



voice

# UPSTART PROJECTS 2022 TO 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

CHARITY NUMBER: 1157864  
59 TRINITY STREET, SHREWSBURY, SY3 7PQ



# Contents

## OUR MISSION AND PROJECTS

Pages 3-4

## VOICE MAGAZINE

Pages 5-7

## CREATIVE PATHWAYS

Pages 8-11

## TRAINING AND COMMISSIONS

Pages 12-13

## GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

Pages 14-23

# Welcome

In November 2022, after serving as a board member for three years, I was delighted to be elected as chair of the board by my fellow trustees. We bid farewell to our retiring founder chair, Felicity Woolf, thanking her for her tremendous eight years of leadership. She's a hard act to follow but I am excited to steer the charity into its next phase, alongside my talented fellow trustees, a number of whom joined us this year, expanding our pool of knowledge and expertise.

I am so proud of the work we do with young people, many of whom have previously had little or no access to arts experiences, and that we are able to open up new horizons for them with our opportunities and training. With our support, many have been able to find their first employment in the cultural sector (see pages 9 and 10). During the past year, using our arts magazine Voice as the vehicle, we developed a clear progression model from local projects to cultural jobs. We call this 'Creative Pathways' – more info on page 8.

As someone who works in the media, I strongly believe in the importance of giving back and am proud to be a patron of the charity. We are an agile organisation, running on a tight budget. As funding for the arts continues to suffer from budget cuts, reducing opportunities and access for young people, our work becomes even more imperative.

If, like me, you would also like to help a young person follow a creative path, please consider making a donation or even better, join us as a Friend or Patron of Voice. Your contribution will make a real difference in supporting the critical work we do: [voicemag.uk/support-us](https://voicemag.uk/support-us)  
Thank you.

**Holly Howe, Chair of Trustees, Upstart Projects**



# Our mission

**Upstart Projects supports young people aged 13-30 to develop their creativity, skills and confidence by taking part in the arts and media.**

Our projects open doors for young people to explore their personal interests and potential jobs. We focus on those with fewer opportunities to take part in the arts or pursue creative careers..

We champion youth voice, leadership and co-production through all our work.






## Our projects

**Voice magazine** is a cultural publication and an open platform for young people's views on the arts and society. Voice attracted nearly **300k readers** and **1,500 posts** this year.

**Creative Pathways** is our progression programme, which supports young people to explore the arts on their doorstep, become arts reviewers at national festivals and take on work experience and employment as journalists on Voice magazine.

We supported **57 Local Reviewers, 22 Voice Reviewers and 8 Voice Contributors** during the year.

**Upstart Training** offers courses and services to organisations, helping them embed youth voice in their work. We trained **129 professionals** and worked with **11 organisations**, either running bespoke training or undertaking commissions.

A photograph of a yellow table with a laptop, a smartphone, and a sign that says 'Who is your biggest creative inspiration? #voiceviews'. The sign also features a pink speech bubble icon. The background is a pink wall.

*“Working with Upstart and Voice made the arts world seem much more accessible and the skills I’ve developed have been invaluable.”*

Mystaya, 19, Voice Reviewer, Shropshire



# VOICE MAGAZINE highlights

**Voice magazine is our lead project and the bedrock for our work.**

Voice is an online culture magazine, which supports young media-makers, journalists and arts reviewers and provides a platform for young people aged 13+ to showcase their art work and publish reviews or opinions.

Voice encourages and supports young audiences and provides skills development and career pathways for those aiming to work in the arts and media.

[voicemag.uk](https://voicemag.uk)

## Highlights from 2022/23 include...

Wrapping up Voice's **Kickstart training programme**. During the past 2 years, we have provided 24 high-quality paid placements to unemployed young people aged under 25, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions

Relaunching the **Voice Contributor** programme as a 3-month training programme for 8 aspiring journalists leading to paid commissions

Introducing our **summer journalism placements** for 5 interns from 3 universities

Supporting **57 Local Reviewers** to explore the arts on their doorstep in Brighton, Burnley, Nottingham, Redditch, Shropshire and Stoke-on-Trent

Taking 6 young reviewers to **Edinburgh Festival Fringe** to cover nearly 160 shows – 15% by emerging artists

Creating **Media on Voice**, an online hub for all multimedia content published on Voice, popular with users who prefer media to the written word.



