

A young man with dark skin and short black hair is focused on working on a complex, metallic, industrial-looking assembly. He is wearing a black Adidas tracksuit with white stripes on the sleeves and a lanyard with a badge around his neck. The background is a blurred indoor setting with a white table, a potted plant, and a cardboard box. The word "Mediorite" is overlaid in large, bold, orange letters with a copyright symbol.

# Mediorite<sup>©</sup>

# TEN YEARS OF MEDIORITE

**Mediorite is a social enterprise working with young Londoners from diverse backgrounds who have an interest in film. We make films that look good and do good, providing meaningful career progression and personal development opportunities for 16 to 24 year olds.**

To celebrate our 10th year in business we worked with an independent evaluation specialist to review the effectiveness and impact of Mediorite's activity over a period of 8 years, from October 2010 to July 2019. It found our support has contributed to four key outcomes:

- Increased employability
- Improved mental health and wellbeing
- A better understanding of creative career pathways
- Making connections through film

With the support of our clients, funders and delivery partners we have inspired hundreds of diverse young people to explore their creative abilities and move towards careers in London's thriving creative sector.

## **ABOUT THE EVALUATION**

The aim of this evaluation was to summarise the processes and outcomes that took place across multiple Mediorite

projects in terms of provision of creative careers training, our impact on young people's chances of employment and how we support young people into creative careers.

The analysis method for this evaluation involved collating organisational documents, including: end of year reports, outcomes data, programme delivery content, case studies, partnership building information and stakeholder interviews.

The resulting report puts our impact in the context of our development as an organisation and underlines the need for Mediorite's work. Our aim is that people and businesses that share our values will collaborate with us to empower young people to take up careers in the creative industries. We also hope our journey and learnings will inspire and inform other social businesses using creative activities to tackle social issues.





It is not an understatement to say hundreds of people have helped Mediorite over the years. The below list is made up of clients, friends and contacts from across media, youth work and social enterprise sectors who have supported me as well as the business.

Mediorite Board; Anders Henrikson, Henry Wilson, Ellis Croft, Dominy Roe, Arit Eminue, Fay Canning, Judy Shum, Penny Munday, Tanya Weekes, Tobias Priscott.

Barney Worfolk Smith, Diane Leeming, Dr Michelle de Jongh, Anthony Matthews, KC, Katy Dawe, Adam Brichto, Marion Spiers, Ohaji Kamara, Agenda, OffCenter, Dr Carly Raby, Joel and Just for Kids Law, Bootstrap, London Youth Support Trust, Jonathon Chandler, Social Enterprise UK, School for Social Entrepreneurs, PwC's Social Entrepreneurs Club and Daniela Lloyd-Williams at Jac Trust. The Childrens Society's Dave Pettet, PwC's Elise Black, Vicki Barringer, David Adair and Jeremy Willis and Wates Groups' Su Pickerill.

Particular thanks to a long term partner in crime Jessica Rose Smith, Leanne Rogers for putting her heart and soul into Mediorite... and of course my mum.

- Lucy Ferguson, Mediorite founder

# TEN WAYS MEDIORITE MAKES AN IMPACT

Mediorite's mission is to tackle youth unemployment in London by developing diverse young people to move into the creative sector industries on their doorstep. We work with young people to produce films, supporting their progression towards a creative career through networks, training and paid work.

## 1. BRINGING DIVERSE YOUNG TALENT INTO THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

More than 1300 diverse young people exploring the creative industries and 170 supported into work, education or training.

## 2. PROVIDING FREE CREATIVE INDUSTRY TRAINING AND WORK EXPERIENCE

2,201 hours of work experience placements and 2,163 hours of free training provided.

## 3. GIVING INSIGHT INTO THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

39 youth visits to creative businesses facilitated.

## 6. SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE THE LEAD

Young leaders ran funded projects totalling £65,916.

## 7. BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS THROUGH CREATIVE TEAMS

90% of training participants surveyed from a programme in 2017 rated their team work and likelihood of finding a creative job as good, very good or excellent after training with us compared with just 21% for team work and 5% for finding a creative job before training.



**4. ENGAGING HARD TO REACH YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM**

156 NEET young people engaged with Mediorite programmes from 2010 to 2018.

**8. DEVELOPING PROFESSIONALISM AND NETWORKS THROUGH INDUSTRY CONTACTS**

163 creative professionals have delivered talks and 84 provided mentoring to diverse young people.

**5. OFFERING PAID WORK TO BOOST CONFIDENCE AND FINANCIAL WELLBEING**

£57,986 paid out to young people for freelance work since 2010.

**9. RECOGNISING YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACHIEVEMENTS THROUGH ACCREDITATION**

118 young people gained formal accreditation for their work.

**10. EMPLOYING AND INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE EVERY STEP OF THE WAY**

4 young people and 15 freelancers under 24 are currently working for Mediorite.



"I first came to Mediorite as part of my Creative Media apprenticeship. I wasn't very confident in myself or my abilities, but Mediorite pushed me in a positive way. Not too long after, I was running training and had become the editor of their youth magazine, YHWorld. Four years later I am working as a creative freelancer, getting my own work in and helping others to get their message out there. I am truly grateful for all of the support that Mediorite has given me. Without their help and guidance, I wouldn't be where I am today."

-- Michelle Stannard, former apprentice

# OUR MISSION

London is a tale of two cities, as statistics compiled in 2017 by London Poverty Profile (Trust for London) show. It's simultaneously a booming center of global finance and creativity and a city with high levels of poverty and deprivation.

## YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN LONDON

London's young people are more likely to be unemployed than older working-age adults and 22% of people aged 16-24 (90,000 people) are deemed to be at risk of insecure employment. In Hackney, the main location for Mediorite's youth engagement, 36% of people are living in poverty and 1 in 10 working-age people are claiming an out-of-work benefit. East London's unemployment and income-poverty rates are juxtaposed with the rising number of creative firms located in the borough. The creative sector is one of the fastest-growing employment sectors in London, however, young people are struggling to take advantage of these emerging creative and tech opportunities.

