

## Iconic Steps Evaluation Report



*“Happy I got a chance to do this so thank you for letting me be in the team and changing my life so I can see what I can do”*

*“Well done! Keep up the great work. Iconic steps are giving many people a great opportunity with tons of support!”*

*“It is a highly innovative company that I am very pleased to be part of. I would like to say much thanks to Victoria as she always make the effort to reach out to us and involve us with Iconic Steps and other firms.”*

Katie Windsor, Engagement Manager

May 2015



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## 1. Introduction and Aims

Iconic Steps is an independent film training and production company, offering a range of services to clients including documentaries, promotional films and live event filming. Their training strand specialises in working with young people and helping them to reach their potential. Started by Victoria Ijeh in 2011, with support from the British Film Institute, Iconic Steps has been operating successfully over the past three years.

In April 2015 The Audience Agency was commissioned by Iconic Steps to monitor and evaluate all its work to date since 2011, with the main aim of finding out the impact Iconic Steps has had on participants' lives, future aspirations and way of thinking about their future. The evaluation work highlighted several strengths, as well as potential areas for development.

## 2. Methodology

The following approaches were used in the evaluation, focussing on the experience of the young people involved in its projects:

- Reviewing existing evaluation carried out by Iconic Steps
- E-survey sent out to 48 participants from across projects, and completed by 44%, so fairly representative of the group as a whole.
- Semi-structured phone interviews with 3 participants

## 3. Monitoring headlines

The following headlines show the demographics of the 21 participants who responded to the e-survey:

**Age range of participants:** 16 - 26 years old

**Gender:** 43% male; 57% female

**Ethnicity:**

- 85% Black/Black British
- 5% White British
- 5% Asian/Asian British
- 5% Multiple ethnic background

