

INTO
FILM

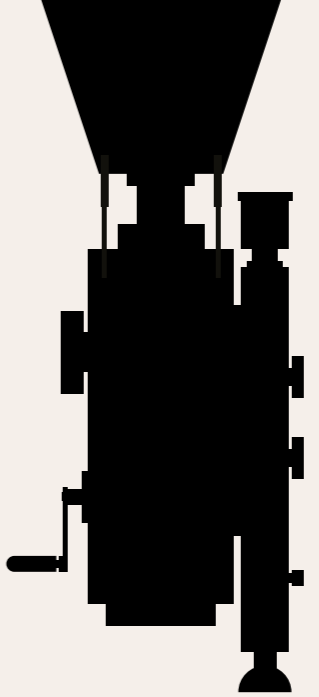
NORTHERN IRELAND
screen



External Evaluation Summary Report

2022/23 & 2023/24

 Screen**WORKS**



MAKE A START



Introduction

Into Film is the UK's leading charity for film in education and the community, providing screen industry careers information and advice, supporting young filmmakers, and bringing the power of moving image storytelling into classroom teaching. Into Film has a vision of 'Film enriches the life of every child and young person' and a mission 'To inspire and support young people to learn, and to realise their creative, cultural and career aspirations, through film and the moving image'.

ScreenWorks is a work placement programme delivered by Into Film in Northern Ireland. Funded by Department of Communities through Northern Ireland Screen, ScreenWorks offers young people aged 14-19 the opportunity to learn more about job roles in the craft and technical disciplines of the screen industries in Northern Ireland through 3- to 5-day work experiences delivered by professionals working in that industry sector.



Trailblaze is a mentorship programme developed by Into Film and delivered in 2023-24. Funded by ScreenSkills, Trailblaze has offered a valuable next step for young people that have participated in ScreenWorks through a 1-2-1 mentorship over 10 months with an industry professional working in High End Television.

This report will focus on the delivery of ScreenWorks during the 2022-23 and 2023-24 academic years and has been prepared by Brian Stratford & Associates.

The Need for Screenworks

Work experience opportunities in the creative industries can be highly sought after but are not always readily available or easy to practically deliver. Film locations and sets can be complex locations to provide a safe and meaningful work experience opportunity with issues including transport, child safeguarding and health & safety all having to be considered.

Past engagement with schools and young people has shown Into Film that there is a lack of awareness around craft and technical roles within the screen industries, which is exacerbating a skills shortage within these careers. By highlighting these roles before making career choices, young people will be better informed to make the educational choices required and more likely to pursue job roles in these sectors.

ScreenWorks has sought to replace existing school work experience provision by offering coherent 'taster' sessions for those considering a career in the screen sectors, creating an interest in and awareness of job roles delivered by those employed in the industry.

Some comments have included:

"I feel there's a huge need for ScreenWorks if the NI and UK industries are to thrive as hoped. We often find ourselves unable to find enough trained crew for jobs and ScreenWorks ability to train, encourage and funnel young people to disparate areas of the industry is essential to our ability to continue work."

SCREEN INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL

"I think it's really helpful. So many schools are, even now, only tuned in to 'traditional' careers, and with the screen industry in the UK and Northern Ireland taking off to the extent that it has and so many opportunities available there, it's mad not to support that wherever possible."

SCREEN INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL

"I think what Into Film does is really important. I would have bitten your hand off for these opportunities at school; I loved film but it seemed like an impossible industry to get into for a girl from a small town in Northern Ireland. I spent six years qualifying as a lawyer instead before jumping into this career, and some early intervention might have secured me an earlier start."

SCREEN INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL

In research carried out in 2022 by BFI¹, both young people and careers teams stated they wanted to know more about careers in the Screen Industries. Careers teams feel they are not being equipped or supported enough by the Screen Industries to be able to highlight careers opportunities to young people.

The Screen Industries need to invest more time, effort and money into being involved in the careers education of future talent, to actively inspire young people to want to pursue Screen Industries careers. Without being able to see the people who work in these industries, hear first-hand accounts of what it's like to do a job or have a tangible experience to pique interest, a career in the Screen Industries will remain an abstract concept to young people and they will continue to be disengaged. Visual representation is hugely important.

Research carried out by Pivotal Public Policy Forum in 2021² identified the need for transformational change in the education and skills system for 14–19-year-olds in Northern Ireland, to address skills gaps and to ensure that all young people meet their potential. Whilst both employability and life skills are incorporated into the Northern Ireland Curriculum, the research suggests that the focus on grade attainment in examinations at Key Stage 4 may undermine wider skills development.

The majority of young people referenced their family and part-time employment as the main sources of gaining experience in developing employability skills such as problem-solving, communication, leadership and critical thinking. Less than a third (31%) of young people claimed to learn these skills in school. Only 29% of parents felt that young people were currently learning the skills they needed for future study and employment, with the need for more opportunities to develop stronger links between education and industry to ensure an understanding of the skills needed across sectors.

Amongst the recommendations, a need for better connections between education and employers to inspire young people, particularly those from marginalised communities was highlighted, to raise aspirations to work in growth sectors and encourage continued engagement in education. Young people require access to an inspiring range of work experience placements across a number of sectors to provide a taster of options available to them and better inform career decision-making.

[CLICK TO READ REFERENCE 1](#)

www.bfi.org.uk/industry-data-insights/reports/bfi-eric-screen-careers-research

[CLICK TO READ REFERENCE 2](#)

www.pivotalppf.org/our-work/publications/18/transforming-the-1419-education-and




Outputs Achieved by Screenworks and Trailblaze

Over the past two years, ScreenWorks has delivered 57 work experience programmes, 15 of which were being delivered for the first time.


