

Social Mobility

ELBA
Creating Possibilities in East London



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**Experience, Expertise
and Innovation in UK Business**

Sally Roberts & Viki Holton



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The East London Business Alliance (ELBA) has been working with the varied and ever-changing communities of east London since 1989. We have experienced, either as recipients or as participants and delivery agents, a multitude of public and private initiatives aiming to make a difference to community cohesion and social mobility over that time. Working with more than 250 community organisations and 3,000 job seekers, including graduates, every year, we have a unique insight into the problems and challenges facing the East End community. We don't claim to have all the answers but we have street level credibility and have formed some views on what does and doesn't work.

Promoting social mobility has become an increasing focus in both Government and business circles in recent years, and it is clear that the financial services sector has a critical role to play. With many more young people going to University and obtaining degrees, but still not breaking into the professions, it has become more and more apparent that other factors are at work.

This report highlights the role corporate social responsibility (CSR) departments play in this equation through a series of case studies from elite companies, ranging from direct employability and employment interventions through to community-based programmes that support social mobility.

It demonstrates that companies have the willingness and capacity to support people from all walks of life into employment. Employee volunteering features significantly, with staff being keen to share their time while, at the same time gaining enormously from the experience themselves. By sharing skills and experiences, employees can help people navigate the world of work, raising aspirations and self-belief.

The report also shows that CSR can be a catalyst for change in mainstream company practice. Modelling initiatives that prove that local young people from our poorest boroughs are not only as talented as their middle class peer group but can bring new perspectives and skills to the table has often helped HR departments adapt their assessment and recruitment procedures.

The programmes highlighted in this report are some of the best and most effective we have seen here at ELBA and we commend them to you for your consideration. Macquarie is proud to be associated with ELBA and we will continue to work with ELBA to improve our commitment and performance in this area in the years to come.

Martin Stanley
Global Head, Macquarie Infrastructure
and Real Assets, ELBA Trustee

Foreword

Introduction

E LBA is east London's leading community regeneration agency working with more than 100 corporate members and almost 500 community organisations over recent years. With 14,000 volunteers each year and around 800 people supported into work, ELBA has first-hand experience of social mobility and some of the challenges that face young people from less advantaged backgrounds in achieving job outcomes appropriate to their educational attainment.

ELBA has been running its successful EaGLES graduate programme – which has seen 96% of 122 participants into graduate level employment – since 2005, and throughout has been supported by Ashridge Executive Education. From basic training in CSR (corporate social responsibility) to project management and presentation skills, the college has been at the centre of our main social mobility effort. Access to excellence at Ashridge has been an eye opener for our non-traditional candidates and at the same time a promise of what is to come.

ELBA member companies have many varied and effective programmes and both Ashridge and ELBA believe they deserve a wider audience, hence this publication. These company schemes have evolved over time, becoming more sophisticated and impactful. There have been numerous lessons learnt about working with the community in the most effective manner and these have been shared in this report. We commend the report's contents for consideration in designing new interventions and wish everyone success in this important area of corporate effort.



Liam Kane
Chief Executive, East London Business Alliance

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What is Social Mobility?



“Social mobility is ‘the ability of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to move up in the world, akin to the notion of equality of opportunity’ with the three key drivers being income, education and occupation.”

Social mobility is a much used term but one that is difficult to define. For the purpose of this report it is referred to as *“the ability of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to move up in the world, akin to the notion of equality of opportunity”*¹ with the three key drivers being income, education and occupation.

Although apparently high on the agenda of all the mainstream political parties, social mobility progress not only remains stubbornly low but there is growing evidence that it is, in fact, getting worse. A report in 2012 by the Cabinet Office² found that the professions tend to be significantly over-represented by people who were independently educated. One-third of MPs, 43% of barristers and 45% of senior civil servants have come from private schools (despite these accounting for only 7% of the overall school population) leading Alan Milburn to conclude that *“the data is so stark, the story so consistent, that it has all the hallmarks of social engineering.”* – Alan Milburn, 2012³

THE ROLE OF THE PROFESSIONS

The professions are an important part of the UK economy with the Cabinet Office predicting them to provide around 83% of all new jobs in the next decade¹. Thus they clearly have a critical role to play in challenging the status quo and representing a force for change.

However, the 2015 report of the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission found the elite accountancy and law firms were not only offering 70% of their jobs to graduates from selective or fee paying schools, but the people employed from state schools, were earning nearly £3,000 less than their peers from independent schools⁴.

“There is good academic evidence that over time most professions have recruited people from more wealthy backgrounds. However, the same data shows that the recruits are not getting brighter; indeed the reverse seems to be happening, as privilege reinforces itself through access to the best schools and family and friend networks” – Paul Cleal, Partner, PWC⁵.

CSR AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and, more specifically, corporate community investment (CCI), has long been concerned with improving the quality of life for the most disadvantaged people and demonstrating a commitment to the communities in which they operate. It is a fast growing sector that has evolved from industrial paternalism and philanthropy to a more strategic approach that is good for business as well as the communities it supports. The government has become an increasingly important driver for

CCI by providing financial incentives and policy guidelines such as the Amended Finance Act 1986. The interest taken by the Deputy Prime Minister’s office over recent years has been influential in developing business involvement in a variety of initiatives as well as David Cameron’s interest in CCI demonstrated by his ‘Big Society’ concept.

One example is the Social Mobility Compact introduced by the Coalition Government in 2011. The Compact sought to encourage behavioural change in organisations by asking employers *“to open their doors to people from all walks of life, regardless of their background”*⁶. In response, over 180 employers signed the Compact, from a range of different industries including finance, legal, retail and energy. The level of interest from business leaders makes it one of the biggest social impact initiatives in the UK.

In terms of cost effectiveness, the case for social mobility for most professional businesses is not always immediately evident. There is no shortage of highly qualified people applying for jobs and the recruitment process is already lengthy and time-consuming: HR departments may be left wondering why they need to further widen the net. This report goes on to argue that, to the contrary, there is a strong business case for recruiting people from all social economic backgrounds. However, at this point in time, it is largely the moral case for social justice that drives many companies to promote social mobility which is why it can often remain largely within the remit of CSR departments.

WHY SOCIAL MOBILITY IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS

“Youth unemployment and a lack of social mobility are two of the major issues facing our society in 2012. Britain’s young people have been some of the hardest hit in these difficult times and we want to do our part, working closely with the Government to raise aspirations and give them the opportunity to build their careers regardless of their background.” – Gordon Frazer, Managing Director, Microsoft⁷.

ELBA has purposely recruited from a wide and diverse ethnicity base over the last ten years to great effect.

“Some of the spectacular corporate failures and scandals we’ve seen in recent years were clearly made possible by monocultures – places where everyone was too like everyone else, group think prevailed and no-one challenged the prevailing view, even when it was clearly wrong and a road to ruin.” — Peter Cheese, Chief Executive, CIPD⁸

“ELBA’s diverse ethnic base has been one of the key factors of its success. Diverse experience, social mores and general outlook have created much of ELBA’s dynamism and innovation in the sector.” – Liam Kane, Chief Executive, ELBA.

The changing economy of the global world has had a huge impact on our workforce and working patterns, including the nature of the work carried out, who does it and where and how it is done. Valuing diversity is becoming increasingly important for businesses who need to adapt to these changing demographics in order to be effective in the economic market. Social class tends to be a hidden category of diversity within the professions but a workforce with mixed socio-economic backgrounds would undoubtedly help counterbalance the dangers inherent in ‘monocultures’ mentioned by Peter Cheese above.

INCREASE IN PRODUCTIVITY

There are competitive advantages to having a diverse workforce including an increase in productivity⁹. Research confirms that groups of diverse workers outperforms those of homogeneous highly able workers¹⁰ as well as improving decision-making capabilities and increasing productivity¹¹. The employer benefits from new ideas and different ways of approaching issues. The changing demographic profile of the UK will inevitably be reflected by a change in consumer purchasing power. Companies need to be aware of the increasing diversity of stakeholders and look to employ a workforce best positioned to meet their needs. Companies embracing non-traditional recruitment today are recruiting the talent that will people their boardrooms tomorrow.

POSITIVE REPUTATION AND STAFF MORALE

Employees seek a discrimination-free work environment and want to know that they will be treated fairly regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or socio-economic background. Effective diversity and inclusion strategies will improve staff morale, reduce employee turnover costs and avoid expensive discrimination lawsuits.

INCREASE IN CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

A homogenous workforce can result in ‘group-think’: organisations cannot thrive and grow if everyone in them thinks and behaves in the same way¹². In contrast, employees from diverse backgrounds bring with them a wider range of skills, knowledge and experiences. The company benefits from new ideas and different ways of approaching a common goal. It is also important that there is diversity amongst senior managers and leaders in order to demonstrate social mobility in action.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, social mobility is often thought of as a rather complex, difficult area and this is why some companies have avoided working with these issues. The case studies in this report show that the opposite is true – that with good planning and design it’s perfectly easy for any employer to get involved and make a significant contribution in the area of social mobility.

“Companies embracing non-traditional recruitment today are recruiting the talent that will people their boardrooms tomorrow.”

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Lessons learned

Whilst the initiatives highlighted in the company case studies featured here offer a variety of different ideas and approaches, we believe that, viewed together, they offer some valuable lessons that can be helpful to everyone who is involved in social mobility initiatives:

- **Work in partnership with others**
- **Understand your volunteers**
- **Define and measure impact**
- **Focus on detailed programme design**
- **The value of senior leadership**
- **Understand, and communicate, the business value to the company**
- **Understand your target community**
- **The big picture – consider the macro issues**

1

Work in partnership with others

A consistent message throughout the case studies was not to try and go it alone. Most companies worked with one or more charity partners who knew their communities well and were expert in their field. Most partners had an impressive track record and experience of working with employee volunteers. The most successful corporate/charity partnerships show mutual respect for each other, value each other's capabilities and have an open, honest relationship. The case studies emphasised the importance of identifying common goals from the start and ensuring there were clear, two-way pathways of communication with built-in regular feedback sessions.

2

Understand your volunteers

Volunteering played a central role in all of the programmes with companies encouraging their employees to share their time, skills and energy. Employees are often keen to volunteer, talking about 'giving something back'. However, they may not be clear about what they want to do or the skills they have to offer. It is important to help them identify this to make the most of the opportunity for both themselves and the recipient(s). Social mobility is a complex issue with which it can be difficult to understand and engage. To that end it is important for programmes to have a narrative, explaining why it is a priority for the company and the role volunteers have to play in making it successful. Orientation and training of volunteers is built into the most successful programmes, ranging from one-off briefing sessions to providing access to on-line resources such as videos and downloadable material. Getting feedback from volunteers after the event is essential and, of course, always thank them – they are more likely to volunteer again in the future! Finally, the two-way benefits of volunteering were regularly mentioned. Volunteers not only enjoyed the experience, they also gained new skills or built on existing ones. Several companies mentioned that their volunteering opportunities were linked to their core competencies and that volunteering was often raised in appraisals. However, there were also a few issues to be considered:

- Low attendance: Employee volunteers are busy and can call-off at the last minute. It is important to have contingency plans
- False hopes: employees are often excited and motivated at the start which can lead to over-promising or over-committing.
- Tokenistic: employees may volunteer because of pressure from senior managers and their heart may not be in it. They may lack empathy with people from a very different background and not treat them with the respect they would afford a paying client.
- If CSR is not embedded as a key part of company business and philosophy, volunteers may not perceive it as relevant or important.
- For activities such as mentoring there needs to be careful pairing of beneficiaries and volunteers to ensure a good fit. Ideally, brief questionnaires should have been completed by both parties prior to the session so that a good match can be made.

3

Define and measure impact

All case studies had systems in place to measure the impact of their programme. The simplest focused on immediate outputs, such as the number of people benefiting from the programme and the number of volunteers involved. The larger, longer-term programmes had also made some effort to measure outcomes and the long-term impact. It is, however, in some instances (e.g. exam results) hard to differentiate the impact of the programme from other variables such as quality of teaching, parental guidance and individual personality traits. A practical point of advice for any companies starting out on such a programme – it's important to set objectives at the start and decide on some measures/metrics, even though they may be developed/amended over time. It doesn't have to be labour intensive or a complex financial analysis – simple measures of success can be just as good as complicated approaches. There are often multiple beneficiaries, including the community group or school, the charity partner, the volunteers and the company as a whole. 'Success' may mean something slightly different to each stakeholder and these differences need to be clearly recognised right from the beginning. Finally, listen to the evaluation results! Be prepared to be flexible and adapt goals and delivery methods in response to feedback. Ultimately, the aim of most CSR social mobility programmes is for individuals to gain employment, usually in the industry represented by their company. However, the long-term tracking of individual beneficiaries is complicated and expensive. For example, the Business and Social Mobility Manifesto¹ contends that it is not enough simply to distinguish between state and independent schools when defining educational background, and recommends whole-school performance levels are taken into account. It is also necessary to track more than one indicator (such as family income and educational background) if the socio-economic make-up of the beneficiaries is to be measured effectively. In terms of recruitment, the Social Mobility Commission highlights the importance of transparency and of companies gathering hard data as part of their recruitment practices in order to get a true picture of the socio-economic background of their work force². By looking closely at the application process it should be possible to see at what stage candidates from particular backgrounds are excluded and, in this way, identify 'inadvertent barriers to talent'.

4

Focus on detailed programme design

It has been interesting to see how the longer-term programmes have evolved over time and to note the way in which they are increasingly growing in sophistication in terms of programme design. A number of programmes have become less generic and more focused, concentrating on the people they believe they can help the most. This reflects the findings of the 2015 Social Mobility Commission report which describes many efforts as 'well-intentioned but under-developed, with both students and current professionals apparently unsure about their purpose'² resulting in limited progress. Several companies said that they had become more realistic in what was achievable in terms of career routes into their particular profession. Because of this, their target audience for some programmes had changed to those with the academic ability to achieve, with guidance, the necessary entry results. A similar point was made in a literature review by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills which found that policies aimed at improving social mobility often targeted the least skilled and most disadvantaged individuals. However research showed that the most cost effective interventions were focused on individuals in the middle of the distribution rather than the lowest level³. Several firms talked about establishing a sustained relationship with students, allowing them to access a range of opportunities over a number of years. For example, the same student could attend workshops, have a mentor and be offered work experience. Programmes were often focused on transition stages or critical points in a young person's education such as the exam years or next steps after school. More than one company mentioned the need for more innovative CSR programmes. CV workshops and interview practice are now regular offers but there is room for more initiatives that help people from lower socio-economic backgrounds gain social capital and feel more like they 'fit in' to professional work. One example was personal impact training that helps people to value their differences and be their 'best self'. Another suggestion was the need for more programmes aimed at the students' parents, who often need help in understanding the education system and career routes. They would then be more able to support their children in this area.