And some editors' picks from the year.



Voice's Summer Showcase celebrating young artists' work explored the theme 'Utopia/Dystopia: Reimagining the climate crisis'

### [Summer Showcase](#)



With the advancement of technology, the lessons of Covid-19 and the ongoing fight for more access to the arts industry, what does the future of youth culture look like?

### [The future of youth culture](#)



From how the media influences our views on climate change to the lack of trans visibility, our trainee Voice Contributors explored representation in the media.

### [Media Representation](#)

This year young people have posted **492** reviews | **346** blogs | **227** interviews | **46** features | **12** How-to guides

Voice's [Creative Careers](#) area also provides insights into training and jobs with **532 arts careers** items including:

**206** *Want My Job?* interviews with creative professionals [Want my job?](#)

**73** *Instaviews* - live chats on Instagram with young artists about their career path [Instaviews with Voice](#)



### Voice readers

- ★ **336,599 visits** this year
- ★ **286,871 unique visitors** this year

We use Google Analytics to track our reader audience as follows:

**Age** 30% are between 18-24, 24% are 25-34, 45% are over 35. We can't track under 18s

**Gender balance** 55% female and 45% male readers

**Location** Readers are spread across the UK, with 64% outside London, concentrations in many cities but reach to rural areas too.

### Voice members, contributors and participants

- ★ **7,874 Voice members**, registered users who post and comment
- ★ **5,300+ Arts Award participants** using Voice for guidance and to post work for assessment
- ★ **57 Local Reviewers** exploring the arts where they live
- ★ **22 Voice Reviewers** reviewing the arts for Voice at national level
- ★ **8 Voice Contributors** developing their skills, publishing their work and gaining jobs.

See the profile of our members, contributors and project participants on page 11.

**Creative Pathways is our progression programme**, supporting young people to explore the arts as reviewers at local level, before progressing to opportunities, training and paid work with Voice magazine.





Hear from three young people who have moved through the Creative Pathways programme.

## ELLIE BLACKWELL

Voice Reviewer



Voice gave me the opportunity to attend arts and music events, performances at my local theatre and much more.

I gained confidence in networking, communication and even interviewing for my reviews!

## SASKIA CALLISTE

Contributor & Editor



Working with Voice while at uni helped reduce the anxiety about being newly graduated without a job! Voice gave me a pathway from Contributor to Deputy Editor and the skills and self-belief to enter the media world.

## HECTOR MACDUFF

Voice Trainee



Voice helped me find creative opportunities without having years of experience or lots of funds. Working on the magazine gave me the confidence, and excuse, to reach out to people I wouldn't have known how to approach.



# CREATIVE PATHWAYS jobs

We're proud of our trainees and contributors who developed their careers with Voice and have moved into media jobs over the past year! 70% of our trainees are now working or in training.

Here is a sample of what recent alumni have gone on to do

**Ali**, Voice Trainee Journalist 2022

**Saskia**, Voice Contributor & Deputy Editor 2020-22

**Olivia**, Business and Projects Assistant 2021-22

**Kashmini**, Voice Contributor 2022

**Molly**, Trainee Development Assistant 2021

**Laura**, Voice Internship 2022

**Elle**, Trainee Journalist 2021

**Aneeka**, Trainee Journalist 2021

**Hamish**, Trainee Journalist 2022

**Faith**, Trainee Journalist 2022

**Lauren**, Trainee Journalist 2022

**Hector**, Trainee Development Assistant 2021

Journalist on **Sky Sports**

Sub-editor at **LadBible**

Project Lead at **Cloud Artisans**

Assistant at **Book PR Company**

Marketing Assistant at **Stoneseed**

Communications Specialist at **KPMG**

AI and Tech Journalist **Freelance**

Senior Library Assistant at **University of Birmingham**

Creative Writing Judge at **NYC Midnight**

Journalist and Podcast host **Freelance**

Digital Content Producer at **NationalWorld**

Content Creator **Freelance**



**Participants in our projects come from all backgrounds and with different interests.**

We work hard to attract young people who might not usually engage in the arts and to recruit diverse staff and volunteers.