## FOCUSING ON DIVERSE YOUNG PEOPLE

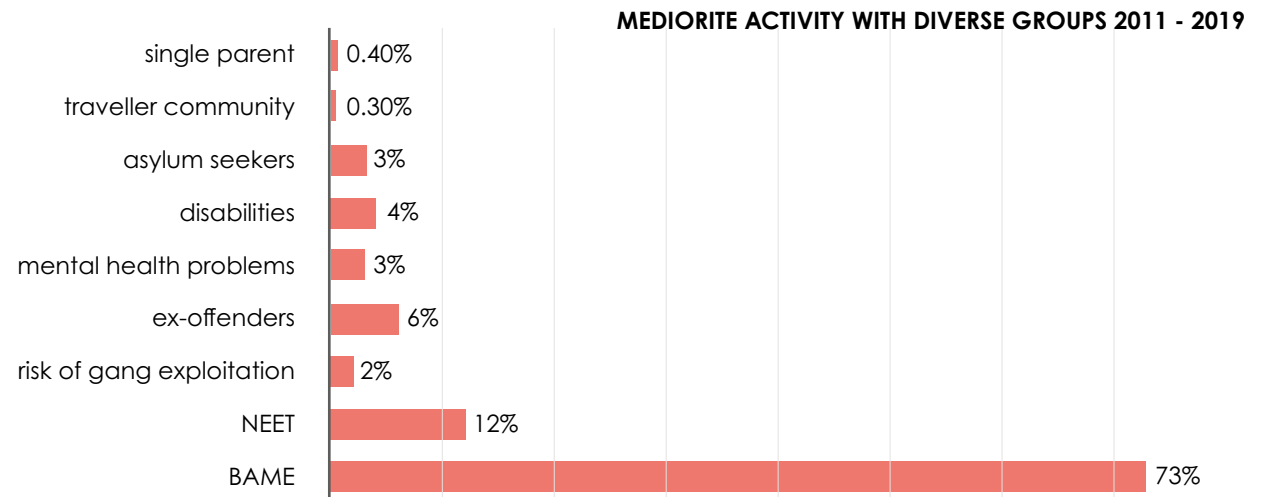
In London, 41% of people are from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and the majority of the young people we work with are non-white. 91% of the cohort we worked with in 2017/2018 came from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, and 60% of these had dual heritage. The figures have been similarly high across other years. Although the poverty rate is not broken down by ethnicity, the available data shows

that issues of poverty and inequality particularly affect Londoners from ethnic minority backgrounds. Many of our participants are vulnerable to social exclusion – an important risk factor for youth unemployment.

## WORKING WITH DIVERSE GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

We work with young people from a wide range of backgrounds, communities and experiences, including young people

who: are from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups; are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), have mental and physical health needs, have a record of offending, are asylum seekers, are from traveller communities, are young caregivers and parents, experience housing insecurity, are victims of youth violence, gangs and knife crime.





**“I see all these people working in creative businesses in Hoxton but they don’t look like me. In Connexions, they just tell you about building jobs.”**

*- Akeine Bennett, 17*

In 2012-2013 we worked with Shannique, a young person who was referred to Mediorite through The Royal Society for the London Blind. She progressed on to paid work with Mediorite and to do a degree in Human Resources. In the same year we supported a young person from disability support charity Heart & Soul and delivered bespoke training to 15 young asylum seekers and 4 young girls from the traveler communities in Hackney.

Over the past 10 years we have gained valuable insight into the challenges that young people experience during key developmental stages in their early adult life. Our learning from working with diverse groups and young people experiencing challenging circumstances has built our capacity to work with young people from all walks of life.

Organisational changes have included introducing new policies and procedures

that support positive risk taking, including a Drugs and Alcohol policy and Six Point Plan with statement on weapons created in collaboration with Xpress HR consultancy (2016). As a result of social impact consultancy with Michelle De Jongh (PHD Gender, Poverty and Development), we adapted our language from describing the young people we work with as ‘disadvantaged’ to adopt the more positive ‘diverse’.

#### **CASE STUDY: diversity at the Inspire Digital Pathways Project**

Across 2015-2016 the Inspire Digital Pathways Project worked with 27 young people. Of these, 11 were excluded from mainstream education, 5 were registered as disabled, 4 were ex-offenders, 3 experienced learning difficulties, 2 were being supported by CAMHS (Child and Adult Mental Health Services) and 12 were NEET.

# FREE YOUTH TRAINING

Since 2014 Mediorite has offered three free youth training programmes: Outreach, The Academy and FastFWD.

Developed with support from our long-standing stakeholder, JAC Trust, each programme has the potential to progress participants to the next level of experience. Our tiered progression pathways provide an entry point for young people with a wide range of experience, creative ability and formal education, making sure that Mediorite's pathways to paid employment opportunities are accessible to young Londoners from all backgrounds and walks of life.



## OUTREACH

A short-term engagement, Outreach involves a 'Make a film in a day' workshop delivered in alternative provision settings, with peer-mentors leading groups of young people through the process of making a film in a fast-paced fun workshop. Participants recreate music videos and produce campaign films whilst learning about concept, storyboarding, camera skills, roles and basic editing. The programme is AQA accredited, with a focus on team work and leadership development.



## THE ACADEMY

For a small group of approximately eight participants with a strong interest in film, The Academy is a six-week training programme resulting in a Bronze Arts Award. We focus in on 'film heroes', watching and reviewing film products, breaking them down and remaking a moment from a famous film that is chosen by the group.



## FASTFWD

An advanced programme that builds work-ready skills, FastFWD sees a group of young people take on a media brief from a charitable client. Once they have completed the course, all graduates are provided with paid work at Mediorite. This programme began with a bespoke mentoring approach and has transitioned to a group activity. Following a review of FastFwd and of young people's employment progression after they have moved onto paid work we have recently developed the programme to have an increased focus on supporting positive changes in behaviour and attitudes, coming into effect as part of Mediorite's current activity Project Shift (2019).



## YOUNG PERSON CASE STUDY: DARREN

We started working with Darren when we were commissioned by Homerton Hospital's youth disability inclusion team, The Key, to run workshops around how to grow membership. His idea, 'Key Man', was so brilliant, we offered him work experience before we'd even found out that he had 7000 followers on Twitter. Initially Darren came in to help with The Key's social media, but it soon became apparent that Mediorite needed his help too.

At the time we had 160 Twitter followers and we spent a great proportion of our capacity on our youth brand YHWorld, for little business gain. We set Darren

the task of helping redefine Mediorite's communications style, build Twitter followers and help find things to tweet about. With Darren's input in less than a year we leapt up to 541 relevant engaged followers. Darren helped to develop Mediorite's brand, including our style guide, and he supported us to distinguish YHWorld from Mediorite, including renaming our youth brand MedioritePlus.