5

The value of senior leadership

A frequent recommendation from the case studies was the importance of recruiting a senior leader in the company to drive change and champion social mobility. This raises the profile of programmes and encourages employees to volunteer. However, make sure the senior leader is totally committed: a half-hearted directive or email is easily spotted. Often the driving force to start a social mobility initiative comes from a CEO who has seen the benefits of such programmes – a point highlighted in Ashridge’s review of the Business in the Community programmes ‘Seeing is Believing’⁴. Starting a programme in this way can be highly effective and makes a difference in terms of engaging the rest of the workforce and creating a real interest around in the programme. The leadership role is particularly important if the business has not previously been involved in social mobility (or CSR) initiatives. It is also worth noting that companies in which the senior management team and the CEO take a volunteer role, or are part of the advisory board, rarely have difficulties in finding other volunteers across the business. Everyone in the business knows that the programme definitely has the ‘stamp of approval’ from the top level.

6

Understand and communicate the business value to the company

Social mobility is inextricably linked to employment. Some of the case studies in this report are about opening up access to employment at a general level, working with school students or hard-to-reach target groups including homeless people and ex-offenders. Other programmes are specifically designed to improve access to the industry in which the company operates and, in this case, strong links need to be built between CSR and HR departments. It appears that some programmes start off in CSR and, once they have ‘proved their worth’ they are adopted by HR which adapts some recruitment practices to optimise the possibility of recruiting from all socio economic backgrounds.

Some of the key points include:

- The need for a wider definition of talent. Performance at ‘A’ level is strongly correlated with social background and, as such, is not a good indicator of future performance. Degree results are more reliable. Setting a high level of UCAS* points can easily become a barrier.
- Similarly, interviewers need to be aware that certain experiences (such as travel) attitudes (such as confidence), and mannerisms can be traced to a middle-class upbringing. There is an increasing move towards strengths-based assessments and psychometric tests.
- These points are beginning to be taken into account by the professions. PWC, the biggest private sector employer of graduates, has recently decided not to use ‘A’ level grades to assess applicants and more and more companies are adopting a ‘CV blind’ policy, moving away from selecting candidates according to the school or university they attended.

*The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) in the UK

7

Understand your target community

Having a good understanding of the target group of the initiative is key. All of the companies were quick to point out that they were not experts in the community and, instead, recommended working with charity partners with knowledge of the local community or experience with specific target groups. Good programmes are executive partnerships where both corporates and the community are open to learning. Things can go wrong from both the community and company perspective. When something goes wrong from the company side it can cause lasting damage and have the opposite effect to what the CSR initiative is trying to achieve. This often happens when the business objective overrides community needs. Our case studies confirmed that ‘one size does not fit all’ and that programmes need to be fine-tuned to suit different audiences. The age of the recipients is an obvious example: adults tend to benefit more from programmes that focus on ‘soft skills’ such as communication skills and self-awareness rather than cognitive skills, which are more suited to students and younger people.

8

The big picture – consider the macro issues

The government agenda has always been an important driver for business. Over the past decade companies have been encouraged to embrace multi-sectorial partnerships with business, charities and government working together to address community issues and several case studies have adapted this approach. It might seem obvious, but is worth pointing out that a national government, a professional association or the European Union can make a good deal of difference here. If they can see the value in a programme – and encourage big business to get involved – then the levels of interest will increase quickly. It’s also true that formal, and informal, supplier links between companies makes a big difference. For example some supplier companies to Barclays (such as ISS UK) are already involved with the LifeSkills programme and can in this way help to strengthen the programme.

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Case studies

The case studies selected for this report are varied deliberately, both in terms of size and the nature of their programmes. However, they are all driven by two common key motivators:

- raising the aspirations of people from lower social economic backgrounds and
- promoting fair and open access to employment.

Some companies have chosen to join existing charity programmes (e.g. BTMU and Working Chance) or broker-ages (e.g. Freshfields and BITC). All of these programmes have evolved and adapted over time to suit the unique needs, skill and commitment of the company concerned.

Other companies (usually the larger ones) have developed their own bespoke programme. Some have a general focus on raising aspirations and access to jobs (e.g. Barclays and LifeSkills, Accenture and Skills to Succeed) while the motivation of other programmes is to attract people from lower socio-economic backgrounds to a particular profession (e.g. KPMG and Access All Areas). Citi took a successful programme from the USA and introduced it to the UK, at the same time opening it up to other companies to participate.

Many companies target schools and young people for obvious reasons, but others work with specific client groups. For example, both BTMU and Freshfields support ex-offenders, Macquarie works with homeless people and Credit Suisse people with disabilities. Catlin has taken a slightly different approach by 'adopting' a specific geographical area and working with the residents who live there across a wide range of initiatives.

One thing is certain, UK companies are alert to the needs of their local communities and are demonstrably committed to supporting them. As the case studies illustrate there are many and varied ways in how to design, develop and deliver a social mobility programme.

- **Accenture and the Skills to Succeed Academy**
- **LifeSkills created with Barclays**
- **Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ and Working Chance**
- **Citi and Career Ready**
- **Credit Suisse and First Impression First Experiences**
- **East London Business Alliance^(ELBA) and EaGLES**
- **Freshfields and the Ready for Work Programme**
- **HSBC and the Opportunity Partnership**
- **KPMG and Access All Areas**
- **Macquarie and Streetwise Opera**
- **Slaughter and May and The Key Project**
- **UBS and the Bridge Academy**
- **XL Catlin Group & the St Paul's Way project**

Accenture & Skills to Succeed Academy: An online training programme for unemployed young people


High performance. Delivered.



“The Academy is a free, highly interactive, online training programme that helps young people, aged 16-24 years old, develop key employability skills necessary to find and keep a job.”

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company serving clients in more than 120 countries. In 2009, Accenture launched its Skills to Succeed initiative in response to persistent unemployment around the world.

More than 200 million people are currently unemployed worldwide, including more than 70 million young people. This rate of unemployment restricts upward social mobility and makes it difficult for individuals to secure sustainable work. Skills to Succeed aims to equip more than 3 million people by 2020 with skills that open doors to meaningful employment.

Accenture’s UK Skills to Succeed programme has a specific focus on youth unemployment, targeting young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs). As of June 2015, 738,000 16 to 24 year olds were unemployed in the UK¹. The total cost of youth unemployment in the UK during the next decade is estimated at £28 billion². Young people from disadvantaged communities often face greater barriers to employment; 53% of NEETs, unemployed for more than a year, feel they have been permanently left behind in life due to unemployment³. Those working to support young jobseekers are finding resources to be increasingly stretched as demand for their services grow. Accenture created the Skills to Succeed Academy to help address these challenges.

Camilla Drejer, Director of Corporate Citizenship at Accenture, describes the online Skills to Succeed Academy as a key component of the overall Skills to Succeed initiative in the UK. The Academy is a free, highly interactive, online training programme that helps young people, aged 16-24 years old, develop key employability skills necessary to find and keep a job.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

In 2012, Accenture and Skills to Succeed partner, the East London Business Alliance (ELBA) joined forces, combining ELBA’s expertise working with young people on issues of social mobility and youth unemployment with Accenture’s expertise in innovation, technology and learning, to create an online learning programme.

Camilla explains, *“The idea was to create something online that would deliver a real step-change in what support is available to young jobseekers in their journey to work.”* She added, *“We wanted to come together to create something very different – something that would be engaging and effective, but most importantly, would ensure all young jobseekers, regardless of their background or access to mentors, would have access to high quality training and support.”*

To benefit from their vast experience within the welfare

to work sector, ELBA used their contacts within different kinds of organisations, including schools, colleges, housing associations, charities, job brokerages, the Jobcentre Plus and Government departments. Subject matter experts from these organisations provided expertise and insight that enabled Accenture to map the end-to-end jobseeker journey from becoming unemployed to finding and sustaining work. Together they identified the common mistakes and barriers faced by young people when navigating the journey to employment. The findings were used to create learning objectives, which in turn formed the foundation of an interactive solution. The partners went on to help ELBA and Accenture pilot the ‘Getting a Job’ course with approximately 130 young people in east London in 2012. The results were extremely encouraging. Based on the results and extensive feedback gathered, Accenture made enhancements to the Getting a Job course and developed two more courses: You and Your Career and Success in Work. From these courses, the Skills to Succeed Academy was born.

When the programme was launched nationally in 2013, it provided young jobseekers in the UK access to high quality employability skills training, at a time and place that suits them. The online training focuses on teaching young people how to do things for themselves, building skills and confidence, and empowering them to take ownership of their career development and job search. It leads young people through the entire process of getting a job and helps them overcome a variety of common challenges along the way. There are three courses, spanning 35 modules of practical employability skills using advanced technologies, including gaming techniques and performance simulations in fun, bite-sized pieces.

The training is now available across the UK via Jobcentre Plus and careers service departments. Accenture also works with charities and other delivery partners skilled in social mobility and employability to provide a regional focus for delivery.

“Our partnership with Accenture means we can continue to support more young people who have the talent and determination, but have experienced difficulties finding employment because they lack the necessary skills and knowledge about how the job market works.” – Paul Williams, Labour Market Operations Director, Department for Work & Pensions

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Accenture has invested heavily in the Skills to Succeed Academy. More than 40,000 hours of consulting services have been donated to build and roll out the online Academy. Accenture also donated more than £450,000 in cash through its UK local giving programme to support the build, piloting and launch of the online Skills to Succeed Academy, which includes donations to partner charities to fund full-time project managers.

IMPACT

The impact of the Skills to Succeed Academy has been significant. Since its launch in 2013, the Academy has helped more than 30,000 NEETS or pre-NEETs build employability skills. Of those who participated, 76% said they felt more confident and employable as a result of the programme.

“I liked that most of the learning was online because it meant I could work at my own pace... before I took this training I really didn’t know what employers expected at interviews. After it, I felt so confident...” – Jamie Huckle, 17, NEET at the time of training.

Of the young people using the Skills to Succeed Academy, 25% have progressed into employment and an additional 18% have gone on to achieve other positive outcomes, such as entering full or part-time education⁴.

Accenture has also embedded the training into its own employability programmes, such as its Movement to Work placements. These placements help young, unemployed people gain a better understanding of what it means to have a career in the technology and digital sector. In addition to providing them with work experience to help build confidence, networks and skills, the young people go through four weeks of training, including employability and vocational skills training, using the online Academy materials. Slightly more than half of these individuals progress into employment or apprenticeships – many with Accenture.

The Skills to Succeed Academy has also benefited Accenture employees. It has enhanced the company’s employee volunteer offering by providing staff with an opportunity to contribute their existing learning and technology expertise while developing new capabilities. Camilla says that the programme has been highly motivating and exciting for Accenture employees, since it is something they can connect to emotionally. She adds, *“They can see the difference it’s making, and they feel really proud to be a part of it.”*

“From the senior leadership to apprentices and interns, the Skills to Succeed Academy has been embraced by Accenture staff both as a pro-bono project and a volunteering activity and is something of which we are immensely proud.” – Mike Byrne, Managing Director and Skills to Succeed Academy sponsor.

LESSONS LEARNED

The development and deployment of the Skills to Succeed Academy has allowed for tremendous learning about cross-sector collaboration. Accenture has worked with more than 35 organisations from across the welfare to work sector, from small charities and educational institutions to large government departments. In the development phase, this enabled Accenture to create content rich with expertise, insights and examples from a diverse range of subject matter experts.

As Accenture moved into the deployment phase, the portfolio of delivery partners was equally diverse. As a result of the partnership with government departments, the Skills to Succeed Academy training is embedded in key national employability support programmes – driving scale of reach. To complement this, Accenture has also partnered with charities, both directly and through their partners’ supply chains, who include the Skills to Succeed Academy in programmes targeting the hardest to reach young people in the UK.

The team also learned how essential it was to involve the young people in the development stage to ensure the final product was relevant, realistic and engaging. In fact, following the initial pilot, significant content changes were made based on feedback from young people. For example, the characters in the programme now actually look and sound like the young people ELBA works with in the local community. This was particularly important since the Skills to Succeed Academy is not only seeking to teach hard skills, but also to develop those very important soft skills, such as body language and interpersonal skills, which are crucial in levelling the playing field. For many young people, who may have no previous exposure to the work world or professional role models, the Skills to Succeed Academy offers the opportunity to practice these soft skills in a safe environment – ensuring they can shine among their peers in an increasingly competitive work environment.

In the welfare to work sector, new programmes and schemes are released on a regular basis. As such, Accenture found that establishing and demonstrating value and relevance of new solutions upfront is critical to achieving the buy-in required from stretched delivery partners. This is particularly true in the field of technology-enabled learning solutions, such as the Skills to Succeed Academy, where they represent a new way of delivering employability support. Camilla commented that establishing senior

“I liked that most of the learning was online because it meant I could work at my own pace... before I took this training I really didn’t know what employers expected at interviews. After it, I felt so confident...”
— Jamie Huckle, 17, NEET at time of training.

champions within delivery partners to build greater visibility and programme buy-in, as well as investing in good quality ‘train the trainer’ programmes and support materials for advisors, was a key factor in ensuring the success of the delivery within their partners. In contrast, the young people were on a completely different level and were very comfortable to log onto the system and navigate the site.

Initially, there was also some reluctance and concern about technology replacing the role of youth workers and employment advisors. However, those same people soon came to realise that the programme actually built on their skills and developed their capacity at work. They found that instead of dealing with people individually, they could work with 20 people at once and saw the real advantages of young people working as a group on the same programme, as well as continuing the learning through self-study.

Finally, Accenture employees learned new skills, including innovations around gamification and performance stimulations. Consequently, not only were they training people in the community, they were also honing and developing their own skills.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

Camilla points out that most companies or employers are comfortable with defining diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, religious belief and sexual orientation, but that it’s still relatively new to include social economic background in this list of factors. Accenture has started to think about social mobility as an aspect of diversity and a way of ensuring that their workforce reflects the communities they serve. Skills to Succeed and the Academy offering are part of how Accenture is investing to promote social mobility.

