Supporting Northern Ireland's Mobile Ecosystem

April - May 2016

THE MOBILE ACADEMY
Where mobile minds meet, think and grow

THE
MOBILE
ACADEMY

@moblacad

The Mobile Academy Belfast offers a collaborative learning environment and provides a grounding in business, design and technology of mobile.

It is a collaboration between Ulster University and Mobile Monday Belfast, who license it from The Mobile Academy, created in 2012 by University College London (UCL) and Mobile Monday London.

The course in London has been very well received by its participants over the past three years and many have said that their experience of the programme has contributed to subsequent successes.

THE MOBILE ACADEMY BELFAST 2016:

WHERE
ULSTER UNIVERSITY (BELFAST CAMPUS)
25-51 YORK STREET, BT15 1ED

WHEN
27 APRIL & 4 MAY, 9AM - 5PM
11 MAY, 1PM - 9PM
18 MAY, 9AM – 5PM
25 MAY, 9AM – 7:30PM (followed by Closing Party)

Brilliant insights, fresh thinking, interesting contacts, a new understanding of what it means to be 'mobile'
Participant of 3rd London Course

The objectives of the programme come from two different sources and two very different organisations. The co-founders explain their motivations in creating the programme:

Jo Rabin, Monday Monday London & Co-Founder of The Mobile Academy

Mobile Monday London is the community for people involved in building and deploying mobile products and services. With over 14,000 members it has the objective of being a catalyst for mobile business and innovation. Since 2005 it has helped members to keep abreast of continuing and ever accelerating change by staging topically themed events and by facilitating knowledge exchange among members.

Mobile Monday London provides a forum for people from all disciplines. It provides an environment where small and large businesses feel equally at home, within which fruitful partnerships form and where funding and acquisitions take place.

At our regular events we often choose a particular trend or development as the focus of a discussion led by a diverse panel of industry experts. The objective of these events is less for attendees to be talked at by the experts and very much more for attendees to participate in the discussion of the topic

in hand. There is very deep expertise in the community and those with that expertise are usually very willing to share it.

As much as there is that depth of expertise, there are many participants who are starting their journey in mobile – sometimes a daunting prospect given its breadth, rate of growth and pace of change. We realised that we could provide more support for this group through a more structured pedagogic approach than is possible or desirable in our events.

The opportunity to work with UCL to build upon their early pilot courses was therefore something that fitted extremely well with extending and strengthening the community. Our emphasis on the importance of knowledge exchange and of active participant participation fitted extremely well with UCL's intentions and fitted specifically with our philosophy of engagement: By the community for the community.

Alastair Moore, UCL Advances & Co-Founder of The Mobile Academy

Mobile, as we all know, is constantly changing. It's why the students and businesses we support need an environment where learning can happen in the context of many unknowns – a place where participants have a licence to explore without an exact outcome in mind. It was in this context that The Mobile Academy was born.

UCL Advances, UCL's centre for entrepreneurship, strives to lead the UK's universities in the support it gives to students, graduates and entrepreneurs equipping them with the the skills they need to start their own businesses; bring new products to market; build skills and grow a professional understanding of the ecosystem.

From masters students wanting to build retail apps, to departments wanting to use apps to collect scientific data, through to Geomatics and Geography doing large scale transport projects with apps, we saw a large demand for up-to-date mobile understanding. With the landscape changing so rapidly, it quickly became apparent that our teaching needed to change too.

In response we decided it would be a good idea to invite industry practitioners from all corners of the ecosystem to become the tutors in their areas of expertise. We ran early pilots and soon realised that it made sense to find a partner who could reach more of these experts and curate useful and up to date content. We are delighted that we found

Mobile Monday London to co-found and iterate this programme.

There have been a number of other factors that we wanted to incorporate into the programme. It's been really important to us that the programme is suitably diverse; it works equally well for corporates, start-ups and those that have never developed a mobile offering before. We wanted also to maximise on the peer-to-peer learning that is possible where participants already have real life work experience and we wanted to structure the business approach around lean methodologies.

Through the Continuing Professional Development aspect of the programme, we have created a vehicle that is not just structured learning. It is all the things you would expect from a traditional teaching approach, plus self-defined learning pathways that are influenced by what the participant is working on, so people take out what they need as they work on their idea through the programme.