## Profile of our staff, volunteers and project participants

Participants, volunteers, trainees or freelance staff we worked with during the year who submitted anonymous EDI information:

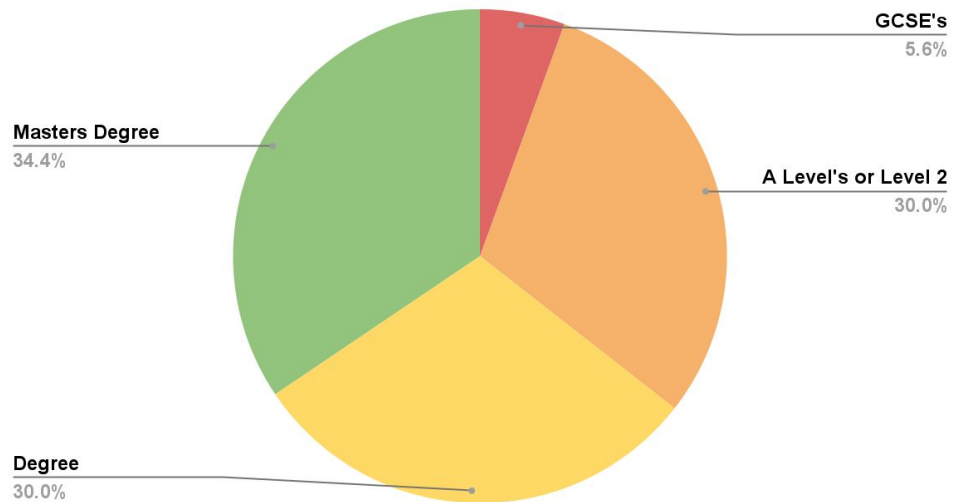
**Age** 69% under 30 years

**Gender as self-identified** 71% Female | 20% Male | 3% Non binary | 3% Another Gender | 3% Prefer not to say

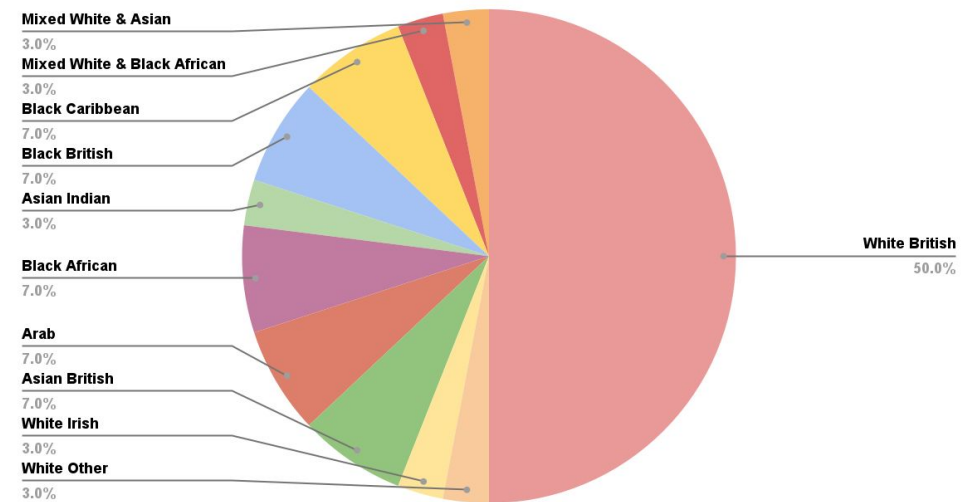
**Sexual Orientation** 69% Heterosexual | 24% Bisexual | 7% Prefer not to say

**Disability** 20% Yes | 80% No

## Highest Educational attainment before joining a project



## Ethnic Background





**Alongside Voice magazine, we run Youth Voice Training**, offering public and in-house courses to support organisations to develop skills and knowledge to engage young people as influencers, decision makers and change makers.

