

# THE BENEFITS OF BEING PART OF SYN

**SYN SURVEY 2013**



*where young people run the show*

Swinburne Institute for Social Research

and the ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation

Report by Ellie Rennie, Benjamin Büttner and Megan Kelleher, August 2013.

# SNAPSHOT OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

## PROFILE OF CURRENT SYN PARTICIPANTS AT THE TIME OF THE SURVEY

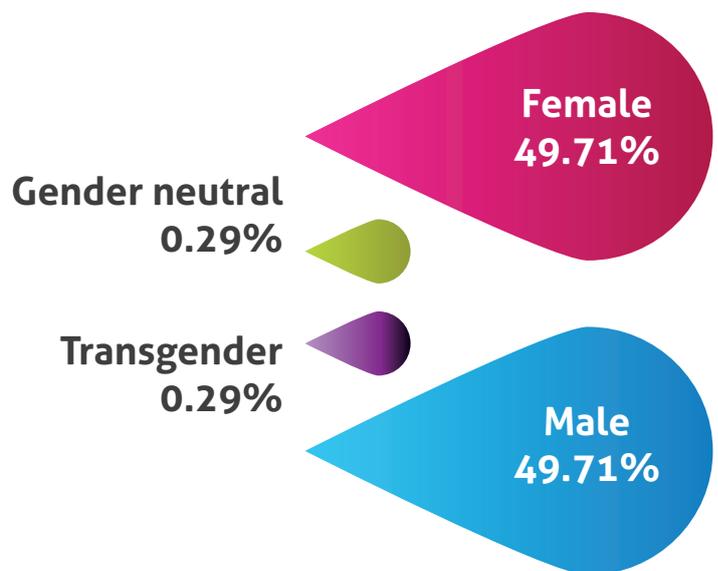
SYN commissioned the Swinburne Institute of Social Research to conduct a survey of SYN members past and present. A total of 352 people completed the survey.

Average age: **22 years old**

Equal numbers of participants identified as **Male (49.15%)** and **Female (49.15%)**. 1.7% of survey participants identified as "Other".

Two thirds of all respondents are studying.  
**68.75%** are studying at university  
**20.54%** are studying at high school  
**6.25%** are at TAFE  
**4.46%** are studying elsewhere

The majority of all survey participants studying in June 2013 were enrolled in a course in creative industry streams.



 : Creative industries, Media & Communications, Journalism, Marketing, Architecture

 : Business, Commerce, Management

 : Humanities/Social Sciences, Policy/Political Sciences

 : Law

 : Health Sciences

 : Engineering & Science

Over **three quarters** of all respondents are employed, with over half in part-time/casual employment positions.

Current SYN participants are typically **metropolitan based**, and are likely to be living with their parents.

Half have volunteered at another non-profit organisation at some time, suggesting a **highly motivated cohort**. A significant number included volunteering at other community media outlets such as 3RRR and 3JOY, as well as various youth festivals, youth organisations and charities.

# HIGHLIGHTS

SYN provides participants with work experience that, for a significant number of people, leads to **employment in the highly competitive media labour market**. For others, SYN provides personal and professional development outcomes such as **communication skills, networks** and the **ability to work with others**.

**SYN provides a real pathway into media careers, with over a quarter of all former participants having gone on to work in the media industries. Many of these are working as producers and journalists. The vast majority of those working in the media industries reported that SYN helped them to gain work, providing both skills and experience employers recognised.**