This new programme format allows a university to work with external bodies, provide dynamic content in a fast changing industry and to act as a facilitator for the learning and development that comes from within an ecosystem. We look forward to welcoming many more participants onto the programme.

A unique and broad programme for those developing new products and services.

The Mobile Academy is a practical programme teaching how to start and continue developing new ideas and businesses. It provides a grounding in business, design and technology of mobile.

There are four principles that guide what we do, how we present ourselves to the outside world, how sessions are designed and how we deliver the participant experience:

1 **CRAFTSMANSHIP** We engage expert industry practitioners as tutors. They give practical advice, toolkits and case studies based on their years of experience, failures and successes. Where possible they map their experiences to theory, but often the textbooks have not been written and in some cases will never be written – so the teaching comes from experience which is not possible to gain elsewhere.

2 **PEOPLE-CENTRED** Participants are encouraged to identify all the people that are to be touched by their product at an early stage, and to keep them involved as they develop their product and proposition. To help them with this, the course includes a practical toolkit for doing your own research.

3 **DIVERSITY** We bring together people from a range of backgrounds and with diverse skills to increase the opportunities to learn from each other.

4 **CO-CURATION** Organisers, tutors, participants and industry collaborators all get involved in the production of each course. Participants contribute to sessions with learnings from their own experiences, they share helpful material and volunteer their products to be worked on as case studies.

"The networking has been invaluable from top people at IBM and Vodafone, industry experts and other large companies to developers, designers and business startups"
Participant of 1st London Course

"A "must" if you want to start a tech business in London"
Participant of 2nd London Course

"Diverse and unique
– nothing like this out there"
Participant of 3rd London Course

"It's like a mini-MBA for mobile product development"
Participant of 3rd London Course

Programme structure
Creating the learning environment

Held in the Ulster University Belfast campus on York Street, participants sit in groups for the formal sessions and there are also informal areas where participants gather outside those sessions. Both of these aspects are conducive to the co-curation principle that they will learn from each other as well as from the expert tutors.

The programme takes place on five Wednesdays in a row, starting 27th April and ending 25th May 2016. The sessions run from 9am until 5pm with a lunch break, except on Wed. 11th May when they run from 1pm to 9pm, and on 25th May from 9am to 7:30pm, followed by our Closing Party. It is usual for participants to continue discussions into the evening in some of the adjacent public houses.

"The coffee break and pub trip is really useful as it relaxes people and gives the opportunity to disseminate what we have learnt and really get to know each other"
Participant of 3rd London Course

The programme is divided into three main streams - Business, Design and Technology. The Design stream runs as a process, starting with verifying assumptions about user needs and the corresponding opportunities. It is the only stream where there is a progression from the previous session and where participants work their way from ideation through to design review. Within the other streams sessions are placed naturally to suit the product development process, for example PR is towards the end of the programme and sessions about choosing the right technology are in the first half.

"Comprehensive, insightful, practical, inclusive, interactive and visually interesting"
Participant of 4th London Course

Sessions have a number different formats including workshops, presentations and demonstrations. There is always material to support each session that participants can keep for future reference. There is always time for questions in each session and tutors often continue discussions into break times. There is a "Drop In Night" at the end of the programme where tutors offer 20 minute surgeries throughout the evening. During the final session of the programme, participants are also given the opportunity to present to the whole class and receive feedback.

The topics covered on the programme are:

B
BUSINESS

Business Model Canvas

The Mobile Landscape

How to write a Business Case

Brand

The Mobile Payments Landscape

Brands and Mobile Marketing

DIY PR

Marketing your Mobile Product

Getting Funding

Agile & Lean Practices

Building a Business

Legal

T
TECHNOLOGY

Technology Overview

Mobile Technologies

How to work with iOS

How to work with Android

How to work Cross-Platform

APIs & Back Ends

Prototyping

HTML5 & Mobile Web

D
DESIGN

Designing for Mobile

Defining your Value Proposition

Defining Design Principles

Creating the Customer Journey

How to write User Stories

Building Desirable Products

Design Review

DIY User Research

Tutors

Read about the professionals and academics who will share their expert knowledge and experience at The Mobile Academy Belfast:

COLM HAYDEN
Mobile Academy Course Director & Co-founder Mobile Monday Belfast
Experienced CTO with 16 years experience in the mobile sector (Apion, Aepona, Mobility Data Systems, SDP Alliance, Mobile Advertising Alliance, Anaeko). Particular expertise in disruptive mobile-first cloud platforms.