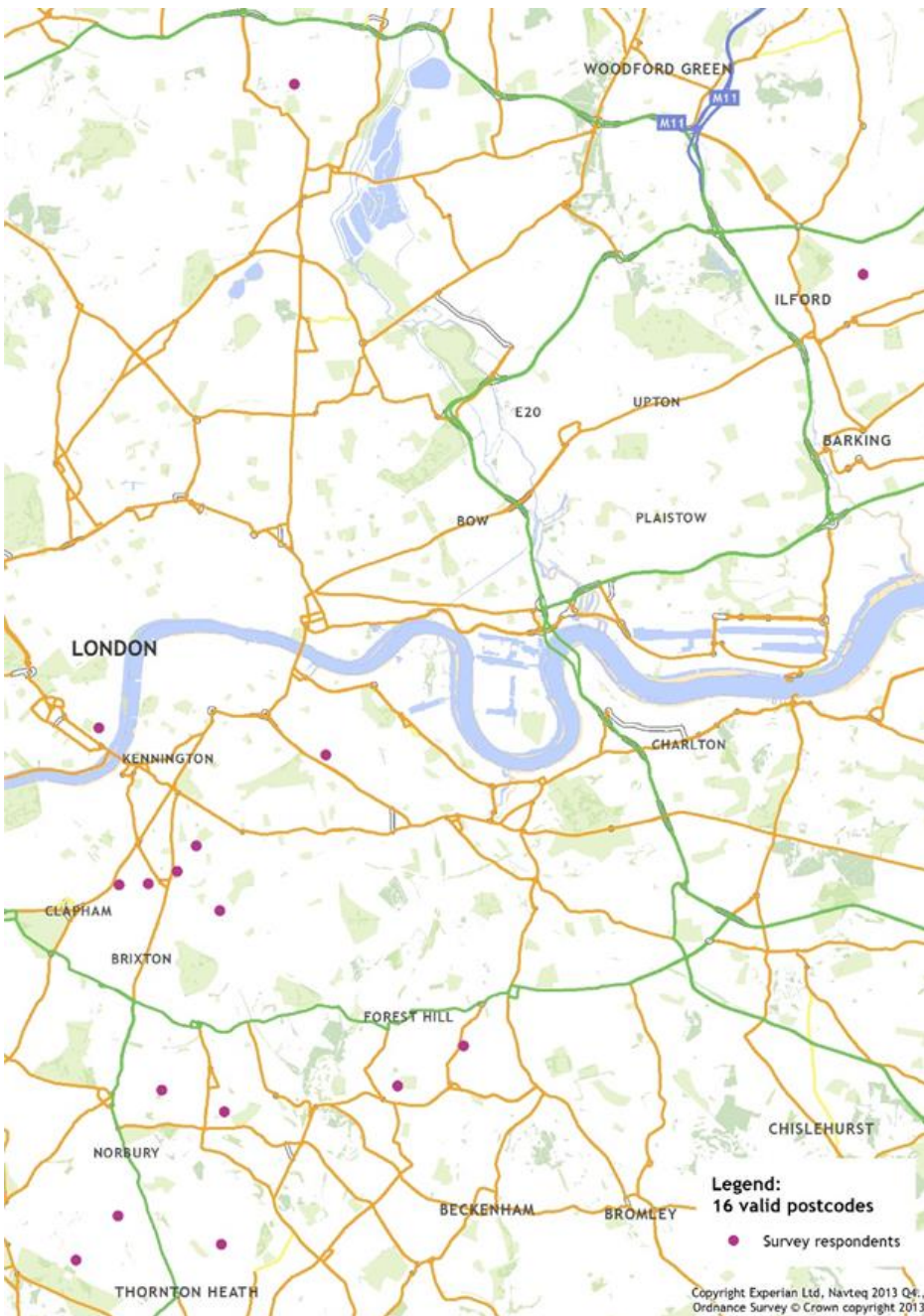
**Participants currently in:**

- Education 50%

- Part-time employment 25%
- Full-time employment 8%
- Self-employed 8%
- Unemployed 4%
- Full-time mother 4%

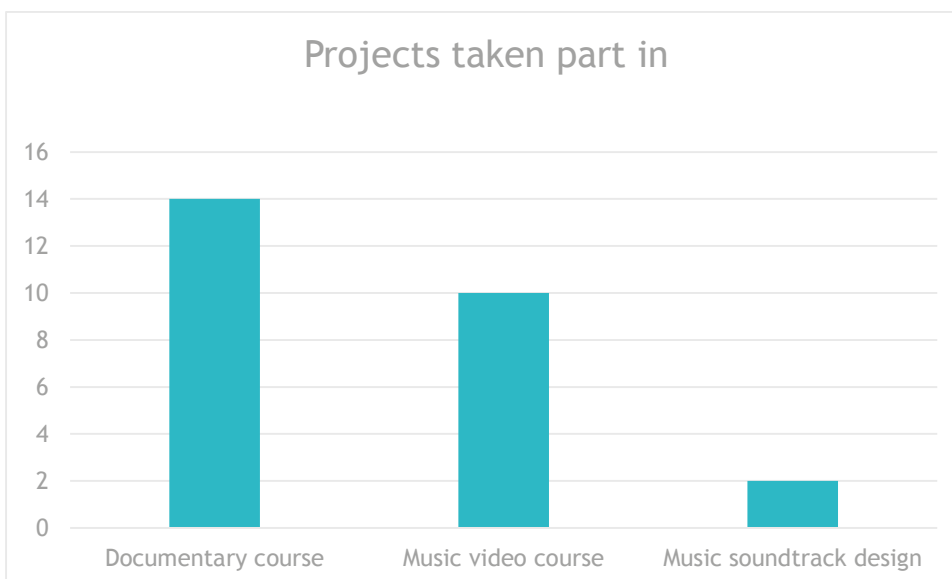
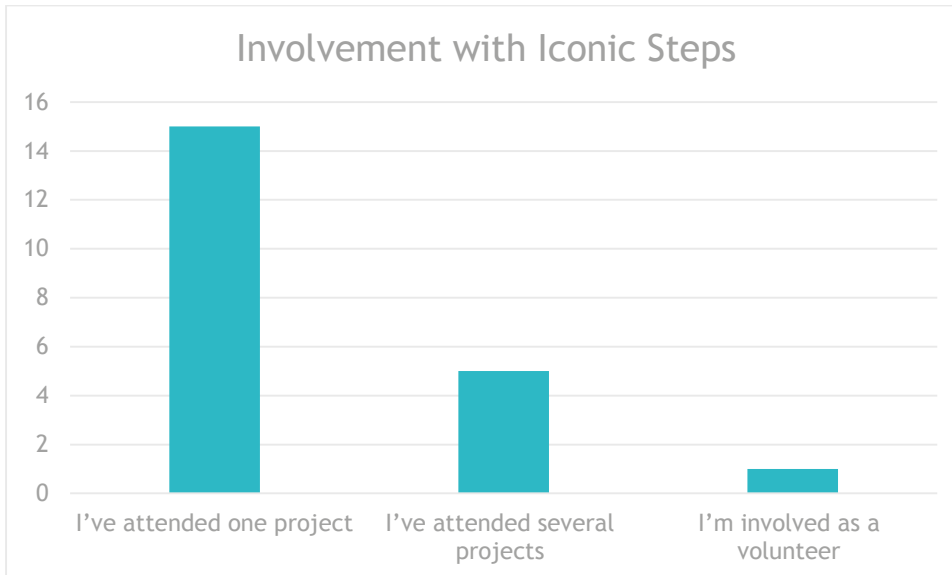
### 3.1 Postcode mapping

