

Autistica funds research, shapes  
policy and works with autistic people  
to make more of a difference

Annual Report and Accounts  
for the year ending  
31 March 2023

**autistica**





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## Honorary roles and charity management

Our trustees, honorary supporters and leaders help make our vision a reality by overseeing and managing all of the charity's life-saving and life-changing work.

### Honorary roles

**President**  
Dame Stephanie Shirley CH

**Vice Presidents**  
Jane Asher  
Sir Christopher Ball  
Lady Christine Bett  
Hugh Merrill MVO

### Trustees

**Chair**  
Stephen Boyle

**Honorary Treasurer**  
Matthew Harris

John Carey (retired July 2023)  
Matthew Davis  
Peter Dilnot (appointed July 2023)  
Professor Jonathan Green  
Professor Dr Hilde Geurts (resigned July 2022)  
Lynn Hawkins  
Katherine Hudson

### Charity management

**Chief Executive Officer**  
Dr James Cusack

**Director of External Affairs (appointed July 2022)**  
Rebecca Sterry

**Director of Fundraising**  
**(on maternity leave: March 2021 to April 2022)**  
Jennie Chambers

**Interim Director of Fundraising**  
**(December 2021 to July 2022)**  
James Robinson

**Head of Research**  
Dr Amanda Roestorf

### Auditors

Azets Audit Services  
First Floor, River House  
1 Maidstone Road  
Sidcup  
Kent DA14 5RH

### Bankers

Metro Bank  
One Southampton Row  
London WC1B 5HA

### Registered office

Suite B  
6 Honduras Street  
London EC1Y 0TH

020 3857 4340  
info@autistica.org.uk  
autistica.org.uk

**Charity registration no.** 1107350  
**Company registration no.** 05184164



## Statement from the chair

I joined Autistica as chair two years ago just as we launched our ambitious 2030 Goals. The progress that has been made in that time is extremely exciting and is testament to Autistica’s talented multidisciplinary team and exemplary leadership. But we know that we can’t achieve these goals alone. Collaboration is at the heart of our progress to date and is shaping our plans for the future.



“We are always striving to work with partners who can help us make more of an impact per pound.”

Stephen Boyle

We recognise that none of our work would be possible without our donors and funders. At a time when many individuals are cutting back on giving, we are extremely fortunate that so many of our donors have stayed loyal to Autistica. Our commitment to you is to ensure that every donation is used in the most effective way possible. We are always striving to work with partners who can help us make more of an impact per pound. For example this year and last year we’ve secured major top-up funding for grants we have awarded for social care research and in March, we received over £100,000 top-up pro-bono support for our World Autism Awareness campaign on employment.

It’s not just funding partnerships that are helping us to make a difference. Our relationships with NHS England, the Department for Health and Social Care, the Department for Work and Pensions and others mean that we are turning research into practice, shaping support and services of the future. We are uniquely placed to give advice based on the latest research and to involve autistic people in the design of services. With this evidence-led approach, we are helping the NHS and others to prevent crisis, create more effective support, save money and transform lives.

I’m extremely passionate about what Autistica can offer in terms of shaping a better future for autistic people. Thanks to the 2030 Goals, we have a clear pathway, we just need the funding and partnerships to make it a reality. If you can help us whether directly or as a vital connector to people who can, get in touch. We’ve included contact details on the final page of this report.

Finally, I’d like to thank those who share their expertise and experiences to support the charity, especially the autistic people and family members who make up the Autistica Insight Group and advisory panels. I’d also like to thank the other board members for their guidance over the past year. We said goodbye to two valued trustees John Carey and Hilde Guerts, but are excited to welcome Peter Dilnot to the board.

Thank you all for your continued support. I can’t wait to see what we can achieve together over the next twelve months.

**Stephen Boyle**  
Chair of trustees

## Statement from the CEO

I have been extremely proud of what we have been able to achieve this year in progressing our 2030 Goals, especially our work towards doubling the employment rate for autistic people and providing support for all autistic people from day one. We now have a strategy and clear pathway for achieving each of our Goals. And we’re looking to how we can grow our impact as a charity in the coming years.



“Over the past few months we have begun to grow the team to allow us to achieve all that we’ve set out in our Goal plans.”

Dr James Cusack

As part of our goal to double the employment rate for autistic people, we are creating a gold standard measure of neuroinclusion. The Autistica Neurodiversity Employers Index will enable organisations to measure themselves against best practice, with recommendations for improvement, and an annual awards programme. We’ve also launched a range of free resources for employers and run an awareness campaign to encourage organisations to hire differently. We’ve also begun work on a major report on autism and employment led by Sir Robert Buckland KC MP with the Department for Work and Pensions which will be released in early 2024 with a set of recommendations for employers in September this year.

To ensure autistic people and families are supported with high quality information we are developing an online evidence-led information hub called the Autistica Everyday Tips Hub. We’re also collaborating on research to develop a personal support profiles assessment for autistic adults.

We’ve also been in high demand from the media who seem to be more interested in autism and neurodiversity than ever before. We’ve advised on a couple of BBC documentaries and spoken on a hard-hitting Channel 4 Dispatches programme about autistic people in-patient mental health units. This is all helping to change public attitudes about autism.

During and after the pandemic we operated as a small team, but over the past few months we have begun to grow the team to allow us to achieve all that we’ve set out in our Goal plans. Three of our new roles have been funded by grants. With a growing team and ambitious set of Goals we’re looking to the best model of delivery of our work.

Traditionally we have outsourced the majority of our research – funding universities around the country – but given much of our research is about product development or service design, we are increasingly running projects in-house with collaborative academic or corporate partners. Despite a challenging economic climate, we are experiencing an exciting time of growth, one which is sustainable and most importantly, drives rapid progress for autistic people.

**Dr James Cusack**  
Chief Executive Officer

At Autistica, research is at the heart of everything that we do. We know that it has the potential to transform everyday lives by making sure that treatments, support and services work for autistic people.

Right now autistic people face far too many inequalities. Most autistic children and adults wait years for a diagnosis, and when they finally receive one, there is little, if any, appropriate support. They experience avoidable challenges throughout education and face the lowest employment rates of any disability. They are more likely to have poor mental health and physical health throughout their lives. And negative attitudes and inaccessible environments can leave many feeling like they just don't fit into this world.


But it doesn't have to be this way.

We have developed a set of six Goals for 2030 that set out our vision of a different world; one where autistic people can access the right support, live in an inclusive and accepting world, and find fulfilling and sustainable work. And these goals are not only visionary and ambitious; they are also achievable.


Research and the development of evidence-based solutions is at the core of each of these goals, but so too is working in partnership and campaigning for change. Autistica works in partnership not only to achieve a step change in the amount of resource focused on autism research, but also to ensure that research funding is directed to the areas of greatest need. We act as the bridge between autistic people, the research community and other funders of autism science.

We also work with key partners in positions of influence over policy and execution to make sure that the evidence generated by the research we support is put into action. Because research without implementation can never result in impact.


Our unique approach is driven by and developed with autistic people and families. It can and will make more of a difference for autistic people in both the short and long term.



**Our vision**  
is a world where every autistic person lives a happy, healthy, long life.



**Our mission**  
is to create the breakthroughs that enable autistic people to live happier, healthier, longer lives.  
  
We do this by funding research, shaping policy and working with autistic people to make more of a difference.