NORBERT SAGNARD
Mobile Academy Course Director & Co-founder Mobile Monday Belfast
Marketer with mobile pioneers (Motorola, Vodafone, Logica) in 1990-2003, since then Lecturer in Mobile Marketing, Angel Investor (GoReport, Komodo Maths, Quizfortune, Rotor, Sensum, Taggled) and Start-up mentor (Propel, StartPlanet NI, Momentum VC/San Francisco).

GEORGE MOORE
Mobile Academy Course Director & Lecturer at Ulster University
Lecturer in Computing at Ulster University's School of Computing and Mathematics. Research interests are in Affective, Mobile and Social Computing with a focus on User Experience Design and Natural User Interfaces.

JERRY STAPLE
Technical Director at design & mobile app agency
Experienced technical architect and software engineer with over 16 years of extensive experience in web and mobile application development for the likes of BP, BBC, Tourism Ireland, Carphone Warehouse and Alfa Romeo, Jerry is Technical Director at Origin Digital.

ADRIAN CAMPBELL
Technical Director at design agency and mobile games developers.
Technical Director at The Design Zoo and Freshly Baked Games. Busy with discovery, tendering, requirement gathering, developing and implementing best practices, ensuring his agency maintains top levels of quality.

GORDON CAMPBELL
Chief Creative at design agency and mobile games developers.
MD/Head of Creative at The Design Zoo and Freshly Bakes Games. An eye for detail and a passion for delivering cutting-edge and engaging interactive content that pushes boundaries.

JONNY CAMPBELL
Design, Marketing, Beer.
Co-founder and VP of Marketing at Brewbot. MA in Multidisciplinary Design. Featured in this year's Independent's 'Thirty under 30'. The Sun has called him a "web wizard".

DAMIAN CRANNEY
User Experience, Product Design, Innovation.
Founder / Director at Big Motive, a digital product & innovation studio. Career spanning digital design, content production and product development for the likes of BBC, Net-a-Porter, Channel 4 and National Trust.

RICHARD DAVIES
True polymath: Human-computer Interaction, Maths/Computing, Engineering, Medicine
Lecturer in Computer Sciences at Ulster University's School of Computing and Mathematics. A passion for Teaching, Learning, and Research into assistive technology for the ageing population.

BRIAN DOUGLAS
Educator and Engineer in Software
Founder CEO of Coding Fury. Delivers iOS Developer and Data Analysis training courses throughout Ireland, using Xcode, to the likes of Facebook, CIE, Deloitte and PwC.

GARETH DUNLOP
User Experience Guru
UX consultant at Fathom. Founder and manager of several web and mobile software businesses (Fathom, iON, Tibus), lecturer (Digital Marketing Institute, Irish Times Training, SureSkills) and EIR.

LEO GALWAY
Mobile Computing Expert
Lecturer in Computing at Ulster University's School of Computing and Mathematics, focusing on the design and development of mobile application software primarily targeted at the Android platform. Research interests include Brain-Computer Interfaces, Affective Computing, Machine Learning and Ubiquitous Computing.

KYLE GAWLEY
Entrepreneur, CEO, Public Speaker
A new breed of NI tech entrepreneurs, Kyle co-founded Getinvited, a social ticketing platform that has generated sales over £1M, that we use for The Mobile Academy Belfast and Mobile Monday Belfast events. As a former freelance tech consultants, he worked with 500+ organisations in NI, USA, UK, New Zealand and Europe.

RACHEL GAWLEY
Entrepreneur & App Coder Extraordinaire

Founder & CEO of AppAttic. Multi-award winner in 2015 for her new ChipIn social crowdfunding platform. PhD in Software Architecture, Research Fellow within the Connected Health domain, Rachel has architected mass consumer digital products with 100,000x of users and has published over 1,000 apps to mobile app stores!