Founder Lucy Ferguson says "What I hadn't realised when I first met him is that Darren suffers from high anxiety levels and depression. Initially he was coming in for the whole day, but always refused

lunch money and I didn't know why. After accidentally putting Darren in a really stressful situation I found out that he's not an independent traveller and won't go into shops on his own, which was why he wasn't taking lunch. I learnt that you need to ask more questions of young people before you start working with them so you can really identify barriers to them taking part. We worked with his mum to find a way of getting him into the office. Every Friday I pick him up with my dog at 12(ish!) and his mum collects him from the office at 4.30."

Darren was completely isolated when we first met him, and he has gone on to

become one of Mediorite's video editors. Our relationship has been going for seven years and we are now mentoring him as he gets ready to leave London and move in with his girlfriend in Bath.



## OUR IMPACT

Our ultimate goal for the young Londoners we work with is for them to gain work or training in the creative sector. Since 2010 we have provided activities and opportunities that empower young people to achieve various outcomes linked to employment. The nature of Mediorite's organisational outcomes has changed as we have adapted, grown and developed across ten years of

activity. For the purpose of this evaluation Mediorite's intended outcomes for youth have been defined as follows:

- › increased employability
- › improved mental health and wellbeing
- › diverse groups of young people are aware of creative career pathways
- › community cohesion through film

## OUTCOME 1: INCREASED EMPLOYABILITY

**Success in this area is when a young person becomes work ready, gains accreditation and moves into employment, an apprenticeship, further education and/or training. We focus on partnering with organisations that are working with the young people we recognise as having barriers to work.**

We have helped young people increase their employability by coordinating training activities, visits to creative businesses and assisting on set of the films we make for clients, providing opportunities for them to learn tacit and practical filmmaking skills, gain knowledge and grow in confidence. This includes allowing young people to lead creative media projects and supporting them to learn critical analysis of the creative process. To date Mediorite has worked with more than 1300 young people and helped 170 young people move back into work, education and/or training. 100% of those who complete Mediorite's advanced programmes are offered paid work and since 2010 we

have paid young people for their work to the value of £57,986. Young people working with Mediorite have engaged in 2,201 hours of work experience placements and 2,163 hours of free training between 2010 and 2018.

### Young People who are NEET

Since 2010 we have seen increased employment outcomes for 156 young people who are categorised as NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). Our Hackney Hounds project in 2010, brought together a group of NEET young people and gave them the brief to make a short film about something they felt strongly about. After engaging with Mediorite, 100% of the Hackney Hounds film crew entered back into education. In 2011, two NEET young people working on our Hackney Young Photographers project accepted places at universities, and in the same year 13 NEET young people who engaged with YHWorld.co.uk went back to education or work including one who went to work with The Voice newspaper, and one young person with a record of offending who went on to university. In 2012, YHWorld Academy engaged nine NEET young people. One

young person received mentoring from YHWorld staff. In total, 14 people on the project moved back into education.

### Accreditation

Since 2010 Mediorite have enabled 118 young people to gain accreditation, including: AQA Media Studies, Bronze Arts Awards, and OCN Event Management qualifications. The AQA award in making a film is a single AQA unit awarded scheme that has a focus on teaching participants basic, entry-level skills and gaining a qualification in the following areas:

- 1) Basic Camera Skills
- 2) Basic Storyboard Composure
- 3) Basic Filming Skills for a Short Story
- 4) Basic Editing Skills
- 5) Learn to work in team and to manage and delegate tasks

The Bronze Arts Award is recognised by FE/HE organisations. We feel that this portfolio-based qualification is great for critical thinking. The Bronze Arts Award is a Level 1 qualification on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and is open to young people aged 11 to 25. To achieve a Bronze Arts Award, young people engaging in Mediorite's

Academy programmes collect evidence in an individual arts-log or portfolio of their experiences of actively participating in any art form.

### YOUNG PERSON CASE STUDY: SELENE

"Working with Mediorite allowed me the opportunity to develop my interests into skills beneficial in any creative workspace. I worked as a Marketing and PR Assistant which allowed me to gain the experience necessary to start my career. I went on to work for various fashion companies doing PR for over a year. Since then I have gone on to work freelance on various different film & TV projects including clients such as ITV2. Mediorite gave me an environment and the support to explore my interests at a time when I was unsure of what I wanted to pursue."



#### YOUNG PERSON CASE STUDY: ONDRE

"YHWorld has been amazing for me. I started on Reparation - it was YHWorld or prison - but once my Reparation ended I stayed on as a volunteer. My friends said I was a mug because I wasn't getting paid but what I've realised is they don't promise you, but they do make sure that you leave with something. I've visited creative businesses, won funding and met loads of interesting people. Now I'm in Uni!"

Seven years since he started to work with us, Ondre is now our lead young photographer delivering photoshoots for PwC, Wates and UCL.

## OUTCOME 2: IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**Mediorite creative training programmes are holistic, providing young people with personal development opportunities that have a specific focus on supporting them with their mental health and wellbeing as they gain real work experience in the creative sector. We coordinate group activities where young people work in teams to produce films and through this approach, we have seen great results.**

Young people experiencing adversity and hardship in multiple areas of life have been supported to build personal confidence and transferable social and communication skills. Our 2011-2013 YHWorld activity supported talented apprentices with experience of the care and mental health systems. In 2014 we worked with a team of 14 young people to deliver a mental health and art event that included talks, music and activities for children and young people called What Beauty Means to Me, supported by Youth Opportunity Funding provided by Hackney Council.

At the event we circulated a petition that gained over 200 signatures on the day, asking David Cameron for fairer mental health services for young people. Over 100 young people attended, and we gained publicity from The Guardian blog, Hackney Gazette and Hackney Today, reaching around 300,000 people.

In 2017 we consulted with our youth cohorts, and out of 71 young people we had supported, 54% identified that they struggle with a disability and/or their mental health. Young people told us that they are not progressing beyond occasional paid work with us, not because they don't have the talent or skill needed, but due to a lack of confidence in their ability to succeed and feeling that they lack the skills to manage motivation and mood. In response to this consultation with young people, we have developed a new social impact framework and policy on mental health with Dr. Carly Raby, with support from Hackney City Mind who have delivered Mental Health at Work training for our staff. We are now working with Hackney City Mind as a local referral partner.