In 2022-23 we supported **129 participants** through public courses and ran in-house training for the British Youth Council, Living Sport, Prime Theatre, Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature, and Monkey Baa (Australia).

We had **113 participants** in our free online programmes: *Introduction to Youth Voice* and *Introduction to Facilitation*.

During the year we further developed our *Having a Voice in your Organisation* course for and with young people, which is now a popular part of our commissioned projects.

## 8.3/10

Avg. rating of our courses



### Feedback from training participants

*"I thought it was very important to come together and reflect on ways we could develop how we implement youth voice and also about integrating it within our organisation"* **Rebecca**

*"I really enjoyed the exercises and how the session was organised and handled"* **Claire**

*"The slides and exercises were really good"* **Irshad**

*"I enjoyed the use of both theory and models alongside discussion and collaboration in the breakout rooms"* **Zoe**

*"The presenters were enthusiastic and warm"* **Hannah**

**We regularly undertake commissions in youth consultation and facilitation** and we expanded the range of partners and clients we worked with this year.

## **Warwickshire Cultural Education Partnership - Shout Out for the Arts**

We developed a young trustee development programme to train and support more than 20 young people to join boards across Warwickshire. We delivered an online community and online workshops for six months after the training.

## **Arts Connect - Speak Up!**

We worked with the West Midlands Bridge Organisation, Arts Connect, to facilitate a panel of seven young people who led on the evaluation of the SpeakUp! Youth Voice & Leadership conference. The group developed a manifesto and creative assets including illustrations on 'We believe in the power of imagination' alongside a poem and film 'We believe in imagination'.

## **Nottingham's Cultural Education Partnership - ChalleNGe**

We continued to develop the Nottingham Youth Cultural Partnership 'Connecting Notts' and supported 28 young people to create events, offer new ideas for the city, evaluate provision for young people, develop a podcast and connect organisations.

## **Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership - Careers Hub**

We supported the 15 members of the Youth Advisory Board to inform and influence the LLEP's work, connecting young people and employers and contributing to the Local Skills Improvement Plan among other consultations.

## **Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature**

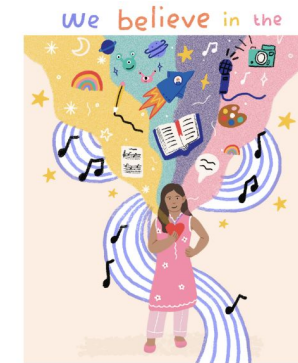
Producing the 'Young Voices Symposium' event in Nottingham has been a highlight of the year. We programmed a panel discussion about young people on boards and featured international examples of youth voice. We arranged performances by young people who were also launching their manifesto for Nottingham. We ran workshops with expert facilitators on youth journalism, how to develop a story of change and how to engage young people in evaluation.

## **Trinity College London**

Our ongoing partnership with Trinity enables us to support young people working towards an Arts Award, promote arts qualifications and encourage progression into cultural jobs. Thousands of registered young people have used Voice and we consulted over 100 people to develop new resources to inspire young people doing their Arts Award.



POWER of imagination!



POWER of imagination!



POWER of imagination!

## Upstart Projects board

We are grateful for the expertise and commitment of our board members who bring a wide range of skills and perspectives to the charity, including activism, arts education, environmental awareness, fundraising, HR, journalism, marketing and youth participation. This year we said goodbye to two of our founder trustees after nine years of dedicated support and welcomed four new trustees to the board.

[Meet our trustees](#)

## Upstart and Voice staff team

Our team this year has consisted of five core part-time roles plus freelance associates running projects and courses, supported by paid young trainers.