The following image shows where participants are located across London (5 of the postcodes were incomplete and therefore not valid):



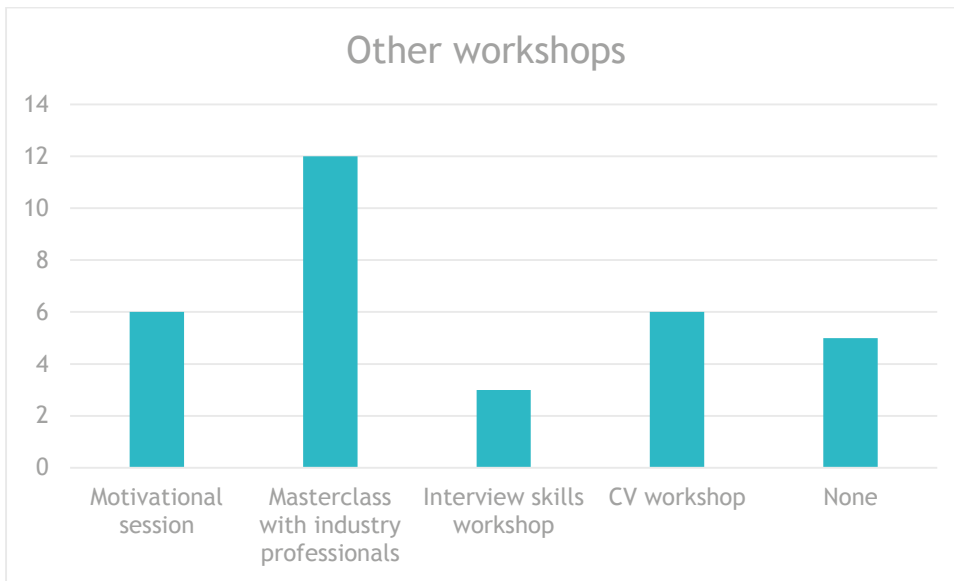
## 4. Involvement with Iconic Steps

The following charts show the level and type of involvement of participants with the organisation, with the majority adding on a one-off basis, and documentary courses being the most popular:





The following chart shows how many participants (out of 21) identified that they had also received further training as a result of taking part in their course:



## 5. Key findings

The main findings are based on the survey questions which can be seen in the appendix.

