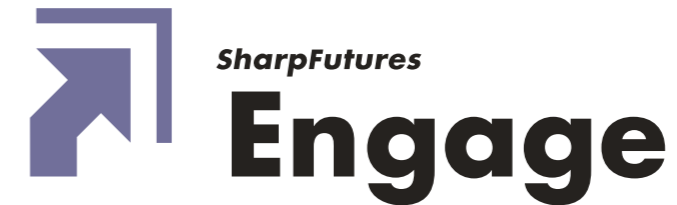
SharpFutures continues to build key relationships with Production and Broadcast partners through the POD model, providing key production services - as and when the need has arisen for dedicated skills.

A total of 40 companies has worked with the POD to date, including:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABF Pictures • 80 Hertz • Project Simply • Tiger Aspect • PAM/Sharp Project • CBBC/Worlds End • Amandas Catering • AppLearn • Digital Next • Neilson Reeves • Promotion • Zemap • Aardman Animations • Mighty Giant • FutureEverything • Mount Pleasant • PUMA • Social capital Venture • Tristan Poyser Photography • FAC 365 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stonecross Films • Brickhouse • Intelesant • TunaFish • Aequitas Forensics • Eon Reality • Future Artists • RSA • Promotion Hire • JD • Digital Ninjas • Zimovi • Youtube • Pitch at the Place • Cisco • Pixel Kicks • Design MCR • Nutmeg • Kay • PAM |
|---|---|

Through Discover we seed our community in learning, through POD we are beginning to see nurtured careers reach their tipping points and in year four we will grow ENGAGE and FRAMED to ensure we move further away from grant seed funding into full sustainability through traded services.

In 2016 our aim is to grow our services and increase our traded income further from 61% to 70%

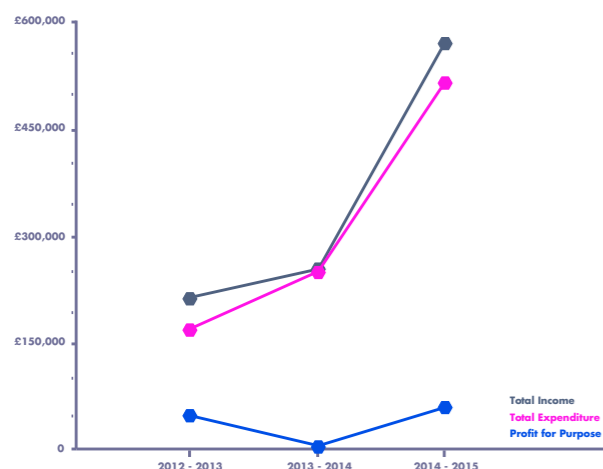


Is a Social Media content creation platform, for TV



A youth channel for Manchester's digital natives by Manchester's digital natives.

Company Trading	April 2012 - March 2013	April 2013 - March 2014	April 2014 - March 2015
Total Income	£221,201	£254,078	£585,643
Total Expenditure	£163,821	£248,494	£521,682
Profit for Purpose	£57,380	£5,584	£63,961



The third year surplus trading for SharpFutures demonstrates continued and significant financial growth, the scale of which suggests that the investment from across the last two years has contributed to the financial growth whilst also maximising the social impact outcomes (as demonstrated throughout this report).

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 meaning 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.

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.

Accounts published in December 2015 at Companies House.

Performance



SharpFutures continues to dynamically respond to the constitutional commitments made in its Community Interest Company Statement of Intent. Approaching the needs of the company with an entrepreneurial learning attitude, SharpFutures has expanded on the knowledge and experience it has gathered over the past three years of operation, increasing awareness and understanding of the Creative Digital sector, and developing innovative access routes and pathways including its 'Discover' programme and POD talent development model.

SharpFutures Social Impact Performance

1. To create and sustain careers in the digital sector

i) The completion and delivery of eleven Manchester residents as Apprentices:

Nine apprentices have completed their Level 3 and 4 apprenticeships, and are now in employment.

Three of the nine have attained managerial roles:

- **Tom Rothwell, who went on to be Assistant Stage Manager at The Space Project, and was the winner of Broadcast Runner of the Year at the 2015 Broadcast Tech Young Talent Awards**
- **Sam Wagster, who went on to be Assistant Trainee Stage Manager at The Space Project**
- **Dan Walsh, who is now Studio Manager with SharpFutures**



Sam's key skill is the fact that he is so approachable, the clients love working with him because they know he's always there"

Dean Sinicola - Stage Manager, Space Project





Two have progressed into employment within the sector:

- **Danny Moore now works full time in social media**
- **Barney Warburton is now working freelance doing stage set up and rigging for several events companies.**

Four have progressed further into a career pathway with SharpFutures, supported by an anterior Level 3 skills programme, based on the key skills exhibited in their first year:

- **Kerry Parker – PR & Marketing Executive**
- **Dominic Corry - PR & Marketing Executive**
- **Lewis Marsh – PR & Marketing Executive**
- **Sophie Hukin - Office Executive**

Two apprentices did not make it through the apprenticeship (an 80% success rate for the programme).