The Film & TV sectors make up 70% of the programmes delivered, with even representation from the other 3 priority sectors of Animation, Games Development and VFX. Programmes delivered as a part of ScreenWorks can be grouped into Production, Technical and Design Areas, as follows:

PRODUCTION AREAS



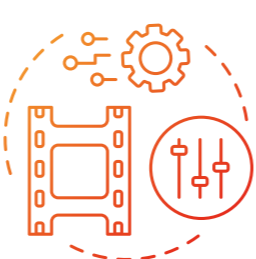
- PRODUCING
- PRODUCTION ACCOUNTANCY
- DEVELOPMENT & PITCHING
- THE WRITERS' ROOM
- LOCATION MANAGEMENT
- JOURNALISM
- NARRATIVE FOR GAMES
- STORY DEVELOPMENT

TECHNICAL AREAS



- CAMERA DEPARTMENT (DIT, DATA WRANGLER ETC)
- 2D & 3D ANIMATION
- VFX & MOTION GRAPHICS
- AUDIO & LIGHTING
- GRIP DEPARTMENT
- VIRTUAL PRODUCTION
- EDITING

DESIGN AREAS



- PROP MAKING
- GAME DESIGN
- THE ART DEPARTMENT
- PROSTHETICS
- HAIR & MAKEUP
- COSTUME DESIGN
- CONCEPT ART FOR GAMES
- STORYBOARDING

111 screen industry professionals were engaged, as facilitators, mentors or guest speakers across programme delivery. Credits for these industry professionals include Deadpool & Wolverine, Derry Girls, Gladiator 2, Star Wars: The Acolyte and Ashoka, Kneecap, How to Train Your Dragon, House of the Dragon, Lord of The Rings: The Rings of Power, No Time To Die, Blue Lights, and The Marvels.

ScreenWorks has a dedicated training suite at its premises in Dublin Road, Belfast. This has been developed specifically for ScreenWorks delivery and has been rated highly by industry professionals and young people that have used the facility. It is both safe and close to transport links. In addition, Into Film has utilised a range of other venues for delivery, including The Imaginarium in Newry, Ignite SFX Base in Antrim, the Nerve Centre in Derry, as well as other Belfast locations including Pixel Mill, Ulster University and Duncairn Arts Centre. In 2023-24, 11 different locations were utilised, 36% of these venues not in Belfast.

In total, 968 young people applied to ScreenWorks, 814 (84%) starting and 88% of those completing a programme. For Trailblaze, 16 young people received mentoring support. When including career insight days and Speakers for Schools events, 1557 young people were engaged by Into Film over the past 2 years.

ScreenWorks and Trailblaze has engaged young people drawn from 102 post-primary schools, representing 53% of all post-primary schools in Northern Ireland. Of these schools, 67% can be considered to be in rural areas and 46% in areas experiencing deprivation. Referrals have also been received from Further or Higher Education Institutions, SEN and Irish Language Schools, as well as employability organisations supporting young people that have left full-time education and who are seeking work.



[CLICK HERE](#) FOR FURTHER DETAILS ON THE SUITE OF SCREENWORKS PROGRAMMES

OUTPUTS ACHIEVED

OUTPUTS ACHIEVED

Using data that has been gathered across the last 7 years of ScreenWorks delivery, the following can be ascertained:

- 136 post-primary or further education institutions in NI have sent at least one young person to ScreenWorks, representing 67% of all post-primary schools and colleges. In addition, 17 post-primary schools have sent a young person to ScreenWorks every year the programmes have operated.
- For those post-primary schools that have not sent a young person to ScreenWorks, 7 are in Enniskillen (out of 10 post-primary schools in that area), 6 are in Craigavon postcodes (out of 10), and 6 are in Newry (out of 13).
- There have been 117 physical (not including the online content delivered during the pandemic) face-to-face ScreenWorks programmes delivered to more than 1500 participants, of which 64% of these young people recognise as female.
- During the period of Covid-19 restrictions, more than 2500 young people were also engaged in activity online.

Why Teachers have encouraged Young People to attend ScreenWorks

- **Quality and Nature of the Course** - ensuring that the programme offers high-quality education and hands-on experience in the film industry, offering specialisation into specific areas of the film-making process.
- **Range of Courses offered** - ensuring that there is something to suit a wide range of students based on the different goals that they may have.
- **First-hand Industry Experience** - ScreenWorks allows students to work on actual projects with industry professionals, ensuring they receive practical and relevant real-world experience of working in the creative film industry.
- **Accessibility and Cost** - the fact that the courses are free and easily accessible via public transport ensures that all students, regardless of their financial situation or location, can participate without any undue burden.
- **Support and Communication** - detailed information and clear contact routes provided by Into Film help in addressing any concerns or questions schools may have.
- **Timing** - the importance of work experience programmes not being offered at a time in the academic year that would clash with exams or coursework deadlines.
- **Skills Development** - the opportunity to try something, learn new skills and develop an appreciation of what may be required to work in a particular job.
- **Relevance to School Studies** - the benefit that attendance will bring to one of their school subjects, particularly where this support is not available in the school.
- **Location and Cost** - for students that live in rural areas, it can be challenging for them to get to a delivery location that is far from where they live, with many not having a car and transport links limited.

“These courses offer them the opportunity to merge their artistic skills with practical filmmaking techniques, providing a comprehensive learning experience that is both engaging and relevant to their studies.”