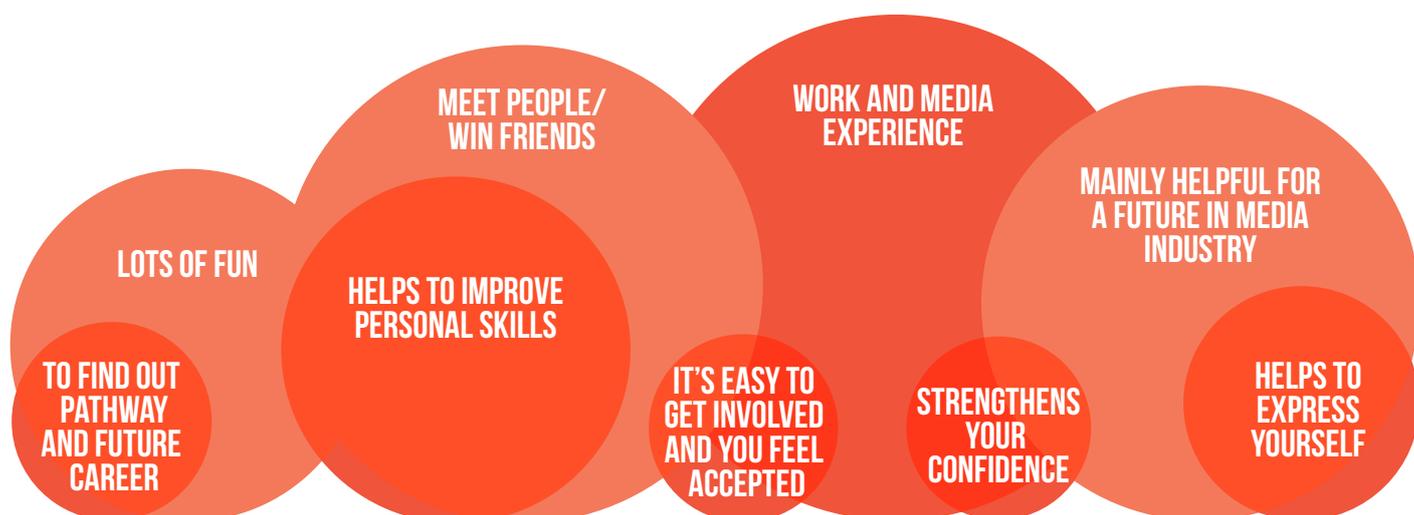
## OVERALL SYN EXPERIENCE

97% of survey participants would recommend SYN to others, suggesting it is a **positive and useful experience** for the vast majority of those that get involved.

When participants were asked why they would recommend SYN to others, the most frequent reasons given were that SYN **provides experience in the media industries**.

