

# HINKLEY POINT C

## INSPIRE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

## INDEPENDENT EVALUATION 2014-2019

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**NOVEMBER 2019**



# THE HINKLEY POINT C INSPIRE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

## FOREWORD

In this independent evaluation report, Skyblue Research summarises the impact of EDF Energy's HPC Inspire Education Programme and outlines its key recommendations for future working.

A wealth of curriculum-linked activities from primary school POD programmes to secondary school careers fairs, Talent Academies and the Young HPC programme (to name a few!), have delivered on their aspiration to inspire young people in Somerset into the world of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Since 2011, EDF Energy has made a long-term and considerable investment to improve the curriculum and apprenticeship opportunities available in Somerset.

They are ensuring that the construction of the power station also delivers a significant and lasting impact for the region, broadening the horizons of our children and young people.

As the programme has developed, EDF Energy has listened to the feedback of leaders in education and grown its programmes in response. Whilst reaching across Somerset has its geographical challenges, the resources and opportunities have supported colleagues by ensuring they are relevant and responsive to changes in the educational landscape.

I am delighted to see that this report recommends broadening even further the engagement of such a wide variety of contractors. Ensuring the bonds between business, enterprise and education continue to grow is critical if we are to ensure aspirational futures for our young people.

**Emma Wilkes**

Chair of Somerset Association of Head teachers  
Head teacher, Oakfield Academy



## 2018/2019 PERFORMANCE

**19071**  
STUDENTS

**661**  
EDUCATION  
PROFESSIONALS

**691 HOURS**  
OF ACTIVITY



EQUIVALENT TO



**86**  
DAYS

**92 INSTITUTIONS**  
INVOLVED

**15 NEW**  
SCHOOLS



**834**  
REGISTERED TO  
YOUNG  
HPC

**175 STEM & CAREERS**  
ACTIVITIES  
DELIVERED ACROSS THE SW



## INTRODUCTION

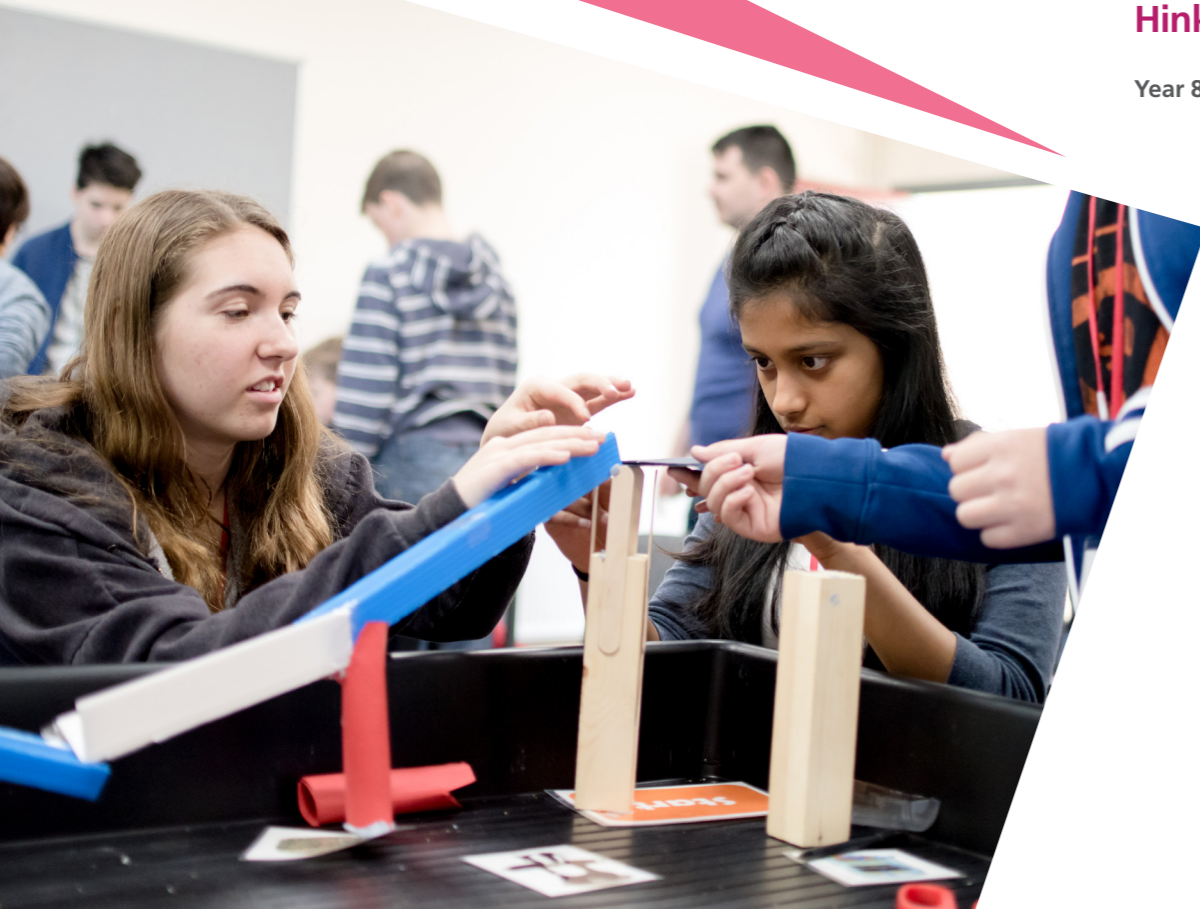
EDF Energy is building two new nuclear reactors in Somerset, known as Hinkley Point C (HPC), marking a significant milestone in the revitalisation of the UK's nuclear industry. The Project will not only make a major contribution to reduce the UK's carbon emissions, but is also an opportunity for positive and sustainable growth locally, regionally and nationally. Since the start of the Project, EDF Energy has been determined to provide a lasting legacy for people, industry and the economy.