TEACHER

What Teachers and Young People hoped ScreenWorks would achieve and how successful it has been

- **Introduction to the Screen Industries** - to provide an initial introduction to the industries in NI and what would be involved in pursuing a career in this sector.
- **First-hand practical experience** - delivery by industry professionals using software and equipment allowed for the development of invaluable experience.
- **Industry Contacts/Networking** - to establish an initial contact with someone that is working in the screen industries that could be beneficial to have in their future career.
- **Peer Contacts** - to ‘find their tribe’ of young people that share their creative passion, something that may not exist in their existing friendship group.
- **Industry Awareness** - to better understand what it is like to work in an industry workplace and what is required in terms of work ethic and teamworking.
- **Equipment and Software** - having the opportunity to use professional equipment and software that would not otherwise have been available to the young people.
- **Awareness of Skills** - to be aware of the skills that are required by the screen industries, and why it is important to develop and apply these to their future study.
- **Skills Development** - to develop technical, employability and interpersonal skills.
- **Develop Confidence and Provide Encouragement.**
- **Coursework** - to be able to apply what they have learned to their schooling.
- **Inform Future Career Choices** - to establish whether the programme attended is something they would like to pursue in future, and to inform future subject or third level education choices as a result.
- **Job Availability and Career Paths** - to increase awareness of jobs that are available in these sectors in Northern Ireland, creative growth areas and how to go about achieving employment.

“Getting to meet and talk to an industry professional who is so knowledgeable and experienced.”

YOUNG PERSON

“Extremely successful placements, the variety and quality of pupil experiences has been fantastic. This has resulted in a positive experience for pupils who now want to work in NI within the screen industries. We have seen applications for university courses in NI double this year, pupils are wanting to study at home as they now see employment opportunities.”

TEACHER

“To interact with an industry professional - this is so much better than a teacher telling them about career paths!”

TEACHER

“I was able to understand all elements that go into making a film and working within the industry in general. I learnt a lot about different departments within the Film crew and their roles alongside their high importance to making a successful film.”

YOUNG PERSON

Adopting Industry Standards

An important element of ScreenWorks is providing young people with the opportunity to use the latest technology that is being used in the screen industries locally. Unreal Engine is one example of a tool that is driving virtual production but is also used in animation and games design. Having experience of using this provides the young person with an opportunity to see into a number of different sectors and a range of ways in which this can be applied.

Delivery using industry professionals in an environment that closely replicates what would be expected to be seen in the industry is considered to be intrinsically important. ScreenWorks takes a different approach to the traditional provision of work experience, but it is still a work experience programme. The nature of certain screen industry workplaces means that delivery to 15 young people is often not possible in that environment; the structured approach adopted here offers the next best option.

Into Film believe that using professionals in delivery offers credibility to the programme, with young people responding as they are not teachers, have current intelligence on and experience of what it is that they are delivering on. Delivery has also showed that including professionals that are as close as possible in age to the young people is also important, as the young people can better relate to them. Junior roles are what the young people would be going into and it may be too long ago since senior staff were in that position to be able to accurately reflect what is involved. The professionals act as positive role models, someone the young people can aspire to be like.

“It’s vital that the programmes are delivered by people who have current working knowledge of the industry as it changes so regularly.”

SCREEN INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL

“Having Professionals delivering the programmes is one of the key elements to the success of ScreenWorks programmes. The adherence to industry professionals, especially those locally, helps many of our students see a life and career in the screen industries is very possible. It also allows them to avail of contacts made for later in their career.”

SCREEN INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL

“I now feel like I understand how to get started in the film industry; a future in prop and costume making feels much more achievable after this programme. It has also shown me the breadth of creative careers there are in Northern Ireland in general, which has given me a lot of hope for my future in the arts.”

TRAILBLAZE YOUNG PERSON

“I benefited from the openness of the mentors and how they constantly made you feel welcome and comfortable. Even though they have a big role in the film industry, they were very grounded and down to earth, talking to you like anyone else and happy to share their knowledge. It helped demystify the industry in my head, as these were normal, real and kind people. Their lovely characters gave me more hope that I too could be a part of the industry, that it isn’t reserved for just a certain type of person.”

TRAILBLAZE YOUNG PERSON



Benefits Brought about by ScreenWorks

This Section will set out the initial outcomes achieved for young people that have engaged with ScreenWorks. Outcome information has largely been drawn from pre- and post-delivery questionnaires carried out with young people, reinforced with qualitative information drawn from the consultation process.

Outcome information for ScreenWorks has been presented under 3 themes, 'Getting Into the Screen Industries', 'Working in the Screen Industries', and 'Skills Development'.

Getting Into the Creative Industries

The information in Figures 1-3 shows that:

- Prior to ScreenWorks, 77% of young people had No or only a Slight understanding of how to start a career in the creative industries. On completing the programme, 86% of young people had a Good or Great understanding of how to start a career in the creative industries.
- Prior to ScreenWorks, 42% of young people had No Awareness or were Not Very Aware of the work of the creative industries. On completing the programme, 95% of young people were Quite or Very Aware of the work of the creative industries in NI.
- The vast majority of the young people were likely to pursue a career in the creative industries both before and after the support, with this figure rising to 96% that are Quite or Very Likely to do so in the post-delivery questionnaire.

Additional information gathered in the end of programme questionnaire shows that:

- 94% of young people were Quite or Very Aware awareness of opportunities available in the screen industries.
- 87% of young people were Quite or Very Aware of progression routes into the Northern Ireland screen industries and how best to navigate them.
- 89% of young people intend to return to school to complete their studies, with 41% of young people also intending to apply to University to study a screen-related course in the future.
- 63% of young people plan to attend another screen related short course with Into Film or Northern Ireland Screen, and 32% plan to apply for a work experience programme in the Screen Industries.

