

HOSTED BY **ULSTER UNIVERSITY & MOBILE MONDAY BELFAST**



Supporting Northern Ireland's
Mobile Ecosystem

May - June 2017

THE MOBILE ACADEMY

Where mobile minds meet, think and grow

INTRODUCTION

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 popular since 2012 and the first-ever edition in Belfast in 2016 has been highly commended by the first cohort of students.

THE MOBILE ACADEMY BELFAST 2017:

WHERE

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

WHEN

10 MAY, 08:30AM - 5PM
17 MAY, 08:30AM - 5PM
24 MAY, 08:30AM - 5PM
07 JUNE, 08:30AM - 5PM
14 JUNE, 08:30AM - 5PM (followed by closing party)



The course gave me an insight into how big and dynamic the mobile industry has become.
*Sharon Young,
Jumpcut Media*

A black and white photograph showing several people working at desks in a classroom or workshop setting. One person in the foreground is looking down at a laptop. In the background, a large banner reads "THE MOBILE ACADEMY".

To anyone who works or want to work in the mobile ecosystem, I would not only recommend this course, but actually make it compulsory.

GARY SMYLIE, INVESTNI

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.

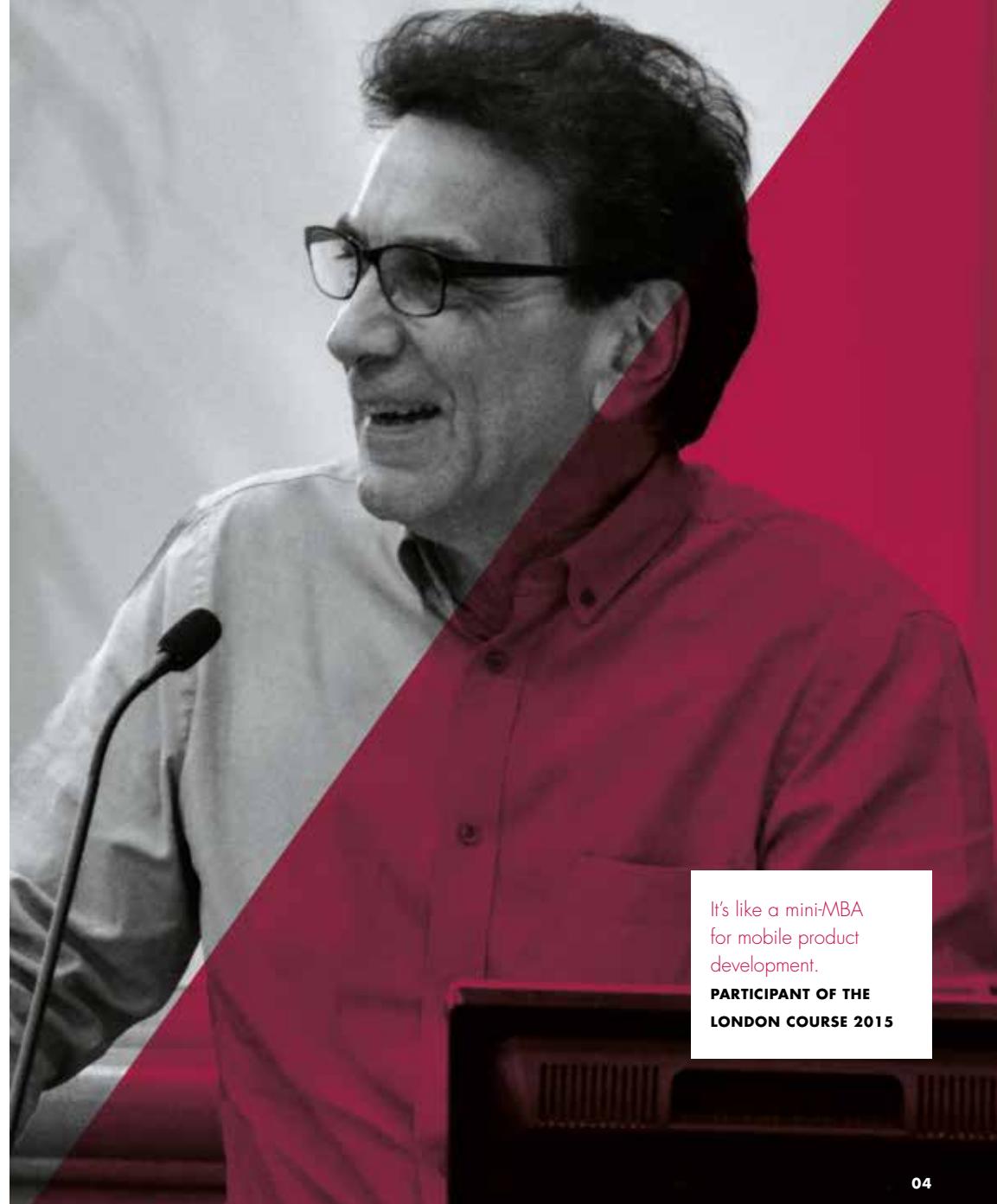
Mobile Monday London provides a forum for people from all disciplines. It provides an environment where small and large businesses feel equally at home, within which fruitful partnerships form and where funding and acquisitions take place.