Camilla stresses the importance of working in collaboration. Accenture always works in partnership, recognising that youth unemployment is too large and complex for any one organisation to tackle alone, instead preferring to work with organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors that are experts in engaging with young people and understanding the local community to make sure solutions are relevant and effective.

“ELBA was able to pull in lots of other experts around employability through their community network, leaving Accenture to stick at what they’re good at.” – Camilla Drejer, Director of Corporate Citizenship, Accenture UK & Ireland

Starting up a programme such as the Skills to Succeed Academy can lead to the development of other related projects. For example, Accenture has since created a technology apprenticeship scheme. People from the Movement to Work programme who demonstrate an aptitude and interest in technology but lack formal qualifications have an opportunity to participate – enabling Accenture to attract a different pool of candidates, including many more women.

“From the senior leadership to apprentices and interns, the Skills to Succeed Academy has been embraced by Accenture staff both as a pro-bono project and a volunteering activity and is something of which we are immensely proud.”
— Mike Byrne, Managing Director and Skills to Succeed Academy sponsor.

1 Parliamentary briefing published 12 August 2015, researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN05871/SN05871.pdf

2 ACEVO Commission on Youth Unemployment - February 2012

3 The Prince’s Trust

4 As reported from partners able to capture outcomes

LifeSkills created with Barclays: Inspiring millions of young people to get the skills they need for a better future

LifeSkills

Created with  BARCLAYS



“Too many young people in the UK don’t have access to the skills or opportunities they need to realise their potential when they leave school.”

When the LifeSkills created with Barclays programme was launched in 2013 most people would have considered it to be both ambitious and a rather daring initiative. Not only was it designed to involve a high number of young people, but it also aimed to involve a large number of different schools and teachers. The programme aims to provide teaching material and work experience opportunities for young people, and also to catch the attention of those who are ‘not in employment, education or training’, a group also known as ‘NEETs’. Ashok Vaswani, Chief Executive of Barclays Personal and Corporate Banking, said at the launch: *“Too many young people in the UK don’t have access to the skills or opportunities they need to realise their potential when they leave school. Businesses, schools and families need to work together so that the next generation have the support they need to get ahead... every business should get involved in offering work experience through the LifeSkills programme because by doing so they’ll create opportunities to transform what young people go on to achieve.”*

The progress achieved is impressive. Already, just a couple of years later, the programme has turned around the lives of many young people who might otherwise have missed out on life (and work) chances.

LifeSkills is one way in which Barclays is demonstrating its deep commitment to improving the employability skills of young people. Another is its apprenticeship programme. Over 2,000 apprentices have joined Barclays since 2012 on the programme which offers career options to young people with no qualifications or experience. This has helped to improve bank recruitment retention and contribute to tackling youth unemployment.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

LifeSkills gives young people advice, support and opportunities to help them navigate the world of work. It focuses on delivering employability skills – that complement the national curriculum – in areas such as presentations, interviewing and writing CVs. The early design and planning for LifeSkills began in 2012 when the team at Barclays considered various options to deliver something practical for young people (which would be easy for them to access and use), as well as creating a programme that the rest of the Bank would value. They also wanted to build on the learning and earlier success of the Barclays Money Skills programme (first launched by Barclays in 2007), so that hopefully the new programme would appeal to a large group of young people. Additionally, the programme had to be an initiative that would resonate with the Bank’s customers, add value to society, and help resolve some of the issues that confront many young people in our society.

The easiest, and most practical, way to achieve this objec-

tive was working with schools and teachers to determine how best to reach young people. Initially, this did create some concerns as Faye Jordan, Senior Programme Manager for LifeSkills explains: *“we knew that there were many competing demands on teachers’ time and this was a challenge at first. However, we felt that we were offering something different. Schools were asking for help in delivering employability skills for their students and we were happy to fill that gap.”*

The programme has three main areas: people skills (such as self-confidence); work skills (this includes presentation and interviewing), and money skills (helping the students manage their own finances). There is a comprehensive set of teaching resources for each key theme, all linked to the curriculum, as well as some fun and educational interactive content to back up the learning. A key part of the programme are the workshops, delivered by volunteers from Barclays, that provide real-life examples of the world of work and build on the knowledge, skills and confidence of the students. Finally, as an incentive, work experience is provided for 14 to 19 years olds who complete LifeSkills in schools.

Initially, the programme was targeted at those aged 11 to 16 in secondary schools but quite quickly the target group expanded to include the 16 to 18 age group. Plans are in hand to include those aged 19+, and to enable other groups beyond teachers to access materials from the programme. In fact, one of the surprises has been the level of demand from youth workers and parents who are interested in the materials available. Once the programme launched it quickly became well-known, as Faye explains: *“Within a matter of weeks we had 900 teachers signed up. We also found we had wider appeal than we initially realised and found that youth organisations and Further Education Colleges were also signing up.”*

It’s interesting to note the different forms of communication employed with the various groups involved in the programme. *“For teachers, emails are a great way to raise awareness and we find that educators have great networks and often pass on the information to their colleagues. We use a similar process with our own volunteers and circulate a weekly email message (to different regions or counties) to highlight volunteering opportunities they can access. However, to communicate with young people, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are more effective channels.”* Vloggers (Video Bloggers) on YouTube are also part of the communication mix as they are influential with young people. Faye admits that using the latest social media is still a relatively new medium for the bank to use for this activity, and that there is a balance to be had between using multiple platforms and ensuring both brand and messaging coherence not only for the programme but the business as a whole.

Support from the senior team has been crucial for the programme’s success and does make a difference: *“It’s really important that the programme has business relevance for us within the Bank, and for our customers, and that senior leaders such as Ashok Vaswani and Antony Jenkins were completely supportive of what we wanted to achieve.”*

Engaging staff with these workshops has been a relatively simple process, though requiring ongoing activity, and there are now around 14,000 people registered across all parts of Barclays who are willing to help as and when needed. Faye

stressed the importance of the volunteers feeling comfortable when delivering the workshops and, to that end, orientation and training is provided, including on-line videos.

Robin Reynolds, a LifeSkills volunteer said: *"I have been an advocate of Lifeskills since mid-2014 when I was able to begin to understand how I could engage with the team and what each of the activities entailed.*

I've gained the most personal benefit from the 16-19 activities, looking at CV writing, interview skills, networking and presentation skills, as I have my own children in this age group, so I can witness real benefits in how these students really benefit from our experiences. When one enters a room of students it can be quite intimidating - so if I accompany anyone who is a 'first timer' on a LifeSkills session I ensure I take part of the lead rather than throwing them into the deep end. However all of the students I have encountered are really grateful for the time we take and the passion we have for delivering the sessions."

The team were determined that schools from more rural or disadvantaged areas would be able to access the programme, and, to that end, four charity partners are funded by Barclays to deliver the workshops in schools where more than 21% of pupils receive free school meals. This has ensured the programme is reaching young people who can really benefit from the training, as well as helping to raise awareness of what we have to offer.

IMPACT

- 68% of secondary schools and around 18,000 teachers are involved in LifeSkills
- Young people who have taken part in the LifeSkills programme online have said that the programme helped them:
 - Be more confident during an interview (71%)
 - Make decisions about their future career (74%)
- 94% of teachers who used the resources said they were likely to use them again
- 85% of teachers who used the resources said they were likely to recommend LifeSkills to colleagues

The Work Foundation conducted independent research into the impact of LifeSkills. The author of the evaluation report, Lizzie Crowley, found that *"the largest observable impact the LifeSkills programme is having is in raising the confidence and aspirations of the young people who take part. Academic reports highlight the fact that there are strong links between young people's aspirations and/or attitudes and future educational attainment/labour market success. Therefore LifeSkills, by raising confidence and aspirations, is likely to have a positive impact on young people's future outcomes in learning and work."*

LESSONS LEARNED

Faye highlights one useful lesson about LifeSkills - which could apply to any type of CSR project - which is about goal-setting: *"If you set yourself a public goal it's a definite help in ensuring you achieve that. We knew that some of our initial goals were very ambitious, for example, the idea that we could reach a million young people! And whilst if we had fallen short we would have been transparent about the*

challenges faced, we found that we hit our target 11 months much earlier than we expected which was incredible!"

Establishing a programme such as LifeSkills within tight timescales is not easy, but the 2014 TV advertising campaign has helped reach a wide audience. The point to note - that other social mobility programmes might benefit from - is to build in some form of local, regional or national marketing campaign alongside any programme. While this has not traditionally been the approach for most CSR corporate programmes, it has the potential to capture the attention of those beyond the immediate target audience (outside the organisation). It also may attract the attention of potential volunteers (inside the organisation) in a novel way that may complement any internal marketing.

"LifeSkills, by raising confidence and aspirations, is likely to have a positive impact on young people's future outcomes in learning and work"

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

Piloting has been important in some social mobility programmes but has not been part of the Barclays' programme. Perhaps the scale of the programme makes piloting less relevant but the LifeSkills team has instead found more value from what might be described as an 'adapt and change' process. Faye explains: *"we've found that it's better just to push it out there but be prepared to tweak and update as you go."*

One of the challenges for LifeSkills will always be whether teachers can find the time to take part - something relevant for any work with schools. *"We know that, when we ask teachers about why they either don't use the programme at all or why they don't use it more, the key issue is 'time'. They have so many other commitments involved in teaching they simply don't have enough time to spare, even though they recognise the importance of the skills being taught."*

Finally, Faye advocates the importance of keeping in close touch with relevant insights - research reports, stakeholder activity and developments of interest to target audiences. *"When managing a programme it can be all consuming to ensure the day to day experiences of participants are fantastic. It's key to look both up and ahead to understand the current and future need for what you are delivering, to plan for relevant new content and to ensure you are using the best methods to communicate it to your audiences."*

Bank of Tokyo- Mitsubishi UFJ & Working Chance: Helping women with criminal convictions into employment

 MUFG



Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ (BTMU) is Japan's largest bank. Its CSR programme in EMEA began in late 2012 and one of the first charities the bank collaborated with was Working Chance. This is an organisation that supports women with criminal convictions into sustainable, paid jobs, breaking the intergenerational cycle of disadvantage and crime. The team at Working Chance describe themselves as 'pioneers, reframing the recruitment of people with convictions by changing attitudes amongst employers, media and society at large'.

Nicola Ruane, Associate Director of Corporate Social Responsibility, explained that when ELBA introduced BTMU to Working Chance, she was immediately impressed by the charity's very clear goals and commitment to social impact.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

Working Chance supports women to find paid and voluntary employment and provides one-to-one coaching, employability training and other social support. In 2013/14, Working Chance placed 144 women into paid work, with over 80% of these still in their jobs after six months. In the same year, Working Chance were able to offer placements with 41 different employers.

As part of its programme of candidate support and training, Working Chance runs regular Employability Sessions, which offer candidates an invaluable opportunity to practise their interview skills and learn how best to disclose their convictions to potential employers. During these sessions, candidates take part in a series of mock interviews, each lasting around 15 minutes, and are encouraged to meet with employers across a range of sectors. In this way they get plenty of opportunity to talk through their CV and sell their skills and experience, just as they would in a real interview with a future employer.

BTMU supports Working Chance by sending employees to volunteer at these sessions. Volunteers provide candidates with valuable feedback, both verbally and in writing, which helps Working Chance identify the future support needed in each woman's search for work.

"I feel more confident, capable of a happy working life and of having a brighter future" - Working Chance candidate after Employability Session, June 2015

Nicola explained that the charity is popular with volunteers because they can see how their efforts make a positive difference to women's lives. Their involvement with Working Chance has broken down stereotypes about ex-offenders. The Employability Sessions are appealing because they only last for a couple of hours, which especially suits more senior volunteers, and there is currently a waiting list of employees interested in volunteering for Working Chance.

"In terms of how I made an impact; I feel I was able to help the women feel comfortable to practice talking about their experiences and in fact a couple of them wanted to talk to me after the session to share what they had learned and how they wanted to move on."

"Supporting Working Chance has had clear benefits for BTMU as a company and for its employees. Feedback from volunteers has been very positive: they describe the programme as very well organised, providing them with a chance to develop their own skills."

IMPACT

Supporting Working Chance has had clear benefits for BTMU as a company and for its employees. Feedback from volunteers has been very positive: they describe the programme as very well organised, providing them with a chance to develop their own skills. They also value the fact that the programme challenges their assumptions and preconceptions. One of the unexpected impacts of this programme is that it encourages employees to think outside the box in regard to different CSR activities and causes they could support or become involved in.

"In terms of how I made an impact; I feel I was able to help the women feel comfortable to practice talking about their experiences and in fact a couple of them wanted to talk to me after the session to share what they had learned and how they wanted to move on. In terms of how it made me feel; to be honest a little sad, as I realised what I had done that morning was just a tiny drop in the ocean in terms of the work that Working Chance have to do. However, this would not stop me from taking part again and I am considering another event later on this year. Working Chance were extremely knowledgeable and professional and they ran the event exceptionally well." - Odette Simpson, BTMU 2015

BTMU supports diversity in recruitment and broadening the routes into employment, recognising the business benefits of accessing talent pipelines which have not been previously considered. In future, BTMU is hoping to develop its relationship with Working Chance and open up its own internal recruitment channels, perhaps through some of its supply chain companies.

LESSONS LEARNED

Because CSR was a newly developing concept for BTMU, using the expertise of its community partners was essential in building volunteering opportunities efficiently. BTMU believes such charities understand the social and local issues and have the infrastructure in place to facilitate a strong relationship with the Bank and its employees.

Initially the Working Chance Employability Sessions were promoted to volunteers across the Bank, but in the last six months, BTMU adopted a more targeted approach so that the support provided would have more impact on the women involved. The focus is now on attracting employees in senior positions and also those who have extensive interviewing skills (for example in HR) to volunteer for the programme.

BTMU was open to developing its relationship with the charity as opportunities arose. For example, the head of BTMU's operations is a member of the bank's CSR committee and, when he heard about Working Chance, he invited some of its candidates to experience 'a day in the life' of the Operations Department. In this way, candidates gained a day's work experience, along with an insight into the workings of a corporate bank. The feedback received was extremely positive and it is likely that a similar event will be run again in the future.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

Nicola advised companies that are just starting out in supporting social mobility initiatives to identify one issue that fits in with the ethos of their business and work with charities that specifically focus on that area, and then build on this. Staying in touch regularly with the charity is also crucial to avoiding any operational issues such as a change of staff or programme design.

