



Curious Minds

Curious Minds' Registered Office:

Studio 15, The Old Courts
Gerrard Winstanley House
Crawford Street
Wigan
Greater Manchester
WN1 1NA

Curious Minds is a Company Limited by
Guarantee and a Registered Charity

Registered Company	Registered Charity
Number: 06775402	Number: 1130988

Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year 1st April 2022 to
31st March 2023

Contents

Company Information.....	2
Chair and CEO's Joint Statement.....	3
Trustees' Annual Report.....	4
Review of our Achievements and Performance in 2022/23.....	6
Activity	7
Our Commitment to Equality, Inclusion and Diversity.....	19
Our Commitment to Quality.....	19
Our Commitment to Climate Change	19
Our Values - The 7 Cs.....	20
Our Plans for the Future.....	21
Financial Review	24
Structure, Governance & Management	27
Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities.....	29
Independent Auditor's Report to the Trustees of Curious Minds	31
Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 st March 2023 (Including income & expenditure account)	36
Balance Sheet as at 31 st March 2023.....	37
Statement of Cash Flow for the Year Ended 31 st March 2023.....	38
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 st March 2023.....	39

Company Information

Incorporation

The charitable company was incorporated on 17th December 2008 and commenced trading on 1st April 2009. Curious Minds became a registered Charity on 6th August 2009.

Trustees

Mrs. Karen Crowshaw – Chair (Retired 9th May 2023)
Ms. Kathy McArdle – Chair (Appointed 8th December 2023)
Mr. Jaffer Hussain – Vice-Chair (Resigned 24th August 2023)
Mr. Jonathan Robinson – Vice-Chair (From 9th May 2023)
Ms. Samira Al’Obaidi
Ms. Eleanor Chapman (Died 23rd August 2023)
Mr. Mustafa Hassan
Ms. Alicia Smith
Mr. David Wearing

Executive Management Team

Chief Executive Officer	Derri Burdon
Chief Operating Officer	Sue Langfeld
Executive Director of Learning & Workforce	Jude Bird (Leaver on 13 th January 2023)
Executive Director of Social Justice	Kelly Allen (Deputy CEO from 1/2/2023)

Statutory Auditors & Accountants

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited
3rd Floor
44 Peter Street
Manchester
M2 5GP

Bankers

CAF Bank Limited
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent MA19 4JQ

Solicitors

Counterculture Partnership LLP
Unit 115
Ducie House
Ducie Street
Manchester M1 2JW

Chair and CEO's Joint Statement

The financial year 2022/23 was, for the Executive Management Team and Board, one of the most challenging yet, as we put plans in place for our future - knowing for sure that our work was never more needed, but not knowing if our core Arts Council funding would continue beyond March 2023.

So it is with great pride that we present this report, highlighting the wealth of activity and impact the Curious Minds team delivered despite the uncertainty they and the organisation faced.

In some ways it was a bonus year, with Arts Council England (ACE) extending our Bridge funding for an extra twelve-months as the cultural sector started to recover from the devastating impact of Covid-19 Pandemic restrictions. We are grateful to ACE as our main funder for the space and flexibility this extra time afforded us; it meant we were able to end our 11 years as the North West Bridge organisation with care and consideration, as we had planned to do from the very beginning.

We knew that the national Bridge organisation network wasn't forever and, having successfully applied to join the ACE National Portfolio, we are excited about the increased freedom our new status allows in terms of what we do and where we work.

However, we are concerned that, for the first time in four decades, England is without a consistent publicly funded infrastructure for cultural education. Only time will tell what impact this will have on the availability, accessibility and quality of the cultural offer for children and young people.

Looking back over this year we must say a huge thank you to the staff and Trustees who left the organisation for their commitment and contribution. Special thanks must go to our outgoing Chair, Karen Crowshaw, vice-Chair Jaffer Hussain and Executive Director, Jude Bird. Also appreciated is Elli Chapman, a wonderful trustee, tragically lost this summer and much missed. All are incredible leaders who made a valuable contribution to our plans and strategy. Looking forward, we are delighted to welcome Kathy McArdle as our new Chair of the Board of Trustees.

So, into a curious future we go, determined to make a positive difference for children and young people, and the adults who support their cultural and creative lives.

Jonathan Robinson

[Jonathan Robinson \(Dec 8, 2023 12:53 GMT\)](#)

Jonathan Robinson
Vice - Chair of the Board of Trustees

Derri Burdon

[Derri Burdon \(Dec 8, 2023 12:18 GMT\)](#)

Derri Burdon
Chief Executive Officer

Trustees' Annual Report

Our purpose and activities

The purposes of the charity are to advance for the public benefit the education of children and young people within England to enable them to participate in society as mature and responsible individuals, in particular by:

- supporting them to become successful learners and responsible citizens by working with others to extend the range, amount, quality and scope of formal and informal learning opportunities in the areas of creativity, arts, media, culture, heritage, humanities and science;
- supporting teachers, practitioners, carers, performers and artists in developing the necessary skills and knowledge to assist them in enabling children and young people both inside and outside formal education to develop and apply their skills and talents and to open up to them cultural and creative activity;
- developing programmes, where appropriate, in partnership with others to deliver positive learning outcomes and encourage the recognition, enjoyment and use of culture, media and heritage;
- empowering them to be involved in the promotion of cultural and learning activities and enhancing their skills, capacities and capabilities; and
- encouraging them to visit, experience, participate in, initiate and engage in cultural activities, places and performances.

Curious Minds aims to improve the lives of children and young people in the North of England through facilitating access to arts and culture for all. It promotes cultural education and enables creative innovation and collaboration between the cultural, educational and youth sectors.

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. Our main beneficiaries are schools, local authorities, cultural organisations and creative practitioners and we are mindful that they all continue to work within a challenging social, financial and policy climate.

Our Vision and Mission

Our Vision is for a future where being creative and experiencing brilliant culture is a regular part of every child's life and learning.

Powered by curiosity, we work to tackle unequal access to creativity and culture for children and young people who are often excluded by social and economic inequalities.

We know, from evidence and experience, that children who take part in arts and culture do better in school and are happier and healthier. As young adults they are more likely to vote, go to university and to get and stay in good jobs.

But despite decades of investment and good intention, too many children and young people still miss out on the pleasure, happiness and learning that engaging in arts and culture brings. And the situation is getting worse.

In 2023, the status and provision of arts subjects in schools continues to decline while the cultural participation gap between the most and least well off is widening. Without proper investment and innovation, soon only the most affluent families will be able to purchase the advantages of a proper cultural education for their children.

Charging Considerations

Our main beneficiaries/stakeholders are schools, local authorities, cultural organisations and creative practitioners, all of whom are working in a challenging financial and policy climate. Affordability and access to our programmes is important to us and remains a key consideration when we are planning our activity. Wherever possible, places on our events and training programmes are provided at low or no cost to participants using the grants we receive as subsidy. The decision whether to provide a service, place on training or at an event or conference is carefully balanced to ensure cost does not act as a barrier but also taking into account our experience of drop-off when offering places for free (e.g., people register but don't turn up). We cost all our traded offers on a full cost recovery basis.

Review of our Achievements and Performance in 2022/23

Curious Minds continues to punch above its weight to achieve significant regional impact with limited resources. We choose to support the sector rather than directly working with young people and it is this strategic approach that enables us to have substantial regional reach and influence as honest brokers and advocates for cultural and creative education.

Our work targets children and young people living and learning in some of the most socio-economically disadvantaged areas of the country. We continue to support cultural and education sectors to collaborate so that these children and young people can enjoy rich art and cultural experiences.

As this year began, the sectors we work across were still reeling from the impact of the Covid-19 restrictions, and our efforts to support the cultural education workforce through this period of recovery and renewal continued at a pace. At the same time, we, like most other cultural organisations, were deep into preparing our critical application to join Arts Council England's 2023 to 2026 National Portfolio, knowing that our role as the NW Bridge organisation and the funding attached to it would end in March 2023.

With our future beyond the Bridge role in mind, at the start of 2022 we worked with our Board of Trustees and Advisory Groups to refresh our long-term strategy. We agreed the following theory of change and priorities:

Draft Strategic Framework 2022 - 2026

Through our work we will:

1. INFLUENCE children's services policy and practice
2. INVEST in the cultural education workforce
3. INNOVATE creative practice & pedagogy
4. INITIATE partnerships and strategic alliances

By focusing on:

- a) Purposeful Inclusion and Relevance
- b) Workforce and Leadership Development
- c) Learning and Advocacy
- d) Quality and Creative Pedagogy

It was a tense wait between submitting our NPO application in May 2022 to finding out in November 2022 that it was successful. We were delighted (and relieved) to be able to end the financial year knowing that we would join Arts Council's 2023-2026 National Portfolio and continue to play a key role in helping them achieve the ambition for children and young people as expressed in their new Ten-Year Strategy, 'Let's Create'.