ANDREW GOUGH
CTO and iOS Specialist

Mobile and web application specialist (GCD Technologies, GoReport, Arca Technologies) delivering Propertynews.com, niJobFinder.co.uk and niCarFinder.co.uk

RHIDIAN JOHN
Mobile Payments Specialist

Product Manager at Cybersource. Expert in Business Analysis, Requirements Management, Project Management, Payments and Agile.

SCOTT KENNEDY
Legal Eagle for start-ups, early stage and technology-based companies

Director at Cleaver Fulton Rankin Solicitors. Scott advises on all types of corporate finance transactions - business sales & acquisitions, VC and private equity investment, general commercial contracts, licensing, IT procurement and software development contracts, IPR licensing.

KEVIN LEWIS
Enterprise Mobility Specialist

Experienced mobile solution architect and developer (Gravity, Autometrics, Northbook, Aepona, Apion) specialising in cross-platform mobile technologies (Xamarin, PhoneGap, Sencha Touch).

SHANE MCALLISTER
CEO at two mobile agencies

Entrepreneur, CEO and Founder in all things Mobile: Founder of MobaNode, an award winning mobile agency and CEO of Furious Tribe, an agency that helps smart companies think differently about the mobile channel. He is also Lecturer in Mobile Marketing at the Digital Marketing Institute in Dublin.

SANDY MCKINNON
Venture Capitalist and Private Equity Specialist

Over 20 years in commercialising technology innovations. Partner in Pentech Ventures LLP and techstartNI with responsibility for the NI University Seed Funds.

DIARMUID MOLONEY
Loves new media tech. Perpetual optimist.
Co-founder & CEO of Rotor Videos. Diarmuid knows music, video and mobile. He has tried every single source of start-up funding available to prepare for his lecture. Legend!

RICK MONRO
Designer & Evangelist for Design Thinking
UX Director at Fathom. Extensive experience in user research, interaction design and user-centred design strategy. Writer on user experience design at the 'Designing the Middle' blog, and contributor to .Net and Smashing Magazine. Rick regularly speaks at UX Scotland, UX Belfast and Refresh Belfast.

CHRIS MURPHY
Interactive Multimedia expert
Senior Lecturer Interactive Design at Ulster University. writer, speaker and educator based in Belfast; working on so many things his head hurts.

DENIS MURPHY
Entrepreneur & Business Advisor
Serial entrepreneur and investor in mobile telecoms since the early 90s (Aldiscon, Apion, Openwave, Mobile Cohesion, Anaeko), investment committee board member and chairman (QUBIS, NI Venture Capital Forum), business coach and mentor.

DIANE ROBERTS
Start-up Guru
Founder & CEO of Xcell Partner, conceptor and programme director of Propel NI Accelerator. Angel investor and coach of start-up founders, who she understands like her own children.

MARK ROBERTS
Lean Start-Up Maestro
Partner at Xcell Partners. Entrepreneur, advisor and delivery manager. Sales and business development professional with 20+ years operating in the technology and services sector. Coach and advisor to start-ups: ideation, concept development, planning, pitching and funding.
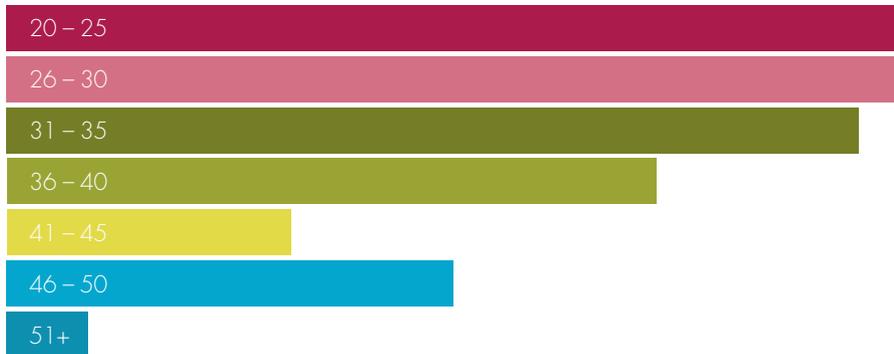
ROGER WALLACE
Architect and API Specialist
Seasoned software architect specialising in scalable cloud architectures and API design and development (Kainos, Singularity, Anaeko).