In a questionnaire with past participants of ScreenWorks:

- 41% have gone on to study a screen related discipline in either further or higher education, with 34% also developing their own independent creative work.
- 74% indicated that they are currently pursuing a career in the screen industries, with 13% of those currently employed in the sector.
- 74% stating that the ScreenWorks programme helped them to decide to pursue a career in the screen industries.

Figure 1: Understanding of Starting a Career in Creative Industries

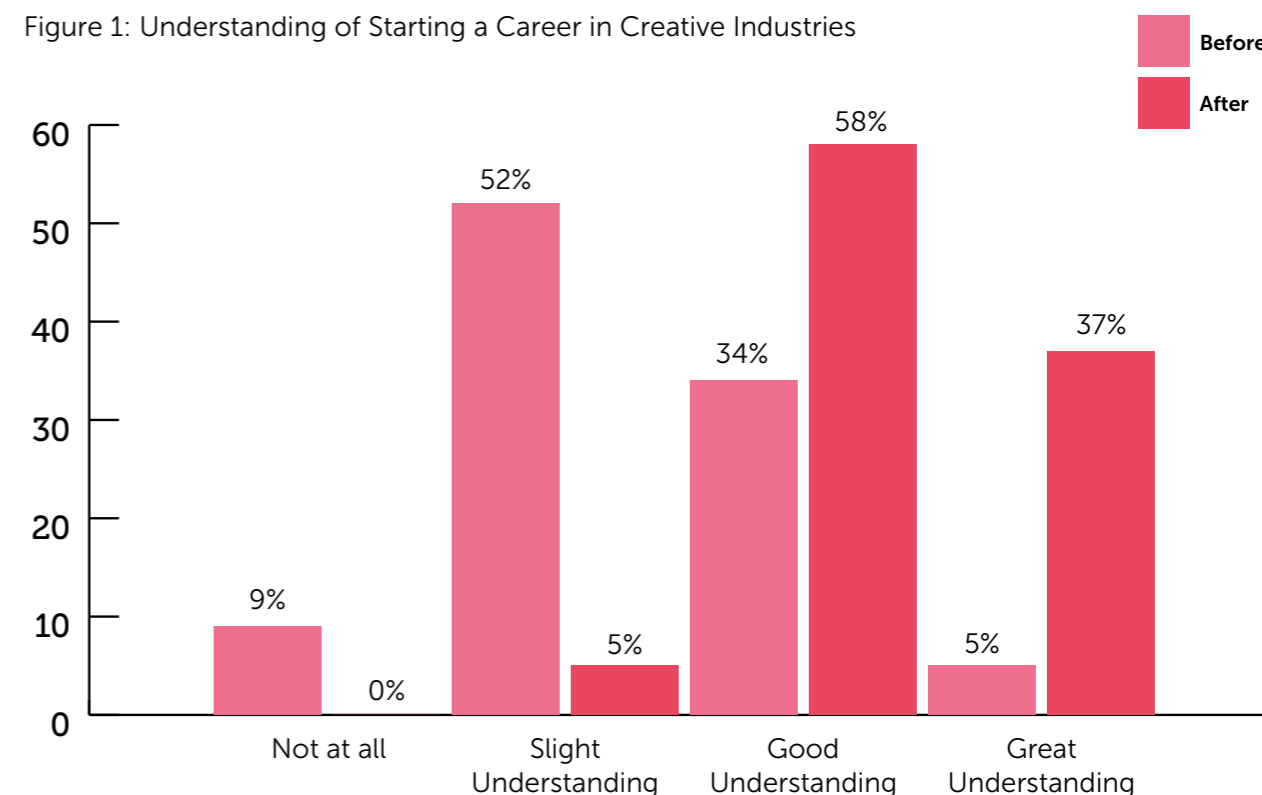


Figure 2: Awareness of Creative Industries in Northern Ireland

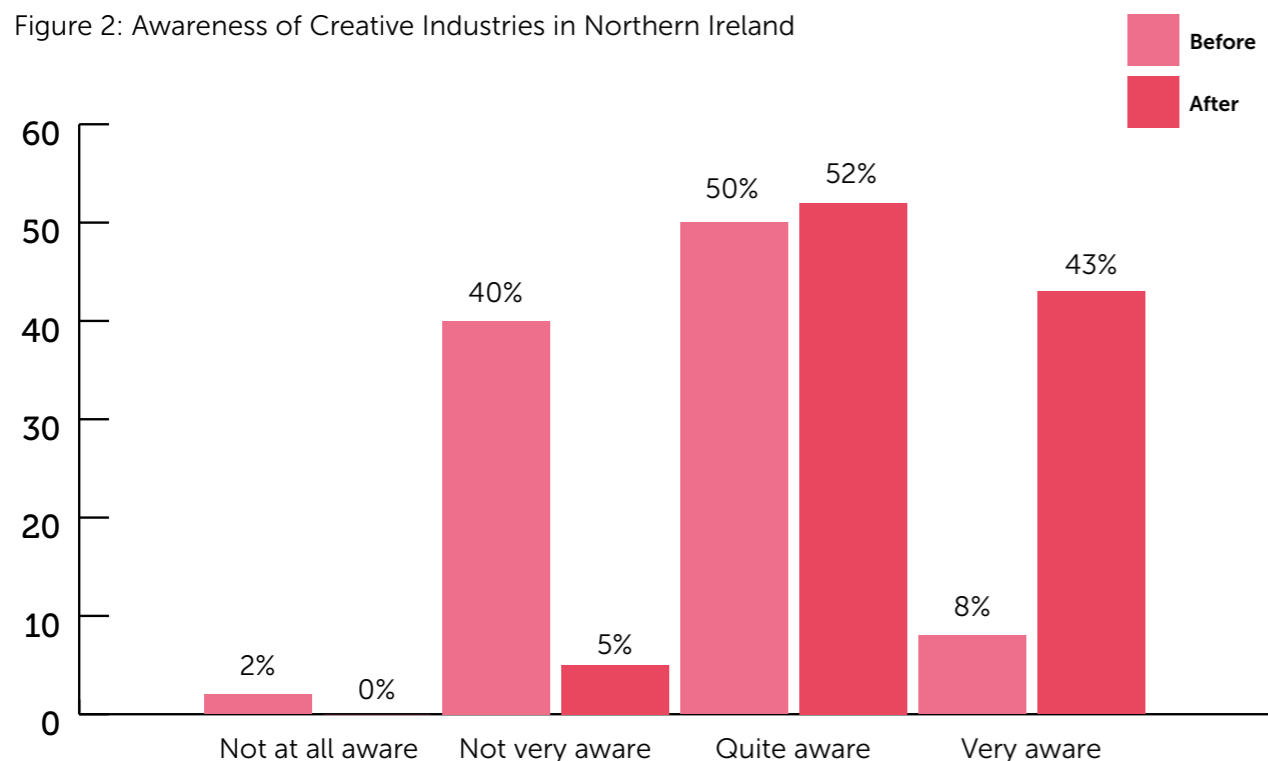
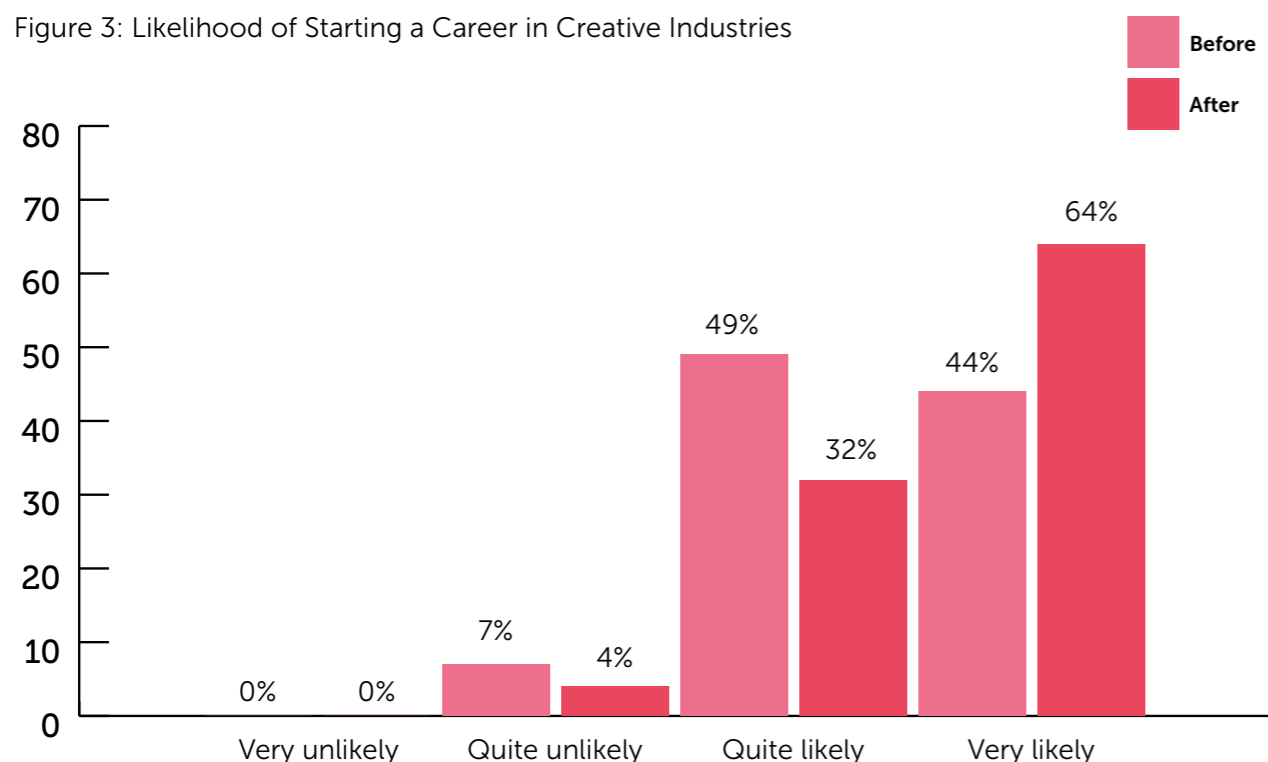


Figure 3: Likelihood of Starting a Career in Creative Industries



Comments from past participants on ScreenWorks included:

“I graduated from Nottingham Trent University in 2023 with a first-class honours in Design for Film and Television. Whilst at University I did a week of work experience on The Crown S6, Hollyoaks, Renegade Nell and The Full Monty. In May 2023 I started working as Art Department Trainee on How to Train Your Dragon. I got accepted on to ScreenSkills Trainee Finder in January 2024. I finished working on How To Train Your Dragon in March 2024 and I am now working as Art Department Assistant on a TV show for World Productions.”

“ScreenWorks was my first professional introduction to the film/screen industry, due to coming from a school with limited resources. I enjoyed getting to learn how everything worked in a judgement free manner, as everyone was beginners and just as excited to learn. My programme pushed me to study film at University, and now I work in VR Production company RETiniZE in Belfast.”