Activity

1. Workforce and Leadership Development

1.1. Leading The Arts In your School

Between October 2022 and March 2023, we delivered three cohorts of our teacher training programme Leading the Arts in your School. This included two open-access cohorts with thirty-five participants and one subsidised cohort in West Cumbria, with eleven participants, as part of our Priority Place targeted work. As part of our Hyperlocal work places for teachers working in Ellesmere Port schools were also subsidised.

Running across the academic year, this hybrid course involves an online induction, three separate in-person training days with teachers, three online themed sessions and self-led learning via our Online Learning Platform.

Participant Quotes:

"It's given me lots of confidence with work. It's also allowed me to approach SLT with a completely different mindset, and it's given me the empowerment and the knowledge to go and really focus on arts within our school."

"I found the Curious Minds course really useful for building partnerships with other local schools. One in particular from the work shadowing: we've decided that we're going to continue to work together. We're going to put projects together in collaboration with our youngest children in school."

1.2. SLiCE®

We continued to work with United Learning Trust to deliver the SLiCE Programme during the year, with an overarching theme of Cultural Capital. We arranged cultural placements with Lewisham Education Arts Network, The Southbank Centre and Justice in Motion. The fellows received online CPD sessions, and self-directed work on our online platform and a commissioning budget was provided.

The year culminated in a sharing day in London that the cultural partners were also invited to.

Participant Quotes:

"My SLiCE placement has been one of the highlights of my career."

"One of my main takeaways is what does 'Cultural Capital' actually mean and how can we best support our communities to ensure equity in education."

"Through our cultural commission our school has: increased engagement, a real appreciation of Arts & Culture, created a shift in SLT focus and increased interest in extra-curricular activities."

"This year's work has forced me to reach beyond my staff to outside agencies. It has given the young people a chance to question how they want to be seen and how to positively commit to exploring and expressing that."

1.3. Royal Society of Public Health Creative Health Module

Through our involvement in the GMCA Sixth Form Social Prescribing Pilot, we developed a relationship with the Royal Society of Public Health (RSPH). Working with Julie McCarthy, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Creative Health Lead, we developed a Creative Health Module that can be delivered as part of the RSPH Youth Health Champions (YHC) Level 2 Qualification. We continued to develop training and resources to support the module.

1.4. #BeeWell - GMCA Youth Health Champions & Artsmark Pilot

We were appointed by GMCA to project manage delivery of the YHC Pilot across five boroughs in greater Manchester, working with Theatre in Prisons and Probation (TiPP). We delivered Youth Led Commissioning Training and convened area-based marketplaces to enable participating schools to commission activity based on the schools and neighbourhood #Beewell Data with a £100k pot of funding provided by Children in Need. Managing this programme has been challenging, with schools involved struggling to find capacity and time to undertake the qualification and training effectively. It has however helped us develop our approach to a second #BeeWell Pilot funded in part by Arts Council England (ACE).

At the same time, Arts Council England approached us to develop and deliver a pilot programme exploring Health and Wellbeing linked to the Artsmark Framework using the #BeeWell Data as a starting point. This programme engaged schools in Wigan, Rochdale, Bolton, Oldham, and Manchester.

1.5. Freelance Network Events:

Across the year we continued to deliver our Curious About sessions with a focus on supporting Freelance Practitioners and people working at the grassroots.

- **June 2022 – Curious About... Health and Wellbeing, with:**
 - Julia Payne, The Hub, Colchester (Creatives Balance Toolkit)
 - Jacqui Wood, Arc Centre Stockport
 - Francesca Speakman, #BeeWell GMCA
 - Sara Domville, Curious Minds
- **November 2022 – Curious About... Place Based Policy & Practice, with:**
 - Hannah Baldwin – Curious Minds
- **January 2023 – Curious About... Governance, with:**
 - Ann-Marie Lawrenson – Halton & St. Helens Voluntary & Community Action

Participant Quotes:

"I found the session incredibly interesting and useful, and Ann-Marie was an incredible mine of knowledge!"

"I feel so fortunate to be in the North West because of all the support you give to freelancers."

1.6. Training and Support programmes for practitioners

Throughout the year we also responded to the Professional Development needs of Cultural Learning Practitioners with a series of seminars designed to keep them up to date with best and next practice and connected to the very best experts in the field. Topics included:

- Connect 5 Training (Health & Wellbeing)
- How Young People Learn and Behave
- Socially Traded Organisations (Kindred Liverpool)
- Governance
- Holiday Activity Fund (in partnership with the Department for Education)
- SEND films & online Q&A sessions.

1.7. Associates Recruitment

In September 2022 we undertook the successful recruitment and training of several Curious Minds Associates, to diversify our team and increase organisational capacity. We appointed 18 brilliant individuals with a range of skills and experience, including delivering training & facilitation, project management and evaluation.

1.8. City as Arts School

We were delighted to work in partnership with MADE, Manchester's Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) to commission a film profiling eight Manchester Schools advocating for the importance of arts partnerships in schools. This was part of a wider Art Assembly Project. A full and short version of the film can be viewed online:

<https://vimeo.com/719398412/66642c3495>

In addition, we commissioned the development of a Youth Voice Toolkit linked to Artsmark Award. We are updating the toolkit to broaden its use and to incorporate our updated learning from our #BeeWell work, Hope Streets and I'm a Teenager.

1.9. Artsmark Award

Leading on Artsmark across a region is one of our Core Roles as the NW Bridge organisation. Recruiting schools to Artsmark continued to prove challenging this year. This was due to continuing financial and capacity constraints schools were experiencing post Covid. For some the focus on 'catching up' in the core subjects means the arts aren't a big enough priority.

Where schools chose to engage in the Artsmark process, we saw an increase in them utilising the arts to support student wellbeing. This was evident in Statements of Commitment and Impact. Consequently, health and wellbeing has been more explicitly woven through the refreshed Artsmark Criteria.

We continued to deliver the Artsmark Support Programme as part of our Bridge Role. However, like other Bridge organisations, we were shocked about Arts Council England's plans to commission a single delivery organisation from April 2023. We considered tendering for the contract but felt the funding offered would not allow for an acceptable level of quality delivery meaning the reputational risk was too high. We continued to deliver the programme to July 2023 when it was handed over to Goldsmiths University who had won the tender.

1.10. Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPs)

Supporting the development of LCEPs in targeted places across the North West of England was one of our core Bridge organisation roles. 22 North West LCEPs had been established in the years leading up to 2022.

In spring 2022, Curious Minds supported the recruitment of a Development Coordinator for FRAME, the West Cumbria LCEP, using Partnership Investment funds. They worked closely

with the Curious Minds team to recruit 10 teachers for the Leading the Arts in your School 22-23 programme, and 4 high schools to be part of the Curious Citizens programme in 22-23.

We hosted a joint briefing with Edsential in May about the summer HAF (Holiday Activities and Food) programme. This and a follow up briefing in October connected freelancers, LCEP partners and HAF. A Padlet, regularly updated, to share information on HAF opportunities across the region, was shared with the LCEP network and continues to be updated to inform and equip LCEPs to engage with HAF to ensure cultural opportunities are included in local offers.

Between May and July 2022, Curious Minds supported the set-up of the Rochdale LCEP, after a request from the culture team at Rochdale BC. Rochdale had secured 3 years of funding to support an LCEP coordinator to develop and lead programmes for children and young people. Over three sessions, Curious Minds helped LCEP partners to develop a strategic vision and action plan for the LCEP, which the partners and coordinator took forward independently.

Between September 2022 and January 2023, Curious Minds supported the set-up of the Crewe Area LCEP, after a request from the culture team at Cheshire East. These workshops were originally planned for spring 2020, however the Covid pandemic delayed the original plans. In 2022 a new Cultural Economy Development Manager (CEDM) came into post, who then initiated the rescheduling of the workshops.

Over three sessions, Curious Minds helped LCEP partners to develop a strategic vision and action plan for the LCEP, which the partners and CEDM took forward independently.

Additionally, LCEP chairs and coordinators were sent quarterly reports of Arts Award and Artsmark activity within their local areas, and bi-monthly policy and practice updates.

14 LCEP chairs and coordinators attended an online meeting in September 2022, looking at LCEPs and their work with schools.