Evidence of this can be seen over the last five years where the Project has demonstrated incredible progress not only in construction, but also in its initiatives to support people, communities and business to continue to grow and develop.

One such initiative is the Inspire Education Programme. Part of an innovative education, skills and employment pipeline, delivered by EDF Energy, it aims to ensure that the opportunities from HPC can be realised by individuals from across Somerset and the UK, whether they are in school, exploring careers or accessing apprenticeships. Beginning in primary schools, the Inspire Programme draws in young people through engaging assemblies, interactive events, challenging workshops, trips and residential programmes.

**“  
I learnt a lot about  
potential career  
opportunities at  
Hinkley Point C!  
”**

**Year 8 Student**



## ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

The Inspire Programme was launched in 2011 and was designed to inspire young people in Somerset to continue to study STEM subjects; building a sustainable legacy for the future by supporting a pipeline from early education into skills development opportunities, before helping them into future long-term employment. The programme also aims to work in collaboration with key external partners to create a framework that will support skills development and pathways into work.

In July 2014 Skyblue Research was commissioned to carry out a five-year longitudinal evaluation of the Inspire Programme. This independent research considered whether the Inspire Programme is meeting its objectives and making a tangible difference to the young people of Somerset by helping them to access the opportunities presented by the construction and operation of HPC.

This report represents a final assessment, drawing on over 6,000 sources of primary evidence and a further 6,200 sources of data gathered by STEMworks (Inspire's delivery partner). This is the last in a series of five independent evaluation reports.

# SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Since its launch in 2011, research shows that the Inspire Programme is making a positive contribution to young people in Somerset. It is making a tangible difference in increasing awareness, knowledge and motivation towards STEM subjects whilst supporting young people in accessing the employment opportunities provided by the construction of HPC.

This final report also considered the wider social value of the Inspire Programme. The Programme has directly led to the creation of social value of between £1.395 million and £1.732 million<sup>1</sup>, principally through raising the aspirations and widening the networks of young people in Somerset whilst helping them into improved employment opportunities at HPC and across the wider STEM sector. The Inspire Programme has played an important part in supporting a diverse set of young people to enter careers that they find fulfilling, financially rewarding and where they can gain new skills.