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.



It's like a mini-MBA for mobile product development.

PARTICIPANT OF THE LONDON COURSE 2015

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 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.

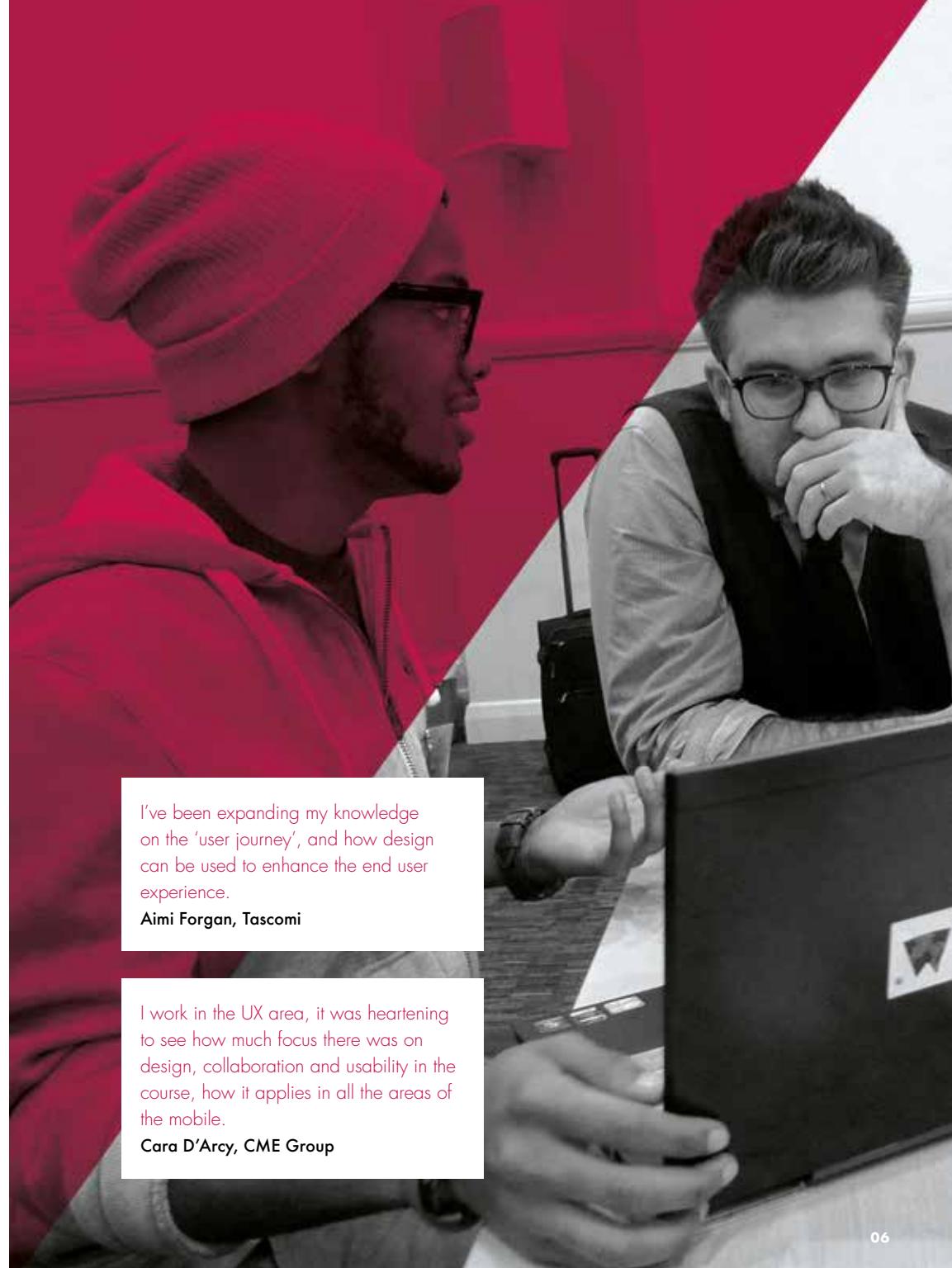
In response we decided it would be a good idea to invite industry practitioners from all corners of the ecosystem to become the tutors in their areas of expertise. We ran early pilots and soon realised that it made sense to find a partner who could reach more of these experts and curate useful and up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