**Our Goals**  
By 2030:

all autistic people will have proven **support from day one**

the **employment rate** for autistic people will double

autistic people will have proven treatments for **anxiety**

**public spaces** will be more accessible for neurodivergent people

every autistic adult will be offered a yearly, tailored **health check**

**attitudes** to autistic people will change





Having launched our 2030 Goals in late 2021, the past year has been focused on strategic planning and kickstarting projects and campaigns to achieve them. These are some highlights from key areas of our work.

1

**Enabling and leading world-class research**  
To achieve our 2030 Goals we kicked off our own internal research projects this year, including the development of a gold-standard neurodiversity employers index and an online information hub for autistic people and families. We have also co-funded research projects with the National Institute of Health Research and NHS England and partnered on collaborative research with organisations across the UK, which led to £5.767 million of external funding for autism research. We also continued to support the next generation of autism researchers with funded studentships and training.

3

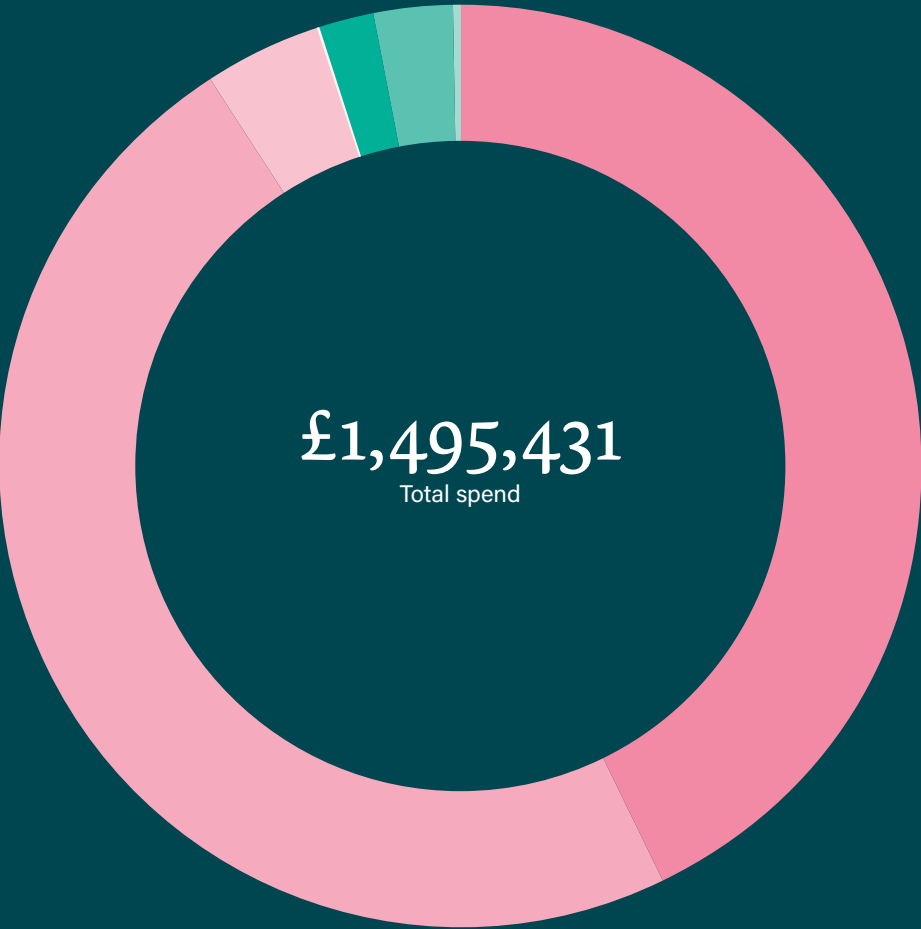
**Sharing evidence and campaigning for change**  
As part of our goal to double the employment rate for autistic people we ran our *Hire Different Campaign* to highlight outdated recruitment techniques that prevent autistic talent from securing employment. We also started work with the government on a review of autism and employment, with a co-authored report due early 2024. We've also continued to advise organisations such as the British Standards Institute who are developing a new neurodiversity standard. We've also shared the latest evidence, personal experiences and expert advice through our monthly webinars with academics, clinicians and autistic people.

2

**Ensuring community involvement**  
We continue to involve autistic people in everything we do and enable researchers to do the same through our research mailing list - the Autistica Network, and the Autistica Insight Group. We helped to recruit for 61 research projects through our 20,000 strong Autistica Network and the Autistica Insight Group shaped the development of 24 research projects. We involved autistic advisors for each of our Goal projects – for example to inform the topic areas in our Everyday Tips Hub and the roll out of an annual health check. We also brought on board a group of autistic advisors as part of the Government Review of Autism and Employment we are supporting.

4

**Funding for impact**  
We have continued to benefit financially from our key long-term supporters, enabling us to start some of our key projects such as our "Personal Support Plans" which will provide autistic people with more information about what their diagnosis means to them. Our partnership with CareTech Foundation continues to help fund our Social Care Action fund which looks into key areas of social care provision that are under researched, with a view to making life changing improvements for those that access adult social care services. And a huge thank you to Fujitsu and all its staff as our partnership came to an end this year after extending the original partnership for another two years - their support and funds have really helped Autistica continue its vital work during a global pandemic and economic instability.



£641,358  
Research staff and research governance

£721,033  
Communicating research, staff and governance

£61,741  
Goal: Employment

£450  
Goal: Support from day one

£25,190  
Goal: Anxiety

£41,901  
Autistica Network - research participation

£3,758  
Embracing Complexity - charity coalition

All autistic people will have proven support from day one

- Developing strengths and needs assessments to make sure support can be individually tailored to every autistic person.
- Building a platform to provide practical support and guidance for autistic people and their families about everyday concerns and needs.

The employment rate for autistic people will double

- Launched the Autistica Employers Guide to Neurodiversity which will be continually added to as new evidence and best practice emerges.
- Developing a gold standard benchmarking metric to help companies to create neurodiverse and inclusive workforces, based on best practice guidance.

Autistic people will have proven treatments for anxiety

- Trialling new approaches that help point us towards anxiety treatments that reduce anxiety for autistic people across their lifespan.
- Continuing our support for our anxiety app Molehill Mountain.

Public spaces will be more accessible for neurodivergent people

- Continuing to work with the government, public services, commissioners, local authorities, and public research funders to create environments that are autism friendly and account for the diversity of autistic people's needs.

Every autistic adult will be offered a yearly, tailored health check

- Supporting NHS England as they look to rollout health checks beyond the initial trial.
- Continuing our research to demonstrate the benefits the health checks give autistic people.

Attitudes to autistic people will change

- Kicking off our innovative new research project, the Autistica Autism Attitudes Index, to track and measure how attitudes to autism change over time.

“Everything I read about autism related to young boys. I wanted to change that.

I’ve been involved in a few research studies, and fed my experiences into various surveys and campaigns.”

Flo, member of the Autistica Insight Group

Partnerships – collaboration and commissioning funding

In 2022 we continued to build on relationships with NIHR and NHSE to commission funding in priority areas for autism and learning disabilities related to health and social care and innovations that make a difference to autistic people's lives.

We supported a number of other research partnerships across the UK as well as international collaborations. We partnered with The National Autistic Society and other UK charities to design and pilot a peer education training programme to support families.

In total our research partnerships brought in £5,766,895 of external funding for autism research.