### 5.1 Enjoyment

When asked what they had enjoyed most about being involved with Iconic Steps, the main themes came out as the following:

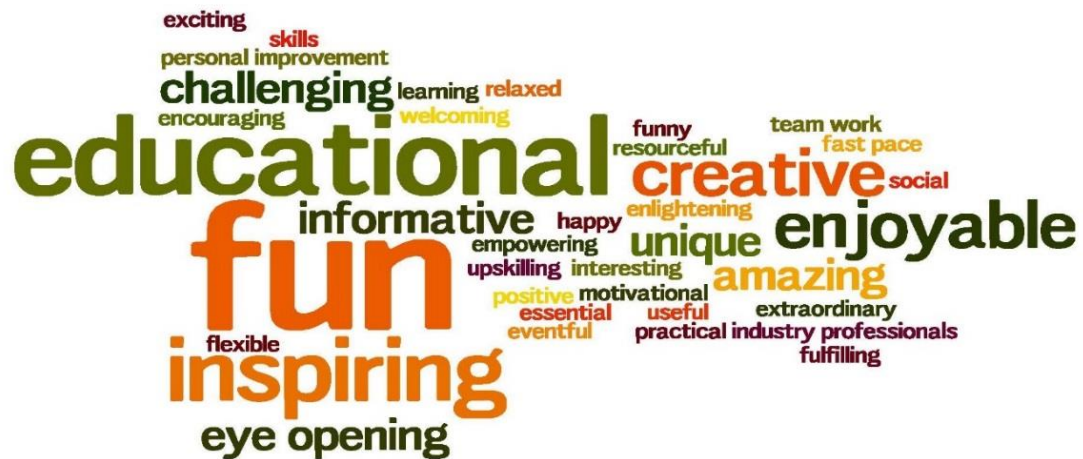
- Developing skills
- Meeting new people
- Gaining hands-on experience
- Meeting industry professionals
- Being updated with further opportunities
- Learning how to shoot a documentary

*“Being with Iconic Steps meant that I was able to gain basic skills in regards to media. I was given the opportunity to work with professional filming equipment in a prestigious environment such as the BFI. Being involved with Iconic steps meant that I was able to gain more social skills not only with my team members but also as a 'director' because I had to liaise with members of the public for certain aspects of my documentary. I enjoyed the whole experience as it has equipped me with versatile skills that I can use in additional institutes other than those of media”*

*“The atmosphere of being together with like-minded individuals & being able to share these ideas & learn from each other!”*

*“The fact you get to work in a team and that you have a deadline and you see your project through from pre-post production. All of the equipment is there and you get trained by a mentor who is always there throughout all the stages. The mentors are highly skilled. The industry talks are varied across the media industry and I have found them beneficial when making decisions about my own career”*

The following word cloud shows the words most frequently used by participants when describing their experience with Iconic Steps, the most common being ‘educational’, ‘fun’ and ‘inspiring’.



## 5.2 Changes in aspirations and attitudes

### 5.2.1 Confidence

100% of participants rated themselves more self-confident as a result of their experience:

*“I would say that my confidence has grown as a result of my time spent learning/working at Iconic Steps.”*

*“I am more self-confident in my abilities to be part of the media industry.”*

*“It has encouraged me to push myself further”*



*“In terms of approaching members of the public and asking them socially conscious questions-it definitely added to my confidence! However I've always been an individual that's sure of myself.”*

### 5.2.2 Changes in perceptions

The majority of participants stated that there had been a change in the way they thought about themselves or wider society. This was in two main ways, firstly in realising their own potential in the media industry, and secondly in interacting with new or different people:

*“It has opened my eyes that I can be good at something, I've been influenced by it everywhere I go now. I always talk to people about it and it starts up conversations and has lead to me getting new contacts”*

*“I took the course to find out if I enjoy making film and the course definitely confirmed for me that I should continue to work in creative industries.”*

*“It helped you learn how to interact with people that you don't know”*

*“It has given me confidence, and has also made me mix with people I would not have had the privilege of otherwise mixing with - I am not really from South London so it is nice to meet people from there.”*

*“It gave me an insight to working with different types of people and how my approach should differ accordingly”*