The programme attracts a broad constituency
Playing to our core principle of diversity, we believe that people with different levels of experience benefit from sharing knowledge with each other. Within our cohorts, we also find craftsmen who contribute to the co-curation bringing their experience to share with the group.

Participant Age Range

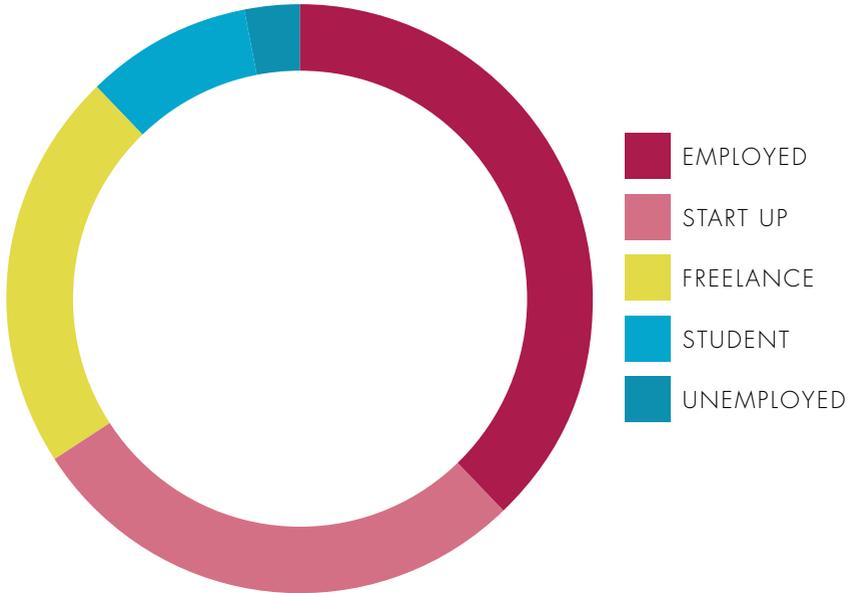20 – 25
26 – 30
31 – 35
36 – 40
41 – 45
46 – 50
51+

Our colleagues at The Mobile Academy in London have consistently had 30% female attendance over the past three years. This is high for a technology based sector and 40% of sessions on the programme were led by women.

While they don't maintain specific measures of participants' backgrounds, these have represented a wide range of cultural, ethnic and national diversity.

The objective was to make the course as widely accessible as possible but also to cover running costs and encourage commitment, hence the decision to charge an attendance fee, which we have reduced in Northern Ireland to reflect the lower earnings base than in London.

Resulting in a wide range of participant benefits
Motivations for attending the course and corresponding outcomes are quite diverse:

EMPLOYED

START UP

FREELANCE

STUDENT

UNEMPLOYED

Over the past three years in London, some participants were sent by their employer to bring mobile and entrepreneurial knowledge back to their teams. The programme helped others to get their business ready to make an investment pitch or accelerator application.

There was a large number of founding teams who were already working 100% of the time on their new business and were coming to make sure they had the mobile angle properly covered. Others were already on accelerator or incubator programmes and found the course content to be complementary.

A number of participants had full time jobs and came to broaden their skills, deepen their knowledge of mobile and find out what lean business practice was all about.

Looking to evaluate an early concept or discover a new business idea, many alumni got their ideas off the starting block. Finally there was also a number of self-employed participants, working as freelancers or as small agencies – who benefitted from the connections they made whilst updating their mobile knowledge.

Participant attendance in London has been high
70% of participants attended 80% or more sessions on
previous courses (2012-2015).

Participants that fulfil course criteria will receive a
Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Certificate of
Attendance.

Participants have become Tutors

In the spirit of co-curation, four of the London tutors are alumni of the programme.

Alumni evangelise the programme

Over half of the participants on our last course in London were recommended by alumni. Evangelising as they move around the London scene, they are active and willing ambassadors. Through alumni, organisers and tutors are often invited to speak at other events and provide expert surgeries throughout the year.

Tutors going the extra mile

There are lots of examples of tutors spending extra time coaching participants and making useful introductions. We have been delighted in how willing our experts are to share their knowledge, give back to the community and be a part of our participatory learning model.