On 8th November 2022, Curious Minds hosted an in-person event focusing on place, including explorations of ACE place partnership and other place-based funding. 15 LCEP chairs and coordinators attended the event.

During the year, Curious Minds staff attended LCEP partnership meetings in Blackpool, Bolton, Bury, Halton, Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Warrington, West Cumbria, Wigan, and Wirral. Oldham LCEP were supported in the development of a cultural strategy by the Curious Minds team.

1.11. Alumni Mentoring Pilot & Early Careers Research

As part of exploring a creative talent pipeline for the cultural education workforce, this year we piloted our Associates mentoring the alumni from our careers programmes. Five mentoring relationships were established and these centred around progressing in cultural education and working in this field.

Alongside this we commissioned research into what early career professionals want and need from Curious Minds going forward. The findings from this are due in July 2023.

The learning from both strands will help formulate ideas for creating a more joined up approach to our early careers work and wider workforce development.

2. Purposeful Inclusion and Relevance

2.1. Pushing Boundaries

We worked in partnership with Community Arts North West to devise and deliver this ground-breaking pilot programme to help us achieve our long-term aim of a more diverse, resilient, skilled and connected and strengthened cultural education workforce. Pushing Boundaries facilitated the development of a selected group of international artists who had experienced forced migration. The project helped them learn skills and develop a network that would support them to go on to work in English schools. The project was externally evaluated and culminated in an inspirational sharing event at the Whitworth Gallery. We are now seeking funding to further develop and scale the programme beyond Greater Manchester.

Participant Quotes:

"I felt valued as an artist, the bursary was really important because it acknowledged the cost of replacing my income, not just my expenses."

"I am far more focused and understand what my creative practice can contribute to a school."

"The programme gave me the skills to make the transition from training to becoming more professional."

2.2. Generations for Change

In 2021 we entered a partnership with Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) to support six paid work placements for Young Producers from Black, Asian and other

diverse Ethnic Communities. The project was part of LCRC Race Equality Programme, a response to the inequality that was exposed by the Covid-19 pandemic and designed to support our shared campaign to advocate for cross-sector change to achieve racial equality. The project culminated this financial year with the production of six films giving the context and challenges of the Young Producers' research and findings.

2.3. Liverpool Royal Court Theatre Mentoring Pilot Programme

We used Partnership Investment funding in 2021 to develop a partnership with Liverpool's Royal Court Theatre to support young creatives from Black, Asian and other Ethnic Communities to gain insights into the creative industries, both on and behind the stage. 8 mentors and 8 mentees took part in the programme across a period of 6 months and the partnership continued into 2022-23. An external evaluation noted that "Without exception, all mentees expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the MMP... They spoke of how much they valued their mentors' willingness to share their industry insights, knowledge and experience..." The programme is being scaled to involve more partners in 2023-24.

2.4. Access and Inclusion Champions, Alternative Saturday Jobs (ASJ)

Working with partners Mind the Gap and Totally Inclusive People, we adapted our Alternative Saturday Jobs model to create youth employment opportunities that made a meaningful contribution to improving access and inclusion for others, not just within organisations, but across the wider local area.

Four young people with lived experience of SEND/neurodivergence worked across four place-based partnerships to audit four member organisations around access and inclusion. Following this, each partnership came together to share the learning and work towards a joined-up approach to improving access and inclusion for children and young people across their local area.

A summary document of the audit findings has been shared with our networks along with tools for partnerships and individual organisations to continue developing this work for themselves.

2.5. Creative Youth Voice Champions, Kickstart

We successfully worked with seven young people under the Kickstart scheme from March 2022 to September 2022. Employed directly by Curious Minds and deployed in pairs across four LCEP areas in the North West, the Creative Youth Voice Champions were tasked with delivering a project for their local area, taking a creative approach to engaging children and young people's voices in creativity and cultural education.

All seven young people successfully completed their role with us. Working with their LCEPs and Curious Minds, they created a set of youth voice recommendations for place-based partnerships, and this has been shared with our wider networks.

They have gone on to other opportunities both with us and our wider networks. For example, working for Greater Manchester Youth Network, being part of our alumni mentoring pilot, joining Young Associates, and working in education.

2.6. ARG (Anti-racism Group)

Our ARG continued to meet throughout the year and support our operational planning and recruitment processes. Working with SEND experienced partners, they acted as an Advisory Group supporting us to develop our plans to respond to Arts Council England's 'Inclusivity & Relevance' Investment Principle as part of our new Strategy and NPO funding application. Our agreed long-term ambition is:

"Our permanent and extended workforce will be full of diverse individuals we have nurtured, and people who are very comfortable instigating sophisticated external conversations about inclusion and anti-racism. Our workplace will celebrate diversity and be a proud anti-racism role model for the sector and a conduit for change."

2.7. Young Associates

This year's cohort was made up of seven early career professionals from diverse backgrounds from across the North West. We placed an emphasis on working with people who wanted to make a change to cultural education and had leadership potential, so the sessions were framed around these ideas.

It was our first year operating as a hybrid model and this was well received by both facilitators and participants, and we will look to continue this approach.

The programme was successfully coordinated by one of our alumni and their knowledge of the programme added value to the experience for this year's cohort. This is an example of our continued engagement with previous cohorts, and how they are part of our wider networks at Curious Minds

This year's cohort have continued to work with us in numerous ways. Examples include Facilitators at the NW Cultural Education Summit, working with Stockport LCEP to do youth voice research (inspired by our Kickstart and ASJ models), and taking part in our alumni mentoring pilot.

3. Quality & Creative Pedagogy

3.1. Philosopher in Residence

Manjit Shellis continues as our Philosopher in Residence developing our Curious Pedagogy work. She has supported initial scoping for programme development, including redeveloping successful courses delivered by the former charity UFA and utilising the learning coming from our ongoing partnership with Goldsmiths University.

Throughout this year, Manjit has chaired regular working group sessions to develop and deliver the Curious Citizens pilot project, including facilitating a two-day residential and further training sessions, recruiting a coordinator and producing resources.

Manjit has also contributed to the development of the 'I'm a Teenager Get Me Into There' training course which can be delivered for clients face-to-face at their venue, but also launched this year as an open access online course.

3.2. Let's Craft

The first delivery of Let's Craft packs as part of the partnership between Crafts Council, Hobbycraft and 9 of Arts Council England Bridge organisations, began in November 2022.

In December 480 boxes of craft materials were delivered to the Turnpike Gallery, from where LCEP partners and Curious Minds staff distributed the packs to the following partners: 80 packs each for Fred Longworth High School, Bedford High School and Lowton CE High School; 55 packs for Expanse Learning (SEND setting); 60 for Spinners Mill (LCEP partner); 125 for WigLe Dance CIC (LCEP partner). Both WigLe Dance and Spinners Mill distributed their packs to young people taking part in the winter HAF programmes

All packs included an envelope with a Let's Craft leaflet and information on Creativity Unlocked (the Wigan LCEP) and activities for children led by Wigan Steam, WigLe Dance and others.

3.3. Curious Citizens

Building on the Cultural Citizens pilot we delivered on behalf of the Government in 2016-17, Curious Citizens successfully launched as a pilot project with nine secondary schools (including one special school) in the priority areas of West Cumbria and Wigan. The programme involved twenty-two teaching staff and 180 pupils and concluded at the end of the 2022-23 academic year. The external evaluation of the programme is informing the programmes development and aiming to scale further.

4. Learning & Advocacy

4.1. Goldsmiths Research Partnership

The relationship with Goldsmiths continued in 22-23 as the results of our partnership to facilitate the research of four psychology master's students achieved publication in the journal Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts.

'Exploring barriers to and drivers of participatory arts engagement in early adolescence' explores how wellbeing is linked to perception of barriers to engagement with art and culture.

The results showed that a key barrier to engaging with art and culture was related to motivation; young people's interest in taking up an activity was linked to patterns within their personalities, particularly those related to curiosity. The paper concludes that

opportunities to engage with art and culture should be tailored to young people's personalities and interests if they are going to provide entry points to those young people who stand to gain the most from the associated wellbeing benefits.

The second article is titled, 'Character Strengths Afforded by Arts Engagement During Adolescence: The Development and Validation of the Creative Artistic Activities Strengths Affordances Scale (CAASA scale)'.

This article acknowledges that the wellbeing benefits of art and culture are the subject of growing interest but that research in this area has been limited by a shortage of tools for measuring arts engagement's impact on wellbeing for young people. The research focussed on the development of a new self-report questionnaire which will help researchers to identify the mechanisms by which engaging with art and culture can promote adolescent development and wellbeing.