It is important to measure the impact of the programme and to set up reporting systems with the charity partner to communicate how the volunteers' efforts are making a difference - for example, how many women have been interviewed and whether the support provided is directly helping these women into employment.

“The aim is to use the expertise of our community partners rather than reinventing the wheel, leverage the knowledge and connections of community partners and internalise that for your people. The charities understand the local issues and have the networks to provide the support to tackle these issues and then we as CSR professionals create the bridge into our organisations to use our resources to make a difference in that area.”
— Nicola Ruane, Associate Director, Corporate Social Responsibility, BTMU

Citi & Career Ready: Preparing young people for the world of work



citi®



Citi is a founding supporter of Career Ready (previously Career Academies UK). Inspired by the work of the National Academy Foundation (NAF) in the US, Citi was not only instrumental in launching the UK programme in 2002, but has supported expansion and growth of the programme over the last decade to include Northern Ireland, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

The Career Ready programme is a transformational, employer-led, structured programme of study which successfully prepares young people for the world of work through regular contact with working people and work places. It includes four key elements – mentoring, masterclasses (delivered by employers), workplace visits and internships/work experience – all of which combine together and build on young people’s studies to help them develop the skills and confidence they need to perform effectively in the wider world. 2,700 students from 192 schools and colleges across the UK are currently enrolled on the Career Ready programme.

Career Ready is not aimed at strong academic students who already know they will go to university; it is not for students with a wealth of professional career experience in their family and it is not for students who know what they want to achieve. Career Ready is for students with potential, who need the guidance and opportunities to compete on a level-playing field for the best careers in the country.

An annual ‘A Capital Experience’ event is organised by Career Ready which brings students and employers together. Aimed at raising student ambitions and aspirations, it involves a motivational morning followed by workplace visits to top companies including Citi. For many students, who are largely from urban areas of social need, this will be the first time they’ve been to London or had access to such large-scale, influential businesses. A Capital Experience is a fun, but educational day and gives students a real insight not just into the types of careers available, but more crucially, advice on how to get in to these careers.

Career Ready have a wide range of volunteering opportunities including mentoring, Local Advisory Board (LAB)

“Career Ready is not aimed at strong academic students who already know they will go to university; it is not for students with a wealth of professional career experience in their family and it is not for students who know what they want to achieve. Career Ready is for students with potential, who need the guidance and opportunities to compete on a level-playing field for the best careers in the country.”

roles and masterclass facilitation. LABs provide schools/colleges with a sustainable link to their local employment market. Providing support and advocacy, LABs steer the programme and make a real impact on delivery and the opportunities afforded to its students. Many Citi employees are involved in LABs as volunteers, driving the programme and employer engagement work on behalf of schools.

As part of its Global Community Day in 2014, 45 Citi employees signed up as volunteer mentors for the Career Ready programme.

A number of senior managers at Citi are also actively involved. For example Colin Stewart, managing director of Citi’s Scottish operations, is a member of the Career Ready Scottish Advisory Board while James Bardrick, UK managing director, is a member of the National Advisory Board. He is clear about how important it is to change attitudes on both sides – by the young people taking part in the programme and by employers.

“Young people have to go the extra mile, be proactive and understand the basics of business in order to be career ready and get ahead. Employers need to be even more forthcoming and make a greater effort to engage with, and motivate, the talent on their doorsteps.”
— James Bardrick, UK Managing Director, Citi.

Citi also supported 15 Summer Interns in London and five Summer Interns in its Edinburgh office.

What Career Ready does is at the heart of Government’s objectives in creating partnerships between business and education. The UK Skills Minister, Matthew Hancock, in a flagship report on the future of careers said – *“the best motivation and advice tends to come from people in jobs themselves. People with fulfilling careers are the ones who can really show young people what it is like to succeed in the world of work.”*

Swati Patel, Senior Vice President, EMEA Community Development, Citi explains – *“Career Ready makes a real difference to the lives of young people and, from an employer perspective, it provides a wonderful opportunity for Citi to be involved in helping develop the talent pool of the future. The internships also offer development opportunities for our first line managers.”*

The programme continues to grow with increasing numbers of volunteers providing long-term face-to-face mentoring to Career Academy students. This could include advice about university choice, making personal statements for applications or mock interview practice. Upon graduating from the programme at least 65% of Career Ready students go on to university.

IMPACT

The impact of the Career Ready programme is impressive. Many Citi employees, including senior staff, volunteer and support Career Ready across its UK operations – in Belfast, Edinburgh and Glasgow as well as London. As Swati Patel explains, *“the programme is very effective because it provides in the workplace experience to prepare students for the world of work. It’s definitely helping get the next generation equipped with 21st century employability skills.”*

In Scotland, currently the only place in the UK with comprehensive Career Ready destination data, 97% of 2013/14 students went on to a positive destination – of whom 25% went into work or work-based training, 54% are at university and 21% are in further education. Career Ready students develop employability skills, but also demonstrate drive, determination and ambition, which makes them stand out when applying to potential employers.

LESSONS LEARNED

Working in partnership is really important to Citi. Swati believes the key to this is good project management, adapting the design of the programme as it develops.

As Swati explains, *“What we’ve learnt is that we have to evolve together, to look at the current educational climate and deliver something practical for young people, which at the same time aligns with our company mission and that of the Citi Foundation.”*

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

Getting involved with the students as mentors and helping them make their journey into either education or employment also opens up skills development opportunities for employees.

- Financial support alone is not enough. It is important that volunteers are involved in the programme. This ensures the students meet people outside of their normal social circles and encourages social mobility.
- The volunteers also promote the work of Citi, *“There is nothing better than having employees being the voice of the good things that a company is sponsoring.”*

“Career Ready makes a real difference to the lives of young people and, from an employer perspective, it provides a wonderful opportunity for Citi to be involved in helping develop the talent pool of the future. The internships also offer development opportunities for our first line managers.”
— Swati Patel, Senior Vice President, EMEA Community Development, Citi

Credit Suisse & First Impressions, First Experiences: Helping young disabled people into employment

CREDIT SUISSE 



“Young people with a disability are twice as likely to be unemployed, and much less likely to go onto further education compared to their non-disabled peers. Also, by age 26, a disabled young person is four times as likely to be out of work as their non-disabled peers.”

Credit Suisse Group is a leading global financial services company with its UK headquarters based at Canary Wharf. The Credit Suisse EMEA Foundation focuses on raising the educational attainment, employability, and aspiration of young disadvantaged people and, for over four years, has provided a grant to Scope, a charity promoting equality of opportunities for disabled people, to fund and pilot a programme called First Impressions, First Experiences.

Kate Butchart, Head of Corporate Citizenship at Credit Suisse explained that the company was aware that young people with a disability are twice as likely to be unemployed, and much less likely to go onto further education compared to their non-disabled peers. Also, by age 26, a disabled young person is four times as likely to be out of work as their non-disabled peers. As Kate explains, *“Credit Suisse was keen to gain a fuller understanding of the links between disability and poverty, particularly what the company could do to make the biggest positive impact on the lives of young people.”*

PROGRAMME DESIGN

‘First Impressions, First Experiences’ is a training programme for young disabled people from east London aged 16 to 24, which prepares them for the world of work. The programme starts with six weeks of pre-employment skills training (three mornings a week) to help the students develop employability skills and grow in confidence and independence. The training is followed by four to eight weeks of work experience with each placement matched with the career aims of the individual. In addition to those at Credit Suisse, recent placements have included London Overground, NHS Litigation Authority, Transport for London, Hackney City Farm and Hoxton Hall. Students are carefully selected by Scope staff and supported throughout the programme and also have a weekly one-to-one meeting with a personal mentor. On completion of the placement, participants have ten weeks of individual support from Scope staff, along with a personal action plan, helping them to achieve their career goals.

“We make a real difference to young people’s confidence and enable them to take the next steps to the world of work. We hope the course will lead them to make life-changing career decisions.” – Guy Chaudoir, Project Manager at Scope

Credit Suisse supports the programme on a number of different levels. In addition to funding, it provides facilities for eight of the workshops along with volunteers who help the students with their CVs, job search techniques and mock interviews. Credit Suisse also provides mentors for the students. In 2014, 14 Credit Suisse employees acted as mentors and a further 64 volunteers helped with the employability sessions.

IMPACT

Over a two-year period, 60 young people took part in First Impression First Experiences. 80% of those who completed the programme progressed onto volunteering, employment (paid or unpaid) or further learning within six months of the programme.

There are additional benefits to the programme, most of which centre around ‘soft skills’. Participants learn to communicate confidently, manage their own time and travel independently. They pick up social skills by meeting new people from their cohort and understand the importance of teamwork.

“Without Scope I don’t know what I’d be doing now. I’d be jobless, probably at home, playing my X Box, watching TV. Without Scope, I wouldn’t be where I am today and I wouldn’t be able to explain my disability in a confident manner. I’d probably be doing nothing.” – Azar Ali, Learner from Scope

Volunteering is a key part of Credit Suisse’s social responsibility strategy and the opportunities provided by First Impression, First Experiences have also had an impact internally by developing the skills of their staff and creating a positive workplace culture.

“I found the time I spent helping very fulfilling. I was able to show the trainees how best to approach interviews and CV writing and I think they appreciated it. It’s in a really informal environment and you get to meet some great people. I have done it a few times now and would love to continue helping.” – Daryl Isaacs, Credit Suisse Volunteer

“Without Scope I don’t know what I’d be doing now. I’d be jobless, probably at home, playing my X Box, watching TV. Without Scope, I wouldn’t be where I am today and I wouldn’t be able to explain my disability in a confident manner. I’d probably be doing nothing.”
— Azar Ali, Learner from Scope

LESSONS LEARNED

Volunteering for a programme such as First Impression First Experiences is not always easy and, because of this Scope decided to provide more in-depth training for the mentors from Credit Suisse, including specific training on the young people's needs and suggestions for mentoring activity.

There are also a number of other initiatives that have been developed because of Credit Suisse's experience with the programme. One example is their mock interview week. In the past, mock interviews used to be carried out on an ad hoc basis as need arose, but Credit Suisse saw the benefits of providing generic, bi-annual 'mock interview weeks' to support not just Scope students but beneficiaries on their other programmes, such as school pupils applying to universities and undergraduates looking for jobs. These are large-scale events supported by ELBA with over two hundred employee volunteers giving feedback on interview skills and CVs with many young people offered further, ongoing support via email.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

Kate describes social mobility as a *"big agenda item for many stakeholders in particular the Government. Whilst they don't always specifically refer to it, many of their programmes have social mobility as their ultimate objective, particularly education, aspiration and employability."* As a result, Kate's team spent time researching what social mobility means. They learnt that, throughout an individual's lifetime, there are a number of intervention points that can have a real impact on a person's social mobility and the different challenges each represents.

Kate believes it is essential to find great partners who have a thorough understanding of their target group. It is also important to understand the link between the process a beneficiary goes through when they are part of a particular project and the ultimate impact it has had. This informs the future development of the programme and provides pointers on how to maximise the impact.

“Credit Suisse was keen to gain a fuller understanding of the links between disability and poverty, particularly what the company could do to make the biggest positive impact on the lives of young people.”
— Kate Butchart, Head of Corporate Citizenship at Credit Suisse

“We make a real difference to young people's confidence and enable them to take the next steps to the world of work. We hope the course will lead them to make life-changing career decisions.”
— Guy Chaudoir, Project Manager at Scope

East London Business Alliance (ELBA) & EaGLES: Helping local graduates into jobs in the City and Canary Wharf

ELBA

Creating Possibilities in East London



EaGLES (ELBA's Graduate Local Employment Scheme) was developed in 2005 as a response to the very high level of graduate unemployment and under-employment in east London. Research at the time showed that local graduates were unlikely to have parents who had been through the British education system and this, coupled with financial and / or social pressures, made academic success more difficult to achieve. Consultation with local employers revealed that they commonly perceived local graduates as lacking in social capital and other attributes that can contribute to self-confidence including poor communication skills and a lack of self-awareness.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

EaGLES was designed to address these issues by providing three weeks of pre-placement employability training followed by a 6 month placement in the CSR department of major employers in the City and Canary Wharf. In this way the graduates, who are paid an allowance at the rate of London Living Wage, are able to learn what it means to be a 'professional' and, at the end of the programme, to access jobs commensurate with their skills and ability.

ELBA does not select candidates by academic results, the degree studied or the university attended. Instead it looks for people with potential and who have a 'can-do' attitude to work. The recruitment process is designed to be a learning opportunity for everyone who applies, not just the people who are selected at the end. To that end, as many candidates as possible are invited to open days and then on to an assessment day. Following this, ELBA identifies a 'pool' of people whom they believe have the right abilities, aspiration and attributes to do well on the programme and provides them with training on understanding CSR, help with CVs and interview practice. Placement companies are asked to select the candidates they would like to interview from the pool and, following the interviews, choose the graduate they think would be the best fit for their placement. Candidates who are not selected are all offered feedback and referred onto London Works for further support.

A critical part of the programme is the intensive three-week pre-placement training provided by ELBA which aims to promote and encourage the critical attributes and behaviours identified as important by employers. There is a focus on employability skills and familiarising the trainees with the world of work and what it means to be professional. There is also specific training in CSR and corporate community investment as well as additional training from Ashridge on project management and from Pitman's on business English, Outlook and Excel. Finally, there are regular group visits to the placement companies when the trainees can familiarise themselves with the business environment and the work that takes place there.

Once on placement, the graduate's role and responsibilities will vary according to the individual company's CSR and CCI strategies and priorities. Some have fairly large teams but most remain small, sometimes with just one member of staff tasked with overseeing the firm's CSR activities. Nevertheless most graduates will be involved in organising and promoting volunteering and fundraising activities and supporting community and charity partner relationships,

including processing application forms from charities. Many are also involved in supporting and promoting match-funding and pay-roll giving and there is an increasing communication element to the roles, with graduates being asked to write articles for newsletters and the company's intranet.

EaGLES is a popular choice for companies who value the graduates arriving 'day one ready' with specialist CSR knowledge (which is unusual for what remains a fairly niche sector) and also appreciate the fact that the graduates are ELBA employees and, as such, are not on their headcount.