Research Funding and Development

Through the generous funding made available from our donors corporate partners trusts and foundations, we funded £1.495 million of world leading research in the UK

Autistica network and insight group

The Autistica Network - our email network of people interested in taking part in or learning from research, continued to grow and we now have over 20,000 subscribers including professionals, researchers, autistic adults, parents, educators, policy makers. With over 200 people in the Autistica Insight Group, we supported research through co-production and lived experience insights to shape research that makes a difference for autistic people now and in the future.

Research governance – our Scientific review and expert review panels

Independent peer review from scientific advisers and lived experience experts is crucial to our research governance and funding process. All the research we fund is reviewed independently by our scientific lived experience expert review panels, who provide recommendations on the quality of the research to fit its priorities, fit with Autistica's strategic goals, value for money, opportunity to influence policy, and to make a difference to autistic people's lives. We are incredibly grateful to the time, knowledge, insights and expertise that our advisors freely provide to ensure we have strong governance, and continuously and improve our charitable aims to shape and fund the highest quality autism research.

We have continued to work closely with government and NHS England to drive forward our goals. In April the government announced that we would be supporting them on a review of autism and employment. And we continue to work closely with NHS England to test and implement an annual health check for all autistic people.



#### The Buckland Review on autism and employment

In March 2023, we were announced as the lead charity on this important review, working with the Department for Work and Pensions and Sir Robert Buckland. We have received a huge amount of interest from other charities, employers and autistic people. We expect the review to launch early next year, and expect the recommendations to be applicable to a wide range of employers across the UK.

#### Developing a plan for health checks with NHS England

Autistic people face poor health outcomes, but these could be avoided with better diagnosis and treatment. With support from NHS England we have been working with Newcastle University to develop and test a health check for autistic people. In January 2023, we brought together different stakeholders, including autistic people, commissioners and policymakers, GPs and researchers in two workshops to understand how this check could be implemented across the NHS. Our plan and the evidence so far was released in June 2023.

#### Collaborating with charities and government

We continue to be a key player in a number of government and NHS committees, as the charity that feeds in the latest evidence. We sit on autism-specific advisory boards for NHS England, the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Education. The national strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021-2026 was released last year by the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and encompassed multiple Autistica recommendations. We're working with other autism charities to advise the DHSC, and ensure progress is made.

#### Embracing Complexity – a neurodiversity coalition

We are thrilled that The Waterloo Foundation have pledged £104,600 to support the Embracing Complexity coalition for the next 3 years. We now have 61 members all working together to improve the lives of those with more than one neurodevelopmental condition. We've run workshops at public facing events to encourage collaboration amongst charities and people with lived experience and continued to run webinars to share the latest research with member charities and their networks. Embracing Complexity is in the process of research development and we've created an Advisory Group of neurodivergent people to help us shape our plans.



“Having adjustments in my interview made all the difference. It’s about time some traditions were broken. #HireDifferent #Autism Acceptance Week”

Autistic adult supporting our Hire Different campaign

Sharing the latest research and drawing the public’s attention to issues that matter to autistic people is crucial for driving progress.

#### Highlighting autistic ChangeMakers

Thanks to funding from the National Lottery we’ve been able to use our platform to celebrate autistic people who are using their own experiences and skills to create change for other autistic people. These autistic changemakers are progressing research, improving support and changing attitudes. We’ve amplified their voices every month and shared their successes. Given the success of the series, we intend to continue to highlight these individuals and their stories to empower and inspire others in our community and beyond.

#### Shaping the media and changing attitudes

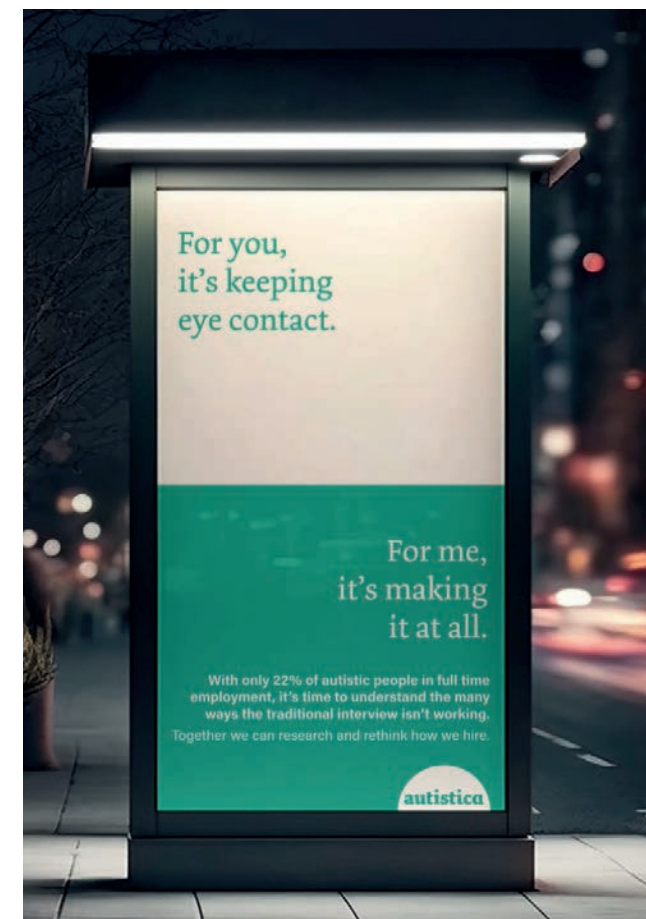
As the voice of research, we have been asked to advise on a number of media stories and productions. Our Chief Executive was the lead advisor for the highly praised BBC documentary about Christine McGuinness, and advised and appeared on the harrowing Channel 4 Dispatches film about autistic people in inpatient mental health units. Neurodiversity and autism is certainly rising up the media agenda, and we’re pleased to see such in-depth journalism being carried out which promotes research and the power that it has to transform lives

#### Campaigning to get employers to #HireDifferent

In World Autism Acceptance Week 2023 we launched a campaign to help the world understand why interviews aren’t working for autistic people. With billboards in cities across the UK and social media videos, quotes and messages we called for employers to make small changes that could make a big difference to autistic talent. We also used the campaign to encourage companies to download the Autistica Employers Guide to Neurodiversity. Thanks to the campaign, over 1000 companies have downloaded this resource.

#### .Autistica webinar series and the Autistica Festival

In 2022 we held the fourth Autistica Research Festival, with sponsorship again from Fujitsu. We had 67 researchers presenting, 10 autistic people sharing their personal experiences and 5000 views of content over the course of the Festival. Despite the success of the event we have decided to change our events calendar next year and instead, spread events throughout the year. Based on audience feedback, we think this might mean less information overload for those attending, and may prove easier to manage internally. We may well revisit the Festival format again in the future.





We are so grateful to our loyal donors, partners, and trusts and foundations who support us to achieve our mission. Many of whom support us for multi-year projects that drive real and lasting change.

£383,416  
Trusts

£287,560  
Major donors

£273,179  
Corporate

£241,941  
Gifts in kind

£163, 621  
Other income

£69,510  
Events

£54,057  
Gift aid

£53,645  
Individuals

£16,547  
Investments

£150  
Legacy

Trusts and foundations

We have a number of long-term funding partnerships in progress which are enabling major projects to make significant progress. With funding from CareTech Foundation, we are running the Social Care Action Fund which is fostering research into important, under-researched areas of social care provision accessed by or impacting autistic adults. The fund launched last year and continues for three years, with the goal of enabling researchers to develop high quality research proposals to submit to the National Institute for Health and Care Research's (NIHR) Research for Social Care Call (RfSC). In addition, we have received significant support from the London Stock Exchange Foundation, who have provided funding towards the development of our Neurodiversity Employers Index.