### PAID WORK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

In London, children are more likely to live in poverty than their peers in the rest of England and in 2017, after housing costs, 700,000 children were living in poverty (LPP, 2017). We believe that paid work experience and placements for young Londoners helps to increase a positive sense of self-esteem, building confidence and real-life skills. 100% of those who complete Mediorite's advanced programmes are offered paid work and since 2010 we have paid young people for their work to the value of £57,986 and have coordinated youth-led funding to the total of £65,916.



## **OUTCOME 3: DIVERSE GROUPS OF YOUNG PEOPLE ARE AWARE OF CREATIVE CAREER PATHWAYS**

**We have found that young people often have low belief in their likelihood of developing a creative or media-based career. Our programmes engage diverse groups of young people in media-based activity, helping young Londoners who are less likely to engage in the creative sector, and who present with complex backgrounds and circumstances, to see value in a creative pathway.**

We do this by presenting young people with the opportunity to see real-life work environments, and to date we have coordinated 39 youth visits to creative businesses. The real-life work opportunities we facilitate help young people understand different roles and responsibilities in the media industry and as part of these activities young people are set tasks to create new ideas and plan to make them happen, giving insight into creative working processes.

In 2010 we conducted a youth consultation, speaking to young people on the streets of Hackney, to find out more about how young people felt about their employment prospects in their area. Our research showed us that 82% of young people felt there was nothing available for them to take part in, or that they did not know what was on offer in their area. Creative subjects came out top in our survey at school as a preferred career option, however many had little or no understanding of different job roles or qualifications needed for a job in the creative industries. Out of the young people we spoke to 91% felt depressed when thinking about the future, education or jobs. From interviews and surveys we discovered that 76% of the young people we spoke to outside the Job Centre were interested in Mediorite traineeship and The Academy, and 89% of those young people we spoke to within partner organisations were interested in creative workshops and gaining a certificate or accreditation.

### **WORK WITH YOUNG OFFENDERS**

We work with young people in custody who come with complex needs and

issues. 38% of young people in custody come from a care environment, a third have mental health issues and 50% of 15 to 17 year olds in custody have the numeracy and literacy levels of a seven to 11 year old. We aim to build practical skills with these young people and provide positive role modelling, as our staff and peer-mentors work with custody services to help change the mind-set of young people who have often had to deal with a lot and been left to fend for themselves.

In 2012, YHWorld activity engaged 12 ex-offenders, supporting one young person to win a place at university. In the same year we helped three ex-offenders into paid regular work. A further two young people joined Mediorite's Discover Young Hackney Media Ambassadors project and have since founded a TV production company. In the same year, YHWorld Academy engaged 6 young people from a local estate who are at risk of offending.

### **WORK IN ALTERNATIVE PROVISION SETTINGS**

We work in alternative provision settings with young people who are otherwise less likely to access information that could help them choose a creative career. Peer mentors run our 'Make a Film in a Day' Outreach programme so that young people in these settings can see, work with and talk to others who've chosen a creative pathway. As part of Mediorite's current activity with Project Shift (2019) young people are scheduled to embark on a 12-week creative and soft skills programme. As a group they will work together to make a social action film, building practical filmmaking experiences that can be used to gain a Silver Arts Award. We have included AQA accreditations for Project Shift Outreach Sessions, as we know that young people in alternative provision greatly value qualifications.





## CASE STUDY: HACKNEY INSIDERS

In 2014 we worked with 358 young Londoners through our Outreach programme and our trainees on our Hackney Insider program. We started a YouTube channel and ran a 10-week video training program with support from LBI DigiTas and Space Studios, with young Hackney residents creating engaging content for fellow young people in Hackney.

Supported by Hackney's Youth Opportunity Funding, we paid £7,903 to young creatives and 13 young people were employed as part of the project, all of whom are from disadvantaged backgrounds and live in deprived areas and ten of whom were previously unemployed. We partnered with Art

Against Knives who helped us create content and we won a SEDA (Social Enterprise Development Award) from Santander and Unltd, which helped us invest in new camera equipment. With this programme we developed tools for coaching and tracking participant development, including Coaching Star, Mediorite Induction, Learning and Development Plan, Distance Travelled (measures). We also introduced annual safeguarding for staff during this time. Here is a summary of the employment and progression opportunities that came about as a result of the Hackney Insiders programme:

Progression route	No. young people
Self-employment	13

## OUTCOME 4: COMMUNITY COHESION THROUGH FILM

**We aspire to bring young people together with each other, their families, community groups and media organisations to unite around film and media as a youth-owned currency.**

Our programmes facilitate diverse young people to engage with each other and their local community by making films that help to dispel negative stereotypes and allow more young people's voices to be heard. We know that young people need support from their families and the wider community, so we create film screening events for young people to share their films with their communities.

Final graduation screening gives the chance for the whole community, including parents, caregivers and family members, to celebrate young talent, and engage through film with local issues. Out of the young people taking part in 2017's FastFWD programme, no-one rated themselves beyond moderately good at sharing their ideas and 46% felt they were average or below average

before undertaking the programme. After the programme, 54% rated themselves as good or very good and no-one rated themselves lower than 'slightly above average'.

### PEER MENTORING AND NETWORKING

Embedded in Mediorite's way of working is the culture of peer mentoring, peer leadership and peer-to-peer learning. The young people we work with have delivered training at Hackney Quest, The Workshop, Bluehut and multiple youth centres in local housing estates.

Mediorite currently has 4 young members of staff and 15 freelancers aged under 24 working with other young people. We offer career progression and development opportunities to the young staff who work with us, and in 2019 staff will receive Young People and Mental Health training from London Youth. Our peer mentoring scheme and development cycle is repeated with each cohort we work with, and Mediorite's workforce of young leaders support cohorts through work experience placements before upskilling them as they get ready to deliver peer-mentoring

activities in alternative provision settings. Peer leadership creates successful delivery that informs and inspires other young people around creative careers, and we ask peers from diverse backgrounds who are experiencing career success within the sector to manage work placements, giving new trainees the best chance of settling in and achieving their best.

## YOUNG PERSON CASE STUDY: JANESHA

"Working with Mediorite has helped me tremendously with my confidence and mental health. Before I worked with Mediorite I had given up on working in the media industry. I was ready to throw my degree in the bin because of how the places I worked for in the past destroyed my confidence and love for videomaking. I just wanted to get skills anywhere else so I could move on from my broken dream.