### 5.2.3 Progression and future aspirations

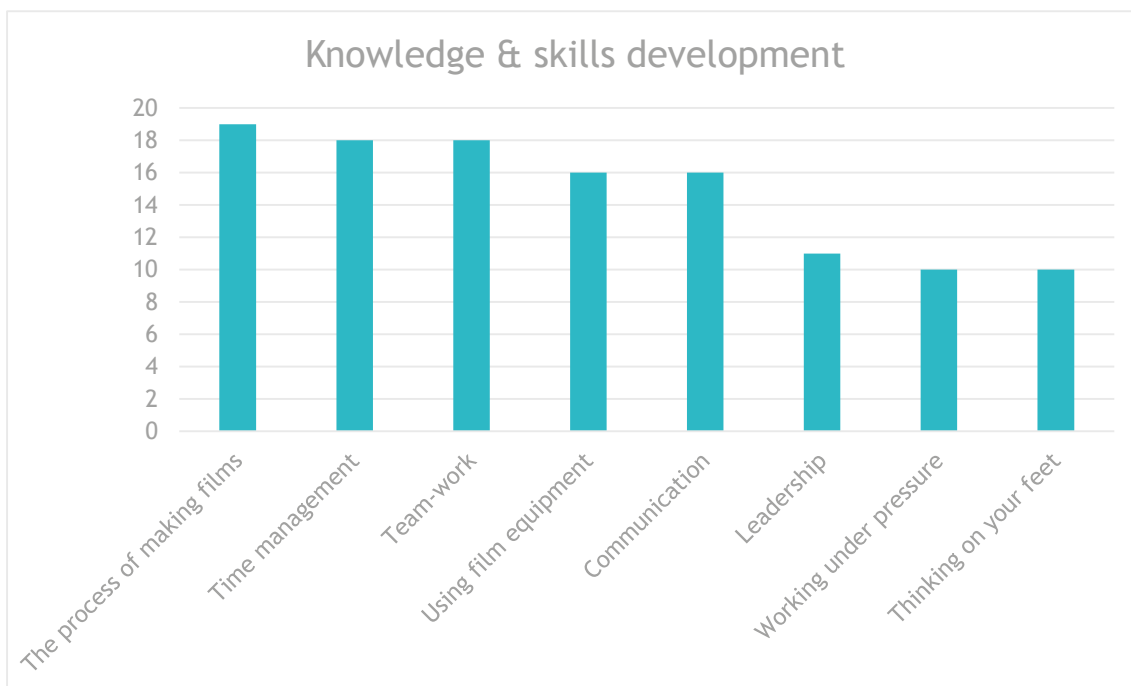
- The majority of participants commented that they had done something new or different after being involved with Iconic Steps, for example, going to on to gain further experience, taking up a media degree course, starting more creative hobbies, directing their own films, and buying their own equipment

- The majority of participants said that they had learned something about careers in the media industry, the main themes being how difficult and competitive it is to get in to, how there are many different or flexible career paths to take, the importance of networking and practical experience, and the value of being able to hear from guest speakers as part of their courses
- Around 60% of participants also stated that they had made new contacts in the industry for future work experience or employment

### 5.3 Knowledge and skills development

The chart below shows the skills developed through attending courses with Iconic Steps, as stated by participants. Participants were also able to say that they had applied these skills in other settings, such as further courses, job and university applications and interviews, and other independent projects.

*“Sitting down with a team, writing objectives and planning a project was a very major part of being with Iconic Steps. I was able to apply these skills as a youth forum member at the National Portrait Gallery. The youth forum was a group of young people who would come together in order to plan events for young people at the gallery.”*



## 6. Participant testimonials

### Reannon

I did a film documentary course in 2013 and made a film which was entered into a festival the next year. I've also done a music video course and volunteered on other projects. The projects have really helped me with where I'm trying to get to (in terms of interviewing and editing techniques, Photoshop etc.) I think Iconic Steps would be useful for getting into any route of media as they help you gain the skills you need. I originally studied sports science and wanted to be a sports journalist, but now I'm doing multimedia journalism. The documentary I made helped me get on to the course as I could already prove that I met the standards. Victoria is awesome and keeps everyone in the loop with emails about work experience and work placements. I don't think the projects need any improvements, but recruitment does - don't do flyers as young people don't read flyers, maybe make a 20 second advert instead.