Additionally, a number of participants in the SharpFutures' Placement programme have gone on to secure employment, including:

- **Lucy Kirwen - Attained Full time role with The Sharp Project tenants JD Sport**
- **Nick Wood - Attained Full time role with The Sharp Project tenants JD Sport**
- **Callum Critchley- Works for the SharpFutures' POD team**
- **Natalie Potts - Attained Full Time role with Tenants of the Sharp Project 'Bird Consultancy'**
- **Aimee Speed – Attained Full Time role with Agency**
- **Javier Borrás Anta – Works for the SharpFutures' POD team**



Rachael Rothwell and Shu-Ling Li have secured full time roles at The Sharp Project and The Space Project. Rebecca Fell and Sally Hirshman have also been invited to join SharpFutures POD.

- ii) To increase the number of Creative Digital employers trialling young people through Talent Pool

A total of 40 companies has worked with the POD in 2014/5, up from 25 in 2013/14

- iii) To increase the volume of actively inspiring Creative Digital Careers

The SharpFutures' Placement programme has included masterclasses on:



Masterclass/Session

Delivered by

Introduction to the creative sector	SharpFutures (Rose Marley/Rachael McGuinness)
Getting to know you –Writing you blog/Biography	SharpFutures (Sheni Ravji-Smith)
Report on a scene/ Making things happen	Terry Christian
How to get your Film to Cannes	Endeavour Productions
Photography Skills: Composition/ Visuals/ Lighting	Neilson Reeves Photography
Production Resource: Camera/Lighting/Sound	Zemap Productions
How to make programmes in broadcast productions	SharpFutures (Elli Metcalfe)
Social Media Overview	SharpFutures (Lauren Hira)
Social Media Content Platforms and Distribution	Social Capital Network
The Science of Play	Design Manchester
Following Brand Guidelines	SharpFutures (Tom Clarke)
Design Dojo	Design Manchester with Malcom Garret
North: The Great Debate	Design Manchester
Professional Conduct and Presentational skills	Contact Experts
Production Process: Responding to the Brief	Brickhouse Productions
Production Process: Concept to presentation	Crocodile Media
CoderDojo	SharpFutures/Manchester Coderdojo
Behance Portfolio Review	Degree 53
So you are ready to be a freelancer?	MultiSolo/Cowgill Holloway
Post production With Creative Cloud- Design for print	Soho Editors
Post Production with Creative Cloud - film production	Soho Editors
Setting up a WordPress CMS	SharpFutures (Dan Walsh & Danny Moore)
Optimising your SEO	Digitangle
Project Management Skills	Digitangle



- iv) To engage with and educate the education establishment about the sector SharpFutures has hosted 14 schools and 261 pupils through the Discover programme.

The following schools have worked with Discover:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| • Burnage Academy for Boys | - Burnage |
| • Co-operative Academy | - Blackley |
| • Gorton Education Village/Cedar Mount | - Gorton |
| • Loreto High School | - Moss Side |
| • Manchester Academy | - Moss Side |
| • Manchester Communication Academy | - Harpurhey |
| • Manchester Creative and Media Academy | - Blackley |
| • Newall Green High School | - Wythenshawe |
| • Parrs Wood High School | - East Didsbury |
| • St Matthews RC High School | - Moston |
| • St Paul's RC High School | - Wythenshawe |
| • The Barlow RC High School | - Didsbury |
| • The East Manchester Academy | - Beswick |
| • Trinity High C of E High School | - Hulme |
| • Whalley Range High School for Girls | - Whalley Range |
| • William Hulme Grammar School | - Whalley Range |
| • Wright Robinson High School | - Gorton |

2. To build capacity and opportunity across the sector from deprived communities.

SharpFutures has significantly expanded its capacity-building work with local communities, both directly through the 'Discover' programme and indirectly in generating wider awareness of the Creative Digital sector through CoderDojos and its outreach work with local work clubs, housing trusts and community groups.

Working with the expanding expertise across The Sharp Project team and associates, SharpFutures has been able to create additional economic impact for local business, and open access for young people into industry trends across the Creative Digital community – such as Digital Forensics, UX and Gaming.