"EaGLES is a unique and innovative programme which genuinely meets the needs of local unemployed graduates, as well as corporate institutions."

- Anthony Harte, Community Engagement, Bank of America Merrill Lynch

The graduates are all keen to be ambassadors for east London and, once on placement, in addition to being a valuable member of the team, they are able to use their local knowledge to help fine-tune CCI programmes based in east London as well as being great role models for the case for local recruitment.

ELBA remains involved throughout the placement. There are two review meetings for each trainee as well as monthly recall days when the trainees return as a group to ELBA for additional training. Each trainee has an ELBA mentor who provides on-going support throughout the placement and beyond. Even when they have completed the scheme, ELBA keeps in regular touch with all of the ex-trainees and invites them to ELBA networking events.

"EaGLES is a unique and innovative programme which genuinely meets the needs of local unemployed graduates, as well as corporate institutions."
— Anthony Harte, Community Engagement, Bank of America Merrill Lynch

IMPACT

The scheme has built up an excellent track record with over 96% of graduates securing graduate level work at the end of the placement. The programme's popularity with graduates and placement companies is such that it now runs twice a year (March and September) with 8 - 12 graduates on each programme. Since its inception in 2005, 122 graduates have taken part in the programme. EaGLES was initially subsidised by various regeneration programmes but is now 100% funded by placement companies, making it sustainable for the future.

"ELBA's graduate programme addresses the needs of local unemployed graduates in a unique and insightful way. It delivers to both parties. The graduates are presented with an opportunity to develop their skills and the corporates benefit greatly from their local knowledge and understanding. The

passion, time and energy spent by ELBA on each of the graduates ensures that they all realise their potential and get the most from their time with the companies. Time can fly, but the high level of detail provided ensures the graduates are supported throughout their journey at every stage.”

- Emma Turnbull, Pro bono & Community Affairs Officer.
Allen & Overy

“The EaGLES programme offered me a vital foundation to build my career upon, opening a door into a large corporate law firm that might have proved difficult for me to force my way into otherwise. The quality and quantity of the training was superb and prepared me to hit the ground running on my placement, bestowing in me a business focus and an acute commercial awareness that is essential when entering a corporate environment for the first time...I really couldn’t recommend the programme highly enough!”

EVIDENCE OF SOCIAL MOBILITY

ELBA commissioned some research to mark the ten-year anniversary of EaGLES with a key aim being to determine the extent of upwards social mobility experienced by the participants. The response rate was a huge 70% and some interesting information was revealed.

Because ELBA works with three of the most deprived boroughs in the country, it is no surprise that most of the eagles come from pretty disadvantaged backgrounds. 90% describe themselves as black and minority ethnic with the majority (64%) being from Bangladeshi background and eight out of ten eagles speaking a language other than English when at home. The majority of eagles received free school meals (65%) and only 15% had parents who went to University.

In general, the information on parental characteristics revealed significant disadvantage. Respondents were asked what their parent’s main employment status was whilst they themselves were at school. Only 65% of fathers were in a job, with a high incidence of people describing themselves as retired (13%) or sick (8%). For mothers, employment levels were very low with only 15% in a job. The remainder were either ‘looking after family and home’ (56%) or unemployed (23%).

The occupational distribution for parents was very much skewed towards the lower end of the occupational scale with jobs in the garment industry, catering and occupations involving driving (taxi, bus and delivery). From the research

it is clear that the eagles themselves do experience upward social mobility as their own occupations are considerably more highly ranked than that of their parents as evidenced by the examples below:

FATHER’S JOB	EAGLE’S CURRENT JOB
Tailor	Business Analyst
Bus Driver	Internal Communications Associate Manager
Chef	Project Manager
Delivery Driver	Policy Advisor
Catering Assistant	Marketing and Outreach Coordinator

Recent research looked at the salaries the eagles went on to earn on completion of the programme. It showed that, for the three most recent cohorts (2014 and 2013), the average first salary was £27,112. And it appears that ex-eagles not only stay in employment (95% of respondents were still in work) but continue to progress. The average salary for the people who took part in the first three programmes (2005, 2006 and 2007) is now £43,262.

“It is clear that the eagles themselves do experience upward social mobility as their own occupations are considerably more highly ranked than that of their parents”

LESSONS LEARNED / ADVICE TO OTHERS

Sally Roberts, the manager of EaGLES, has learnt a number of lessons over the ten year duration of the programme. She advocates demanding excellent results from the start, *“we have found that the graduates live up to our expectations. They realise they have been offered a great opportunity and are keen not to let us down.”*

Sally recognises that the number of graduates (known as eagles) each year is very small (between 16 – 20). In order to widen the number of people benefiting from the programme ELBA tries to make sure that the recruitment process is a learning experience for everyone who applies, which is why they short-list as many people as possible.

Each programme is evaluated and, as a result, it is regularly modified. The CSR sector is still relatively young and evolving and, in response to this, the training has been adapted accordingly. For example, there is now training on branding and communications as well as a more advanced Excel module.

Sally has found that different companies have different motivations and different requirements. For some, having an eagle is essential for their team to be able to function in terms of numbers. Others see it more as CSR effort; providing a local young person with an invaluable experience.

Sally gets to know the graduates in the 'pool' fairly well but, even so, she says she can never guess who will be selected by the companies following the placement interviews.

"A lot of it boils down to a matter of 'fit': some teams are looking for extroverts who will go out and recruit volunteers while others want someone who will keep their head down and deliver results in a quietly efficient way."

At first, companies tend to select the graduates they want to interview according to university attended, academic results and subject. However, over the years Sally hasn't found these to be necessarily strong indicators of who will perform well on placement. The important factors seem to be the right work ethic and the drive to do well. Because of this, from 2016, the CVs sent to the companies will not include details of academic results or the university attended.

The graduates learn best as a group. They are in constant informal contact throughout their placements, passing on advice and supporting each other when things get tough which is better than any formal training. The monthly recall days are also very important since, in addition to the actual training topic, the graduates have a chance to catch-up as a group, pass on top tips and discuss any difficult issues.

One of the essential requirements needed to be an eagle is to have had experience of volunteering. As well as showing compassion and gaining great transferable skills it also shows that the graduate (who very often also had a part-time job) has been able to juggle commitments while at university.

Sally concludes by saying that she feels very privileged to have worked with such an inspirational group of young people over the past 10 years. *"It's the best job I have ever had!"*

LIST OF COMPANIES OFFERING PLACEMENTS

Allen & Overy, Bank of America Merrill Lynch, Barclays, Beazley Group, Bradfield Group, BT, BTMU, Cambridge House, Canary Wharf Group, Chaucer, Centre of the Cell, Citi, City of London, Clifford Chance, CMS, Credit Suisse, Deutsche Bank, DLA Piper, ELBA, EY, Freshfields, FCA, Hammerson, Heart of the City, House of Lords, KPMG, Linklaters, Lloyd's, London Air Ambulance, London City Airport, Marsh, Metropolitan Police, Morgan Stanley, National Theatre, Nomura, Poplar HARCA, Prudential, RBS, Royal Sun Alliance, Schroders, Swan Housing, TDT, TH EBP, TH PCT, Thomson Reuters, Tower Hamlets Council, Tower Hamlets Homes, Tower of London, XL Catlin.

"ELBA's graduate programme addresses the needs of local unemployed graduates in a unique and insightful way. It delivers to both parties. The graduates are presented with an opportunity to develop their skills and the corporates benefit greatly from their local knowledge and understanding. The passion, time and energy spent by ELBA on each of the graduates ensures that they all realise their potential and get the most from their time with the companies."

— Emma Turnbull, Pro bono & Community Affairs Officer, Allen & Overy

Freshfields & the Ready for Work Programme: Giving people a second chance



Freshfields



International law firm Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer has run Ready for Work in partnership with Business in the Community (BITC) since 2001. The programme aims to raise the aspirations and employability skills of people who face significant barriers into work. Freshfields' involvement with the programme started with a 'Seeing is Believing' visit organised by BITC – these are community visits for senior business people to gain an insight into the social issues faced by local communities and to meet those involved in community projects. The events often provide powerful learning for businesses, helping them appreciate the value of community and social inclusion projects.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

Freshfields employees provide two to four week work experience placements or act as job coaches to participants on the programme. Partners and senior staff sit on BITC boards, providing strategic guidance for the programme.

Working in partnership with businesses, the programme provides individuals with the chance to gain work experience, providing a practical opportunity to develop their skills, meaning they have current experience to add to their CV. The scale of the Ready for Work programme is broad, with 160 businesses engaged nationally and 11 firms in London offering work placements. The programme runs six times a year, with work experience placements every other month and there are roughly 30 people on each programme. BITC identify people who are ready to take the next steps into employment through the job centre, probation, hostels and key workers who refer people to the programme.

Those on the programme face a range of challenges in addition to being at risk of homelessness, for example being in care or long-term unemployed; they may have mental health problems, substance abuse issues or be ex-offenders.

The programme starts with two days of training to help to develop the candidates' interpersonal skills, confidence and interview technique. BITC then match individuals to the businesses offering the work placements. Juliet Holden who is responsible for running the programme at Freshfields says, *"We have many highly committed volunteers that take part in the programme. A few years ago, as the programme had reached capacity we decided to focus on a specific group - ex-offenders. We are one of just four businesses in London who offer work experience placements, through Ready for Work to individuals with unspent criminal convictions. The aim now is to grow or at least maintain these offers to ex-offenders."*

During their two week placement, candidates spend most of the time working in a particular department but they are also given IT training and participate in CV and interview skills sessions whilst they are on site. After the work experience placements the participants are invited back to share what they've learnt with others on the programme. The participants are then matched with a job coach who acts as a mentor and gives advice on anything from job searching to advice on how to find accommodation.

There was a little apprehension at first about offering placements to people with unspent criminal convictions, but the support from senior employees was very encouraging at the outset. A risk assessment is carried out before offering a

placement to those with unspent convictions and everyone is judged on a case by case basis.

Seeing the success of working with ex-offenders through the Ready for Work programme started a wider conversation about opening up all roles to ex-offenders. In January 2014, Freshfields became the first law firm to remove its criminal tick box on its application form in support of BITC's 'Ban the Box' campaign. Freshfields no longer ask for disclosure during the interview process, but when a job offer has been made. This gives potential candidates the clearest understanding that they will be judged primarily on their skills and suitability for the role first. This isn't about banning disclosure all together; it's about moving it further down the recruitment process. Just common sense recruiting.

"A few years ago, as the programme had reached capacity we decided to focus on a specific group - ex-offenders. We are one of just four businesses in London who offer work experience placements, through Ready for Work to individuals with unspent criminal convictions. The aim now is to grow or at least maintain these offers to ex-offenders."

— Juliet Holden, Corporate Responsibility Executive, Freshfields

"Freshfields no longer ask for disclosure during the interview process, but when a job offer has been made. This gives potential candidates the clearest understanding that they will be judged primarily on their skills and suitability for the role first. This isn't about banning disclosure all together; it's about moving it further down the recruitment process. Just common sense recruiting."

IMPACT

Juliet believes there are significant benefits to be gained from Ready for Work. The first and most obvious is the candidates' increased confidence, as it is clear to see the positive change in individuals once they have been on work experience for a few days. Employees who volunteer to host the placements, acting as a supervisor or buddy, want to offer more placements because they can see the positive impact the programme has on those taking part. Freshfields have offered over 290 placements in total and 29 candidates have been employed by the firm, 23 at Freshfields and 6 by suppliers.

Ready for Work has national targets of getting 40% into work within a year and 40% remaining in work after a further 6 months. Freshfields began by offering 15 placements each year, and they currently offer double that number.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Host 15 placements annually	14 offered	22	29	29
100% complete their placement	100%	95%	100%	97%
40% have their placement extended	36%	45%	72%	86%

Another way Freshfields measure the success of the programme is through surveying their volunteers, as research shows that employees can develop skills such as managing and delegation when they volunteer. Volunteering for the programme also makes employees feel proud to work at the firm and employees often mention their involvement to clients and suppliers. Surveys carried out with the participants also show the positive difference it makes to those taking part.

The programme has been recognised as outstanding in its field. Freshfields was the winner of both the Best Social Mobility Programme at the MPF Awards for Management Excellence and the Enterprise and Employability Award at the Lord Mayor's Dragon Awards in 2015.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

- Work in partnership - working in partnership with BITC and NACRO*, has meant that expert advice and guidance has been available every step of the way.
- Don't select a programme just because it works well somewhere else. Identify the social issue you are aiming to tackle and the business case for taking part.
- Be clear about what you want to achieve, decide how you are going to achieve it and set key performance indicators to measure the success (KPIs).
- Review and refresh programmes constantly and don't be afraid to exit the relationship if it's not working.
- Communicate your success!

*National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders

“Employees who volunteer to host the placements, acting as a supervisor or buddy, want to offer more placements because they can see the positive impact the programme has on those taking part. Freshfields have offered over 290 placements in total and 29 candidates have been employed by the firm, 23 at Freshfields and 6 by suppliers.”

HSBC & the Opportunity Partnership: Collaborating to tackle youth unemployment

HSBC 



H SBC aims to be where the growth is, helping businesses to thrive and economies to prosper and enabling people to realise their ambitions.

Sustainability at HSBC focuses on building the business for the long term by balancing social, environmental and economic considerations in the decisions made. HSBC's sustainability programme focuses on three areas: sustainable finance; sustainable operations, and sustainable communities.

In the UK, HSBC invests over £14m a year in its education programme: helping over 50,000 young people, supporting 14 schemes and providing over 2,000 employee volunteering opportunities.

One of these programmes is the Opportunity Partnership – a three year £30m investment which will support 25,000 disadvantaged 16-25 year olds into education, training or work.

The Opportunity Partnership, launched in April 2013, works with four youth charities: Catch22, St Giles Trust, The Prince's Trust and Tomorrow's People – to rapidly expand their existing, tried and tested programmes, to inspire disadvantaged young people and connect them to opportunities in education, training and ultimately employment.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

The Opportunity Partnership is targeted at 16-25 year olds who are not in work, education or training, and who also may face additional barriers such as homelessness, poverty or mental health problems.