Both articles draw on data collected from United Learning Trust, The Valley Leadership Academy and Bedford High School, resulting from Goldsmith's partnership with Curious Minds.

4.2. Traded Evaluation and Facilitation

Five evaluation and facilitation contracts were completed this year with one ongoing into 2023-24. These comprise two projects with Chester Zoo, two with HEI clients and two with arts organisations: Crewe Lyceum Theatre and the completion of our work with Liverpool-based NPO, Writing on the Wall.

These projects have allowed us to explore how evaluation can be conducted by drawing upon a pool of trusted Associates. Projects for Cumbria University, Chester Zoo and Crewe Lyceum have been successfully delivered by this extended team.

Going forward we plan to grow this specialism as a source of income generation and to support out charitable objects. This includes our Head of Impact & Learning undertaking SROI (Social Return on Investment) training to enhance our organisational expertise and offer.

We continue to build our facilitation offer around ICA 'consensus' and 'ORID' methodologies and our programmes team recently took part in two-days training with an ICA facilitator to update and extend their skills and practice.

Client Feedback:

Working alongside Curious Minds "has been an invaluable experience not only for my own professional development but for that of Writing on the Wall and their best practice."

“[The evaluation approach] helped create concrete plans and aims for the project that were essential to help us reflect and evaluate.

The role as critical friend was crucial for me as Head of Programmes, allowing space for me to discuss ideas and solutions but importantly to help me support new members of the team to understand the benefits of critical reflection & evaluation.”

4.3. Public Relations & Public Affairs

We continue to retain the services of PLMR to support our Public Affairs and Public Relations work. Our CEO and Exec Directors were active across several strategic partnerships and events. Our CEO Derri Burdon was invited to join the Local Government Association’s Commission on Culture and Local Government which ran to December 2022. Subsequently we hosted one of the national Roadshow events as a Cultural Education Summit that was attended by 120 delegates from across the country, including Civil Servants from the Department for Education and Department for Culture, Media and Sport, who were leading on the development of the Cultural Education Strategy. Feedback from the event was provided to the Expert Panel appointed to develop the Plan.

We continue our involvement as a key partner and sponsor of The Northern Culture Club to support and inform the work of the Northern Culture APPG, with a focus on ensuring the needs and ambitions of children and young people, schools and the youth sector are considered in future cultural policy and planning.

4.4. Brand Identity

We started the financial year by rolling out the new Curious Minds visual identity, which had been developed for us by PLMR, across all public-facing comms channels (website, social media, etc.).

4.5. Thought leadership and news content

We published 29 individual sector-related stories via the blog/news page of the Curious Minds website through the year, as well as pushing out twelve eBulletins (6 cultural audience specific, 4 education audience specific and 2 to all subscribers).

4.6. Audiences

CM website received 33,583 hits across the year and 58,218 page views. 12.6% of visitors are returning users. Core social media channels ended the year with the following audience/follower totals: Facebook-2,471, Twitter-12,785, Instagram-2,098, LinkedIn-542. Our email marketing list contained 3,541 subscribed email addresses at year end.

4.7. Supporting national initiatives

Curious Minds was active in support of various national advocacy campaigns through the year, including Artsmark Celebration Week and National Careers Weeks, for which we published our own bespoke content as well as sharing that of the leading organisations. We also supported the official launch of the Arts in Schools and Cornerstones of Culture reports.

4.8. Launching new CM initiatives

As well as supporting longstanding programmes with their annual callouts (Leading the Arts, Curious Associates, Curious Commissions), we were excited this year to launch two significant new initiatives - the '*I'm A Teenager Get Me Into There*' microsite and the *Chance to See Fund* in partnership with Wigan band The Lathums. Both launches were impactful and were assisted by PR support from PLMR.

Our Commitment to Equality, Inclusion and Diversity

We want all children and young people to enjoy and contribute to the cultural life of society. We are ferociously committed to identifying and removing barriers to engagement for children and young people from marginalised backgrounds. We recognise this can only be achieved by a more diverse, resilient, and better-connected workforce. We commit to playing our part to bring about these changes – starting with ourselves. We are a Real Living Wage employer.

Our Commitment to Quality

We believe that quality and equality go hand-in-hand. Raising the quality of the creative and cultural learning experiences all children and young people have access to, at school and in the community, is fundamental to 'levelling up' opportunity.

Developing the workforce is key. Overcoming preconceptions and barriers to engage with previously excluded children and young people is highly skilled work, yet most practitioners learn on the job with little support. We commit to creating new and clearer pathways that lead to the professionalisation of the Cultural Education workforce.

Our Commitment to Climate Change

The global pandemic which struck in 2020 led to a year in which Curious Minds, and the wider world, changed. Our Action Plan and supporting Policy have been developed as we emerge from the pandemic and seize the opportunity to build on these changes to develop our environmental practices for the better.

We commit to redoubling our efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of our day-to-day operations and be more environmentally responsible. We seek to influence, educate, and advocate for a post carbon future through our day-to-day work and programmes; including doing whatever we can to ensure children and young people see themselves as global citizens and develop the creative skills they will need to access opportunities arising from the transition to a low carbon economy.

Our Values – The 7 Cs

The **7C's** are seven words beginning with the letter C by which we hold ourselves to account and invite others to do the same. They continue to guide our planning, recruitment and self-evaluation, and provide a framework for performance management.

- We are **CURIOUS**

We are hopeful for a fairer future. We explore new possibilities and seek out best and next practice, listening and responding to the opinions and ideas of others, especially children and young people.

- We **COLLABORATE**

Partnerships and collaboration are fundamental to how we work. In these times of change and uncertainty we understand the importance of listening to build meaning and grow collective impact.

- We are **COURAGEOUS**

We are relentless in our pursuit of fair access to creativity and culture for all, and work to disrupt the status quo. We accept and deliver challenge, especially concerning diversity, inclusion, quality and relevance.

- We are **CREDIBLE**

We are evidence driven and always learning. We draw expertise from across education and culture to skilfully navigate and connect both worlds. We seek out and build alliances with experts in their field.

- We are **CONSCIENTIOUS**

We take our leadership role seriously and never take for granted the privilege of being trusted by our funders and partners to do the right thing with the resources we hold. We practise Host Leadership, knowing when to step forward and when to step back.

- We **CARE**

We care deeply about children and young people, the adults who support them and the places where they live and learn. We embrace, celebrate and champion diversity in all its forms.

- We **CELEBRATE**

We celebrate and champion creative and cultural education, the diverse professionals championing and delivering it, and the children and young people it is for.

Our Plans for the Future

The Trustees, Executive Management Team and staff of Curious Minds remain ambitious for the charity's future, knowing that our work is more urgent and needed than ever.

2023 to 2026 represents a pivotal period of transition and transform in the life of Curious Minds, and the first phase of our seven-year strategy 'Into a Curious Future'.

Leaving behind our Bridge organisation status to join Arts Council England's National Portfolio proper, means we are simultaneously grappling two significant challenges. Both require us to adapt and find new solutions to secure the charity's future:

- **TRANSITIONING** from being a Bridge organisation (appointed by Arts Council England to deliver 'sector support' across the North West) to become an NPO (delivering services and programmes across the wider North and nationally). This process will take time and requires us to shift deeply ingrained perceptions about what we do, how and where we do it [see table below].

A key challenge is to maintain and grow our status as a strategic backbone organisation now that we are no longer an Arts Council England appointed Bridge organisation.

- **TRANSFORMING** our business model and operational structure to manage the 40% cut to our Arts Council England (ACE) regular grant funding; having been funded at a similar level since 2012.

A key challenge is to diversify sources of income to support our charitable objectives. We need to attract new funders and sponsors, and increase income through trading our training, evaluation and facilitation services.

To respond effectively it is vital that we dedicate time and resources to explore and test new income generation opportunities; build new partnerships; and foster more cost-efficient approaches to service and programme delivery.

We were delighted to be awarded £503,800 Arts Council England Transform Funding from 1 August 2023 to 31 March 2026. We will match this directly with £140,000 from our free reserves and have designated an additional £160,000 as a strategic development fund.