**I CERTAINLY WOULD [RECOMMEND OTHERS TO PARTICIPATE].  
RADIO, TV, FRIENDS - WHAT MORE COULD YOU WANT? IT'S A  
GREAT CAREER PATHWAY FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO WORK IN  
THE MEDIA (BUT ALSO GREAT FOR THOSE WHO DON'T!) AND  
JUST A GREAT WAY TO EXPRESS YOUR OWN IDEAS.**

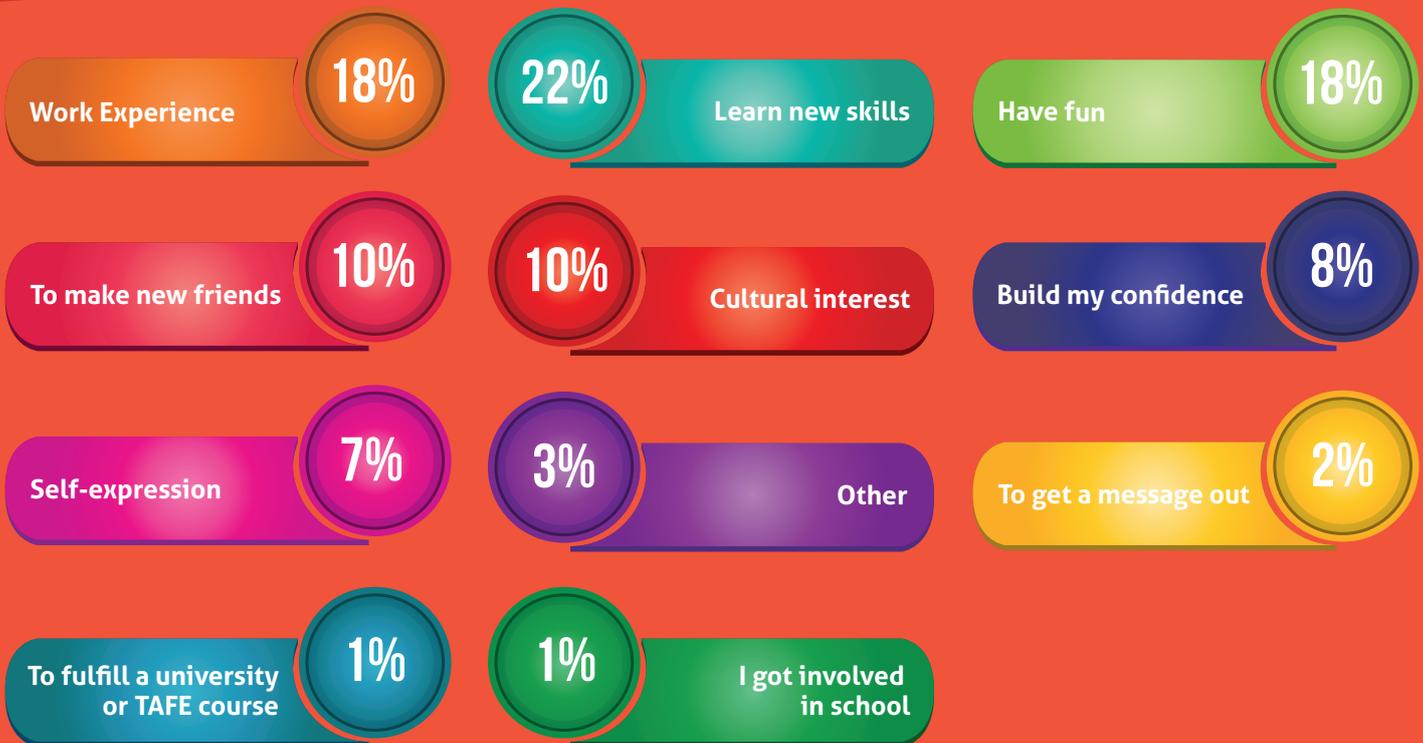
## WHY SHOULD YOUNG PEOPLE GET INVOLVED WITH SYN?