I've been expanding my knowledge on the 'user journey', and how design can be used to enhance the end user experience.

Aimi Forgan, Tascom

I work in the UX area, it was heartening to see how much focus there was on design, collaboration and usability in the course, how it applies in all the areas of the mobile.

Cara D'Arcy, CME Group

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.



I'm from an Operations & Management background it was really good to learn about the technology and the design aspects, it really rounded out my skill set.
David Kerr, Anaeko

As a creative person, I loved the design part of the course, how to make effective design for mobile apps and sites.
Matthew Gibson, UU student

I loved every topic.
Amanda Friel, Mobile app developer

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 crash course takes place on five Wednesdays, starting on 14th May and ending 14th June 2017, with one week break between Day 3 and Day 4. The sessions run from 8:30am until 5pm with a lunch break. There will also be a Closing Party at Brewbot Bar, the world's only micro-brewery with its own mobile app - in Belfast! Participants can also continue discussions into the evening in some of the pubs and bars of the Cathedral Quarter.

As an engineer, the most I took from the course was the Design section: the user journey, understanding what users want to do with a mobile device.

Anthony Hanna,
Intelligent Site Technologies

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.

As a marketer the course gave me skills to understand the mobile app development process.

Lydia McClelland, Ulster University

Sessions have a number of different formats that include presentations, demonstrations and practical group exercises. 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:



BUSINESS

- Business Overview / Mobile Landscape
- Business Model Canvas
- Defining your Value Proposition
- Monetization of Mobile
- Marketing Your Mobile Assets
- Branding for Mobile
- DIY PR
- Legal
- Building a Business Case
- Getting Funded
- Grow the Business



TECHNOLOGY

- Technology Overview
- iOS Essentials
- Android Essentials
- Cross Platform
- HTML5 & Mobile Web
- APIs & Back Ends
- DevOps
- IoT, Wearables & Connected Devices
- Emerging Mobile Technologies



DESIGN

- Design Overview / Process for Mobile
- Design Principles for Mobile
- Creating Core Customer Journey (UX)
- User Stories
- Prototyping
- Building Great Apps
- DIY User Research
- Design Review
- Design Iteration & Testing

The course is very worthwhile, if you're serious about moving with the times, you should definitely do it.

Sarah Jane McAllister, JR Lighting

I'm a waterfall software guy and now I understand what agile is about.

Gus Collins, Whitethorn Consulting

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 & Cofounder 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.



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.



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.



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!