Our Transform Delivery Plan comprises **5 interdependent STRANDS** that will be delivered across **3 distinct PHASES**:

- STRAND 1** Creating Capacity for Transformation
- STRAND 2** Digital Transformation
- STRAND 3** Developing New Products & Services
- STRAND 4** Leveraging Value from Existing IP
- STRAND 5** A New Approach to Fundraising

Phase 1 1st Aug 2023 – 31st March 2024

Phase 2 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025

Phase 3 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026

EXPLORE & TEST

MARKET & DELIVER

REVIEW & EMBED

From Bridge organisation	To National Portfolio Organisation
As a Bridge organisation the focus of our work was 'support' and 'sector development' which was an accurate description of our organisation and charitable objectives.	For NPOs the focus is on 'Delivery' which is less of an accurate fit for our work and methodology. We still describe ourselves as a 'Backbone Organisation' and 'Field Catalyst' and therefore will likely sit somewhere on the spectrum between NPO and IPSO.
As a Bridge organisation we were widely recognised as a source of free or heavily subsidised support, networking and CPD offers.	As an NPO we need to begin to charge for our services, support, training and events.
We were one of ten Bridge organisations (and only one in NW), working to four shared 'role descriptors' from ACE and benefitting from economies of scale through joint efforts and national relationships.	We're now one of many NPOs, developing our own activity plan to deliver our own strategy and helping to deliver ACE's Let's Create Outcomes.
We chose not to compete for same funds or participants as NPOs and other organisations we supported, enabling us to maintain excellent relationships and position ourself as an honest broker.	We're now vying for the same funding as lots of other NPOs, arts & youth organisations, at an extremely competitive time. Needing to establish relationships with multiple new funders, sponsors, commissioners and philanthropists.
We worked almost exclusively across the 5 North West sub-regions.	We need to extend our reach and impact across the wider North, nationally and internationally.
We used our ring-fenced Partnership Investment budget to forge relationships and lever additional funding that we reinvested in the sectors we work across, education, culture and youth - providing both financial and practical resource.	With a reduced grant from ACE we will need to use the reduced level of funding we have to deliver our own work and programmes.
We were able to be exceptionally generous with our time and ideas.	As an NPO we will need to consider our time as a cost implication and ideas as income generation opportunities.
We had bestowed status, kudos and credibility through being 'appointed by ACE'. We were sought out and people were directed to us. We rarely had cause to say no!	We now need to maintain and grow status, kudos and credibility on our own terms. It is likely we will need to say no a lot more.
We were resourced to maintain an overview of the sectors and landscapes we work across, positioning us strongly to advocate and be a source of expertise to significant bodies.	We still need to maintain an overview of the culture, education and voluntary sectors and political landscapes - but with less time and capacity to do so .
We were able to respond to need very quickly, (e.g. during Covid) as remit and resource was already in place.	It might take more time to secure or repurpose resource (e.g. via 'project funding') to respond to needs and opportunities.
We were able to undertake the kind of work that has limited funding potential, but is strategically important for the cultural sector. (e.g. work with schools around curriculum and workforce facing support).	We will need to incorporate 'fundability' into project design alongside responding directly to need, or income generate to undertake some strategically important work
Having a relatively secure role allowed programmes to be refined over several iterations. Repetition enabled momentum to be built (eg SLiCE, ASJ's).	Funders may expect more emphasis on new approaches and less on repetition and refinement.
Being the Bridge required a relatively large stable regionally based staff team (the term ACE used is 'footsoldiers') with a focus on relationship management and partnership development.	As an NPO we will need to remodel the organisation to embed a more flexible 'expand and contract' approach to staffing to support project and programme delivery and facilitation.

Strategic Framework 2023 – 2030

Our Mission	Our Theory of Change	Our 2023–2030 Priorities	Our Activity	Our Vision
In order to...	We will...	By focusing on...	Through the delivery of...	To achieve...
tackle unequal access to creativity and culture for children and young people	INNOVATE in the field of creative and cultural education	1 Purposeful Inclusion & Relevance	learning and leadership PROGRAMMES & PARTNERSHIPS that bring about individual, organisational and systemic change, IMPACT Social Justice outcomes and 'level-up' opportunity.	a future where being creative and experiencing brilliant arts and culture is a regular part of EVERY child's learning and life.
	INVEST in a diverse cultural education workforce	2 Workforce & Leadership Development		
	INFLUENCE cultural education partnerships and policy	3 Learning & Advocacy		
		4 Quality & Creative Pedagogy		

By 2030, as a result of our innovation, investment and influence, we want to see:

- More children and young people benefitting from greater access to creativity & culture.
- Children and young people using culture and creativity to influence and make change.
- A more diverse and dynamic workforce.
- Stronger place driven partnerships and collaboration.
- Compelling & persuasive evidence about what works and why.
- Higher expectations of quality.
- Cultural education and cultural educators are valued more widely.

Driving all our work over the coming months and years is the belief that, with the right support and space to innovate, the cultural sector can play a greater role in making the North of England the best to grow up and achieve your potential.

Our long-term ambition is to become the representative body for creative and cultural educators in England.

Financial Review

Financial Results

The Trustees are pleased to report an increase in free reserves to £500,968 (2022: £481,491) placing the Charity in a stable financial position for meeting our plans for the future. We continue to plan for a new base and have therefore set aside further funds towards the cost of establishing this in the coming year.

The principal funding sources during the year continued to derive from restricted grants, with a total of £145,060 (2022: £476,979) funds carried forward at the year end to meet future activity plans.

Core funding

From April 2012, Curious Minds has been in receipt of National Portfolio Funding and Department for Education funding from Arts Council England in respect of its status as a Bridge organisation, which ran until March 2023, extended by a year in response to Covid-19. We also received funding through government initiatives in response to the Covid-19 pandemic during the year.

Project funding

In late March 2020, we were awarded a European Commission Erasmus+ grant for a partnership project with Poland and Greece however this was impacted by the inability to travel during the pandemic and the timeline extended to complete. The war in Ukraine has further impacted the ability for travel to Poland and we therefore decided to draw the project to a close in spring 2022.

We continued to deliver the Hope Streets project through National Lottery Heritage funding which commenced in 2018 and ran until March 2023. Total funding for the project was £1,127,000.

The Charity retains the objective to further diversify incoming resources in future periods.

Financial Risk Management

Within the wider risk management process, the Board of Trustees monitors and assesses financial risks to which Curious Minds may be exposed and assesses their potential impact on the Charity. We have in particular reviewed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our income and are monitoring and considering potential future scenarios. The continuation and extension of our core funding through ACE in 2022/23 has been hugely supportive.

The awarding of the Bridge Organisation status to Curious Minds by Arts Council England for an extended period April 2018 to March 2023 secured £6.7 million of funding.

The Bridge Organisation status gave us a solid platform from which to plan and develop the organisation. That said, we are committed to retaining our independence and the ability to pursue activities beyond our Bridge remit in order to ensure that the organisation is best placed to meet and deliver its strategic objectives.

Reserves policy

The level of unrestricted reserves has been set to meet the costs of retaining sufficient staff and covering overhead costs for six months in order to continue to pursue our objectives, given the planned investment in transforming our business model to become more sustainable over the period 2023 - 2026. The target was reviewed in 2023 and the calculated unrestricted reserves needed to meet these costs increased to £500,000 (2022: £375,000). During the current year, this target was met and at the year-end the free reserves stood at £500,968 (2022: £481,491). At the discretion of the Trustees, the surplus above target can be designated to development work. The Trustees review the reserves policy annually.

Investment policy

Our cash assets, over and above those required for day-to-day working capital, are invested in appropriate fixed-term and notice cash deposit accounts that yield a greater return than our instant access current accounts. This investment policy is reviewed with reference to a detailed cash-flow analysis and assessment of future funding opportunities; however the scheduling of cash outgoings (including grant claims) remains difficult to predict with accuracy, as this is largely in the control of our partners and therefore timing is unknown.

Financial control and audit

The organisation's finances are overseen by the Finance and Operations Team. They use Xero Accounts software for financial processing and adhere to finance systems which were developed in partnership with our Auditors and are reviewed annually. Relevant staff receive appropriate training for day-to-day financial systems and consistently process financial information in an accurate and timely manner.

To ensure effective financial management within the organisation, management accounts are produced on a quarterly basis for the Executive Management Team and the Board of Trustees. Activity against budgets is reviewed between the Finance & Operations Manager and individual budget holders to ensure that all transactions are posted accurately and according to the principles of accruals-based fund accounting.

The Board of Trustees have a comprehensive overview of audit requirements, financial policies and procedures, including accounting policies and compliance with statutory requirements, risk management and financial planning. The Board continues to appoint the external Auditors and approve their remuneration and terms of engagement and responds to any relevant matters relating to annual financial statements raised by the External Auditors as a result of their audit work.