## THE PRIMARY OUTPUTS AND BENEFITS OF THE INSPIRE PROGRAMME CAN BE CATEGORISED INTO FOUR CORE AREAS:

# 1

### The Inspire Programme is increasing interest in STEM subjects

- The evaluation findings from 2014 to 2019 demonstrate that young people taking part in Inspire activities were consistently more likely to show an interest in STEM careers and vocational pathways than the overall sample of young people.
- The Inspire Programme is making a measurable contribution to the careers decisions of young people in Somerset. There is emerging evidence that the Programme is influencing young people to make different subject choices, particularly post-16.
- A positive 'uplift' has been achieved in the interest towards nuclear, engineering and construction careers at a time when these skills remain in short supply in the UK.<sup>2</sup>
- In addition to this uplift effect, almost half of young people who had engaged with the Programme now feel inspired to try harder in STEM lessons.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This total has been derived from a sample of young people in school, and current apprentices. The apprentice sample showed social value of between £550k and £590k, and has then been extrapolated to all current apprentices. The difference between the figures is based on assuming that all of the credit to the Inspire Programme will be used by the end of the first year of the apprenticeship, and the second by assuming that the outcomes from the first year will continue, dropping by half in year 2. This assessment does not include apprentices who will be recruited in the future, as while the Inspire Education Programme continues, the level of investment is unknown.

# 2

### The Inspire Programme is contributing to Somerset's careers advice and guidance network

- The Inspire Programme has been shown to be a stable and important component in Somerset's careers advice network since 2012. Developing and maintaining strong relationships with schools and stakeholders, including Somerset County Council, the Careers Enterprise Company and Local Enterprise Partnerships, were crucial.
- Stakeholders agreed that the Inspire Programme is well positioned to contribute to both social and economic value:
  - Social value by raising awareness, aspirations and opportunities for young people.
  - Economic value by supporting a robust STEM pipeline to HPC and apprenticeship pathways into the wider STEM sector.
- Hinkley Point C's role as a 'Cornerstone Employer' within the West Somerset Opportunity Area and the Heart of the SW LEP Career Hub demonstrates a commitment to create social value and contribute to wider social mobility ambitions in these localities.

<sup>2</sup>A 2019 study suggested the cost of STEM skills shortages was £1.5 billion a year in recruitment, temporary staffing, inflated salaries and additional training costs. EMSI Focus On The Demand for STEM Jobs & Skills in Britain (January 2019).

<sup>3</sup>Sample size of 1,304 Young People who had engaged with the Inspire Programme, surveyed 3-6 months later.



# 3

## The Inspire Programme is influencing both young people's further education choices and how the HPC supply chain engages with young people

- Members of the HPC supply chain agree that the connecting role played by the Inspire Programme enabled them to showcase available careers and maximise local recruitment.
- The HPC Inspire programme drove the development and establishment of the 'Young HPC' programme (October 2017) – Feedback from Young HPC<sup>4</sup> members shows high levels of awareness of the roles required at HPC, with strong interest in degree apprenticeships standing out as a result of their links with the programme.<sup>5</sup>
- Feedback from HPC apprentices who took part in the Inspire Programme indicates that the Programme is making a positive difference to the ambition and attitude of young people, both in education and in the workforce.
- The Programme is supporting the ambitions of The Nuclear Sector Deal which sets challenging targets for recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce.<sup>6</sup>
- 43% of HPC apprentices who were engaged in the Inspire Programme strongly agree that the initiative had changed their career path.<sup>7</sup>
- The vast majority of apprentices agreed strongly that the Inspire Programme is needed to continue to raise awareness and interest in STEM career pathways.

<sup>4</sup> Young HPC is part of the holistic education, skills and employment pipeline and has been designed to give support, guidance and resources to 16-21 year olds to help them towards a future career in STEM and Hinkley Point C.