# WHY PARTICIPATE IN SYN?

One third of survey participants first heard about SYN through friends. **Friendship networks are the most effective means of recruitment into SYN.**

The top three reasons for getting involved with SYN are to **learn new skills**, to **have fun**, and to **gain work experience**.



**Engagement is high**, with approximately two thirds physically present at the SYN office ('The House of SYN') or studio at least once a week. Over one third of SYN participants are present at least twice a week.

When asked to identify the most positive aspects of their experience at SYN, a common response provided by participants was **working with people from different backgrounds** (cultural diversity and political beliefs).

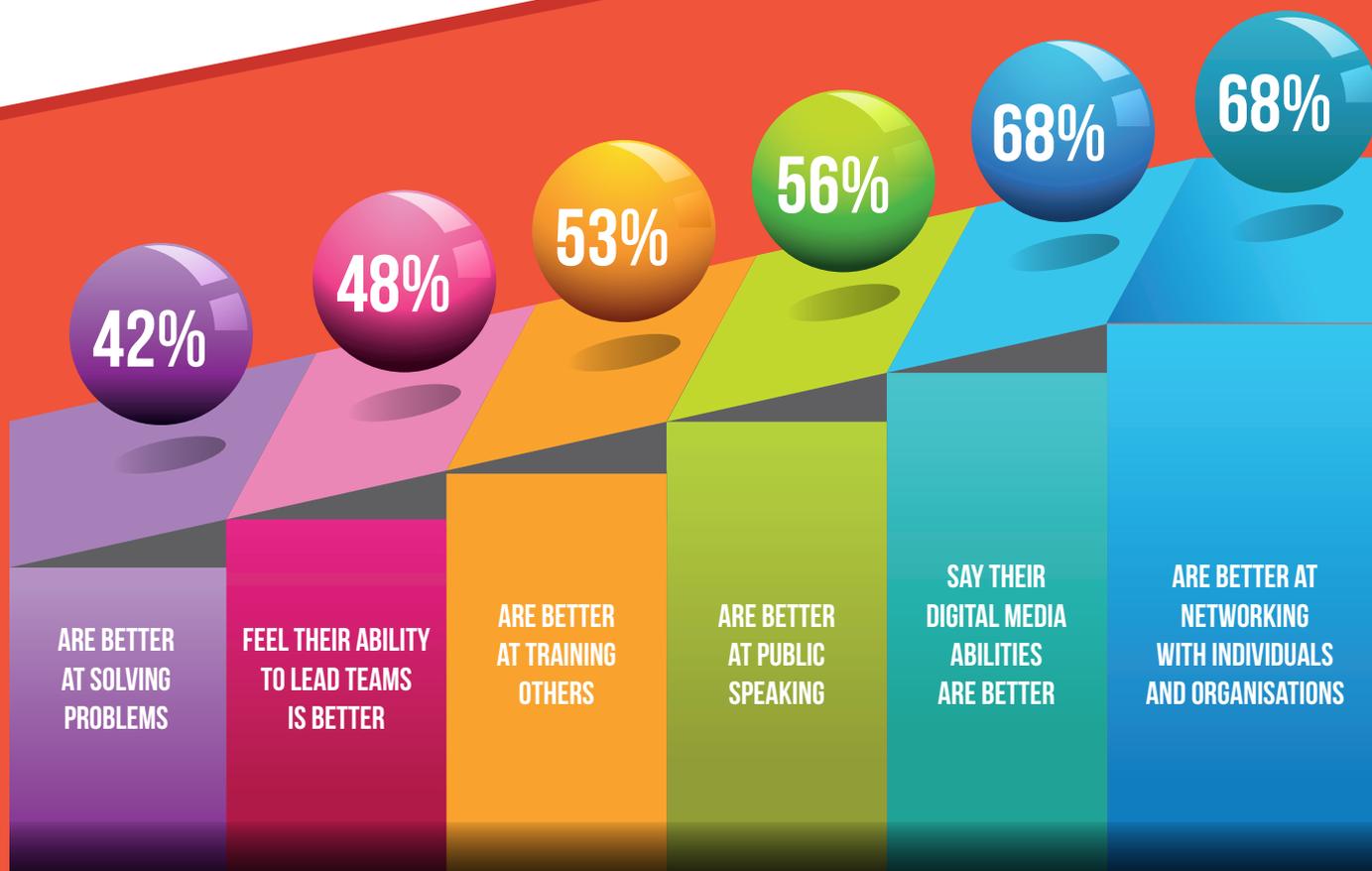
Participants were also overwhelmingly working with people **both older and younger** than themselves, suggesting that SYN involves **peer-support and mentorship for younger participants**.

People were most likely to leave SYN because they became **too busy, got a job, or reached the SYN retirement age** of 26. Less than 7% left because they were bored or experienced conflict.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A majority of participants stated that they were “better now than before SYN” (in other words, had improved as a result of participation with SYN) when it came to **networking with individuals and organisations**, and **training others**.

A majority of participants stated they had improved at **using digital technologies**, and **public speaking**.



# CAREER BENEFITS

Of those that are no longer involved in SYN and were employed at the time of the survey, **almost half were working in the creative industries**, with one third working as media professionals.