Structure, Governance & Management

Governing Document

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 17th December 2008, as amended by special resolutions dated 3rd March 2009, 25th June 2009 and 2nd November 2022. The Company is registered as a Charity with the Charity Commission.

Trustee recruitment

Transparent procedures are an important element of good governance. All new Trustees to the Board are appointed through a transparent open recruitment process when skills and knowledge gaps in the Board are identified. A thorough induction to Curious Minds is given to all newly appointed Trustees and they receive a governance pack which includes the organisation's business plan and current financial budget, the organisation's memorandum and articles of association, the Trustee role and description and sub-committee terms of reference, the Charity Commission document 'The Essential Trustee', and the publication 'Good Governance: A code for the voluntary and community sector'.

Curious Minds' Board of Trustees is fortunate to contain a mixture of skills ranging from arts, culture, heritage, public services and education through to human resources and accountancy. This enhances the placement of the organisation as a key player within the arts and cultural sector, regionally and nationally.

Trustees are encouraged to attend events and project activity throughout the year to gain first-hand knowledge and experience of the work of Curious Minds, and they are required to attend an annual Board away day with the management team to develop their skills within the Board environment and to discuss key strategic issues for Curious Minds, which in turn informs the business planning process for the organisation.

Related Parties and links with other organisations

None of our Trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Trustees and members of the Curious Minds paid staff team are required to declare any interest - when considering what interests to declare, the principal rule is that if members of the general public could reasonably conclude that the interests might have an influence on an approach taken by Curious Minds to an application or contract awarded, to funding received by Curious Minds, or general organisational decisions taken by Curious Minds, then they must declare them.

Due to Curious Minds' recruitment of experienced sector leaders, it is inevitable that Trustees and Executive Management will have declared interests arising from either executive or non-executive appointments with Public, Cultural and Education Sector organisations. Where Curious Minds engages with a partner organisation in which a declaration has been made, the interested party must be excluded from the decision making processes. It is considered that these transactions do not represent 'related party transactions' for reporting purposes.

Decision making

The Board of Trustees have delegated the day-to-day management and decision making of Curious Minds to the Chief Executive. Significant decisions that impact on, for example, staff employment, business planning, financial stability and the sustainability of the organisation, are brought to the Board for approval prior to action taking place.

Risk management

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which Curious Minds is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. Curious Minds has a thorough risk management procedure wherein risks to which the organisation may be exposed are monitored and assessed as to their potential impact and likelihood. Appropriate controls are then identified and put in place to provide reasonable assurance against their occurrence.

The executive management team, led by the Chief Executive, monitor the risks associated with the organisation regularly and the updated risk register is presented to the Board of Trustees quarterly for discussion and approval.

Internal policies

Curious Minds have a range of internal policies that have been written in consultation with appropriate professionals and that are reviewed annually and amended more frequently according to new legislation as appropriate. These include (but are not limited to) the following areas:

- Employment (including wellbeing)
- Inclusion
- Pay policy (see note 5)
- Fund Management and Financial Controls (including procurement)
- Health & Safety (including Covid-19)
- Safeguarding
- Environmental sustainability.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of Curious Minds for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which 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 those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP)
- 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 business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to 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.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Statement as to disclosure of information to Auditors

In so far as the Trustees are aware at the time of approving the Trustees' annual report:

- there is no relevant information, being information needed by the Auditor in connection with preparing their report, of which the charitable company's Auditors are unaware, and
- the Trustees, having made enquiries of fellow Directors that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all the steps that they are obliged to have taken as a

Director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's Auditors are aware of that information.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees:

Jonathan Robinson
Jonathan Robinson (Dec 8, 2023 12:53 GMT)

Jonathan Robinson
Vice - Chair of the Board of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report to the Trustees of Curious Minds

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Curious Minds (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31st March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flow, and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 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 31st 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.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the Trustees' report; or
- the charitable company has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement 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.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with regulations made under section 154 of that Act.

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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- the nature of the sector, control environment and charitable company's performance;
- results of our enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the charitable company's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
- identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
- the matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in relation to the timing of the recognition of income, and the recognition of grants payable. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override and we identified a risk in relation to the posting of unusual journals and the manipulation of accounting estimates.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that the charitable company operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the reporting requirements of the funding bodies and the charity commission regulations.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the charitable company's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty.

Audit response to risks identified

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to risks identified included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations described above as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management and members of the Board of Trustees concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;

- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing correspondence with relevant authorities where matters identified were significant;
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's Trustees 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 Trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Mitchell Charlesworth

08/12/2023

Jamielee Johnston CA
 Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited
 Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor
 3rd Floor
 44 Peter Street
 Manchester
 M2 5GP

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31st March 2023 (Including income & expenditure account)

		2022/23		2021/22		2022/23	2021/22
		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	Note	£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOME							
Incoming resources from charitable activities	2	58,156	1,938,678	62,082	1,711,485	1,996,834	1,773,567
Investment income	2	16,368	-	4,494	-	16,368	4,494
TOTAL INCOME		74,524	1,938,678	66,576	1,711,485	2,013,202	1,778,061
EXPENDITURE							
Expenditure on charitable activities	3	374,856	1,650,225	352,281	1,263,225	2,025,081	1,615,506
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		374,856	1,650,225	352,281	1,263,225	2,025,081	1,615,506
NET INCOMING / (OUTGOING) RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR BEFORE TRANSFERS							
	6	(300,332)	288,453	(285,705)	448,260	(11,879)	162,555
TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS	11	620,372	(620,372)	375,668	(375,668)	-	-
NET INCOMING / (OUTGOING) RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR AFTER TRANSFERS							
		320,040	(331,919)	89,963	72,592	(11,879)	162,555
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS							
FORWARD	11	700,033	476,979	610,070	404,387	1,177,012	1,014,457
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD		1,020,073	145,060	700,033	476,979	1,165,133	1,177,012

The notes on pages 39 to 51 form part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible Assets	7		-		-
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	8	154,226		129,636	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>1,232,926</u>		<u>1,180,041</u>	
		1,387,152		1,309,677	
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due in one year	9	<u>222,019</u>		<u>132,665</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			1,165,133		1,177,012
TOTAL NET ASSETS			<u>1,165,133</u>		<u>1,177,012</u>
FUNDS					
Unrestricted	11		1,020,073		700,033
Restricted	11		145,060		476,979
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>1,165,133</u>		<u>1,177,012</u>

For the year ending 31 March 2023 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies but as this company is a charity, it is subject to audit under the Charities Act 2011.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The notes on pages 39 to 51 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 6th December 2023

And signed on their behalf by

Jonathan Robinson
Jonathan Robinson (Dec 8, 2023 12:53 GMT)

Jonathan Robinson – Vice - Chair of the Board of Trustees

Company registration number 06775402

Statement of Cash Flow for the Year Ended 31st March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Cash used in operating activities			
Net movement in funds		(11,879)	162,555
Deduct interest income shown in investing activities	2	(16,368)	(4,494)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	8	(24,590)	(30,510)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	9	<u>89,354</u>	<u>(53,280)</u>
Net cash flow from / (to) operating activities		<u>36,517</u>	<u>74,271</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest income	2	<u>16,368</u>	<u>4,494</u>
Cash provided by (used in) investing activities		<u>16,368</u>	<u>4,494</u>
Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		52,885	78,765
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,180,041	1,101,276
Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		<u>1,232,926</u>	<u>1,180,041</u>

Analysis of changes in net debt

The charity did not hold any overdraft or loan facilities nor finance lease obligations at the start or during the period covered by these accounts or in the previous accounting period.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st March 2023

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of Preparation

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 (FRS 102 - effective 1 March 2018), Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2016.

Curious Minds meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s). The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

Going concern

These accounts are prepared on the going concern basis. At the time of approving the financial statements the directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus, the directors continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements. The Charity has confirmed ACE grant funding to 31st March 2026 and sufficient cashflow to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

Incoming resources

Income is recognised in the accounting period in which it is receivable, except in the following circumstances, when the income is deferred and included in creditors:

- The income is unrestricted core funding for a specified future period.
- A sales invoice has been raised ahead of work being carried out and there is no contractual entitlement to the income until the work has been done.
- Not all the terms and conditions for the receipt of the grant instalment have been met.
- The project has been completed and the grant conditions are such that unspent grant must be refunded.

Income includes grants in respect of revenue and capital items.

Resources expended

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year-end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Allocation and apportionment of costs

Support costs have been allocated between the cost centres: salaries; travel and subsistence; learning, development and recruitment; marketing and publicity; premises related costs; and office, sundry costs and depreciation.