“The Props & Set Design course I took part in had a huge impact on helping me decide that this was something I wanted to pursue. The first-hand experience was invaluable and helped me prove to my parents, teachers and others that there are Art Department jobs in Northern Ireland. I really enjoyed getting to see a prop house and see inside the BBC studio in Belfast. I spoke about my experience on the course in my University application and interviews. The course gave me a great understanding of what is involved in the art department in Film & TV and I am very happy that I have ended up in that career!”

Teachers identified the difference they have observed in young people on returning to school:

- Shaping or Clarifying Career Options - using the ScreenWorks programme to help them with their decisions on what to do next;
- Choosing Film and Media Subjects - an increase in the number of young people that have gone on to opt for media and film subjects, both in school and in their further studies post-school;
- Improved Coursework - through applying what they have learned on ScreenWorks;
- Boosted UCAS applications - through being able to use the ScreenWorks experience as a part of their university applications;
- Progressed from further to higher education - several students at College have subsequently progressed on to University degree courses; and
- Staying in NI – one teacher commented “Our applications for 3rd level study in NI have doubled this year, pupils want to stay here rather than travel to other jurisdictions which is a real positive step and hopefully a common trend elsewhere.”

Teachers have also indicated that engagement with Into Film (as well as other screen education organisations and events such as the RENDR festival) has in general increased their overall awareness of the screen industries in Northern Ireland and the opportunities these present for their young people.

Working in the Screen Industries

The information in Figures 4 and 5 shows that:

- Prior to ScreenWorks, 51% of young people had No or only a Slight understanding of working in the creative industries, and 70% No or only a Slight understanding of the different job roles that exist.
- On completing the programme, young people expressing a Good or Great understanding has increased to 96% and 97% respectively.

“Where there was once a flicker it has now ignited a fire!”

TEACHER

“Interest in this area has increased significantly over the past 3-4 years as students become increasingly curious about how to enter the industry and build networks.”

TEACHER

Additional information gathered in the end of programme questionnaire shows that:

- 96% of young people expressed a Good or Great understanding of how different job roles collaborate.
- 95% of young people expressed a Good or Great understanding of basic working practices.
- 89% of young people expressed a Good or Great understanding of the value of networking and contacts within the screen industries.
- 89% of young people stated they had benefited from advice from industry professionals towards career development in the screen industries.
- 82% of young people benefited from direct contact with industry professionals.
- 71% benefited from meeting other young people and developing their networks.