We also have projects ongoing thanks to funding in 2021-22 from the Peter Sowerby Foundation (for the development of annual health checks for autistic people) and The Maudsley Trust (for our anxiety app Molehill Mountain, developed with King's College London). We have another multi-year partnership with Waterloo Foundation, whose funding is enabling us to lead the unique Embracing Complexity Coalition which brings together 61 charities to better support people who think differently.

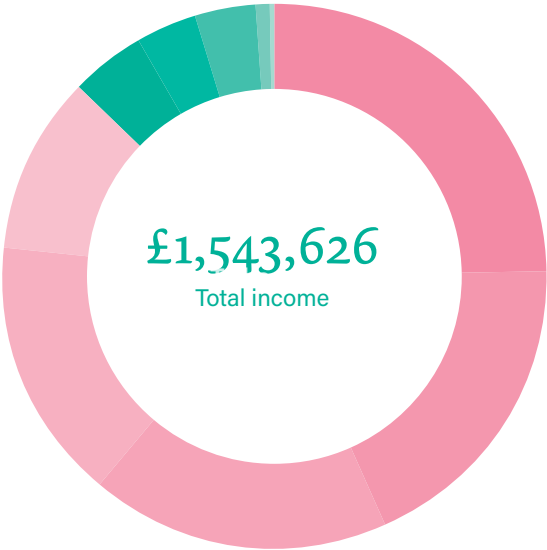
Individual donors

We continued to benefit from the generosity of our supporters through one-off gifts, and regular monthly contributions, community fundraisers and those participating in various challenge events, including the TCS Money London Marathon which raised circa £70,000 in October.

Corporate and major donors

Despite coming to the end of our four-year partnership with Fujitsu, the leading tech company continued to show their commitment to neurodiversity in the workplace by sponsoring the development of the Autistica Employers Guide to Neurodiversity released in March 2023. The resources have already benefitted hundreds of companies and generated a pool of 1,000 corporate contacts. GamesAid continued its unwavering support for Autistica, with GamesAid members choosing to support our cause once again.

Our Major Donors and members of our renamed giving club; the Autistica 2030 Club, continue to support us to achieve our Goals, and connect us with others who can fund or progress the Goals further. In turn, we involve them in special events and personalised updates that bring them closer to our work. This year our major donors have made significant gifts that have kickstarted our employment and support Goal projects, including our "Personal Support Plans" project which will provide autistic people with more information about what their diagnosis means to them.



“Many people of colour were labeled as difficult and disruptive in school and face higher rates of hospitalisations and negative police interactions likely because of undiagnosed neurodiversity. More research can help facilitate the development of more effective support and interventions.”

Ben, Autistica Network member (pictured)

Progressing our Goals

We have developed robust plans for achieving four of our goals and will continue to meet the milestones set out in these plans, with project leads now in place on key projects. And we will be pushing hard to get a research plan developed as promised by the government to progress some of the research goals within our plans.

Strengthening our relationships and influence

We know we can't achieve our Goals alone. We'll be using every opportunity to find champions in government, policymaking, business and beyond to ensure that we continue to make progress and reach new audiences. We look forward to the release of the Buckland Review on autism and employment in early 2024 which will establish Autistica as the authority and should bring in organisations who can help us to influence employers across the UK.

Bringing more research and development in-house

Many of the projects within our goal plans involve both research and solution development – for example the development of the Everyday Tips Hub and Neurodiversity Index. Given the range of skills we have at Autistica we are bringing more and more projects in-house. We will continue to monitor and explore the right balance of in-house research and external projects, but intend to always fund and co-fund externally as we do now.

Optimising our income

After reviewing and streamlining the fundraising team this year we are now better placed to push forward with our new business aspirations in 2023-24, including exploring new opportunities to generate income in addition to our standard income streams.

In fundraising our key goal is to ensure we can provide long-term financial stability to the charity therefore we will continue to focus on multi-year partnership opportunities as well as opportunities where we have a greater chance of securing funding.

Growing and developing our team

Over the course of the next year we will be recruiting some members to the research and communications team to enable us to deliver on the Goals projects that we are running in-house. We're also focusing more than ever on staff wellbeing and development, and continually looking to improve how we recruit, support and retain all staff and we especially want to showcase best-practice when it comes to inclusivity of neurodivergent staff.





The trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in relation to the charity's aims and objectives. The trustees consider it important to demonstrate to supporters and others interested in our work that the research we have funded will support breakthroughs, create tangible progress, and enhance understanding.

Autistic people and families are at the heart of work, our national research network and embedded within our wider governance processes. By involving our community, we can create breakthroughs that enable all autistic people to live happier, healthier, longer lives.

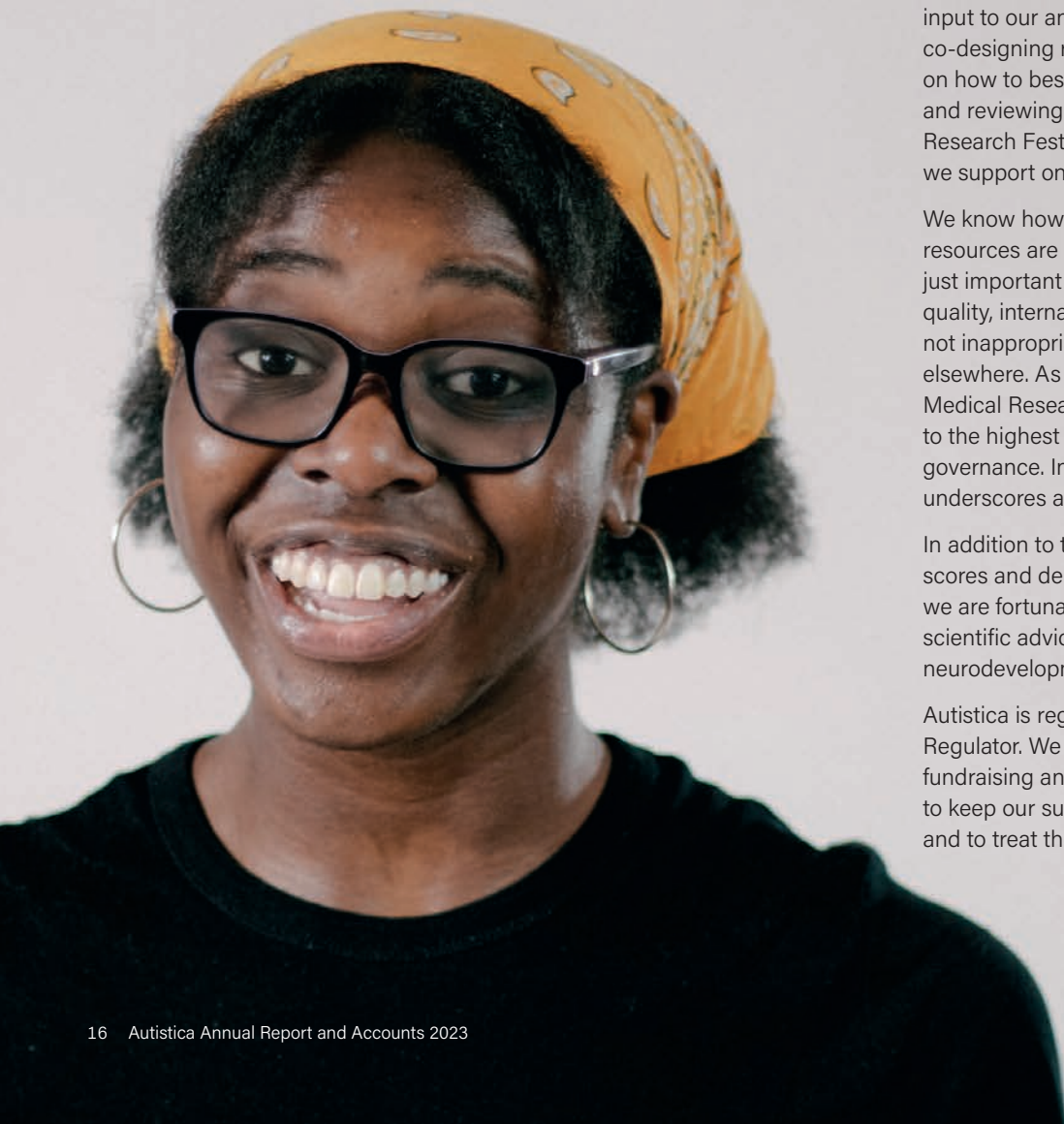
Autistic people and family members play an active role across our work. The Autistica Network provides autistic people with the opportunity to be involved in research as participants and advisers. It also gives researchers a valuable resource to recruit to their studies.