Central costs are charged to unrestricted funds with contributions to overheads levied to individual programmes as appropriate. Contributions to overheads are charged to programme funds, as agreed with funders and where funds are restricted, these are shown within fund transfers along with relevant permissible recharges for specific programme work.

Grants payable and grant making policy

Curious Minds issues grants in accordance with the requirements and objectives laid out within the various funding agreements we receive. The Charity does not have its own funds for grant making purposes.

In meeting our strategic objectives (and requirements of our funders where applicable), the nature of the investments committed determines grant making as the legal form to achieving this, as they do not constitute contracts for services.

Grant commitments are recognised when the legal agreements are signed and control of the grant funds is passed to the recipient or lead partner in a partnership.

Direct grant costs are allocated directly to the grant funds. Where agreed with the funder, a management charge is levied for central overheads, administration and contribution to reserves (this is credited to unrestricted funds, where associated costs are charged).

Where agreed with the recipient, grant repayments during the year are shown as a reduction in grants payable.

Tangible fixed assets

Single asset purchases, not forming part of a related series of transactions, costing less than £2,000 are not capitalised, but are written off as a revenue expense in the year of acquisition.

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its estimated useful life:

Office Equipment / Furniture & Fixtures at 25% on cost

Taxation

The Charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

The Charity is not registered for VAT and therefore all its input VAT is irrecoverable. Expenditure is analysed inclusive of VAT where this has been incurred.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme which pays 6% of gross salary. Contributions payable to the employees' personal pension schemes are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate. The Charity' staging date for auto enrolment was 1/4/2017 and the scheme is compliant.

Operating leases

Payments under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes. Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in this note to the financial statements.

Designated Funds

- **Curious Stories**

Funds generated from sale of the Curious Stories book, sponsorship as well as fundraising to enable disadvantaged children to better experience high quality arts and culture.

- **Curious Space**

Following closure of our Preston base in 2020, we have designated costs saved as set up funds towards a new base as we emerge from Covid-19 restrictions and home working.

- **Development & Transformation Fund**

Funds set aside to support development of income generation activities and international opportunities and towards Transformation of the business model from 2023, in conjunction with ACE Transform funding.

- **Dialogic Teaching & Learning**

A trial project to explore the impact of dialogic teaching and pedagogy.

- **Hope Streets Fund**

Additional funds to cover the required match contribution to the NLHF programme and cover ongoing legacy requirements.

Restricted Funds

- **ACE BeeWell**

Grant from Arts Council England for an Artsmark pilot project across Greater Manchester.

- **ACE Bridge Organisation**

Grant from Arts Council England for the delivery of the Bridge role for the North West of England (Cumbria, Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester & Cheshire).

- **ACE Coronation Bandstands**

Funding from Arts Council England to support projects centred around Bandstands throughout England and engaging children and young people in music and the arts to celebrate the King Charles III's coronation.

- **ACE DfE Extension**

Grant from Department for Education, paid by Arts Council England, for Bridge network expansion activity.

- **Arts Connect Let's Craft**

Grants from the Artfund and the Crafts Council via Arts Connect for the delivery of creative resources to children during school closures due to Covid-19.

- **Erasmus+**

European Commission grant funding for a partnership project to explore arts-based youth work.

- **Esmee Fairbairn**

Grant from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation towards the Bubble Up programme of activities for children transitioning from primary to secondary schools during the Covid-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2022.

- **DWP Kickstart**

Funding through the Government Kickstart scheme towards salaries and support for six month employment placements for young people.

- **Lowry**

Funding provided through a partnership project to deliver the Stage Directions programme.

- **NLHF Kick the Dust Hope Street**

Grant received from National Lottery Heritage Fund for delivery of the 'Kick the Dust' Programme.

- **Manchester Museum Development**

Funding to support Trailblaze placements.

- **The Lathums – Chance to See Fund**

A fund inspired and supported by the band The Lathums to improve access to musical instruments and opportunities for children in Wigan.

- **Warrington HAF**

Funding from Warrington Borough Council's Holiday Activities and Food programme 2021 to deliver a programme of activities during the school summer holidays.

2 INCOME

Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities:		2023	2022
Restricted Grants		£	£
Funding body	Purpose		
Arts Connect	Let's Craft	-	4,365
Arts Council England	BeeWell	25,000	-
Arts Council England	Bridge Organisation	1,359,893	1,359,893
Arts Council England	Coronation Bandstands project	200,400	-
British Council as National Agency for the European Commission	Erasmus+	1,439	11,537
Department for Education	Bridge Extension	82,612	82,612
Department for Work & Pensions	Kickstart Scheme	46,903	4,620
Lowry	Stage Directions	-	15,000
MDNW	Trailblaze	-	2,445
National Lottery Heritage Fund	Kick the Dust - Hope Streets	221,776	213,318
The Lathums fundraising	Chance to See Fund	655	-
Warrington Borough Council	Holiday Activities and Food	-	17,695
		1,938,678	1,711,485
Unrestricted Income			
Bank Interest		16,368	4,494
Donations		-	12
Fees received		57,305	62,070
Other Income		851	-
		74,524	66,576
Total		2,013,202	1,778,061

3 EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

a. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	2023		2022		2023	2022
	Direct costs £	Support costs £	Direct costs £	Support costs £	Total £	Total £
Grants payable	494,570	-	281,720	-	494,570	281,720
Project delivery	1,187,843	334,842	986,061	339,378	1,522,685	1,325,439
Governance costs	-	7,826	-	8,347	7,826	8,347
	1,682,413	342,668	1,267,781	347,725	2,025,081	1,615,506
% of total expenditure	83.1%	16.9%	78.5%	21.5%	100.0%	100.0%

Charitable expenditure is allocated between unrestricted and restricted funds as follows:

	2023		2022		2023	2022
	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Total £
Grants payable	5,000	489,570	5,000	276,720	494,570	281,720
Project delivery	362,030	1,160,655	338,934	986,505	1,522,685	1,325,439
Governance costs	7,826	-	8,347	-	7,826	8,347
	374,856	1,650,225	352,281	1,263,225	2,025,081	1,615,506
% of total expenditure	18.5%	81.5%	21.8%	78.2%	100.0%	100.0%

b. Grants payable by programme

	Number of grants to institutions		2023 £	2022 £
Programme	2023	2022		
Arts Council England - Bridge	23	24	394,165	183,437
Arts Council England Department for Education	4	2	33,705	19,500
NLHF Kick the Dust - Hope Streets	9	6	61,700	73,783
Curious Minds	1	1	5,000	5,000
	37	33	494,570	281,720

3 EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

c. Analysis of institutional grants

Grantee	Purpose	2023	2022
		£	£
ACE - Bridge grants			
Accrington Academy	The Uncertainty Principle PI	-	3,000
Blackpool Grand Theatre	LCEP Development	5,750	-
Blackpool Teaching School Alliance	Illuminating Futures PI	-	(60,712)
Blaze Arts, Preston	Staying Curious in a Crisis PI	-	10,000
Bury Arts Museum and Sculptures Ce	LCEP Development	675	-
Circus House	LCEP Development	3,000	-
Collective Encounters	CASE Leadership Programme	870	-
Community Arts NW	Pushing Boundaries	10,770	-
Community Objectives CIC	Let's Craft	-	250
Creativity Works Preston	LCEP Development	1,000	-
Cumbria Music Service	FRAME Project PI	50,000	20,500
Cumbria Music Service	Let's Create & Let's Craft	-	650
Factory International	CASE Leadership Programme	600	-
Festival of Making CIC	LCEP Development PI	10,000	30,000
Festival of Making CIC	Let's Craft	-	650
GMCA	Culture & Transport in GM PI	5,000	15,000
Gorse Hill Studios	LCEP Development	3,000	-
Home Start Warrington	Let's Craft	-	250
Lancashire Youth Challenge	Our Place in the World PI	1,000	7,000
Lancashire Youth Challenge	Let's Craft	-	650
Liverpool City Region	Generations of Change PI	5,000	45,000
Liverpool Learning Partnership	Let's Craft	-	350
Manchester Metropolitan University	Intergenerational pilot	13,000	-
Museum Development North West	Re-engaging Audiences PI	-	2,500
Music for Youth	Coronation Bandstands	200,000	-
Odd Arts	CASE Leadership Programme	-	671
Pendle Leisure Trust	LCEP Development PI	10,000	15,000
Ready Generations	Creative Curriculum	4,500	-
Robert F Kennedy Human Rights UK	Poetic Universal Declaration of Human Rights PI	5,000	45,000
Royal Court Liverpool Trust	Mentoring Programme PI	12,000	-
Theatre Porto	Ellesmere Port Hyperlocal		
(formerly Action Transport Theatre)	Development PI	25,000	35,000
Tullie House Museum	LCEP Development	3,000	-
Warrington Borough Council	Let's Create & Let's Craft	-	250
Whole Education	School Ready Digital PI	-	3,000
Wigan STEAM	CASE Leadership Programme	-	778
Wirral Hospital Schools	LCEP Development	-	3,000
Ykids	Let's Create & Let's Craft	-	650
Young Manchester	Youth & Play Cultural Partnerships PI	15,000	-
Z Arts	Creative Curriculum PI	10,000	5,000
	Sub total	394,165	183,437
	Sub total number of grants	23	24