Michaela Wright, UK Sustainability Manager at HSBC, explained that the four charities were chosen because: *"They already have a proven track record in the youth sector and credible programmes in place."*

The charities work together to expand their reach through collaboration and cross referrals, helping people with the greatest needs.

Catch22 'Route to Work' helps young people gain experience, skills and qualifications to succeed in education, training or employment, working in collaboration with businesses to match the young people to jobs.

St Giles Trust 'Choices' provides targeted interventions for young people who face complex barriers including a history of offending, homelessness, family breakdown, leaving the care system, acting as young carers or becoming teenage parents.

Rob Owen, Chief Executive, St Giles Trust said: *"HSBC's support will help us make a real difference to the lives and futures of a vastly greater number of disadvantaged young people, particularly young offenders who face huge barriers in accessing employment and the opportunity for a second chance. We can now extend our very successful Choices programme to other areas of the UK, benefiting those young people, their families and most importantly their local communities."*

Tomorrow's People 'Working It Out' is an intensive, work-focused, community volunteering programme which helps young people to build confidence, motivation and employable skills so that they can get and keep a job.

The Prince's Trust 'Get into' is a two to six week long programme that helps young people develop work related

skills including teamwork, reliability, hard work and communication as well as specific vocational skills or qualifications to access employment.

The Opportunity Partnership also creates roles for young people to act as 'Job Ambassadors' with help from The Prince's Trust. The ambassadors are young people who have turned their own lives around and their role is to direct people to the most relevant programme provided by the four charity partners.

HSBC employees support young people by acting as mentors and delivering workshops, helping them gain confidence and an insight into work. Since the start of the programme hundreds of volunteers have offered this support.

HSBC also offers a four week traineeship programme in partnership with The Prince's Trust, at the end of which all participants completing the programme are offered an interview. By the end of 2015, 700 participants will have completed the programme, and to date 62% have been offered permanent full time employment with HSBC. The successful candidates then go on to HSBC's existing apprenticeship programme.

Importantly, HSBC also encourages its supply chain to run similar traineeship programmes.

IMPACT

The traineeship programme is now part of HSBC's recruitment strategy, which includes its apprenticeship and graduate programmes.

In addition, HSBC has created a 'buddy system' pairing trainees with employees. Not only do the trainees benefit from advice and guidance, but employees also develop new skills.

Employees who have volunteered for the Opportunity Partnership report that the programme made them feel proud to work at HSBC.

"I am proud to be supporting this Partnership. With the right support, we can help disadvantaged young people find fulfilling opportunities through education, training and work. We want to help young people who feel that the job market is out of reach find direction for the future. They can act as a positive influence on their peers and families and contribute to the long-term economic development and prosperity of communities throughout the UK." – Antonio Simoes, UK CEO, HSBC.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

Michaela's first piece of advice is to ensure that any CSR initiative has senior leadership support as this helps encourage more employees to volunteer for the programme.

Employees may be anxious about volunteering outside work, thinking that they don't have anything to offer to young people. Michaela believes it is important that charities recognise this and offer appropriate support, training and reassurance in advance of launching any programme.

KPMG & Access All Areas: Bridging the gap between employability skills and employment

KPMG



“As a large business, employing over 12,000 people in the UK, we know the benefits of recruiting from the broadest talent pool and giving people an opportunity whatever their background. That is not altruism or a compromise – it simply builds a better business.”
— Marianne Fallon, Partner and Head of People at KPMG

KPMG, a global network of professional services firms providing Audit, Tax and Advisory services, puts social mobility at the core of its UK corporate responsibility agenda.

Access all Areas is not a single initiative but a suite of outreach and employment programmes focussed on primary, secondary and college school pupils. The design is both innovative and varied, and includes developing basic skills such as numeracy and literacy, specific employability skills through workshops, mentoring or tutoring, and recruitment for KPMG’s school and college leaver programmes. 2015 is the fourth year of Access all Areas and there are now over 30 primary schools and over 100 secondary schools or colleges involved across the UK.

The programme is supported, and championed, by senior leadership in the firm. Marianne Fallon, Partner and Head of People at KPMG, explains that *“Social mobility is a fundamental issue for the UK, and as such is at the very heart of our business. As a large firm, employing over 12,000 people in the UK, we know the benefits of recruiting from the broadest talent pool and giving people an opportunity whatever their background. That is not altruism or a compromise – it simply builds a better business.”*

KPMG’s schools programmes have evolved over the past 20 years. A more recent area of innovation for KPMG has been the direct provision of employment opportunities, for example STARS – a paid internship – which started in 2010 and the audit school leaver programme that was launched in 2011. Building on both of those programmes, in April 2015 KPMG launched KPMG360°, an apprenticeship programme which offers structured progression in the accounting profession over a period from three to six years.

“In 1996 KPMG established firm-wide employee volunteering and our schools programmes have always been at the heart of this. Whilst the specific initiatives have evolved over time, the ultimate aim of ensuring every young person has an equal chance in achieving their full potential has remained consistent. Our social mobility programmes today are ambitious and our determination to support disadvantaged communities has become even stronger as a result of our prestigious appointment last year as one of twelve founding Social Mobility Business Compact Champions.” – Jenny Baskerville, Senior Manager, Corporate Responsibility

PROGRAMME DESIGN

KPMG works with over 30 primary schools nationally – as reading partners, number partners as well as enterprise programmes such as ‘Dragon’s Den’ in Hackney, east London. Over 100 KPMG staff also volunteer as School Governors, guiding the strategic direction of both primary and secondary schools.

The work with secondary schools and colleges is more extensive and includes:

1. **Career insight sessions** – introducing young people to KPMG’s offices and building the students’ understanding of the workplace through a variety of activities and volunteer-led discussions.
2. **Employability workshops** – KPMG has developed a range of toolkits for their volunteers to use to deliver general employability skills workshops. Topics covered include; Presentation Skills, CV and Cover Letters, Interview Skills, Managing Money, Time and Project Management and Business Culture. KPMG also work with a communications agency called EdComs to deliver ‘Work Ready’; an exciting, fun, interactive employability workshop aimed at increasing young people’s understanding of careers and skills in the workplace. Year 9 or 10 students are given a mannequin and are asked to dress it with things that will make it ‘work ready’, for example teamwork and communication skills.
3. **Targeted mentoring programmes** – KPMG runs a variety of mentoring schemes for young people from low-income backgrounds. Brokers such as the Social Mobility Foundation help identify the young people and match them to a volunteer at the firm.
4. **Academic attainment** – KPMG has partnered with The Access Project and their co-sponsored school The City Academy, Hackney to offer pupils tutoring at either GCSE or A-Level for various academic subjects. In 2014 the Academy achieved 81% 5A*-C including English and maths for its first set of GCSE results and became the top mixed comprehensive school in the country for student progress and value added.
5. **Work experience** – KPMG’s Discovery Programme provides over 220 centrally managed ‘insight into work’ placements for Year 12 students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. KPMG played a pivotal role in developing the cross-sector initiative Access Accountancy which launched in 2014 and has collectively pledged to offer 3,750 work experience placements to students from disadvantaged backgrounds by 2019. As Jenny explains, *“It’s also about trying to develop a common message and to make people aware of the profession from a younger age so that it might then be on their career horizon.”*
6. **School leaver and college recruitment** – This involves a number of employment opportunities including:
 - **Business Support Academy**, which targets pupils who have just done their GCSEs and who could join the firm as either a Graphic Apprentice or in secretarial support roles. The Programme has expanded from 7 to 25-30 apprentices. It is a one year apprenticeship leading to an NVQ Level 2 or 3 in Business and Administration.
 - **KPMG360°** offers structured progression over a period from three to six years. Importantly, participants can

choose after three years to secure a role as a Technician, without progressing to Chartered status, or can decide to remain on the programme, specialising in a particular area while studying for a professional qualification.

- **STARS** was a 12-month paid internship programme which began in the London office, targeting students from east London, and expanded to over 70 places in 2014 across Bristol, Birmingham, Watford, Manchester and Leeds. The programme offered time in different business areas so that the students, who are targeted via outreach programmes, gained a broader work experience. The STAR programme has now become the first year foundation level of KPMG360°. One of the STARS commented, *“After my A-Levels, I was unsure about what field I wanted to enter and which career path to take. By being at KPMG I am better able to understand the different businesses and sectors within the world of work and therefore will be able to identify which path I would like to follow.”*
- **Audit School** and College Leaver Programme is a longer 5-year programme for those who have just finished their A-Levels. During that time the school leavers will gain a degree (with Durham or Birmingham University) and also gain a chartered accountancy qualification. There is an awareness that recruitment processes may disadvantage some groups of young people. As Jenny explains, *“we are currently reviewing all of our recruitment processes. The question is how do we make it more contextual and attract a broader group of young people? Ultimately, how do we make sure that there are no barriers within our recruitment process that could have an adverse impact on those applying from more disadvantaged backgrounds?”*

IMPACT

Measuring impact and success is clearly important when dealing with such a broad range of programmes. In 2013-14, KPMG worked with over 12,100 young people and in 2014 they employed over 230 students onto their school and college leaver programmes.

Jenny explains the outcomes KPMG are looking to influence include the change in the young person’s career awareness, their level of career motivation, their broader employability skills such as teamwork and problem solving, or their academic attainment. For example 91% of students who took part in Work Ready agreed they had a better understanding of what employers are looking for and 86% agreed they had developed their CV skills as a result of the workshop.

The employees who volunteer also say that it is a valuable experience; they enjoy helping teach and mentor the young people who are involved. Whilst it’s not always easy, they report that most of these challenges can be overcome with extra effort and a good support process for the students.

Engagement and motivation of staff is a key business benefit of volunteering. Likewise the skills and experience gained by the volunteers are recognised and staff are encouraged to include it in their performance reviews.

Access all Areas also has an impact on the firm’s client relationships, both by sharing the firm’s corporate responsibility story and demonstrating our commitment to

improving social mobility as well as undertaking collaborative volunteering activities. For example, teams from Barclays and KPMG delivered a joint employability skills workshop for students at the University of East London, working together to share their experience of the job application process and working life to support students in preparing themselves for the jobs market.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

- It’s important to plan well, taking into account what can realistically be achieved with the budget allocated.
- Focus on sustainable relationships with schools. This takes time but is far more likely to achieve greater impact. The schools involved need to see the benefit of buying long term into the programme. This also helps ensure a better understanding of the needs of the school as well as the firm supporting it.
- Don’t run before you can walk. Start small with pilot programmes and then expand once you have learnt what works and what does not.
- Be clear about what the business can offer and what your staff can contribute and do not over-sell. Step back and think what your business does well and see how this can be developed into a skilled volunteering offer for the school.

KEY FACTS

In 2013-2014 KPMG provided over 12,100 young people from disadvantaged communities with experience of the world of work, improved employability skills or increased academic attainment. In 2014 they employed over 230 students onto their school and college leaver programmes.

LESSONS LEARNED

Over time and working with organisations such as the Bridge Group KPMG has learnt how best to identify schools from disadvantaged backgrounds and how to successfully build sustainable partnerships with these schools. It’s also been important to understand the recruitment process to ensure candidates from disadvantaged backgrounds have an opportunity to apply and ultimately get jobs at KPMG. Jenny concludes:

“One of the lessons we learnt was the importance of developing a continuum from schools outreach through to recruitment. You can do as much outreach as you like, but if the students don’t achieve the grades, they may not be able to join the firm. That’s one of our biggest lessons learnt, how you support the students at every stage to help them join one of our school leaver and college or graduate programmes and also the range of entry points available – for example introducing KPMG360°. We want to be able to say you can work for us or an organisation like us and really mean it.”

Macquarie & Streetwise Opera: Helping people with experience of homelessness make positive changes



Global Financial Services company, Macquarie Group, has been the Principal Corporate Partner of Streetwise Opera since 2007. The aim of Streetwise is to provide homeless people with opportunities to perform and sing opera and, by doing so, to break down the barriers that can exist when working with this vulnerable group of people. Streetwise participants have often experienced homelessness; the charity works with them, using the arts to help to build their confidence and self-esteem.

Macquarie was introduced to Streetwise by an employee who attended a networking event and met Matt Peacock, the Chief Executive and Founder of the charity. The charity's work clearly aligned with Macquarie's values and ethos and fitted well with its other community programmes. As Rachel Engel, Vice President of Macquarie Foundation explains: *"we are known in the market for being entrepreneurial in our approach, when we see an opportunity, we tend to go for it. Our core values are opportunity, accountability and integrity - Streetwise aligned well and showed an innovative approach to supporting homelessness, which we valued."*

PROGRAMME DESIGN

Each opera production is staged under the guidance of well-known producers and directors and, over the past six years, have included 'My Secret Heart', 'The Answer to Everything' and 'Fables'. Performances have received amazing reviews in the press including 4-star notices in The Guardian, The Telegraph and Time Out, a well-deserved accolade for Chief Executive Matt Peacock, who was an opera critic prior to founding Streetwise!

Some productions go on tour to different locations from time to time, but this is often difficult due to the vulnerability of many of the participants involved. Another approach has been to develop film operas which, depending on the participants involved, are a mixture of both stage and film and are shown at film and art festivals.

Macquarie's investment in Streetwise Opera is not simply a financial one but has developed over the years into a strong mutual relationship. As Rachel explains: *"We are not a firm who writes blank cheques, we like to get to know the individuals and organisations we support and be totally involved through staff engagement opportunities, as well as being a funding partner."*

The main funding for Streetwise goes towards building the charity's infrastructure, supporting the workshops across the UK and developing on-going productions. Pro bono support has also been provided including help with the physical relocation of their London office as well as IT support to set up computers and servicing.

Macquarie has seen the charity grow (it currently has 13 staff from start-up) and witnessed partnerships flourish with arts organisations such as the Royal Opera House and English National Opera and homelessness charities including The Booth Centre in Manchester.

IMPACT

Macquarie has enjoyed seeing the relationship with Streetwise grow and develop over the course of eight years. The charity now works with around 700 people each year compared to 200 in the early years.

The programme has had a positive impact on the community and, in a recent survey, 97% of participants said that their mental health had improved as a result of their involvement with Streetwise. There is also evidence of increased skills, confidence and self-esteem in participants in the workshops. One participant commented: *"You come here and you leave your troubles at the door. Once you walk out the door, your mindset's different."*

Evaluation has demonstrated that 75% of participants with substance misuse issues reported reduced drug and alcohol use and 83% felt that attending Streetwise Opera had helped them cope with physical health issues.