Our Insight Group provide more specialised input to our and others' work, including co-designing research studies, providing advice on how to best involve autistic people in studies, and reviewing research proposals and Autistica Research Festival submissions to help make sure we support only the best quality research.

We know how important it is that scarce resources are deployed on research that is not just important to families but is also of the highest quality, internationally competitive and does not inappropriately duplicate investment made elsewhere. As a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities we are committed to the highest possible standards of research governance. Independent peer review underscores all the research that we fund.

In addition to the Scientific Review Panel which scores and deliberates on all our research proposals, we are fortunate to benefit from independent scientific advice from world-leading experts in neurodevelopmental conditions, including autism.

Autistica is regulated by the Fundraising Regulator. We are committed to best practice in fundraising and customer service. We promise to keep our supporters informed about our work and to treat their information with respect.



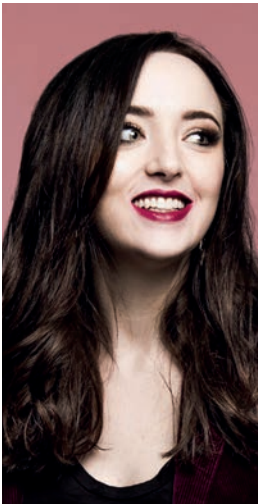
“After graduating university I found it difficult to find a job, the interview processes never seemed to test the things that should actually matter.”

**Jacob, autistic data analyst**  
(pictured)

**We're getting employers to do things differently.**

With our Hire Different campaign, the Autistica Employers Guide to Neurodiversity and work with the Department of Work and Pensions, this year we have educated thousands of employers across the UK about how they can recruit, train and retain autistic talent.





“They include autistic people in the conversation and our love of knowledge and fact-finding means we’re actually pretty good at advocating for ourselves - so long as the information is available. Their research enables that.”

Fern Brady,  
Autistic comedian

How we are governed

Autistica was registered as a charity in December 2004 and its governing document is its Memorandum and Articles of Association, which were adopted on 20 July 2004. Autistica is incorporated under the Companies Act 2006 as a company limited by guarantee having no share capital. For the purposes of this Act, the chair and other trustees (none of whom receives any remuneration) are the directors of the company. A full list of trustees, together with other legal and administrative information, can be found at the front of this report.

The board of trustees meets formally four times a year and additionally relies on sub-committees to provide further oversight of the work of the charity (see page 39). Each is chaired by a trustee. All key decisions, including the allocation of funds for research, are taken at full meetings of the trustee board.

On 31 March 2023 there were seven members of our trustee board. Trustees may serve for up to two terms of three years and are appointed in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association. Professor Dr Hilde Geurts resigned from the board in July 2022 and John Carey retired in July 2023..

The following issues are addressed by the trustees during the year:

- developing and reviewing the organisational strategy
- reviewing progress against our business plan and research strategy
- agreeing and monitoring an annual business and financial plan
- the award of all grants for research
- the risks the charity is facing in delivering its plans
- the impact of the charity's work

Each year the skills and expertise required within the trustee board are reviewed to help the charity deliver its objectives. If gaps are identified or a vacancy occurs, new trustees with the appropriate skills and experience are identified. All trustees are offered a full induction when they join, and trustee training is available to keep trustees up to date with the environment in which the charity operates.

How we are managed

The chief executive is responsible to the board of trustees for the management of the charity. The director of fundraising, director of external affairs and head of research report to the chief executive. Remuneration for senior staff is set at market rates and reviewed annually by the board.

The offices of the charity are registered in Islington.

Risk management

The trustees formally consider the major risks faced by the charity as part of a risk management strategy that comprises:

- an annual review of the risks faced by the charity in delivering its plans
- the establishment of systems and procedures to manage those risks identified in the review
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential negative impact on the charity should those risks materialise
- raising awareness, amongst staff and trustees, of the risk of fraud and the steps to mitigate that risk to the charity
- increasing team capacity to mitigate cyber fraud, seeking expert advice and raising awareness of risks among staff

The charity has identified a number of key risks this year, including the continued impact of Covid-19 on research, fundraising, policy influencing, communications and staff; the stability of our current staff team after a year of significant change; rising costs as a result of the high level of inflation, and; the medium-term effect of Brexit on income, income diversification and improving national and international collaborations in autism research. Our loyal donor base and compelling external relationships put us in a strong position to maintain income and influence and continue supporting UK autism research. We actively seek new partnerships within and beyond autism science and build pro bono support to increase capacity.

“The ideas in this plan have the potential to transform support for autistic people.

The Government and NIHR need to join Autistica in doing their bit.”

Dr Carole Buckley,  
Royal College of General Practitioners on the Autistica support plan.

Financial Performance

The total income for the year was £1,543,626 (2021-22: £1,501,242). It has been a challenging fundraising environment, and thanks to the generosity of our donors we have been able to maintain our income levels.

The cost of raising funds was £302,483 (2021-22: £286,545). We spent £1,495,431 (2021-22: £1,210,522) on charitable activities, including £774,398 (2021-22: £726,130) on grants for medical research and £721,033 (2021-22: £484,392) on medical research dissemination.

We have been able to make use of our reserves in the year to offset the loss on operating activities of £254,288 (2021-22: £4,175).

Reserves

The trustees review the reserves policy annually and consider the charity should hold free reserves of approximately £700,000 (2021-22: £700,000) to cover six months' operating costs plus a contingency of £50,000 (2021-22: £50,000). At 31 March 2023 the charity had free reserves excluding designated funds of £841,439 (2021-22: £1,459,904). Our designated funds were £nil (2021-22: £nil).

At 31 March 2023 the charity had restricted reserves of £708,179 (2021-22: £370,957).

Investments

Free reserves and other surplus cash are held in interest- bearing deposit accounts with authorised UK deposit takers or in regulated money market funds with a maximum of three to four months operating costs (c. £250,000) held in the current account.