NORBERT SAGNARD

Mobile Academy Course Director & Cofounder Mobile Monday Belfast

Marketer with mobile pioneers (Motorola, Vodafone, Logica) in 1990-2003, since then Lecturer in Mobile Marketing, Angel investor (Convergence, GoReport, Humain, Hurree, Komodo Maths, Quizfortune, Rotor, Sensum, Taggled) and Start-up mentor (Propel, StartPlanet NI, Momentum USA).



ANDREW GOUGH

CTO and iOS Specialist

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



LIAM BURNS

Research Fellow at Ulster University's School of Engineering

Liam researches data mining, wearable and mobile devices and Internet of Things for the advancement of Healthcare practice.



PAUL HAMILL

Mobile Music Pro & Radio DJ

Forward thinking professional with 20+ years experience in high profile, work environments across music, technology and media. Co-Founder CEO of highly successful startup Inflyte, creators of the app for taste makers in 2015.



ADRIAN CAMPBELL

Technical Director at design agency and mobile games developers.

Technical Director at Testify Ltd. the testing platform for games developers. Busy with discovery, tendering, requirement gathering, developing and implementing best practices, ensuring his agency maintains top levels of quality.



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.



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.



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).

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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).

Participants in Belfast were very dedicated: all attended 100% of the sessions of the course.

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 Score¹ 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

BELFAST 2016 COURSE PARTICIPANTS



You get challenged a lot during this course. The tutors had something very valuable to bring.

Sharon Young, Jumpcut Media



Very useful for me to attend the Mobile Academy and network with other people in the mobile sector.

Paul Quinn, Ulster University



It changed my perception about how to release a mobile product on the market.

Mark McKim, Liberty IT



As a professional doing software development in Belfast the networking opportunities were very valuable, and the course material second to none. I will recommend this course to a few people I know who would greatly benefit from it, who are in employment and doing their own thing in a startup.

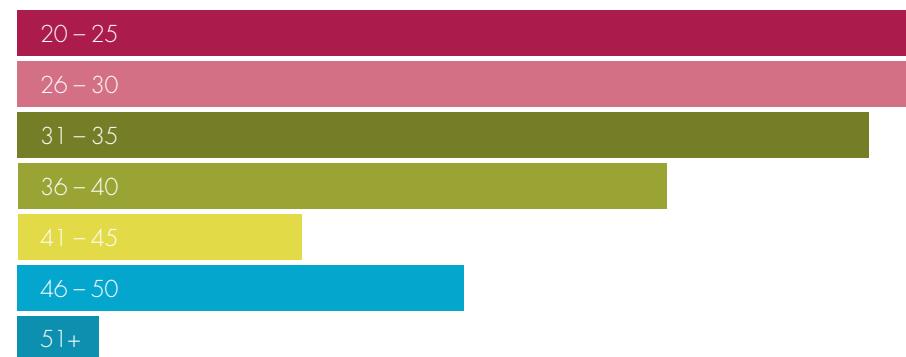
Chris O'Neill, Redgrove Computing

**Watch video testimonials from our 2016 participants at
www.mobileacademybelfast.org**

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



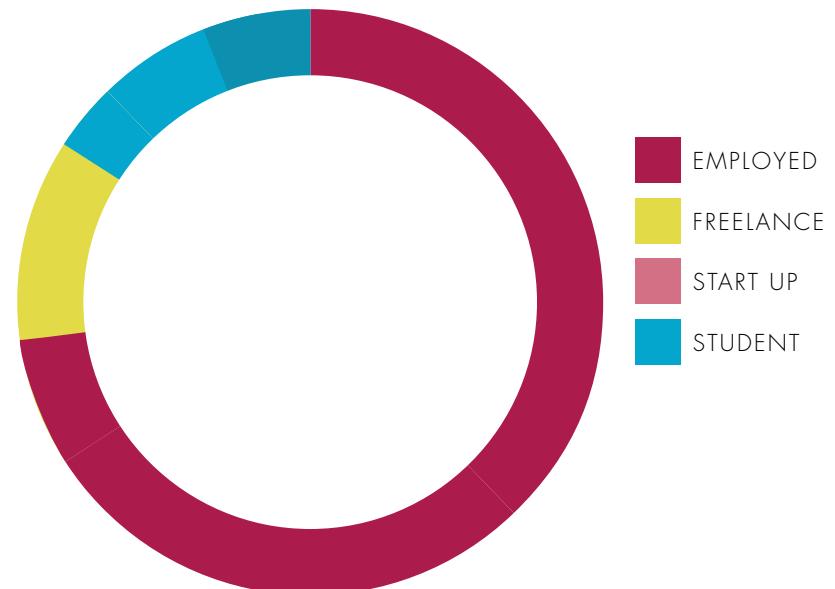
We do our bit for gender diversity in the tech sector at The Mobile Academy. In both London and Belfast, we've had 30% female attendance since the start, quite high for the tech sector, but not high enough, so let's try to beat that with the 2017 cohort.