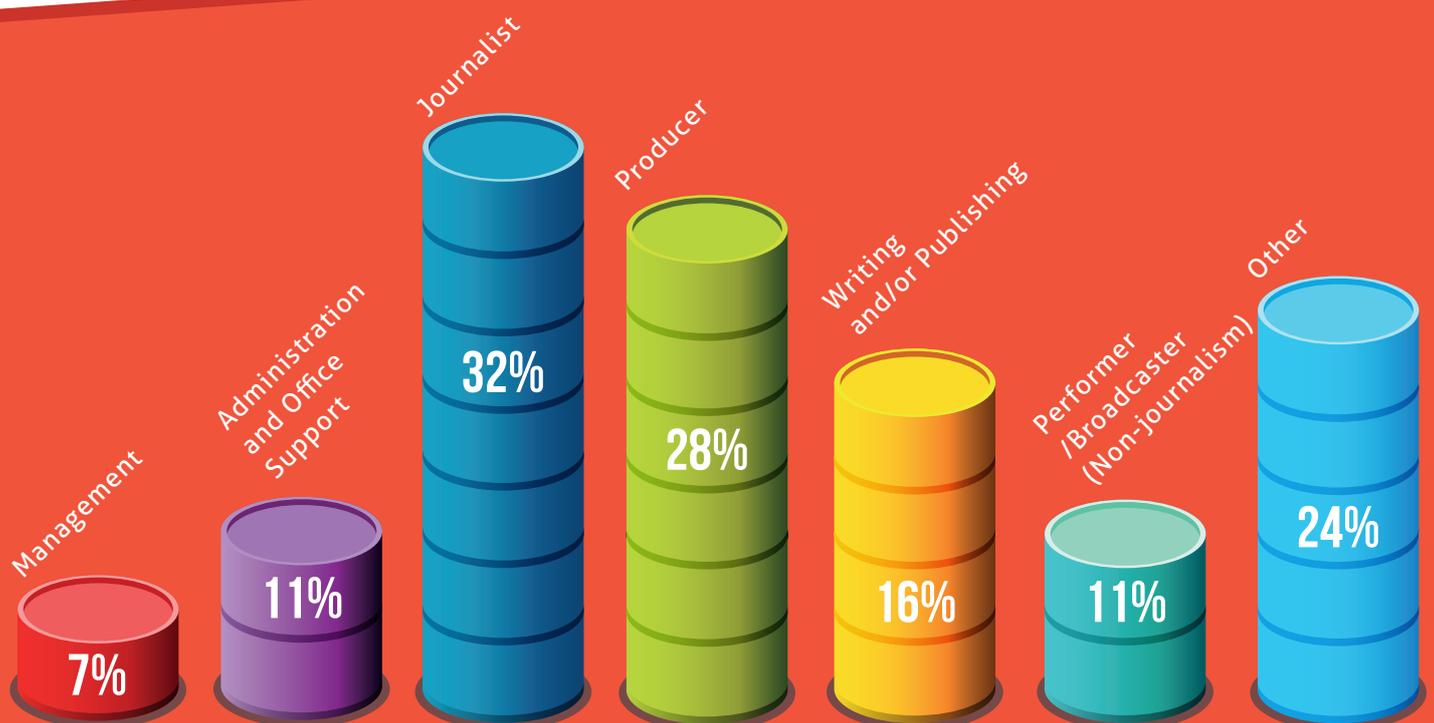
The highest proportion of media professionals were working in **journalist and producer roles**, suggesting that SYN provides **direct or accelerated entry into professional positions** as opposed to administration.

Of all survey participants, **over two fifths stated their involvement in SYN helped them to find paid work**. The majority of this group were employed in the media industries. Participants attributed this to the relevant skills gained at SYN, as well as subsequent employers recognising SYN experience. For a third of participants, **SYN assisted them to choose their career pathway**.

The survey results indicate SYN is an **effective status signalling mechanism**. It enables SYN participants to differentiate themselves from other media job applicants.

When asked how they would rate the usefulness of their own SYN experience in gaining paid work, on a scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating 'Not useful at all' and 5 indicating 'Very useful', 64% rated their SYN experience at 3 or above for usefulness in gaining paid work. This suggests that there is a perception that **SYN's offerings are useful for gaining paid work in the future**.

When asked if they have put SYN on their curriculum vitae, **84% said yes**.



# FIND OUT MORE

## **SYN MEDIA**

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MELBOURNE 8006**

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**[SYN.ORG.AU](http://syn.org.au)**

**TWITTER: [@SYNMEDIA](https://twitter.com/synmedia)**

**[FACEBOOK.COM/SYNMEDIA](https://facebook.com/synmedia)**

SYN is a media organisation run by a community of young people that provide broadcast and training opportunities for young Australians. SYN holds a full-time community radio licence, produces programs for Melbourne's community television station (C31), conducts a range of online content activities, and provides media training.

This report presents a summary of results of an online survey into experiences and outcomes of working or volunteering with SYN. The survey was commissioned by the organisation, and was conducted by the Swinburne Institute for Social Research. Invitations were emailed to station members past and present, with the survey being opened on Thursday, June 13, 2013 and closing on Tuesday, June 25, 2013.

A total of 3783 people were invited to participate in the online survey, administered using Opinio software.

Of that total, 11.08% of invitees responded (419), with 9.3% completing the survey in full (352).

Survey participants were required to be at least 15 years of age in order to take part. The findings presented in this report are based upon data observed in completed surveys.

For a full copy of the results, please contact the SYN office on 03 9925 4747 or [info@syn.org.au](mailto:info@syn.org.au).