I decided to enrol on a Prince's Trust course to get me skills in other areas, and there I also felt lost, until I met Lucy. We were going to make a music video in one of the activities and I was totally dreading it - I wanted nothing to do with the group, but I was told I had to break out of my comfort zone. From this day I am very pleased I joined the group for the day because I got to meet Lucy Ferguson. After we filmed the video, we had to have a go at editing, but we didn't have much time. I knew the program so I approached Lucy and told her I could try quickly to put it together as I have really good editing skills. She let me have a

go and praised me more than anyone has in my life. She made me feel good about editing and it sparked a candle that had been blown out for over a year in my brain. After the group was finished, she asked if I'd like to do some work experience. I told her I believe she is a very nice and kind person I would love to work with her.

I agreed to come in the office before Christmas, however, after meeting Lucy my life came crashing down. My dad ended up getting cancer and then misdiagnosed, which gave him a very slow and terrifying death. I became very suicidal after my father died and was really ready to give up. But a day after his funeral Lucy sent me a text. I couldn't believe after five months she still wanted me to work with her. I replied and met her the week after.

This woman and company gave me so much trust, love and respect. I had a reason to be alive and to try to move forward with my mental health and career. I started off helping on set and

quickly became a sound operator, which I love doing. Then I got to do video edits and camera work. Within a few months I started teaching youth filmmaking skills.

I was so shocked at how fast I had progressed working with Mediorite. It empowered me to do mentoring and control my depression and anxiety much better than I ever had in my life. I feel as if Mediorite is not just a workplace but is also my family. I've found the place I want to be at. I never want to leave. I'm gaining so much knowledge and skills from Mediorite it is making my future brighter than my past.

I love how I can pass down my skills with Mediorite. It's amazing that Mediorite has helped me overcome my fears of the media industry. It also has given me the confidence to use my video and editing skills and then pass them down to help others realise their full potential too."



## CASE STUDY: HACKNEY MASH

On the 7th July 2015 on top of Dalston Roof Park Garden, Mediorite hosted the Hackney Mash Project, a series of activities and talks from industry professionals, providing networking opportunities for aspiring multi-media youths followed by a free film screening for the wider community. The event is marked as one of Mediorite's success stories reaching 112 young people in and around East London. The event was an opportunity for Mediorite's young team to put their project management skills to the test, increase their self-confidence and gain accreditation.

The event hosted creative industry partner, film director David Alexander, who gave an inspirational talk to young filmmakers about his journey in multi-media and discussed the roles and responsibilities of a director on and off camera. Two short films were viewed followed by a Q&A session for young people to question and discuss their challenges with David Alexander.

# TEN YEARS OF MEDIORITE

From insights gained by working as a volunteer with teenagers on creative projects and developing her own career in the creative sector, Lucy Ferguson believed that young people build self-esteem through taking part in creative activities, feeling good at something and accessing paid work.

## FOUNDATION

Frustrated in her career selling advertising for Europe's largest magazine publisher, Lucy left to help develop a youth resource pack with What's Up Information that was circulated around East London, directed at teenagers and disseminated in schools and youth centres to present young people with opportunities.

Partnership was important from the outset and Lucy shared her office with another start-up social enterprise, Poached Creative, which worked alongside Mediorite for the next seven years.

Launched with youth led website [YHWorld.co.uk](http://YHWorld.co.uk)



As a result of building strong relationships with youth organisations keen to share resources with young people, in 2010 Lucy started her own social enterprise with a grant from UnLtd and launched the first youth training and opportunities programme. YHWorld.co.uk was a youth-led website produced by and for young people that promoted opportunities in the creative industries.

Tapping into Lucy's expertise and relationships in publishing YHWorld.co.uk reached 2,500 browsers and 109,000 readers each month, and acted as the glue underpinning Mediorite's engagement with young people for the next five years. In partnership with Poached Creative she won funding to make a film with young people from the local area, which resulted in the docu-drama Hackney Hounds. The seeds for film-focused work with young people had been sown.

2009

2010

UK and London riots. **First client; Peabody 'Staying Safe' campaign.** Funded youth journalism programme

In 2011 Awards for All funding saw Mediorite run our first structured journalism training programme creating content for YH World, with additional funding provided by Housing Association Peabody, charity Skyway and the local council.

Shortly after the Hackney riots, we delivered a high profile, exciting creative project Focused Young Individuals, showcasing Hackney's young creatives through photography, in collaboration with media professionals, Poached Creative and youth charity Art Against Knives. 30 young creatives got assisting roles and we reached a passing footfall of 200,000 a month with the Dalston Art Trail. The project held an exhibition with a private view that gained publicity and press attentions from Dazed, ID, Wallpaper and Fred Butler.



From 2011 to 2014 we recruited and developed The Media Ambassadors, renaming the Discover Young Hackney's opening event at The Hackney Empire and doubling attendance, as well as increasing hits to the blog.

Six ambassadors went on to receive mentoring with award-winning professional mentors. The team promoted Discover Young Hackney, a youth arts festival that aims to widen participation in the arts with young people aged under 18 in Hackney. The group met weekly

over an eight-week period to co-produce a marketing campaign for the festival aimed at young audiences.

We also co-developed and delivered Peabody's Staying Safe project in partnership with Poached Creative. Working with 49 young people across multiple boroughs, we co-created campaigns on the theme of 'staying safe', covering gangs, youth violence, legal highs and knife crime. Participants were supported to produce assets, including films, websites, advertising billboards, and three of the projects went on to win awards.

We worked with a young person from local youth mental health charity OffCentre to create and promote Sofasurferfilm.com. The creative youth group launched a new website and film in just two weeks, arranged a BBC3 speech from Housing Justice and coordinated artworks with homeless charity St Martins in the Field.

"Art meant a lot to me growing up. I wasn't great academically, but I was good at art, and it gave me a lot of self-esteem. After going to university to do a Fine Art degree I ended up in publishing, but found it increasingly hard to ignore the feeling that I wasn't doing anything to tackle the issues around youth unemployment and violence in my community. The creative sector can offer a great career for young people with talent regardless of their background, so I wanted to focus my energies here."

-- Lucy Ferguson, Mediorite founder

2011



Ran BBC journalism training programme around the Olympics [Stopandtalk.co.uk](http://Stopandtalk.co.uk) and a cross partnership campaign around stop and search.