<sup>5</sup> Young HPC has generated greatest new interest in the following roles: Civil Engineering, Quantity Surveying Plant and Project Controls.

<sup>6</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/nuclear-sector-deal/nuclear-sector-deal](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nuclear-sector-deal/nuclear-sector-deal).

<sup>7</sup> Based on a sample of 35 apprentices.



# 4

## The Inspire Programme is delivering additional social value as a result of its operation

- The Inspire Programme is delivering wider Social Value in Somerset by raising awareness of STEM careers, providing a sense of achievement, supporting young people's aspirations to be the best they can be, and by connecting them to a diverse set of careers pathways.
- The available evidence has established a link between a person's place of birth and health, and their education attainment and social mobility.<sup>8</sup> In total, 18% of the apprentice sample were eligible for free school meals. This is more than double a national benchmark.<sup>9</sup> The Inspire Programme is making a positive difference to young people with fewer life chances than their more affluent peers.
- There is strong evidence to show that apprenticeships and STEM careers offer enhanced prospects to earn and progress (relative to average earnings both regionally and nationally).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> 2019 findings show that pupils who are persistently disadvantaged (defined as eligible for free school meals for at least 80% of their education) are 22 months behind average attainment by the end of key stage 4. [www.epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/annual-report-2019](http://www.epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/annual-report-2019).

<sup>9</sup> EngineeringUK, Social mobility in engineering (2018). "Just 7% of apprentices at this [Level3] had been eligible to receive FSM when they were in school."

<sup>10</sup> CEBR, Productivity and lifetime earnings impacts of engineering education & training. A report for EngineeringUK September 2015.





## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish a steering group with HS2, Crossrail, National Grid and others in the i3P network <sup>11</sup> to connect good practice across major infrastructure education programmes.<sup>12</sup>
2. To create the most added social value for the local area, interventions should target young people with some STEM interest living in lower super-output areas of the county, with low STEM capital.
3. Recruit new delivery resource to enable the Programme Manager to take a greater strategic and logistical oversight role.
4. Create an over-arching school and college engagement plan for all HPC contractors. Provide quality assurance and oversight, whilst protecting the relationships developed with schools.
5. Reconsider a previous recommendation to develop YouTube videos for parents, which could be accessed directly or through schools at parents' evenings. We recommend that Inspire 'ambassadors' in the HPC workforce are featured.
6. Work with the STEM National Learning Centre to develop sustainable CPD solutions for the teachers in Somerset, which are aligned to the labour market opportunities in STEM in the South West region.
7. Commission an evaluation in the West Somerset Opportunity Area, over a three-year period, comparing schools that are engaged with the Inspire Programme to those that are not. The study could connect with other STEM employers to assess the Programme's contribution to the wider labour market.

## VALUE FOR FUTURE MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Learning and outcomes created by the Inspire Education Programme are transferable and relevant for other new build projects. Having a team embedded in an area to deliver the Programme has been one of the main success factors. Stakeholders agreed that there was nothing comparable to the Inspire Programme in the region, concluding that the Programme remained both needed and relevant.

The Programme's thought leadership and leverage are also recognised, showing other partners (including STEM employers) what good quality engagement can look like. At an operational level, the relationships that were developed and nurtured with schools across the county over nine years are incredibly valuable to a range of stakeholders looking to support young people.



<sup>11</sup> [www.i3p.org.uk](http://www.i3p.org.uk)

<sup>12</sup> A rapid evidence search of the published education strategies from these infrastructure projects did not discover any published independent evaluation results.



This summary has been produced by independent impact specialists Skyblue Research: [www.skyblue.org.uk](http://www.skyblue.org.uk) [Paul@skyblue.org.uk](mailto:Paul@skyblue.org.uk)



For further information about the various HPC 'Education and Skills' programmes please visit: [edfenergy.com/hpceducationandskills](http://edfenergy.com/hpceducationandskills)