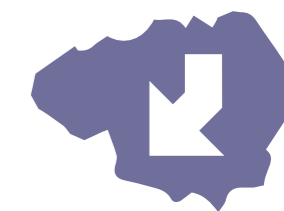
3. To open access to talent from a wide social background

SharpFutures actively seeks to employ and offer experience to individuals from a wide social background across Greater Manchester. This is achieved through ensuring a minimum of 70% of the young people employed come from the most economically deprived GM postcodes (according to the IMD) and are predominantly Manchester residents.

SharpFutures works local schools and community-based organisations such as 'Yes Group' (Northwoods Housing), Factory Youth Zone and Gorton Youth Club to ensure as many local young people as possible are made aware of the opportunities available.

Recruitment includes targeted marketing to young people and agencies through networks such as:

- National Apprenticeship Website
- The Manchester College
- Job Centre Plus local network and employment leads
- Network of Manchester high schools – including Head Teachers, Head of Careers and Media & IT staff
- Network of local youth groups and community hubs
- FE colleges Xavarian College and Loreto College
- Northwards Housing Trust
- The Yes Project employment group in Newton Heath
- The Works employment group in Gorton
- MCC Regeneration Teams and Neighbourhood Managers
- GM Youth Panel Network
- MCC Cultural Economy – Creative Employers Programme
- SharpFutures Talent Pool mailing lists
- The Sharp Project Tenants' network
- The Sharp Project Social Networks
- Network of Creative and Digital agencies across the GM city region including Reform Radio, Z-Arts, Contact, Cornerhouse (now Home), Noise Festival, Community Arts North West, and Factory Youth Zone
- SharpFutures Ambassadors and Word of Mouth Networks



The 'Join Us' Campaign

The 'Join Us' recruitment campaign generated over **850** information clicks on the dedicated page on the SharpFutures website, with approximately **200** downloads of the information pack, which ultimately converted into **35** direct applications from specifically targeted young people. As a result, SharpFutures identified **30** interviewees and recruited **11** of these as **POD** apprentices.

TRAFFIC



Targets

SharpFutures has developed an impressive portfolio of clients, offering many of the services of a full creative digital agency and balancing the delivery of a high production values with a socially responsible product.

SharpFutures continues to invest in a large numbers of new entrants to the Creative Digital sector through its **POD** service, feeding the needs of the growing sector with skills that are ready to be employed.

To date, SharpFutures has successfully brought forward viable employment pathways for apprenticeships and wider **POD** members into the sector. The next challenge is for SharpFutures to embed the offer with industry, so that the pathway for future **POD** members is developed with similar outcomes.

Targets for 2015/6 include:

1. Expanding the **POD** programme to deliver 15 apprenticeships both level 3 and Level 4 in 2015/6, and 33 placements
2. Increasing the **POD** supply chain
3. Develop powerful partnerships and industry partners (including the BBC, ITV)
4. To grow an income of mixed economy and to support activity by providing content services through **ENGAGE** and **FRAMED**
5. The continued delivery of service contracts to The Sharp Project - and The Space Project with high social impact
6. To market and sell **DISCOVER** to wider audiences
7. To increase the traded income to 70%

The Board

i) Governance: Non-executive Directors & Company Secretary



David Sharrock

Financial Director, SharpFutures Manchester CIC
Chief Executive Officer at WRG Live.



Ian Kennedy

Chair, SharpFutures CIC
Vice President, Technical Operations, Cisco International Limited.



Susan Woodward
OBE, FRSA

Founder of The Sharp Project and The Space Project, and Creative Digital Champion for Manchester.



Paula Crosby

Company Secretary
SharpFutures Manchester CIC
Executive Members Support Team
Manager/Senior PA to Deputy Leader at Manchester City Council.

ii) Operation: Executive Directors



Rose Marley

Co-Founding CEO
SharpFutures Manchester CIC.



Lee Stanley

Co-Founding Managing Director
SharpFutures Manchester CIC.



Professor Malcolm Garret
RDI, FISTD

Creative Director at Image&Co,
Ambassador for Manchester School of Art, and
Co-Curator of Design Manchester.



Appendix i: SharpFutures' Apprentices -



Kerry

Kerry from Newton Heath started her time at SharpFutures as an early member of the POD scheme (formerly known as Talent Pool) and worked two hours a week on Front of House as well as volunteering for any Sharpfutures event she was given the opportunity to work with, honing her organisational skills and extending her network.

As a direct result of her hard work and willingness to make herself available she then graduated to the apprentice team as a Digital Runner - which involved her working as a runner for the building, tenants and occasionally with production companies such as ABF Pictures and Tiger Aspect's Mount Pleasant. As she continued the apprenticeship, she was given the opportunity to start working on the SharpFutures Social Media, before taking over the role fully.