Partnerships with national organisations have produced impressive results. For example, the Royal Opera House invited 20 Streetwise participants to be part of the chorus for a production at Covent Garden.

'The Answer to Everything', an opera starring a cast of 100 Streetwise performers alongside professionals from the film and music world, was in part filmed at the European HQ of Macquarie. The production was premiered at the British Film Institute on the South Bank in 2013 and was groundbreaking through its mix of film with interactive sections requiring audience participation. It was later adapted and toured every region in which Streetwise Opera works (Newcastle, Nottingham, London, Middlesbrough and Manchester).

Streetwise has won a number of awards including the BP Arts and Business Award for Long Term Partnerships with Macquarie. This small arts organisation is far-reaching, and is regarded as setting the standard for other organisations across the globe since being involved in the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad as the lead organisation for the 'With One Voice' programme hosted at the Royal Opera House. Learning from this programme has been taken to future Olympic hosts; Brazil and Japan.

Macquarie and Streetwise launched a new project in 2014 focused on developing the leadership skills of Macquarie new Directors. Staff who are invited onto the Macquarie Director's Programme (18 month training initiative) are encouraged to volunteer with Streetwise Opera as part of their ongoing learning. Over a 6 month period staff step out of their comfort zone to work with people who have experienced homelessness, acting as mentors in support of the Streetwise participants who are considering entering back into employment.

"Macquarie and Streetwise launched a new project in 2014 focused on developing the leadership skills of Macquarie new Directors... Over a 6 month period staff step out of their comfort zone to work with people who have experienced homelessness, acting as mentors in support of the participants who are considering entering back into employment."

LESSONS LEARNED

It is not easy! *“We have learned that coming up with unique and interesting ways in which staff can support participants is the best way to engage them and help them to understand some of the issues these people are facing”*

Be open to new ideas. For example, an unexpected but popular development was involving the Macquarie Choir in some of the Streetwise projects.

The programme has from the start been a close and mutual relationship.

“Building the capacity of the voluntary sector is more than just funding new projects. It’s also about investing a range of Macquarie assets into strengthening the partnership including, in this case, staff expertise, site provision and logistical support. Macquarie’s relationship with Streetwise Opera has grown through a genuine understanding of how both organisations can add value to each other. I’m proud that Macquarie staff engagement has been key to the success of the current partnership and we look forward to our continued success together.” – David Fass, CEO, Macquarie Group, EMEA

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

- It is important to ensure there is a ‘good chemistry between the charity and the company’ and the work needs to be aligned closely with the goals and values of both parties.
- It helps to have the commitment of company partners and senior managers.
- Slow burn! Build a structured programme aimed at producing positive outcomes and recognise that this is likely to be a long-term process rather than something that can be set-up and delivered quickly. Rachel’s top tip for others to deliver an excellent social mobility programme would be to ‘see it as a journey’.
- Working with people from different backgrounds, situations and experiences can push your boundaries, however, it is always rewarding and fulfilling when you see the results.
- Have clear targets. For example, Macquarie initially core funded the charity and only later went on to fund specific projects such as opera productions, workshops and international work.

“Macquarie’s relationship with Streetwise Opera has grown through a genuine understanding of how both organisations can add value to each other. I’m proud that Macquarie staff engagement has been key to the success of the current partnership and we look forward to our continued success together.”

**— David Fass, CEO,
Macquarie Group, EMEA**

Slaughter and May & The Key Project: Supporting students from disadvantaged areas to secure top university places

SLAUGHTER AND MAY



International law firm Slaughter and May has been tackling social inclusion issues for a number of years, providing support through pro bono work and consistent investment in local communities. The Key Project, one of its most successful initiatives, focuses on tackling the issue of social mobility. The project demonstrates a long term commitment with a local London school, supporting students throughout their GCSEs and A-levels.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

Set up in 2012, The Key Project is an initiative at Central Foundation Boys' School and is delivered in partnership with social mobility charity The Access Project. Since 2008, Slaughter and May has worked with the school on various career and mentoring activities but, while these were successful and gave excellent support for students, it was hard to see a tangible impact. The firm wanted to develop a programme that showed measurable impact on the students and The Key Project was designed to remedy this. The aim of the programme is to help students from disadvantaged backgrounds not only raise their career ambitions but also to improve their academic performance so that they can gain places at top universities.

Central Foundation Boys' School is a non-selective comprehensive with over 900 students aged from 11 to 18. It is based in Islington near to the firm's office. There is a wide cultural mix among students who, between them, speak 34 different first languages. Around 70% have claimed free school meals during their time at school.

Having first gone through a formal application process, students are matched with volunteer tutors from the firm. The Access Project trains the volunteers and provides a valuable online resource library of educational materials and past exam papers. Around 90 students receive tutoring in up to three different subjects and a wider group of 200 students are involved in other strands of the programme including university admission support and enrichment opportunities. All Year 12 students are offered work placements as well as CV and interview workshops to help prepare them for employment.

Since the programme was launched, more than 4,000 hours of tutoring have been provided and 120 Slaughter and May volunteers have taken part.

The Key Project has three strands:

1. **One-to-one tutorials:** the students are carefully matched with volunteers from the firm. They tutor the students for an hour each week in different academic subjects depending on the student's needs. There are ten different subjects that students can be tutored in, including English, maths, chemistry and biology. The aim is to help students gain a better understanding of the subject and inspire them to work harder to achieve better grades. The impact of this individual help can be significant. As one volunteer, Paul Moyses, explains: *"I am currently teaching French to a Year 11 student and both his spoken and written skills have dramatically improved over the past year. I am confident he will do well - and more importantly he is confident that he will do well."* It is often a steep learning curve for the students, but the volunteers also admit they have similar challenges. *"I particularly appreciated the chance to use*

my French, which I had rarely used since I left university." Another commented: *"I stated I had a maths A-level [on my application form], noting it was a little bit rusty... I was allocated a GCSE maths student as my tutee and so my first task was to spend quieter times at work re-teaching myself such forgotten gems such as simultaneous equations and circle theorems."*

2. **University support:** Slaughter and May funds the placement of a full-time member of The Access Project's staff in school. This member of staff is responsible for ensuring that students are provided with support and advice about what university courses are best for their future career choices and making university applications, as well as being taken on university visits. Support is tailored to provide exactly what each student needs. The university support The Key Project helps to deliver runs from Year 10 to 13, including Oxbridge specific workshop groups running in each of these year groups.
3. **Enrichment:** a third key strand is the provision of enrichment opportunities. For example, external speakers from a range of backgrounds provide 'career insight' sessions to help students appreciate the wide variety of different opportunities in the world of work. The sessions also help students explore the best route to achieving their career goals, such as through higher apprenticeships or a university degree.

Students can also apply for a work experience placement with the firm. Placements in legal teams form part of the Legal Social Mobility Partnership work experience initiative, which has been driven by Slaughter and May and ITV and involves law firms and their clients. Students spend a week at the firm followed by a week visiting five commercial partners. Last year they visited ITV, Microsoft, Viacom, Harlequins Rugby and Yahoo. The students took part in workshops to develop their work-related skills such as networking, resilience and self awareness, as well as sessions to understand how the law plays its part in the media and technology sectors. They were also provided with mock legal tasks to help them understand what it is like to be a lawyer and were introduced to professionals in a wide range of legal and non-legal roles.

Certain aspects of The Key Project have changed over time:

- **Commitment:** students are asked to undertake a formal application process and sign an attendance agreement in order to establish their commitment from the start;
- **Age-appropriate activities:** students from Year 12 and 13 tend not to attend after school clubs and so it was important to develop other, innovative ways to deliver the opportunities. Activities such as debating, career workshops and employability skills workshops are all available to sixth form students.
- **Closer links between teachers and volunteers:** the quality of the programme has been improved through teacher-tutor meet-ups during which teachers can help volunteers identify the difference between potential 'A star' students and 'C' grade students and how they can best adapt their tutorials to suit different levels.

Another change has been prompted by evolving recruitment practices amongst universities. Increasingly top universities are considering students with a mix of A-levels and BTEC (Business & Technology Education Council) qualifications. Following a successful pilot, students studying BTECs are going to be offered tutors in the new academic year.

A fundamental aspect of The Key Project is the senior buy-in from both sides of the partnership. As Kate Hursthouse, Corporate Responsibility (CR) Manager at Slaughter and May, explains: “our senior partner is a great advocate – he speaks at Key Project events and is a leading internal supporter. Our five partners on the CR Committee are also involved – they oversee the funding and speak about the firm’s commitment externally and at Key Project events. Central Foundation’s Headteacher, Jamie Brownhill, has also been an inspirational and visionary leader. As our partnership with the school has grown, we have been guided by Jamie’s high aspirations for his students. He attends steering committee meetings and takes an active part in guiding the direction of the Project.”

“the skills of the volunteers have improved: 96% say they have developed their skills, with more than half saying they have particularly developed ‘improving their ability to explain difficult concepts’, ‘their ability to coach more junior colleagues’ and ‘communication skills’. Evidence of the impact on students is the fact that, since the project started, 19 have met Russell Group University* offers compared to none in the three previous years”

IMPACT

The Key Project has been successful from the start and in the first year received the ‘Special Prize for Social Mobility’ at the Law Society Excellence Awards (in 2012). It also won a Dragon Award (the Lord Mayor of London’s awards recognising community involvement) and a ‘Big Tick’ in Business in the Community’s Responsible Business Awards in 2014.

The positive impact on both students and volunteers is well documented. For example, the skills of the volunteers have improved: 96% say they have developed their skills, with more than half saying they have particularly developed ‘improving their ability to explain difficult concepts’, ‘their ability to coach more junior colleagues’ and ‘communication skills’. Evidence of the impact on students is the fact that last year 13 students went to Russell Group universities, compared to three in 2012; 24% of all GCSE grades were at A*/A this year compared to 10% in 2012; and this year the school

has, for the first time in 50 years, seen one of its students receive an Oxbridge offer – this student went on meet and exceed his offer (achieving A*A*AA).

Kate explains: “The programme is effective as students are put in contact with people who can influence and steer them in the right direction. If a student has a particular career in mind, they are matched with people who can advise them and give them some focus. They also have opportunities to go into relevant businesses to learn more about these careers before committing their time to something that’s not right for them. The one-to-one tutoring is critical as it isn’t simply the teaching of a specific subject, but also getting someone with the right skills and expertise to broaden a student’s horizons by getting them to think about what they would like to do in the future. It also helps the students develop soft skills such as better organisation, communication, self confidence and much more.”

LESSONS LEARNED

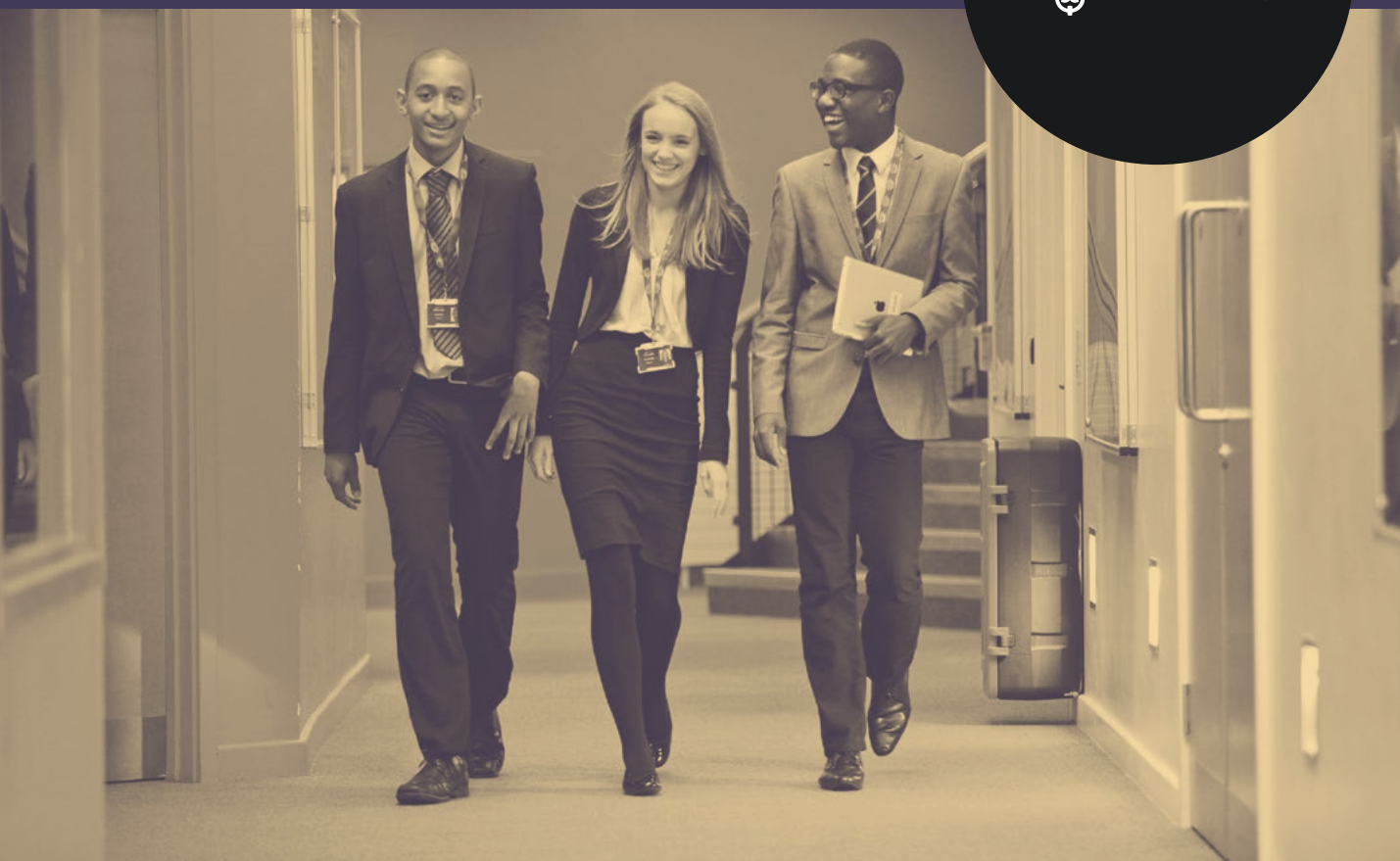
Working with different representatives – the school and the charity – can be challenging as they may have different priorities. For example, in early discussions about the design of the programme, the priority for the school was for the students to win places at top universities as these outcomes affect school league tables, but including higher apprenticeships in the measures of success was also debated. “However,” Kate explains, “while our headline measure of success is the numbers who gain access to top universities, the programme also supports those interested in non-academic options as these both provide amazing development opportunities and routes into fantastic careers.”