Figure 4: Understanding of Working in Creative Industries

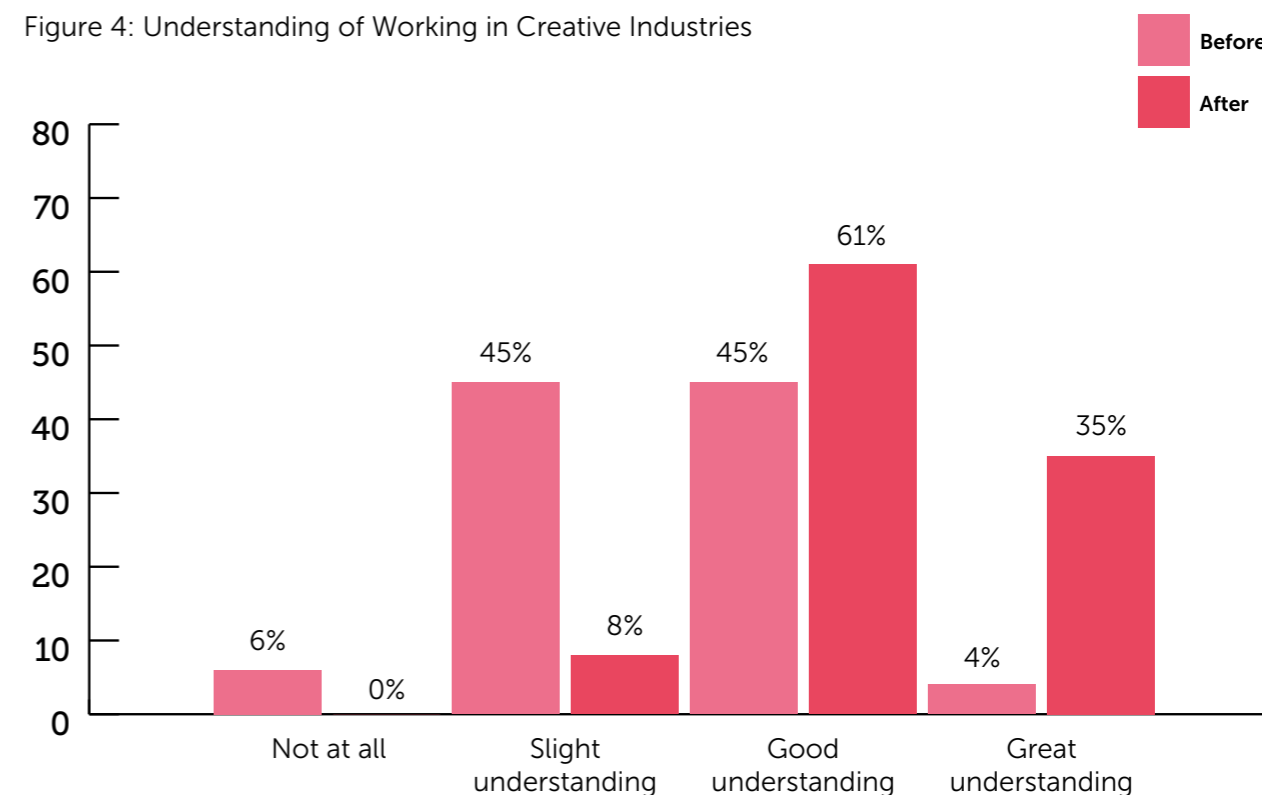
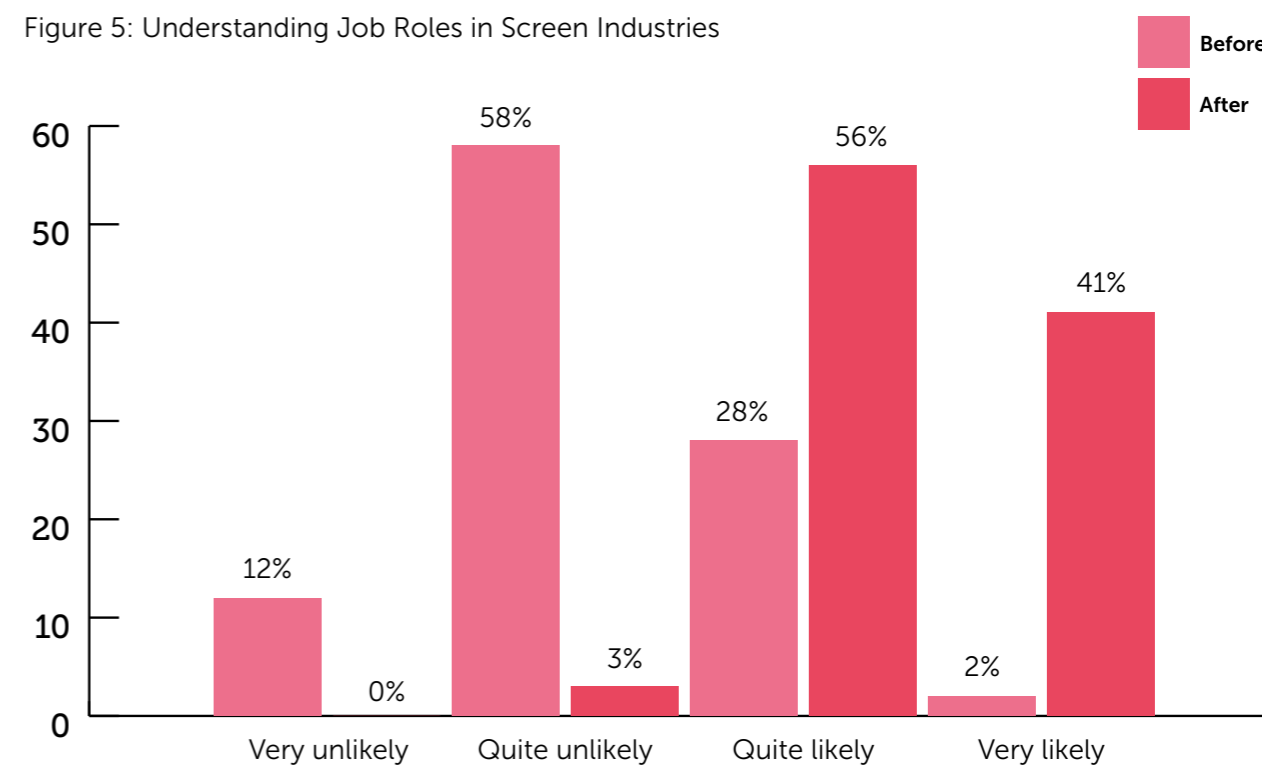


Figure 5: Understanding Job Roles in Screen Industries



Skills Development

The information in Figure 6 shows that:

- Prior to ScreenWorks, 61% of young people had No or only a Slight understanding of technical and creative skills required by the creative industries. On completing the programme, young people expressing a Good or Great understanding has increased to 95%.

Additional information gathered in the end of programme questionnaire shows that:

- 98% of young people stated they had developed one or more of the skills listed. The most notable skills developed were Creativity (85%), Communication (67%), Confidence (64%) and Use of Equipment and Software (60%).