### Pai, 26

In 2012 I did a week long programme, a music video course, and I pitched in front of a guy from the BBC. We had a mentor who was an experienced film maker, and we had to think about the actors, directors, sound, camera etc. There was a screening at the BFI at the end - it was good to get that kind of exposure. I've been back for the industry talks - hearing stories from directors is useful as I was trying to get work as a runner and I got advice about the best routes. Their advice stopped me from pursuing jobs in the wrong route - they wouldn't have got me where I needed to be so it was good advice, and I've also made good contacts.

**Kamal, 20**

I did an internship as a student, learning about the basics of cameras and Mac software. I met people from different backgrounds and experiences. We did miniature projects - using our creative imagination in groups to create a short video. I would say it has had a big impact on my life as we get given a lot of information. I'm currently studying electrical engineering for the railway but if I had enough money I'd get back into media, buy a really good camera and make documentaries and music videos. I've looked at media from a different perspective since the project - Victoria brings guests in and its inspiring to hear what they have done.



## 7. Suggestions for improvement

Although the feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, the main themes from comments about what Iconic Steps could do better or differently are as follows:

**Longer courses with more time to work on the projects and more depth in teaching and equipment training:**

*“More depth in the subjects tackled. I feel like Iconic Steps is so far good at introducing the subjects of study, but I don’t feel like I have been trained as much as I would like to and certainly not enough to feel confident in applying for a job”*

*“Despite the fact that the project was very good and the finishing products were of good standard, I feel the course could have been improved by using DSLR cameras rather than JVC just to give an even better quality image when it comes to screening”*

**More frequent projects:**

*“Great experience, just wish there was more hands on projects to participate in throughout the year”*

**Guaranteed employment or work experience after the project:**

*“The project could further train past individuals and create employment”*

*“The only thing that could make it better would be the guarantee of a job afterwards”*

**More artists/professionals present to give pointers:**

*“I feel that in the initial planning process whether it be to create a documentary or music video, professionals in those areas (preferably well known, even if it’s on a community level) could come and give further pointers as to how we can better those plans and make an outstanding final product”*



**Individual project support:**

*“Supporting young people in doing individual projects like films, song writing and recording, music video production”*

**More structure/focus/discipline/enthusiasm:**

*“I'd like to see Iconic Steps' work done with a bit more conviction. It has all the right intentions but is maybe a bit too relaxed in its expectations of students. For example it could set some light homework, such as watching a film at home, or reading an article, or preparing something for class. I also think talks with industry speakers are really valuable and the more the better!”*

## 8. Appendix

### Survey Questions

#### Monitoring information

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Post-code
- Are you currently in employment (full/part-time), education, training?

#### Iconic Steps

- What is your involvement with Iconic Steps?
- Which projects have you taken part in? Tick all that apply
- As part of these projects, have you done any of the following? Tick all that apply

#### Enjoyment

- What have you enjoyed most about being involved with Iconic Steps?
- Please give 3 words which describe your experience with Iconic Steps

#### Changes in aspirations and attitudes

- Would you say you are more self-confident as a result of your experience?
- Has being involved with Iconic Steps made you think any differently about yourself, society or the world?
- Have you done anything new or differently as a result of this project?
- Have you learnt anything about careers in the media through Iconic Steps?
- Have you made any new contacts in the media for future work (paid or volunteering)?
- Has your experience changed what you want to do in the future?

#### Knowledge and skills development

- Have you gained any new knowledge or skills, or developed existing ones through Iconic Steps?
- Have you applied these skills in any other settings? If so where?

## Suggestions for improvement

- What could be different or better about the projects you have taken part in?
- What other things would you like to see Iconic Steps doing?

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