The first YHWorld formal training programme, YHWorld Academy, was launched to teach journalism skills and content creation for web. Alongside Poached Creative we partnered with the BBC to deliver Take It On, consisting of 10 multimedia training sessions in The Hackney Picture House. Students had the opportunity to work with journalists from the Daily Star, the Independent and Grime Daily; to interview rising stars such as Rita Ora and Delilah; to create a double-page spread for the Hackney Gazette and produce an Academy official blog at [www.route38hackney.wordpress.com](http://www.route38hackney.wordpress.com). We built in paid mentoring roles for 8 young creatives

and got 15 free press passes to The Big Weekend. We continued to deliver Staying Safe, including youth-led campaigns OiiMySize and IAM that tackled sexting and gang violence through intelligent, creative social campaigns. We taught young people the creative tools and analysis process, and supported them to produce and distribute their work.

We created [www.stopandtalk.co.uk](http://www.stopandtalk.co.uk), working with a collective of 16 local and national organisations campaigning for the suspension of controversial Stop and Search law Section 60. We worked with a group of young people to curate

FREEDOM, an art exhibition co-hosted with Art Against Knives in Shoreditch Box Park showcasing our young creatives work alongside award-winning professionals on the anniversary of the riots. As a result we gained coverage from Dazed and Confused, LCB, ChoiceFM and Shoreditch radio, The Independent online and Hackney Gazette and Hackney Citizen in print, as well as an invitation to the Met Police HQ to meet London's head of Stop & Search and to take part in consultation with the police about their youth communications.

We produced and shared two music videos, I Believe and Ali Man, both of which were screened by The BBC Academy at The Hackney Picture House to an audience that included Radio 1 and 1 Xtra DJs. The groups got studio time, access to professional music producers, radio DJ's and had a tour of BBC Radio 1. We used our formula to work with the brilliant youngsters from Bluhut youth centre, producing two more videos.



OiiMySize, a Peabody 'Staying Safe' project, won the 'Making the Internet a Safer Place' Nominet Internet Award 2013. **First film training programme and first paid for film for St Giles Trust.**

We ran a six-week training program for NEETs called the YHWorld Academy, including a bespoke work experience program with OCN accredited outcomes. Mediorite nurtured four young film makers to run their own projects and get paid assisting work. Graduates of The Academy ran 'Making a Music Video' workshops with eight young people who'd been excluded from mainstream education, helping seven gain AQA accreditations.

We re-ran the session for a further 14 under 16s with Hackney Quest. We supported young people to make two documentaries, 45 short films and four music videos. We also delivered nine promotional videos for clients ALL creating paid assisting work, taking the total amount we paid young creatives this year up to £11,696.

2013

Specialised in film with **Hackney Insiders** for young people

Mediorite decided to focus on film because video seemed to be key to reaching more young people to share opportunities and stories online, offering greater engagement. Film offered a more effective way to engage with a wider, more diverse group, including ex-offenders. They found film and video more appealing than traditional media because it was a youth-owned currency and a visual form of storytelling.

Creative sector developments saw more openings for film work as marketing budgets shifted from online and print to video. We found that film offered increasingly sustainable business opportunities and plenty of entry-level paid work roles that were suitable for young people, including running, assisting with pre-production and editing. With a grant from Hackney Council for Hackney

2014

Insiders we started to invest in film equipment and used experienced freelancers to help us create films for clients.

We started a YouTube channel called Hackney Insiders and a pop-up digital agency pilot project Building The Bridge that was targeted at hard-to-reach young people aged 18-24. We ran a mental health and art event What Beauty Means to Me and delivered 15 promotional videos for a range of clients from corporates, PR agencies, small social enterprises and charities, all creating paid assisting work.



Highlights included producing photoshoots for Social Enterprise UK (SEUK) at the House of Commons, getting our photos for Howick Place into The Evening Standard and having to cast 25 European speaking actors holding 19 different flags for Reputation Inc!.. Homerton Hospital's youth project 'The Key' gave us the chance to work with local young people with disabilities.

Mediorite won a SEDA (Social Enterprise Development Award) from Santander and Unltd, and during this year we started using an Employability Matrix, written by Riccardo Guido, a tool to help track the progress of young people's employment progression. The Buy Social Corporate Challenge launched by SEUK bought us our first national corporate client, Wates.

Launched youth led service

**MedioritePlus**. 3 years of funding from JAC Trust for core film program. Anti-knife crime poster campaign Your Choice, Your Future **won the regional award** for Excellence in Digital Engagement.

We launched MedioritePlus based on the observations that some of the young people we'd trained were shooting and editing film to a good level and were capable of creating simple short films for charitable clients at a discounted rate. We set up editing suites in our office and won three years of funding from JAC Trust in partnership with Inspire! EBP to develop our film training for advanced youth cohorts, with an aim to build a talent pool we could offer paid work to.

We committed that every client commission would create paid work for a young person we've trained. We won our first commission from PwC, creating regular paid work for 13 young people



we worked with. Recognising the need for young people to create and share their own creative products with the community, in partnership with Awards for All and Bootstrap we ran a cinema event Hackney Mash.

We took on our second full-time member of staff and started our advisory board, pulling top class cross sector professionals supported by BiTC Arc programme. We joined PwC's Social Entrepreneurs Club and accessed mentors and networking.

**Win Comms2Point** award for SpeakSense campaign. **Won work for PwC.**

Mediorite's Speaksense project was shortlisted for 'Digital Communications Award 2016', alongside fellow nominees Vodafone and HSBC. It went on to win a Comms2Point Award.

We completed and launched The Hive documentary for Camden Council and Catch 22, a documentary co-created over several months of a project to build a new youth mental health and wellbeing centre, led by local young people. The young people involved in the documentary project gained skills in storytelling, camera work, directing and video editing. They also worked on designs for a logo and materials to promote the launch of the new centre.

Our Inspired Digital Pathways project supported vulnerable NEET and at risk of NEET young people to find paid work in the creative and media industries. Up to December 2017, 97 young people directly benefited from the project, gaining training and experience in film making. 80% were from a Black or Ethnic Minority background.

This was the first year we split our activities into outreach, FastFWD and The Academy. We ran outreach sessions with refugees and asylum seeker groups who have English as an additional language as well as housing issues, and our video academy catered for young people with special educational needs and learning disabilities who were under-represented in the labour market.

2015

2016

FastFWD was developed as a bespoke mentoring programme and The Academy was created to be truly inclusive. Building on 1:1 coaching strategies and offering enhanced support, we enabled young people with autism and other learning difficulties to attend and complete their Bronze Arts Award.