She now creates and curates all Social Media content from members of the SharpFutures team and is in charge of ensuring that SharpFutures' various Social Media channels always have fresh and engaging content on them.

She has since completed her social media apprenticeship.



Dominic

Dominic was born and raised in New Moston and after 18 months of hard work voluntary working through SharpFutures POD Scheme, helping with the running of events such as the F Type Jaguar Launch and Digital Teapot, his tenacity to attain the required skills landed him the role of Apprentice Digital Runner in March 2014 working with an array of productions including Mike Garry's St Anthony shoot.

Throughout his first year at SharpFutures Dominic's talent for copyright and creative writing became apparent through his personal blogs and copy for SharpFutures which lead to him being hired as a POD member, and to write an entire Festival Programme for Sharp Project Tenants Digital Ninjas covers band festival 'Boltfest'. Now in his second year, Dominic has taken large amounts of control of all SharpFutures' communications and promotional copywriting as PR /Marketing executive through his apprenticeships.

He is also in a band called 'The Madding Crowd' and sources a lot of creativity from creating the band's general content.

Dominic is currently studying for his Level 3 NVQ in Creative Media with The White Room.

He previously completed a Level 3 in Digital Marketing.



Appendix ii: Case Studies



Lewis

Eighteen-year old Lewis was discovered through SharpFutures' outreach work with West Gorton Youth Project. One year on, Lewis has completed his Level 3 in Social Media for Business with SharpFutures supported by Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, and will be staying on to undertake further Level 3 Study.

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.



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



Working with SharpFutures has opened my eyes to a whole new world around me which I am now thankfully part of, so many doors and opportunities have been opened. Being invited by Tiger Aspect to visit the Mr Bean animation studio in London is exciting and I hope to get an insight into industry-standard animation and meet some interesting people.

Lewis Marsh, SharpFutures



Natalie Potts

Natalie was raised in Failsworth, North Manchester and joined the inaugural SharpFutures Placement team in autumn 2014. She has had a passion for creativity from a young age, and developing her craft whilst studying Fine Art at Liverpool John Moores University.

However, like many young graduates in Natalie's position, she found it difficult to create a sustainable living from her creativity, and worked in retail and as an attendant in an art gallery. She has established a career as a portrait artist, taking commissions from local businesses, including patrons such as the eclectic emporium Affleck's Palace, bass player Mani, and poet Marvin Cheeseman.

During this period, Natalie launched a free community magazine 'NM' creating opportunities for small businesses to access local customers directly. The monthly magazine ran for 12 issues with a regular circulation of 3000, before the effects of recession took hold. Although the magazine couldn't continue due to rising cost, by producing the publication, Natalie focused her creative eye on print design and sharpened her graphic and digital skills.

In autumn 2014, Natalie began her placement with SharpFutures, whilst she simultaneously launched her micro business 'Printed Painted' selling personalised jute bags for children. Orders were steady, but it was only when she attended a Social Media Marketing workshop with SharpFutures Consultant and Trainer Philip Coen that Natalie was able to build an online presence. By directly applying the tips and industry tricks to her micro-business, she was able to increase the number of orders five-fold in a 4 week period.



Soon after, Natalie was offered a role with Bird Consultancy via POD, who are tenants at The Sharp Project, impressing them with her large back catalogue of independent and SharpFutures related experiences.

Natalie said of the Placement:

Coming from a fine art background it (the placement) has been a learning experience to take on new roles and adapting my skills to them. I have enjoyed working with likeminded creatives and sharing ideas. My time with SharpFutures has had a positive impact on the way I view my work and a career seems more attainable now than before. I feel more confident in my creativity, and that career wise I could achieve most things I put my mind to"



Natalie is currently working on a full time POD contract with The Sharp Project tenants Bird Consultancy



Callum Critchley

Callum, who was raised in Harpurhey, had been desperate to get a foot in the creative industries door following his completion of a Film and Media studies degree at Manchester MMU, after showing a creative flare for script writing and production.

SharpFutures identified him as a perfect candidate for a 3 month creative and digital placement. Callum was unemployed but after graduating from this placement and helping to create a film project in the process, he was made a POD member and has since had regular POD bookings and worked on a variety of projects and events including:

- "R U JD" a competition even held by JD
- Running Duties with Mount Pleasant, ABF and CBBC
- Running at the Sharp Project and Space Project
- ITV Running for RAW TV
- Wall to Wall running on BBC's The Voice



Special Thanks

Annual Report produced by:

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- **Lewis Marsh - Graphic Design**
- **Dan Walsh & Tom Clarke - Design Consultancy**
- **Rose Marley - Copy**
- **Clare Devaney**
- **Colin Boulter - Neilson Reeves Photography**
- **Andy Marshall - Photography**

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