[Meet the Upstart team](#) | [Meet the Voice team](#)

### Trustees serving during 2022/23

Felicity Woolf (outgoing Chair, Nov 2022)  
Holly Howe (incoming Chair, Nov 2022)  
Martin Russell (Deputy Chair)  
Amy Clewlow (appointed Jan 2023)  
Tom Edwards  
Phoebe Hill  
Frances Perraudin (appointed March 2023)  
Olivia Porritt  
Beth Troakes  
Maddy Ryle (resigned Jan 2023)  
Nikeria Tannis (appointed Jan 2023)  
Michael Zdanowski (appointed March 2023)

### CIO Governing Document

The CIO Foundation Constitution  
Trustees are appointed through recruitment and invitation

### Reserves policy

To build reserves of 3 months of core running costs (£24,935)  
At 31 March 2023 our reserves were £18,019

**Charity number** 1157864

**Registered office** 59 Trinity Street, Shrewsbury SY3 7PQ

**Independent examiner** Community360, Winsley's House, High Street, Colchester, Essex CO1 1UG

**Bankers** The Co-operative Bank, P.O. Box 250, Skelmersdale WN8 6WT

### Note to accounts (overleaf)

The substantial carryforward from 2021/22 is due to several projects running across years and surplus income generated through training and services. This surplus underpinned our charitable projects in 2022/23 when fundraising became challenging after the Covid pandemic. Our DWP grant for Kickstart in 2021-2022 doubled our turnover which has now re-settled at sustainable pre-pandemic levels.



# INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT

## For the Year Ended 31 March 2023



I report on the accounts of Upstart Projects for the year ended 31 March 2023 which are set out on pages 15 to 23.

### Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 (The Act) but that an independent examination is needed).

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### Basis of independent examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes considerations of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

### Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of the accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shelley'.

Shelley-Marie Rudling FMAAT AATQB  
For and on behalf of Community360  
Winsley's House, High Street, Colchester, Essex CO1 1UG

Date: 30th August 2023

# Statement of Financial Activities

## For the Year Ended 31 March 2023



	Note	Unrestricted Total £	Restricted Total £	Designated Total £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
<b>Incoming resources</b>						
Donations & legacies	2	2,302	-	-	2,302	12,174
Charitable activities	3	18,555	100,818	-	119,373	267,540
Investments	4	105	-	-	105	20
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>20,962</b>	<b>100,818</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>121,780</b>	<b>279,734</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>						
Charitable activities	5	102,391	87,919	-	190,310	207,104
Fundraising costs		-	-	-	-	1,600
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>102,391</b>	<b>87,919</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>190,310</b>	<b>208,704</b>
<b>Net incoming resources before transfers</b>		<b>(81,429)</b>	<b>12,899</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(68,530)</b>	<b>71,031</b>
<b>Transfer between funds</b>		<b>37,560</b>	<b>(44,773)</b>	<b>7,213</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net incoming resources after transfers</b>		<b>(43,869)</b>	<b>(31,874)</b>	<b>7,213</b>	<b>(68,530)</b>	<b>71,031</b>
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>		<b>61,880</b>	<b>31,874</b>	<b>10,806</b>	<b>104,560</b>	<b>33,529</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>18,011</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18,019</b>	<b>36,030</b>	<b>104,560</b>

Signed:

Holly Howe  
Chair of Upstart Projects' board of trustees

Date: 29th August 2023

# Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2023



	Note	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	9	3,029	15,569
Cash at bank and in hand		52,546	102,740
		<u>55,575</u>	<u>118,309</u>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	19,546	13,750
		<u>19,546</u>	<u>13,750</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>36,030</b>	<b>104,560</b>
		<u>36,030</u>	<u>104,560</u>
<b>Total assets less total liabilities</b>		<b>36,030</b>	<b>104,560</b>
		<u>36,030</u>	<u>104,560</u>
<b>Income funds</b>	11		
Designated funds		18,019	10,806
Restricted funds		-	31,874
Unrestricted funds		18,011	61,880
		<u>36,030</u>	<u>104,560</u>
		<u>36,030</u>	<u>104,560</u>



# Notes to the financial statement

## 1. Accounting policies

### **Basis of accounting**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement on Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

(Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

### **Cash flow**

The financial statements do not include a cash flow statement because the charity, as a small reporting entity, is exempt from the requirement to prepare such a statement under Financial Reporting Standard 1 "Cash flow statements".