#### First **social impact framework**

The Academy, FastFWD and Outreach programmes engaged 66 young Londoners through sessions with our partners Skyway, EY Foundation, Fairbridge, Princes Trust, City Gateway, Futureversity & Inspire! EBP and DOST, working with young refugees and asylum seekers. We delivered mentoring, talks, visits and allowed young people to assist on paid jobs, with support from creative sector partners and 10 creative professional mentors.

We also delivered promotional videos and photoshoots for a range of clients from corporates; PwC, Wates Construction and Triodos Bank to PR Agencies; PR Newswire and ReputationInc, to government organisations and councils; The GLA, Westminster and Sutton, to market-leading charities and social enterprises; Foundation for Future London, Construction Youth Trust, SEUK, The Children's Society.

We offered below-cost films for small social enterprises and charities Hackney Pirates, Bootstrap and Art Against Knives. We were also pleased to meet Prince Harry at the London Youth Games.

We invested in our first social impact framework, gathering data across our three core programmes. We looked to measure confidence and found that in outreach and beginners we could report some great results but less so on our advanced programme where participants reflected little movement from before to after the course. This group formed the basis of our youth service MedioritePlus.

Through their on-the-job evaluations and staff reflections we realised they we're still missing the vital workplace skills our creative partners were looking for; self-awareness, ability to take responsibility and critical feedback and consistency



in their professional behaviour. These insights shared with JAC Trust led to us shaping and winning funding for our new ambitious work programme Shift, focused on building soft skills, personal development plans and sector placements.

2017

## YOUNG PERSON CASE STUDY: SHANNIQUE

"I joined Mediorite in 2011, where I was a media ambassador for Hackney. When I first came to Mediorite, I was not in a good place educationally, I had very limited work experience. I was not in education for a while, therefore I volunteered for this organization three days a week for a whole year and over the next up and coming years once in a while.

From a young age, I wanted to be a journalist, but I had little experience in this field. I was introduced to Mediorite through my community worker who worked with the RLSB. I began by writing about events which were held by Hackney today, Art Against Knives,

Clarity, RLSB and more. Being at Mediorite has allowed me to come into contact with various media agencies like Brand Union, Unruly, Peabody only to name a few. This was a great way to build my confidence level.

I would recommend Mediorite to anyone who is interested in working with the media world. It is a great way to build their social network, learn about what is needed to survive in a cut throat business. My plans for the future are very sketchy, but with the help which I have been given from this social enterprise has helped to enhance my CV and prepare me for the corporate world."

### JAC Trust refund us, youth board launched

We re-applied for funding with our long-term funder, JAC Trust, aiming to help young people progress beyond paid work with us and further develop into the wider mainstream creative sector. This involves a more rigorous training programme designed to develop highly employable professional behaviours and attitudes, in addition to technical film making skills.

We wrote our first theory of change with support from our social enterprise landlord Bootstrap, introduced a new impact framework and developed a participant coaching programme, led by a trained counsellor.

As part of this time of reflection we felt the need to develop our youth governance and started the Mediorite Youth Board, collaborating with a participant we have been working with for seven years. We coordinated a Youth Voice Consultation to take place in 2019, aimed at young people aged 18-25, to better understand what film related activities young people are currently engaging with, how work-ready young people feel, and what could help with this; and young people's ideas for future opportunities.

We took on an apprentice to work with our office team.

2018

2019

## 1. CREATE

Creativity connects everyone. It's definitely opened doors for me and I've seen how it can transform people's lives. Young people from very different backgrounds can really gel when they share a love of film.

## 2. RELATE

Build relationships to last. I'm lucky enough to still be working with some of the young people and organisations I first met up to 10 years ago. Partnerships like Wates, PwC, Jac Trust and Bootstrap have made a huge difference.

## 3. SPECIALISE

At first I was trying to offer lots of different services but once I decided to concentrate on film everything became clearer. The young people we worked with and the clients we worked for seemed to suddenly understand what we did and our value to them.

## 4. PROFESSIONALISE

Our clients want a professional service and as we've grown I've noticed my expectations on the young people we work with growing too. Offering paid work means we can provide opportunities for young people to gain skills and produce work to mainstream industry standards, setting them up for the future.

## 5. ACCEPT HELP

When you're doing something good, people want to help. I've gained so much from being open to this. Our amazing advisory board, mentors and volunteers from Business in the Community's arc programme and training from the School of Social Entrepreneurs and PwC SEC have got us where we are today. Young people have also given their time and energy to shape our projects for the better.

# TEN THINGS I'VE LEARNED

## 6. ADAPT

Listen to what your clients and beneficiaries want from you, recognise your strengths, keep an eye on changes in your sector and be prepared to respond. I started out with a youth-led website unsuccessfully trying to sell print and design. Now we bring in 93% of our revenue through selling film services.

## 7. IMPROVE

I didn't know what I was doing when I started out. Especially if you're doing something no-one's really done before, it's unlikely you will either. If you set out with the goal to learn and improve, eventually you'll look back and realise how far you've come. People will forgive you if you learn from your mistakes. Just don't keep making the same ones.

## 8. FOCUS

When we were a young business I found it tempting to accept all the opportunities that came along but some opportunities can lead you in the wrong direction or worse, end up costing you money. Focus on your purpose and don't be afraid to say no if an offer doesn't serve it.

## 9. ACCOUNT

Turnover and profit are not the same thing and you need to be able to account for your spending along with your social value. If you're like me you'll need a lot of help understanding what terms like full cost recovery, fixed and variable costs and unrestricted income actually mean but it's essential that you do.

## 10. KEEP GOING

Like a lot of people who run their own businesses, there are times I've wondered why I'm doing this and if I should get a 'proper' job. It can be stressful, lonely and lacking in the symbols of success your friends seem to have. Define success in your terms and keep going. It's worth it.



# BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

**Mediorite recognises the importance of strengthening young people's professional networks throughout our training and we have a great focus on building external relationships with creative industry partners, local community groups and social enterprises. By working with professionals from within the creative industries, we are able to bring our young creatives closer to a world which may seem closed off to them. Through mentoring, talks, visits and allowing young people to assist on paid jobs, our partners help us to deliver socially valuable work.**

To date, 163 of our creative professional partners have delivered engaging career talks to young people. We have worked with 84 professional creative industry mentors, connecting experienced individuals with young people in order to further advance their development. At times the involvement of industry professionals in our employability training has been more successful than Mediorite could anticipate, and during the Digital Pathways Project (2014) we were inundated with creative professionals, from directors to make-up artists, willing

to volunteer their time to work with young people on the project.

