

### Lights, Camera, Action

- 1 South London social enterprise *Chocolate Films* runs education and outreach programmes aiming to inspire young people from all sorts of backgrounds to voice their opinions and discover their inner creative talents. It uses digital media in innovative ways to offer over 2,000 youngsters a hands-on opportunity to sample the fascinating world of filmmaking every year. It employs 10 staff and works with hundreds of schools, youth groups, museums, galleries, festivals and youth offending teams – to name but a few – to encourage individuals to 4.
- 2 For London teenager Georgina Cross it was joining up with the production company's education project that really opened the 16-year-old's eyes to her inventive streak. "I never saw myself as a creative person until I got involved with *Chocolate Films* just over two years ago," says sixth-form pupil Georgina. "I had my head in books plenty but I had no idea about filming, editing or anything like that. And it's not just the production side either, I have learned a lot of problem-solving skills and about teamwork."
- 3 Founder and director Mark Currie says: "Our goal is to make films about good people and also to help teach people how to make them with skilled professionals and top equipment. It is also about going into communities where people might not have the opportunity to learn about how to make digital media."
- 4 The majority of *Chocolate Films*' participants are children and young people like Southwark youngster Georgina, with tailor-made courses for different age groups enabling all users to get the best out of the experience. Georgina has relished the challenge of learning about this field, something that was a completely new experience.
- 5 A loan from *Big Issue Invest* has allowed *Chocolate Films* to continue to support their projects. Mark says: "This money has gone a long way for us. It's very difficult these days for a small independent company like us to get any sort of loan."
- 6 Aside from education, *Chocolate Films* also specialises in making factual films about social, cultural and environmental issues, largely for charities and arts organisations. The production company prides itself on developing the skills of its students but there has also been no shortage of talent offering a hand to the company, with stars including Daniel Radcliffe and Jo Brand getting involved.



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