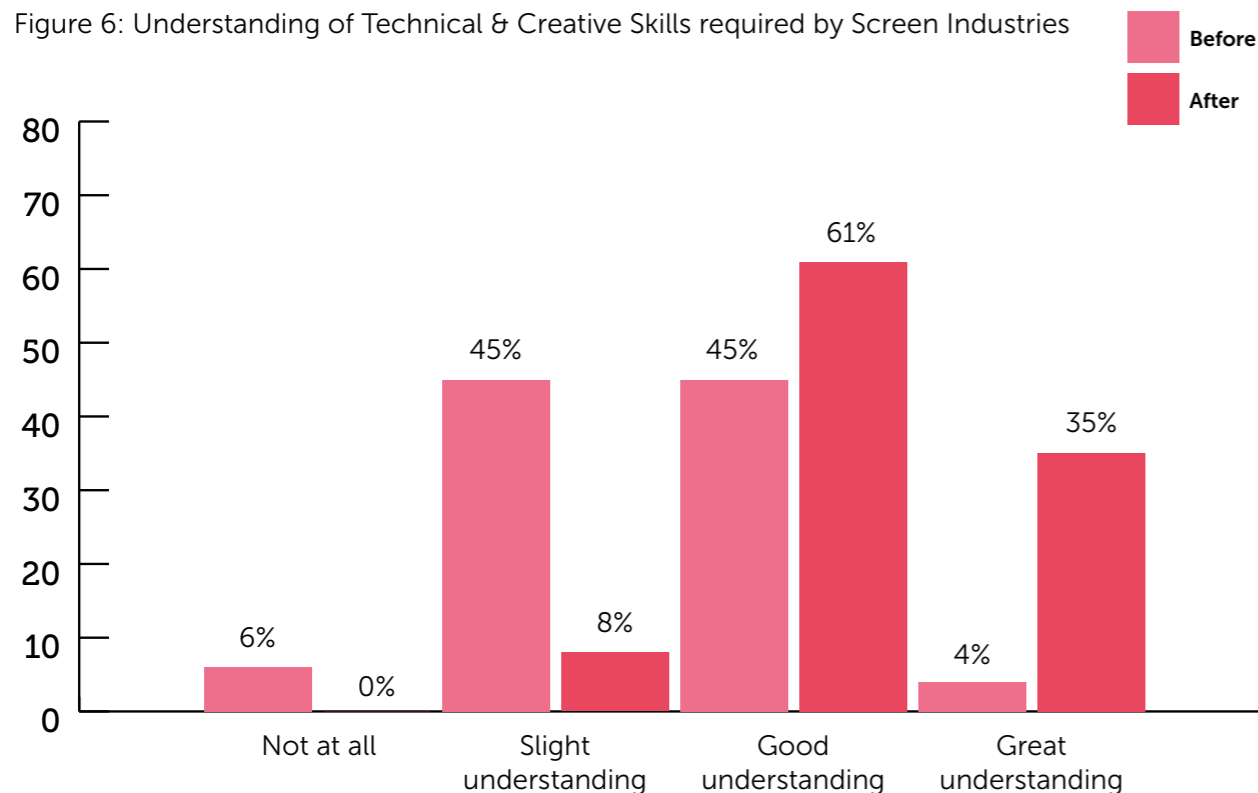
“(Young Person) has a diagnosis of Autism and his creativity and IT skills have found a caveat through ScreenWorks NI. His experience served to inspire and cement his career ambitions and reaffirm his own talent.”

TEACHER

“(Young Person) did a lot of ScreenWorks courses that have had such an amazing impact on him, raising his confidence levels by meeting other young people who are creative, unlike those at his school.”

TEACHER

Figure 6: Understanding of Technical & Creative Skills required by Screen Industries



Extent of Change Affected from Pre- to Post-Delivery Questionnaires

Table 1: Changes in Outcome Variables			
	Decrease	Stay Same	Increase
Likelihood of pursuing a career in the Creative Industries	4%	69%	27%
Understanding about Chosen Role	1%	17%	82%
Technical & creative skills required by Screen Industries	2%	25%	73%
Understanding of Working in the Creative Industries	1%	20%	79%
Awareness of Creative Industries in NI	1%	28%	71%
Understanding of how to start your career in the Creative Industries	1%	41%	58%



Young people experienced a positive change from pre- to post-delivery questionnaire for every variable bar one, with the number of young people experiencing an increase ranging from 58% to 82% across these variables.

The one exception was 'likelihood of pursuing a career in the creative industries' where a majority of the scores stayed the same. Cross referencing this with other data gathered shows that 93% of young people in their pre-delivery questionnaire had stated that they were quite likely or very likely to pursue a creative industries career, so this lack of a significant change should not be considered statistically significant.

Conclusions

The evaluation of ScreenWorks clearly demonstrates the continued success that Into Film has achieved in the delivery of the ScreenWorks programmes. With six years of delivery completed, ScreenWorks can be considered to have matured and the model of delivery is now both established and proven to work.

The growth in the number of young people engaging across the period of delivery shows that there continues to be demand for work experience programmes such as this and that the potential benefits to young people are now more widely understood by educators. The addition of Trailblaze providing an effective bridge between work experience and entry into further/higher education or on to Northern Ireland Screen trainee programmes has also been shown to have worked well and should be continued in future if funding can be secured to support this.

A key reason for the ongoing success of the support is the use of industry professionals to provide an introduction to craft and technical roles in an environment that closely replicates what would be expected to be seen in the industry. Providing credibility for the programmes, young people are considered to better respond to professionals as they are often closer in age to them, act as positive role models and are not teachers. 89% of young people stated they had benefited from advice from industry professionals towards career development in the screen industries, with 82% benefited from direct contact with industry professionals. This has also been the case for Trailblaze, where the quality of delivery has been highlighted, along with the opportunity for peer networking, experience of a set and feedback provided, all of which have contributed to increased confidence levels for those supported.

The outcomes achieved from ScreenWorks have been very positive, with a majority of young people experiencing a positive change from pre- to post-delivery questionnaire for every variable. The largest increase in terms of positive change were for 'Understanding About Chosen Role' and 'Understanding of Working in Creative Industries', with 96% of young people likely to pursue a career in the creative industries at the end of the support. The vast majority (89%) of participants intended to return to school to complete their studies, with 74% of past participants surveyed continuing to pursue a career in the screen industries, with a similar number indicating ScreenWorks helped them when deciding to do so.

With ScreenWorks now established in Northern Ireland, it is important that Into Film continue to develop the offering. In the past 2 years, 26% of programmes delivered have been new and it is important that this type of innovation is maintained to reflect changes in the wider screen industries. Whilst the number of post-primary schools engaged from deprived areas has increased, there remains scope to develop this further, whilst also achieving improved regional coverage to ensure accessibility for all young people in Northern Ireland.

There is also an opportunity for Into Film to consider the delivery of ScreenWorks elsewhere in the UK, by applying the learning gained in Northern Ireland to offer screen work experience in a more structured way to address identified local screen industry needs. This evaluation has demonstrated there are a number of options or approaches for how this could be delivered if funding is available and there is the will to expand delivery to other regions.



CONCLUSIONS

External Evaluation Summary Report

2022-2023 & 2023-2024

PREPARED BY

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