### **Assessment of going concern**

Preparation of the accounts is on a going concern basis. The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

### **Incoming resources**

Grants receivable are recognised in the accounts when conditions for their receipt are satisfied. Grants with conditions attached to their use are included in restricted funds. Donations, legacies and other forms of voluntary income are recognised as incoming resources when receivable.

# Notes to the financial statement

## **Tax reclaims on donations and gifts**

Incoming resources from tax reclaims are included in the SOFA in the same financial period as the gift to which they relate.

## **Resources expended**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised when there is a legal or constructive obligation to pay. Expenditure has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to a particular heading they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

## **Fund accounting**

Unrestricted Funds are funds received which have no restrictions placed on their use and are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided to set aside to use for a specific purpose.

Restricted Funds are funds which are to be used for purposes as specified by the funder.



# Notes to the financial statement (cont.)

## Taxation

As a registered charity, the organisation is exempt from income and corporation tax to the extent that its income and gains are applicable to charitable purposes only. Value Added Tax is not recoverable by the company and is, therefore, included in the relevant costs in the Statement Of Financial Activities.

## 2. Donations & legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 £	2022 £
Donations	2,302	-	2,302	12,174
	<b>2,302</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,302</b>	<b>12,174</b>
2022	<b>12,174</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,174</b>	

## 3. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 £	2022 £
Commissions to run activities	18,555	-	18,555	47,584
Grants	-	100,818	100,818	219,956
	<b>18,555</b>	<b>100,818</b>	<b>119,373</b>	<b>267,540</b>
2022	<b>67,837</b>	<b>199,703</b>	<b>267,540</b>	



# Notes to the financial statement (cont.)

## 4. Investment income

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Interest	105	-	105	20
	<u>105</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>20</u>
2022	<u>20</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20</u>	

## 5. Total resources expended

	Staff costs	Other costs	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Management team	24,205	2,156	26,361	18,306
Delivery of activities	79,721	70,532	150,254	185,565
Accountancy	-	844	844	750
Trustee expenses	-	900	900	802
Administration	10,614	1,337	11,951	1,681
	<u>114,541</u>	<u>75,770</u>	<u>190,310</u>	<u>207,104</u>
2022	<u>120,065</u>	<u>87,039</u>	<u>207,104</u>	

## 6. Staff costs

The average number of employees for 2023 was 9 (2022 - 9). No employee earned more than £60,000 in the financial years being reported on in these accounts.

# Notes to the financial statement (cont.)

## 7. Trustees

The trustees were reimbursed £163.23 (2022 - £45.80) for travel expenses.

## 8. Related parties

There were no related parties during the period.

## 9. Debtors

Trade debtors

2023	2022
£	£
3,029	15,569
<b>3,029</b>	<b>15,569</b>

## 10. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

Trade creditors

Accruals and deferred income

2023	2022
£	£
4,070	13,330
15,476	420
<b>19,546</b>	<b>13,750</b>

# Notes to the financial statement (cont.)

## 11. Statement of funds

	Brought Forward £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	Carried Forward £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<u>61,880</u>	<u>20,962</u>	<u>(102,391)</u>	<u>37,560</u>	<u>18,011</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Arts Council - Outreach	11,924	19,790	(29,071)	(2,643)	-
Trinity College	5,609	27,080	(6,862)	(25,827)	-
The Mighty Creatives	14,341	52,674	(50,712)	(16,303)	-
Queen Margaret University	-	774	(774)	-	-
The Mighty Creatives - Employer Network	-	500	(500)	-	-
Subtotal	<u>31,874</u>	<u>100,818</u>	<u>(87,919)</u>	<u>(44,773)</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Designated funds</b>	8,000	-	-	-	8,000
Reserves	2,806	-	-	7,213	10,019
Subtotal	<u>10,806</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,213</u>	<u>18,019</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><b>104,560</b></u>	<u><b>121,780</b></u>	<u><b>(190,310)</b></u>	<u><b>-</b></u>	<u><b>36,030</b></u>

Transfers from restricted to unrestricted funds covers the core costs attributed to the grant projects.