Community kindness

Businesses, event and community organisers have extended goodwill to our participants by offering places at various conferences, including The Guardian Mobile Business Summit, App Promotion Summit and Droidcon. In addition, Lastminute.com opened their office to us for a tour to showcase agile working practices.

A very high advocacy score

Through continual iteration of the programme, based on feedback from participants, we reached a very high Net Promoter Score[1] on our last course. This score puts us in a range that is considered to be excellent.

1. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Net_Promoter

"The combination of excellent mobile design and technical teaching overlaid with business knowledge means that the take out from this programme is far beyond just being about mobile - it's about starting new businesses and business lines. This, along with the exposure to industry experts and other participants is invaluable for us at IBM as it broadens our outlook and introduces new ways of working.

With this well rounded approach, we have found that our participants return thinking more "outside of the IBM box" and that their client interactions are deeper and broader"

STEVE DEVO, IBM

"I left with a toolkit - techniques that I applied the very next day at work"
Participant of 2nd London Course

"I can now, with confidence, speak in a mobile language"
Participant of 1st London Course

Official London tourist app,
in association with the Mayor's Office
Tony Sandler, What Now Travel?!

Having come from a non-technical background, I did not understand the app development process which made it difficult to work out the best way to progress.

Now the idea that I was working on has been built. It is the Official London Tourist App, in association with the Mayor's Office, and been showcased at major tech and travel events as a top innovation.

The Mobile Academy helped me to get to this point with best-in-class tutors giving an overview of all the elements I needed and introducing me to a network of people from different background who have supported me through this journey.

Thanks The Mobile Academy!

Over 5 million downloads within 6 months
James Metcalfe, BBC Weather

As the Product Manager for the BBC Weather, I came to the Academy looking for ways to improve the mobile experience. It was a new area for me - I needed to get as much information on the process and technologies as possible.

The Academy actually ran in parallel with much of our design and planning process, so was immediately applying learnings. For example I remember a class on HTML5 vs Native in the Academy, and then continuing the same discussion at work with the team the following day as we were really struggling to define the technology.

I was fortunate to meet many Tutors, technical experts and highly engaged course mates who helped me become immersed in the world of mobile development. We ended up working with native Android and iOS developers from the Academy to develop prototypes for user testing and then the final app that launched in June 2013. We were able to release on both platforms at the same time (a first at the BBC) and had over 5 million downloads within 6 months, averaging over 4.5 feedback rating in both App stores.

This was viewed as a great success, and the quality of development was in no small part down to what I learned through the Academy process and the engaged passionate developers we had involved.

Covered in mainstream press
Robyn Exton, Dattch

When I joined the Academy, Dattch was just starting to form, we'd got into an accelerator programme and I was looking to build the team.

The Mobile Academy connected me with our designer and our developer who are now full time team members and really helped focus me on product side of the business. It was a great network of people, great tutors and a great deal of information to learn across that wide mobile spectrum.

Dattch is now 6 team members and is live in the UK and US, with more countries planned for launch in 2014. We've now been featured in multiple mainstream press titles, from TechCrunch to the Guardian to Elle, won an award for Best Designed App at Launch conference and Best Pitch from Tech City News and closed a round of angel funding.

$5 million in funding
Leanne Summers, Medikidz

I joined The Mobile Academy to equip myself with the tools I needed to lead the production team at Medikidz into the digital age. Medikidz creates comic books to explain diseases to children.

Before the Academy we were dabbling in digital comic development. After and during the Academy we were gearing up the production process to be mobile ready.

We now have 3 apps on the Android and Apple App Stores and an HTML5 comic building engine. Participating in the Mobile Academy has helped me to lead the team to develop digital content in line with our current brand.

Excitingly, we've secured $5 million in funding, which is going to help us to take our digital offering to the next level.

Mobile Monday Belfast and Ulster University would like to thank Mobile Monday London and University College London (UCL) for their support in bringing The Mobile Academy to Belfast.

The programme has benefitted from many contributions in kind, especially from generous tutors, experts in their field.

We are also very grateful for the support of all those mentioned in this document, as well as for the generosity and kindness of others not specifically thanked.

Details about the programme and registration for the course:

- **MOBILEACADEMYBELFAST.ORG/**
- **INFO@MOBILEACADEMYBELFAST.ORG**
- **FOLLOW US: @MOBILEACADEMYNI**