Cash outside of the current account should be held in individual interest-bearing deposit accounts with authorised UK deposit takers which benefit from the government Financial Services Compensation Scheme (currently up to £85,000), using the Insignis cash management platform. The maximum amount per deposit account should not exceed £100,000. These can be a mix of instant or close to instant access and longer-term access accounts.

A maximum of 50% of total cash or £1,100,000, whichever is lower, can be held in regulated money market funds with an AAA rating from Fitch and/ or S&P Global, provided that the funds offer instant or close to instant access. A maximum of 25% of total cash or £750,000, whichever is the lower, can be held in equities or funds in line with the asset investment policy. These should be managed by a regulated asset manager. Investments are reviewed by the finance committee, which meets four times a year, and trustees are advised of any recommended changes at full meetings of the trustee board.

At present we have no investment funds which relate to this policy due to liquidating these funds in 2022-23 in the current financial year..

Going concern statement

The trustees have carefully considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from the approval of these financial statements. The trustees have concluded that the budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern. In addition, we have a significant donation and corporate commitments expected in 2023-24.

Approval

The report has been prepared in accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) (FRS 102) and in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to smaller entities. The trustees' report and financial statements were approved by the board of trustees on 30 November 2023

On behalf of the Board

Matthew Harris  
Honorary Treasurer  
30 November 2023



Statement of trustee’s responsibilities

Statement of disclosure to auditors

The trustees (who are also directors of Autistica for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees’ annual report (including the strategic report) and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom accounting standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2015 (FRS 102)
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Insofar as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company’s auditor is unaware
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

*Stephen Boyle*

**Stephen Boyle**  
Chair of Trustees  
30 November 2023



“It is a constant fight to get support, and not everyone can advocate for themselves. Autistica’s Goal to make sure every autistic person gets support from day one is really important.”

*Chris, Autistica supporter (pictured)*



Independent auditor’s report to members

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Autistica (the ‘charitable company’) for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 “The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company’s affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC’s Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Trustees Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our auditor’s report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially

inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees’ Report and the incorporated Strategic Report prepared for the purpose of company law for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees’ Report and the incorporated Strategic Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees’ Report and the incorporated Strategic Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees’ remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees’ responsibilities set out on page 22, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Independent auditor’s report to members continued

Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above and on the Financial Reporting Council’s website, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

We obtain and update our understanding of the entity, its activities, its control environment, and likely future developments, including in relation to the legal and regulatory framework applicable and how the entity is complying with that framework. Based on this understanding, we identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. This includes consideration of the risk of acts by the entity that were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, we designed procedures which included:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims as well as actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Assessing the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company through enquiry and inspection;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management bias and override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for indicators of potential bias.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company’s internal control..
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees’ use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor’s report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor’s report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation (ie. gives a true and fair view).

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company’s members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company’s members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor’s report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company’s members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Michelle Wilkes FCA *Azets Audit Service Limited*  
Senior Statutory Auditor, Chartered Accountants  
For and on behalf of Azets Audit Services  
First Floor, River House  
1 Maidstone Road  
Sidcup  
Kent DA14 5RH  
12 December 2023



Statement of Financial Activities,  
including Income and Expenditure  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

				Year ending 31 March 2023	Year ending 31 March 2022
Income from	Notes	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total Funds £	Total Funds £
Donations	2	922,792	604,287	1,527,079	1,496,886
Investments		16,547	-	16,547	4,356
<b>Total income</b>		<b>939,339</b>	<b>604,287</b>	<b>1,543,626</b>	<b>1,501,242</b>
<b>Expenditure on</b>					
<b>Costs of raising funds</b>					
Costs of generating donations	3	273,083	-	273,083	252,326
Cost of events	3	29,400	-	29,400	34,219
		<b>302,483</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>302,483</b>	<b>286,545</b>
<b>Expenditure on charitable activities</b>					
Grants for medical research	4	658,249	116,149	774,398	726,130
Medical research dissemination	4	638,343	82,690	721,033	484,392
		1,296,592	198,839	1,495,431	1,210,522
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>1,599,075</b>	<b>198,839</b>	<b>1,797,914</b>	<b>1,497,067</b>
<b>Net (expenditure)/income before gains and losses on investments and transfers</b>					
		(659,736)	405,448	(254,288)	4,175
Net (losses)/gains on investments	9	(26,955)	-	(26,955)	41,885
Transfer between funds	14	68,226	(68,226)	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(618,465)</b>	<b>337,222</b>	<b>(281,243)</b>	<b>46,060</b>
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>		<b>1,459,904</b>	<b>370,957</b>	<b>1,830,861</b>	<b>1,784,801</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>841,439</b>	<b>708,179</b>	<b>1,549,618</b>	<b>1,830,861</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure is derived from continuing operations.

Balance Sheet  
as at 31 March 2023

	Notes	£	2023 £	£	2022 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	8		-		-
Investments	9		-		501,542
			<b>-</b>		<b>501,542</b>
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors - amounts falling due within one year	10	269,371		108,484	
Cash at bank		1,600,572		1,560,879	
		<b>1,869,943</b>		<b>1,669,363</b>	
<b>Creditors</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(285,647)		(305,366)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<b>1,584,296</b>		<b>1,363,997</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			1,584,296		1,865,539
<b>Creditors</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	12		(34,678)		(34,678)
<b>Net assets</b>			<b>1,549,618</b>		<b>1,830,861</b>
<b>Reserves</b>					
Unrestricted funds - general	13		841,439		1,459,904
Designated funds	13		-		-
Restricted funds	14		708,179		370,957
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>15</b>		<b>1,549,618</b>		<b>1,830,861</b>

Approved by the board of trustees on 30 November 2023 and signed on behalf of the board



Matthew Harris  
Honorary Treasurer  
Company Registration Number: 05184164

Statement of Cash Flows  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Net cash (outflow) from operating activities	16	(451,442)	(363,560)
Cash flow from investing activities			
Bank interest		16,547	4,356
Proceeds from sale of investments		474,587	-
Net cash from investing activities		491,134	4,356
Net increase/(decrease) in cash		39,692	(359,204)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		1,560,880	1,920,084
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		1,600,572	1,560,880

Notes to financial statements  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) Basis of preparation

Autistica is a company limited by guarantee in the United Kingdom. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 4 of these financial statements. The nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are set out on page 6.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value. The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

b) Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

For donations and grants receivable are included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable.

Investment income is accounted for when received. Tax recoverable on investment income is accounted for on a receivable basis.

Other income is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable.

Gifts in kind and donated services are included at the open market value of the goods or services provided.

c) Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

It is categorised under the following headings:

- Raising funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes expenditure associated with grants for medical research and medical research dissemination. Grants payable are accounted for at the point that either conditions for receipt have been satisfied or the post being funded is filled.

d) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

The designated fund balance has been represented to ensure that fund balance stated accurately reflects the designation policy adopted by the trustees.

e) Tangible fixed assets

All assets costing over £5,000 are capitalised. Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives as follows:

Computer equipment	33%	straight line
Other equipment and fittings	25%	straight line

f) Debtors and creditors receivable / payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

g) Leasing commitments

“Assets acquired under finance leases are capitalised and depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and the expected useful life of the asset. Minimum lease payments are apportioned between the finance charge and the reduction of the outstanding lease liability using the effective interest method. The related obligations, net of future finance charges, are included in creditors.

Rentals payable and receivable under operating leases are charged to the SoFA on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.