When the young people we work with are ready to move into professional work we match them with supportive real work placements in a creative business, along with a structured plan for their experience. We rely on referral partners to help us engage with young people who are Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) and those who need additional support to access the creative industries and wider employment opportunities. In our next phase of work, young people will embark on four-week work placements in order to broaden their skills and professional networks. Placement organisations will also join workshops and set the group creative challenges to support young people's development.

Often, we develop rich relationships with clients who become partners, and vice versa. The Wates Group is one of the largest privately-owned construction, development and property services companies in the UK, and they were the first corporate company on the Buy

Social Corporate Challenge to work with Mediorite. They have provided regular photography briefs for our young photographers and have also commissioned more complex film and animation work. Using their national reach, Wates have championed us to their supply chain, helping us to procure work and advance our reputation beyond London and across the rest of the UK.

Award, and this saw the beginning of a supportive relationship. Four years on they are our largest client, providing consistent work and support, with members of their SEC accessing our mentoring, networking events and coaching opportunities.

We have been invited to talk at PwC procurement and social enterprise events and PwC have hosted our team visit to their offices, including introducing us to

**“You don’t need qualifications to work in the creative industries, you need the right attitude and good ideas. We’d love to work with more young Londoners from diverse backgrounds.”**

*- Luci Baldwin head of HR IPC, Partner*

In 2015 we pitched against other social enterprises and won the brief to work with PwC, who rank as the second largest professional services firm in the world and are one of the Big Four auditors, along with Deloitte, EY and KPMG. We worked to create video case-studies for their Social Entrepreneurs Club (SEC)

extended corporate friends. We have featured in the PwC annual report and, throughout our partnership, PwC have taken a collaborative approach that has enabled us to successfully develop our procurement, delivery and publicity strategies.

# LEARNING AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

**Our future is shaped around the young people we work with and in February 2019 we conducted a Youth Consultation to find out about how the young people we are engaging feel about film in their lives.**

Based on their answers and our reflections on the last 10 years we plan to further develop our Youth Board and additional youth governance structures, working towards a thriving network of peer mentors informing our development at youth board level.

We also plan to improve our capacity to support those with mental health difficulties and those who need high levels of personal and emotional support. We are developing a robust needs assessment and impact framework with collaborative support from Hackney City Mind and coach and trained counselor Shahzad Ali. Founder Lucy Ferguson is embarking on a counselling course and re-writing training and policy documents. All Mediorite course leaders will attend London Youth mental health training and we want to introduce ongoing training for peers, creating a positive culture of

goal setting, whilst providing teams at Mediorite with the tools to articulate and understand what good mental health looks like. All this work will inform a better understanding of the underlying causes and issues of mental health, enabling us to provide better support to the young people we work with.

## PARTNER CASE STUDY: JAC TRUST

Since 2014 JAC Trust have fundamentally supported Mediorite's core activity, programming and strategic development as a funder and by providing critical friendship in the form of ongoing development coaching and practice sharing.

When we first met JAC Trust we were too small to apply for direct funding, therefore we partnered with Inspire!, an Education Business Partnership (EBP) based in Hackney. In 2014 we won funding and support from JAC Trust to deliver the Digital Pathways programme and as part of this project we developed our first version of Mediorite's Outreach, The Academy and FastFWD training programmes.

Through continuing to build a positive and trusting relationship with JAC Trust we fostered an open and reflective environment to explore more difficult areas of our work and strategic development.

We reviewed our programmes and the challenges we were facing in 2018, finding that young people were progressing too quickly into paid roles, leading to inconsistent performance in the workplace.

As a result, JAC Trust invited us to reapply with a proposal to redevelop our FastFWD training programme, and in 2018 they committed to fund our new activity, Project Shift, that will look at behavioural and attitudinal outcomes to help increase stable employment prospects.





## CONCLUSION

This evaluation highlights Mediorite's extensive and successful history of making an impact, providing paid and meaningful creative employment and vocational opportunities for young people across eight years of recorded activity. Mediorite has created outcomes for young people from diverse backgrounds, supporting them into progression pathways that include employment, education, training, work placements, leadership opportunities, internships and apprenticeships.

As an organisation, Mediorite has placed young people at the centre of its business, adapting organisational activity to respond to the needs and circumstances of the people they work with. Young people's voices are heard and celebrated through creative projects and programming that gives room for them to express their identity, to relate to film as a youth-owned currency, and to explore their sense of place as young Londoners in a city with a booming creative sector.

# APPENDIX - MEDIORITE PROJECT HISTORY 2009 - 2019

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
› What's Up Information and the idea for Mediorite formed	› British Council Evolution Now Hackney Hounds	› "Staying Safe" › Discover Young Hackney (DYH) Media Ambassadors › Focused Young Individuals (FYI) › Hackney Young Photographers › Sofasurferfilm.com › YHWorld	› Showing off - making music videos with Hackney's young talent › Tackling issues: <a href="http://www.stopandtalk.co.uk">www.stopandtalk.co.uk</a> › Take it On - BBC Academy › YHWorld › YHWorld Academy	› Video Academy › YHWorld › YHWorld Academy
2015	2016	2017	2018	
› Camden Project The Hive › Fair Bridge outreach › FastFWD › Goal Setting And Motivation With Christian Thomson › Hackney Mash, pop-up cinema › Homerton Hospital making a film about CP › Inspire Digital Pathways › NCS The Challenge, one day outreach for 35 young people with film screenings	› Outreach 1: City Gateway › Outreach 2: EY Foundation › Outreach 2: Plumpstead › Outreach 3: Fairbridge Wickway Centre › Outreach 1: City Gateway › Peabody outreach in our office › Poached – Housing Project on Barnet's West Hendon estate The Academy	› FastFWD › London Football Journey series of one day shoots with young football teams teaching skills › Outreach 1- 3 › SpeakSense project › The Academy	› Employability Day › FastFWD › Outreach 1- 3 › The Academy	› FastFWD › Outreach



## 2014

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- › Academy JAC
- › Building The Bridge
- › FastFWD
- › Hackney Insiders
- › Outreach
- › The Key
- › What Beauty Means to Me

## 2019

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Project Shift  
Outreach 1 - 5  
B6 Sixth form L1

## WHAT'S NEXT

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**Develop our youth led service so that's it's a thriving and self sustaining business**

**Use our in house team on 75% of all jobs, creating more full time employment for young people we've trained**

**Ex trainees in notable roles in mainstream media**