The objective was to make the course as widely accessible as possible while covering our costs, hence the decision to charge an attendance fee, which we reduced to reflect the lower earnings base in NI than in London.

The Belfast 2016 course was indeed attended by professionals from a wide range of companies, large ones like BT, CME Group, Invest NI and Liberty IT, medium ones like Anaeko, JR Lighting, Openwave Mobility and Tascomi, and start-ups like Intelligent Site Technologies and Jumpcut Media. The professional background of our participants was very wide too, from UX Analyst, Software Engineer, Head of Marketing, Operations Manager, Mobile App Developer, Head of Service Delivery, Software Consultant, to Founder/CEO and Managing Director.

Resulting in a wide range of participant benefits

Motivations for attending the course and corresponding outcomes are quite diverse:



Since 2012 in London and last year in Belfast, most participants have been 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.

Mobile video platform, uses music to transform social stories into epic productions.
Sharon Young, Jumpcut Media

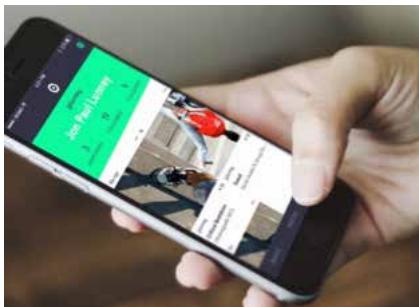
I took part in The Mobile Academy Belfast 2016. The course was very useful for me to revisit some of my mobile working experience from the past and to bring it up to date, because mobile changes so quickly. It was very useful to demystify the terminology and the jargon.

After the course I felt more focused in launching Jumpdrop, our iOS app that allows users to uniquely create 15 second SoMo videos (social mobile) that can be shared with peers and fans. The app offers a simple, enjoyable user journey to create professional quality video shorts with music at the heart. The app's sophisticated synchronisation function allows the video to be adjusted to match the beat of the song to create impact and energy. The app can then be used as an exciting tool for advertising content, product placement and brand elevation.

The app team has worked on apps for Samsung and the London Olympics. Our COO has 10 years' experience at Vodafone and our CEO is a BAFTA-winning composer and has created music syncs for Adidas, Durex and Reebok.

The Jumpdrop team brings together a unique blend of experience and talent from Northern Ireland's creative and tech community. The music team brings 20 years of experience from within the industry, to help with the curation of music content that allows users to breathe life into their video shorts.

To date the company has received £250k of private investment, matched by almost £100k from the Northern Irish public sector.



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.



Mobile revolution in the construction industry Anthony Hanna, ProProject

The Mobile Academy course was great for people like me - without a technology background, though I'm an engineer. There was a lot to be learned, like the tech stacks, the design process, the user journey, what the user wants to do when using a mobile device, but also how to sell a mobile product.

We develop software and the accompanying management practices to revolutionise the way work is carried out by contractors on-site within the Civil, Building and Facilities Management sectors of the construction industry.

ProProject is a web and mobile software platform that allows users to manage all aspects of their projects directly from site, in taking control of project finances, contract documents, HSEQ compliance and integrating building sites with head office seamlessly, using our secure cloud storage. Building on my professional experience, ProProject has sought to remove the biggest burden to the effective management of a construction site – paperwork - by digitising a contractor's compliance and contract documentation and making it more accessible and secure through the use of mobile and cloud technology.



\$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](#)**
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