Notes to financial statements  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

h) Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis, but the Trustees recognise that the economic impact of coronavirus still remains unclear. The trustees have carefully considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from the approval of these financial statements. The trustees have concluded that the budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves appropriate for the charity, in the current circumstances, to be able to continue as a going concern.

i) Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The following judgements (apart from those involving estimates) have been made in the process of applying the above accounting policies that have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements:

Useful economic lives of tangible assets

The annual depreciation charge for tangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological

advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets. See note 8 for the carrying amount of the tangible fixed assets, and note 1(e) for the useful economic lives for each class of assets.

Bad debts

Debtors are regularly reviewed for recoverability. Any debts which in the opinion of trustees are not recoverable are provided for as a specific bad debt.

The are no key assumptions concerning the future and other key sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

j) Fixed Asset Investments

Investments are recognised initially at fair value which is normally the transaction price excluding transaction costs. Subsequently, they are measured at fair value with changes recognised in ‘net gains / (losses) on investments’ in the SoFA if the shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably. Other investments are measured at cost less impairment.

2. INCOME

	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations	611,591	944,646
Gifts in kind	241,941	5,082
Challenge events	69,260	25,585
Unrestricted income	922,792	975,313
Restricted donations	604,287	521,573
Total income	1,527,079	1,496,886
	2023	2022
	£	£
Gifts in kind		
Costs of activities for generating funds, challenge events	122,250	-
Charitable activities, website	1,608	3,207
Charitable activities, administrative support costs - Unrestricted	3,096	1,875
Charitable activities, disseminating information on autism and autism research - Restricted	114,987	-
	241,941	5,082

The above activities were organised by the charity. Income from activities organised by individuals and donated to the charity are included in voluntary income.

Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

3. COST OF RAISING FUNDS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Costs of generating donations		
Website, database, literature and PR costs	9,629	12,034
Other fundraising expenses	38,290	36,103
Allocation of administrative support costs (note 6)	82,702	44,952
Staff costs (note 7)	142,463	159,237
	273,084	252,326

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cost of Events		
Challenge events costs	15,176	30,951
Other event costs	8,520	168
Allocation of administrative support costs (note 6)	5,704	3,100
	29,400	34,219

4. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Grants for medical research				
The Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience	-	25,190	25,190	96,019
Discover Network	32,860	9,041	41,901	11,504
Ambitious about Autism	-	-	-	3,500
Adolescent Psychoeducation	-	-	-	1
MQ Fellow	-	-	-	-
DARE	61,741	-	61,741	60,786
Embracing Complexity	-	3,758	3,758	11,971
Epilepsy Fellowship	-	-	-	13,412
GP Barriers - Health Checks	-	-	-	15,873
Social Care Development Award	-	-	-	16,681
START	-	450	450	-
Governance costs (Note 5)	35,968	-	35,968	21,213
Grant Administration costs (Note 6)	193,921	-	193,921	105,407
Staff costs (Note 7)	333,759	77,710	411,469	369,764
Total grant expenditure	658,249	116,149	774,398	726,130
Research dissemination	268,616	4,980	273,596	93,415
Governance costs (note 5)	35,968	-	35,968	21,213
Staff costs (note 7)	333,759	77,710	411,469	369,764
	1,296,592	198,839	1,495,431	1,210,522

Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

5. GOVERNANCE COSTS

	2023 £	2022 £
External audit	28,748	12,180
Trustees' liability insurance	3,260	3,248
Consultancy & recruitment costs	20,940	15,600
Other governance costs	7,985	966
Allocation of administrative support costs (Note 6)	2,852	1,550
Staff costs (Note 7)	8,151	8,882
	71,936	42,426

No Trustees were paid during this period. One trustee received reimbursements for travel expenses totalling £325 (2022 : none)  
Governance costs were allocated equally against Grants and Dissemination expenditure in Charitable Activities.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT COSTS

The following administrative support costs are allocated between other categories of expenditure as detailed below.  
Costs are attributed directly where possible and the balance is allocated based on time spent by trustees, staff and consultants.

	2023 £	2022 £
Telephone	1,537	4,561
IT Expenditure	32,414	25,986
Stationery, copying, postage and other office expenses	8,168	4,039
Staff recruitment and professional development	51,530	50,264
Rent and rates	70,615	15,019
Accountancy	71,850	-
Other	13,443	24,904
Staff costs (note 7)	35,622	30,236
Total support costs	285,179	155,009

These are divided:

Generating donations 29% (Note 3)	82,702	44,952
Events 2% (Note 3)	5,704	3,100
Charitable activities 68% (Note 4)	193,921	105,407
Corporate governance 1% (Note 5)	2,852	1,550
	285,179	155,009

The increase in rent and rates is due to the charity moving into new office accommodation. During the previous financial year, the charity managed without any significant office space following the end of its previous lease in 2020. The increase in accountancy fees reflects the appointment of temporary finance staff to cover for a permanent vacancy which was filled after the year end.

Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

7. STAFF COSTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries	880,697	829,748
Social security costs	102,587	87,588
Pension costs	23,240	20,547
Redundancy Costs	2,650	-
	1,009,174	937,883

These are allocated:

Generating donations (Note 3)	142,463	159,237
Charitable activities	822,938	739,528
Corporate governance (Note 5)	8,151	8,882
Administration - support costs (Note 6)	35,622	30,236
	1,009,174	937,883

The charity employed 16 full-time and 5 part-time staff members during the year to 31 March 2023  
(2022: 16 full-time and 8 part-time). Staff costs are allocated between the various activities according to time spent.

	2023 no.	2022 no.
The amounts disclosed above include the following number of highly paid employees:		
£80,000-£90,000	1	1

The total amount of employee benefits received by key management personnel is £302,791 (2022 - £216,391).  
Higher staff costs are explained by an increase in members of the senior team. Any pay rises were in line with sector level trends and were in line with any increases awarded to the rest of the team.  
The charity considers its key management personnel to comprise those individuals listed on page 3.

8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer equipment £	Other equipment and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
As at 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023	2,760	1,285	4,045

Depreciation

As at 1 April 2022	2,760	1,285	4,045
Charge for the year	-	-	-
As at 31 March 2023	2,760	1,285	4,045

Net book value at 31 March 2023	-	-	-
Net book value at 31 March 2022	-	-	-



Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

9. INVESTMENTS

	2023	2022
Market Value	£	£
As at 1 April 2022	501,542	459,657
Disposals	(474,587)	-
Unrealised (Loss)/gain	(26,955)	41,885
As at 31 March 2023	-	501,542
Historical cost	-	386,995
Investments at fair value comprise		
Fixed income	-	48,855
Equities	-	344,153
Alternatives	-	92,791
Cash	-	15,743
	-	501,542

There were no material investments in 2022. During the year ended 31 March 2023 the charity disposed of its investment portfolio.

At 31 March 2023, all investments are carried at their fair value. Investments in equities are all traded in quoted public markets, primarily the London Stock Exchange. Holdings in common investment funds, unit trusts and open-ended investment companies are at the bid price. The basis of fair value for quoted investments is equivalent to the market value, using the bid price. Asset sales and purchases are recognised at the date of trade at cost (that is their transaction value).

10. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other debtors	190,702	46,600
Prepayments and accrued income	78,669	61,884
	269,371	108,484

Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

11. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	21,982	33,958
Other creditors	28,718	25,107
Grant commitments (see Note 12 below)	146,092	229,429
Accruals and deferred income	88,855	16,872
	285,647	305,366

12. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

		2023	2022
		£	£
Grant commitments (see table below)		34,678	131,950
	Less than 1 yr	More than 1 yr	Total
	£	£	£
At 1 April 2022	229,429	34,678	264,107
Grant commitments	61,742	-	61,742
Paid in year	(145,079)	-	(145,079)
As at 31 March 2023	146,092	34,678	180,770

13. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS 2023

	Balances	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balances c/f
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds - general	1,459,904	939,339	(1,599,075)	41,271	841,439
	1,459,904	939,339	(1,599,075)	41,271	841,439

**Designated funds**  
There were no designated funds brought forward or at the year-end.

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS 2022

	Balances	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balances c/f
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds - general	1,379,794	979,669	(1,312,084)	412,525	1,459,904
Designated funds	82,000	-	-	(82,000)	-
	1,461,794	979,669	(1,312,084)	330,525	1,459,904

**Designated funds**  
£82,000 2021 Future Leader Awards in Epilepsy

Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

14. RESTRICTED FUNDS 2023

	Balances b/f £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balances c/f £
The Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscienc Mental Health - Anxiety Toolkit	25,724	-	(25,190)	(534)	-
Robert Luff Foundation COMRAD	-	20,000	-	-	20,000
Blackrock	-	11,208	-	(11,208)	-
SHApe, the Sowerby Health intervention for Autistic People	201,520	-	(20,520)	-	181,000
Fujitsu - Employment guide	-	69,250	-	(26,000)	43,250
Embracing Complexity	65,507	87,631	(3,758)	(30,484)	118,896
Social Care Scoping	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
START	-	358	(358)	-	-
University College - Ambitious about Autism - Education to Employment	-	135,000	(135,000)	-	-
CareTech - Social Care Fund	37,500	37,000	(9,033)	-	65,467
ICF- Sowerby - Digital Breakthrough	-	160,000	-	-	160,000
National Lottery	5,707	-	(4,980)	-	727
National Lottery - Changemakers	9,999	-	-	-	9,999
NHS England	-	73,840	-	-	73,840
Epilepsy Dossier	-	10,000	-	-	10,000
Total restricted funds	370,957	604,287	(198,839)	(68,226)	708,179

Restricted funds are funds where the donor has specified the funds must be spent on a particular project as listed above. All of these grants represent either programme grants for autism research at a particular institution, specific Autistica-led projects or where specified fellowships are awarded for the purposes of supporting individuals engaged in autism research.

Transfers out of restricted funds were restricted donations received after funding was committed to specific projects.

Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

14. RESTRICTED FUNDS 2022

	Balances b/f £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balances c/f £
The Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience Mental Health - Anxiety Toolkit	145,347	15,093	(134,716)	-	25,724
Local Engagement	-	-	(208)	208	-
Epilepsy	-	38,500	-	(38,500)	-
Anxiety and Depression in Minimally Verbal Individuals	-	35,699	-	(35,699)	-
University College - Anorexia Nervosa in Autistic Women	-	5,000	-	(5,000)	-
SHApe, the Sowerby Health intervention for Autistic People	12,266	189,254	-	-	201,520
Autistic-led Grants	50,000	-	-	(50,000)	-
DARE	-	45,691	-	(45,691)	-
Home Based PECs	-	3,000	-	(3,000)	-
Podcast	-	-	(171)	171	-
Embracing Complexity	44,625	62,975	(42,093)		65,507
MQ Fellow	-	8,000	-	(8,000)	-
Future Leaders Award - Jane Waite	-	40,040	-	(40,040)	-
Social Care Scoping	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
University College - Ambitious about Autism - Education to Employment	23,500	-	(3,500)	(20,000)	-
CareTech - Social Care Fund	10,000	27,500	-		37,500
Adolescent Psychoeducation	2,712	-	(1)	(2,711)	-
National Lottery	9,907	-	(4,200)		5,707
National Lottery - Changemakers	-	9,999	-	-	9,999
COVID 19	19,650	-	(94)	(19,556)	-
NHS England	-	19,747	-	(19,747)	-
Epilepsy Dossier	(20,000)	20,000	-	-	-
WAAM 2021	-	1,075	-	(1,075)	-
Total restricted funds	323,007	521,573	(184,983)	(288,640)	370,957

Transfers into restricted funds were donations received as unrestricted and subsequently restricted by request of the donor.

Negative balances against specific projects reflect in-year spend which exceeds restricted funds received, but where further.



Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ending 31 March 2023

15. ANALYSIS OF NET FUNDS 2023

	General £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	-	-	-
Investments	-	-	-
Debtors	78,669	190,702	269,371
Cash and cash equivalents	902,325	698,247	1,600,572
Liabilities	(139,555)	(180,770)	(320,325)
	841,439	708,179	1,549,618

ANALYSIS OF NET FUNDS 2022

	General £	Restricted £	Total £
Investments	501,542	-	501,542
Debtors	61,884	46,600	108,484
Cash at bank	972,415	685,736	1,658,151
Liabilities	(75,937)	(361,379)	(437,316)
	1,459,904	370,957	1,830,861

16. RECONCILIATION OF NET EXPENDITURE TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2023 £	2022 £
Net movement in funds	(281,243)	46,061
Bank interest	(16,547)	(4,356)
Non-cash donations (see note 9)	-	-
Net (losses)/gains on investments (see note 9)	26,955	(41,885)
Depreciation charges	-	-
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(160,887)	128,033
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(19,720)	(491,413)
Net cash flow from operating activities	(451,442)	(363,560)

17. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

There were no related party transactions during the year to 31 March 2023 - none (2022: none).

18. GUARANTEE

Autistica is a company limited by guarantee. The Memorandum of Association prohibits any income or property of the company being paid or transferred to the members. Members of the company undertake to contribute a maximum of £1 to cover its liabilities.

Committees and advisory committees

Board Committees

**Finance Committee**  
Matthew Harris (Chair)

Stephen Boyle

Katherine Hudson

Jeff Saul

**Nominations Committee**  
Lynn Hawkins (Chair)

Stephen Boyle

John Carey

Matthew Harris

**Network Steering Committee**  
Prof Dame Sue Bailey (Chair)

Freddie Adu

Dr Carole Buckley

Dr Laura Crane

Prof Sue Fletcher-Watson

Bec Hanley

Prof Francesca Happé

Dr Keren MacLennan

Dr Karen Matthews

Mark Minnot

Prof Jeremy Parr

Jenny Shorthouse

Lisa Wood

Advisory Committees

**Scientific Review Panel**  
Prof Dermot Bowler

Prof Mark Brosnan

Leneh Buckle

Prof Lucy Henry

Prof Catherine Jones

Claudia Klaver

Prof Jonathan Mill

Dr Richard Rowe

Thanks

Thank you to the autism community and all the supporters who make our work possible.

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Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust  
Robert Luff Foundation  
Caretech Foundation  
London Stock Exchange Foundation  
The Waterloo Foundation  
UK Research and Innovation

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Charles Sharland  
Gordon Holmes  
Dame Stephanie Shirley  
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Games

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## Can you help us with our mission?

**We can't achieve our 2030 Goals alone.**

We need to work in partnership with others who have the power to change laws, transform support and fund innovation.

Contact **[rebecca.sterry@autistica.org.uk](mailto:rebecca.sterry@autistica.org.uk)**  
if you have the power to support us.

**Thank you.**