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

- Businesses are not necessarily experts in areas of social need. It’s best to involve an intermediary party that has specialist knowledge to help focus efforts and effectively tackle the issues.
- Resources and budget: think carefully about what can realistically be achieved with the budget and ensure that the project is good quality with measurable impact.
- Collaboration is key: Slaughter and May works with other law firms, clients and suppliers to create larger programmes, which can have greater impact.
- Focus on one goal: what is the social need and how can you tackle it? Keep your message simple about what you are trying to achieve.

*Established in 1994 the Russell Group represents a group of 24 leading academic institutions including Oxford and Cambridge Universities

UBS & the Bridge Academy: Helping students to reach their potential



UBS, a global financial services firm, has been the partner of the Bridge Academy, a secondary school in South Hackney, since its inception in 2003 at the earliest stages of the roll-out of the new academy initiative.

The school saw its first intake of 180 pupils in 2007 with a sixth form being added in 2012. The majority of students are eligible for free school meals, and 45% of the students have English as a second language.

Over the years UBS has provided a variety of resources. At the early set-up stage the firm contributed to catering, governance and managing and monitoring the building programme as well as financial support. UBS encourages its employees to share their skills through volunteering.

“UBS has found that a student’s average reading age improved by almost one year in one term as a result of five hours of volunteer time.”

PROGRAMME DESIGN

Sarah Craner, Director, Corporate Responsibility & Community Affairs at UBS, describes how, as part of the partnership, UBS provides a range of interventions and support across the curriculum, including weekly English and Maths Breakfast Clubs led by UBS volunteers to support Year 7 students who are falling behind in these subjects.

Each academic term a UBS volunteer commits to a total of five hours of reading with a student. In the past two years UBS has found that a student’s average reading age improved by almost one year in one term as a result of five hours of volunteer time. Skills support is also provided for a range of other topics including language mentoring in French and Spanish. Around 96 languages are spoken by staff working in UBS’s London offices and the partnership with the Bridge Academy is a great way to capitalise on this resource. Another innovative programme supported by UBS is the Stonewall Project which tackles homophobic bullying.

In recent years there has been more focus on ensuring that students raise their sights and progress to educational or employment destinations that they might not otherwise have reached. Every senior student has the option to have a UBS mentor, and work experience opportunities are available at UBS to help broaden horizons and raise students’ ambitions about what might be possible.

A key factor for the success of the partnership has been the commitment at the highest level between the Principal of the Bridge Academy and senior managers at UBS. For example, five UBS managing directors are involved in the school as governors. A Partnership Board manages and co-ordinates the programme, matching UBS’s resources to the needs of the school as defined by the Bridge leadership team in a way that ensures that support is directed in the most effective way.

The scale of the opportunities offered by the programme, and the work experience available to pupils, are also important factors in its success. Sarah is mindful of a key finding of the government’s Education and Employers Taskforce

that students most likely to make a successful transition into the working world will have come into contact with a professional in the working world at least four times during their educational years.

The Bridge Academy partnership has high standards, promoting aspiration is not enough, as explained by Sarah: *“There is a focus on supporting Bridge to improve the destinations of students, this is done through delivering the curriculum but also activities and experiences that enhance skills. Both aspiration and skills are key.”*

Future plans include work on ‘Character Education’, an approach that takes into account skills and characteristics such as resilience and self-motivation that are often critically important in the workplace: *“If we want students from disadvantaged areas to compete, arguably, there is a need for a more holistic approach to achieve these aims.”* – Sarah Craner, Director, Corporate Responsibility & Community Affairs.

“students most likely to make a successful transition into the working world will have come into contact with a professional in the working world at least four times during their educational years.”

“One of the best things about being a Bridge student is that every student has fantastic opportunities... we have access to specialist support and provision from ‘drop down day’ workshops to work experience and modern foreign language support.”
— Terence Brown-Harrison, sixth form student, 2013

IMPACT

Based on 2014's A-Level results – which included the first cohort of Year 13 leavers – 70% of students progressed to university, which is impressive when bearing in mind that 57% of these were the first in their family to go to university and 54% were eligible for free school meals.

Sarah described the partnership with the Bridge Academy as *“providing a rich and varied range of volunteering opportunities. The programme seems to have captured the imagination of employees internally.”* Since the beginning of the partnership, an estimated 4,300 staff have been involved in the Bridge Academy.

UBS has three key behaviours that they expect employees to exhibit – collaboration, integrity and challenge – and all three of these can be gained from the Bridge Academy programme. Feedback from volunteers has been very positive with 89% of employees stating that volunteering has increased their overall job satisfaction.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Stay focused: UBS has learnt a great deal from the partnership with the Bridge Academy and although the projects have grown in scale (and number) over the years, it is important to focus resources and not to try and do too much, too quickly.
- There is a constant need for strong communication and dialogue between partners; appropriate channels and structures need to be established to facilitate this.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

Sarah's advice is *“do not start from scratch; use the information that's already out there and look at other organisations as there are a number who are running good programmes.”* She stressed the importance of finding the right partners and quality organisations to help deliver the programme. Both sides need to have a shared vision and identify similar paths and methods of implementation to achieve their joint aims and objectives. For example, in terms of social mobility, what measurements will be put in place, what are the anticipated outcomes and how will impact be evaluated?

Sarah appreciates that some may find the scale of the UBS/Bridge partnership daunting but says it can be replicated by using some of the elements and adapting these to work on a smaller scale. The important aspect is to gradually build a partnership with a school over time using existing resources. Staff at UBS have been generous in sharing their learning with others including through Business in the Community's 'Business Class' programme to encourage other companies to take similar action.

“UBS has three key behaviours that they expect employees to exhibit – collaboration, integrity and challenge – and all three of these can be gained from the Bridge Academy programme. Feedback from volunteers has been very positive with 89% of employees stating that volunteering has increased their overall job satisfaction.”

XL Catlin Group & the St Paul's Way project: A geographical approach



Global insurance company XL Catlin is the principal funder of the St. Paul's Way project in Tower Hamlets. This is one of ELBA's 'hotspot' projects in which volunteer business engagement focuses on a specific geographical area.

“There is a stark income disparity in Tower Hamlets: the average salary of those who work in the borough is £58,000, whilst the average household income of those who reside in the borough, is £29,550. 20% of households have an annual income of less than £15,000.”

Despite being situated just one mile from Canary Wharf, residents in the St Paul's Way do not necessarily benefit from the opportunities available there and in the City. The unemployment rate is around 16%, compared to the national average of 7.6% and there are also more 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training than the national average. There is a stark income disparity in Tower Hamlets: the average salary of those who work in the borough is £58,000, whilst the average household income of those who reside in the borough, is £29,550. 20% of households have an annual income of less than £15,000.

In an increasingly competitive jobs market, residents in the St. Paul's Way need to have the knowledge, skills, aspiration and drive to compete for the jobs available on their doorstep. Typical barriers to employment for local residents include poorly written CVs, poor literacy and numeracy skills, low levels of confidence and poor communication skills. Upward social mobility is further hampered by a lack of knowledge of jobs, skills and career pathways, as well as unrealistic expectations and a shortage of good working role models.

“The aim of the St Paul's Way Project, which started in 2011, is to use the skills and resources of City and Canary Wharf businesses to support the socio-economic regeneration of St. Paul's Way and enhance community cohesion.”

PROGRAMME DESIGN

The aim of the St Paul's Way Project, which started in 2011, is to use the skills and resources of City and Canary Wharf businesses to support the socio-economic regeneration of the St. Paul's Way and enhance community cohesion. Funding from XL Catlin enables ELBA to employ a dedicated project manager who is responsible for identifying and

facilitating employee-led volunteering activities in line with the project objectives.

Promoting upward social mobility runs through the core of the project with a key objective being to increase the employability prospects and life skills of residents in the area. The project also seeks to support the development and sustainability of the voluntary and community sector, social enterprises and public sector partners and to improve the local environment through the delivery of community events and activities.

One example of how the St Paul's Way project has helped the local area is its employability workshops. These workshops are run for various different groups, including, for example, the parents of children from local schools who visit companies in the City to learn about the opportunities afforded by the different sectors, so that they are better able to support their children in considering their future career pathway. Workshops are also organised for voluntary organisations in the area, such as 'Streets of Growth', a charity specialising in preventing educational drop-out and anti-social behaviour and 'Leaders in Community' a youth-led charity that empowers young people in leadership and governance. In these workshops participants visit companies such as Beazley, Citi and Barclays as well as XL Catlin for advice on CVs, interview skills and money management.

The project runs several other employment initiatives. For example, volunteers from Moody's Women's Employee Resource Group have helped women from Fern Street Settlement with their conversational English and sixth form students from a local school visited RBS for a series of careers workshops and networking opportunities. The St Paul's Way project has also run an ELBA 'Training into Work' programme (a week of training in key personal skills) for young people not in education, employment or training, which includes a work experience placement at the end of the programme.

Jamie Savage, an Intern at XL Catlin, has helped at Milestone Boxing Club on a weekly basis, taking part in lessons, chatting informally with the young people about working life and helping them with their CVs.

“I have loved working with Milestone and getting to know the boys. I find it really rewarding to help them with their work and it is always great fun” - Jamie Savage, Catlin.

IMPACT

Over the past year, 533 residents have been directly supported by the St Paul's Way Project. 1,935 employee volunteers have been involved in 93 volunteering activities supporting over 27 organisations.

Vanya Harris, Head of Corporate Responsibility at XL Catlin, says the impact has been two-way and there have been clear benefits for the employees and the company as a whole. Vanya has noticed increased motivation and morale from staff who have been involved in team challenge and volunteering opportunities around the St Paul's Way area. 98% of volunteers surveyed said they would be likely to volunteer again.

Andy Bruce-Lockhart said of his volunteering: *“I was impressed that XL Catlin encourages its employees to take part in volunteering with initiatives during work time and*

would absolutely recommend this activity to others. I think if someone is looking to improve their confidence, then this is a great thing to do.”

There are also benefits associated with staff training costs through business skills based volunteering, for example interview events helped staff members further develop their interviewing technique.

LESSONS LEARNED

Adopting a geographical area has a number of advantages, with a key aspect being a partnership approach. Vanya explains:

“It has been fascinating to work with such a wide range of partners, all of whom focus on the St Paul’s area. These range from the local authority, health services, housing associations and charities with all having an important but different role to play. Working in partnership in this way has helped us to see where XL Catlin can most effectively focus its energy and resources.”

Vanya explained that it would be very difficult to participate in a project such as the St Paul’s Way project without the help of a broker. Once they saw the level of need in the area XL Catlin were very happy to provide ELBA with funding for a dedicated project manager who understands not just the area but also what the company is able to bring to the table.

Regular steering group meetings ensure the project is on track and helps Vanya to feel a part of the project going forward.

Vanya described how the ‘hotspot’ approach used in the project helped her to understand how everything is inter-related. For example, the adults attending a community group may well be the parents of children attending the local school, patients of the local GP and may live in housing association accommodation. This ‘big picture’ approach encourages holistic, long-term planning.

“Over the past year, 533 residents have been directly supported by the St Paul’s Way Project. 1,935 employee volunteers have been involved in 93 volunteering activities supporting over 27 organisations.”

“I was impressed that XL Catlin encourages its employees to take part in volunteering with initiatives during work time and would absolutely recommend this activity to others. I think if someone is looking to improve their confidence, then this is a great thing to do.”
**— Andy Bruce-Lockhart,
XL Catlin**



Ashridge

Established in 1959, Ashridge is one of the world's leading business schools, with an international reputation for world-class executive education and management development. Its activities include open and custom executive education programmes, graduate programmes, organisation development, online learning and applied research. Our approach is practical and results-driven, yet underpinned by in-depth insight and research based firmly in the real world, generated through working with business leaders across the globe.

Ashridge is ranked as one of the top 20 business schools in the world by both the Financial Times 2015 and Bloomberg Business Week 2013.

Ashridge is accredited by AMBA, EQUIS and AACSB – just 1% of business schools worldwide have this triple accreditation.

www.ashridge.org.uk

ELBA

ELBA is a leading social regeneration charity in east London founded in 1989 with the aim of addressing social deprivation in all its guises. It does so through supporting and helping develop community organisations and local charities operating in the area with a particular focus on the relief of unemployment and the provision of education and training. ELBA helps facilitate the corporate community investment efforts of over 100 member companies in east London which in 2014 meant 14,000 employee volunteers working with over 250 local organisations, helping them to build their capacity and support their beneficiaries.

ELBA also runs a wide ranging employment programme and in 2014 placed 739 local people into work. An exciting recent development has been the launch of 'London Works', a commercial, but not for profit, recruitment agency that specialises in finding top class 'non traditional' candidates for the City and Canary Wharf. As a social business London Works re-invests its profits into employability and training initiatives across east London.

www.elba-1.org.uk



“The programme will help us make a real difference to the lives and futures of disadvantaged young people, particularly young offenders who face huge barriers in accessing employment and the opportunity for a second chance.”

“I am currently teaching French to a Year 11 student and both his spoken and written skills have dramatically improved over the last year. I am confident he will do well – and more importantly he is confident that he will do well.”

“Our programme has a focus on youth unemployment... As of June 2015, 738,000 16 to 24 year olds were unemployed in the UK. The cost of youth unemployment in the UK during the next decade is estimated at £28 billion. Young people from disadvantaged communities often face greater barriers to employment.”

“One of the best things about being a Bridge student is that every student has fantastic opportunities... we have access to specialist support and provision from ‘drop down day’ workshops to work experience and modern foreign language support.”

“The programme is popular with volunteers because they can see how their efforts make a positive difference to women’s lives... there is currently a waiting list of employees interested in volunteering for Working Chance.”

“Building the capacity of the voluntary sector is more than just funding new projects. It’s also about investing a range of company assets into strengthening the partnership, including staff expertise, site provision and logistical support.”

ELBA

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