c. Analysis of institutional grants continued

		£	£
ACE DfE Extension grants			
Anchorsholme Primary Academy	SLiCE Programme	10,000	-
Blackpool Sixth Form College	SLiCE Programme	11,705	-
Hawes Side Academy	SLiCE Programme	7,500	-
United Learning Trust	SLiCE Programme	4,500	18,000
University of Manchester	SLiCE Programme	-	1,500
Sub total		33,705	19,500
Sub total number of grants		4	2
NLHF Kick the Dust - Hope Streets			
Bolton Museum		12,500	11,250
Blaze Arts		10,000	-
Lancashire Museums		9,350	15,000
Pinc College NW		5,000	-
Reform Radio CIC		1,100	4,000
The Atkinson		8,750	11,250
Tullie House		5,000	15,000
West Cheshire Museums		5,000	17,283
Youth Focus NW		5,000	-
Sub total		61,700	73,783
Sub total number of grants		9	6
Curious Minds			
Lowry	Youth Performance Hub	5,000	5,000
Sub total		5,000	5,000
Sub total number of grants		1	1
Total Grants Payable		494,570	281,720
Total number grants		37	33

4 Analysis of governance and support costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Governance Costs		
Audit fee	7,800	7,950
Support costs	26	397
Total Governance costs	7,826	8,347

	2023		2022		2023	2022
	Project Delivery	Gover-nance	Project Delivery	Gover-nance	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Support Costs						
Salaries	252,500	-	262,955	-	252,500	262,955
Travel & Subsistence	8,483	-	6,979	-	8,483	6,979
Learning & Development and recruitment	5,599	-	6,414	-	5,599	6,414
Legal & Professional Services	19,542	-	16,283	-	19,542	16,283
Premises related costs	10,666	-	8,935	-	10,666	8,935
Office, sundry costs & Depreciation	45,852	26	45,762	397	45,878	46,159
Total Support costs	342,642	26	347,328	397	342,668	347,725
% of total expenditure	100.0%	0.0%	99.9%	0.1%		

5 Staff Costs

The payroll costs of the charity were as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages & salaries	795,418	787,044
Social Security costs	75,989	74,061
Pension costs	44,897	45,715
Redundancy payments	32,417	7,700
Total Staff costs	948,721	914,520

One employee had earnings (excluding employer pension costs) over £60,000 during the year:

Number of employees	Band
One (2020: One)	£60,000 to £70,000

The remuneration costs during the year of the Executive Management Team as outlined on page 2 (inclusive of pension costs) was £216,528 (2022: £217,172).

The average monthly head count was 24 staff (2022: 23 staff) and the average monthly number of full time equivalent employees (including casual and part time employees) during the year was:

	2023	2022
Average FTE	24.3	20.7

6 Net incoming resources before transfer

This is stated after charging:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Auditors remuneration - Audit fees	<u>7,800</u>	<u>7,950</u>
	<u>7,800</u>	<u>7,950</u>

Number of trustees claiming expenses:

-

7 Tangible fixed assets

Cost

As at 1 April 2022

As at 31 March 2023

Depreciation

As at 1 April 2022

Net book value

As at 31 March 2023

As at 31 March 2022

Office Equipment	Furniture & Fittings	Total
£	£	£
16,474	3,887	20,361
16,474	3,887	20,361
16,474	3,887	20,361
16,474	3,887	20,361
-	-	-
-	-	-

8 Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade debtors	24,242	4,836
Prepayments	9,023	17,413
Grant and other income receivable	<u>120,961</u>	<u>107,387</u>
	<u>154,226</u>	<u>129,636</u>

9 Creditors falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	48,592	11,832
Contract commitments due and accrued	80,503	25,002
Accruals	53,710	41,992
Grants and income in advance	14,548	28,387
PAYE & Payroll deductions payable	19,486	19,849
Pension contributions payable	<u>5,180</u>	<u>5,603</u>
	<u>222,019</u>	<u>132,665</u>

Curious Minds pays all suppliers within 30 days of receipt of invoices due for payment.

Accruals include £14,050 (2022:£23,250), being the cost of staff annual leave due but not taken and carried forward at year end and £18,200 (2022:£NIL) pay in lieu of notice for employees made redundant at the end of March 2023.

10 Deferred income

	2023	2022
	£	£
Chester Zoo	1,560	11,180
Cultural Citizens	3,983	3,983
DWP re Kickstart	-	5,880
Erasmus+	-	6,244
GMCA BeeWell	9,005	-
Heriot Watt	-	1,100
	<u>14,548</u>	<u>28,387</u>
Movement in deferred income		
Balance as at 1 April	28,387	23,760
Amount released to income	(22,844)	(13,746)
Amount deferred in year	9,005	18,373
Balance as at 31 March	<u>14,548</u>	<u>28,387</u>

11 Statement of funds

	Balance 01/04/2021	Income	Expenditure	Fund Transfers	Balance 31/3/2022 & 1/4/2023	Income	Expenditure	Fund Transfers	Balance 31/03/2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds									
General Fund	458,773	66,576	(352,281)	308,423	481,491	74,524	(374,856)	319,809	500,968
Designated Funds:									
Curious Stories	6,193	-	-	-	6,193	-	-	-	6,193
Curious Space	30,000	-	-	70,000	100,000	-	-	-	100,000
Development & Transformation	44,287	-	-	-	44,287	-	-	300,000	344,287
Dialogic Teaching & Learning	50,000	-	-	-	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Hope Streets	20,817	-	-	(2,755)	18,062	-	-	563	18,625
	610,070	66,576	(352,281)	375,668	700,033	74,524	(374,856)	620,372	1,020,073
Restricted Funds									
ACE BeeWell	-	-	-	-	-	25,000	(662)	50,000	74,338
ACE Bridge Organisation	354,387	1,359,893	(905,632)	(331,669)	476,979	1,359,893	(1,346,832)	(419,973)	70,067
ACE Coronation Bandstands	-	-	-	-	-	200,400	-	(200,400)	-
ACE DfE Extension	-	82,612	(61,960)	(20,652)	-	82,612	(61,959)	(20,653)	-
Arts Connect	-	4,365	(4,365)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Erasmus+	-	11,537	(8,117)	(3,420)	-	1,439	(3,579)	2,140	-
Esmee Fairbairn	50,000	-	(50,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
DWP Kickstart	-	4,620	(4,620)	-	-	46,903	(52,566)	5,663	-
Lowry	-	15,000	(15,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
NLHF Kick The Dust Hope Street	-	213,318	(196,217)	(17,101)	-	221,776	(184,627)	(37,149)	-
Manchester Museum Development	-	2,445	(2,445)	-	-	-	-	-	-
The Lathums - Chance to See Fund	-	-	-	-	-	655	-	-	655
Warrington HAF	-	17,695	(14,869)	(2,826)	-	-	-	-	-
	404,387	1,711,485	(1,263,225)	(375,668)	476,979	1,938,678	(1,650,225)	(620,372)	145,060
Total Funds	1,014,457	1,778,061	(1,615,506)	-	1,177,012	2,013,202	(2,025,081)	-	1,165,133

Notes on Statement of funds

Fund Transfers include contributions to overheads charged to programmes within individual funds, as agreed with funders, along with relevant permissible recharges for specific programme work in accordance with the use of those funds.

The net transfer of £620,372 (2022: £375,668) between restricted and unrestricted funds during the year is made up of £397,612 (2022: £395,119) agreed contribution to overheads and £200,000 (2022: £NIL) permissible programme costs, plus (2022: less) £563 (2022: £19,451) contribution from (2022: to) the NLHF Kick the Dust programme. £2,140 to Erasmus+ and £5,663 to Kickstart projects.

The balance of restricted funds represents expenditure not due at the Balance Sheet date from grant funding received. ACE Bridge funds carried forward within the grant period will be used to finalise projects linked to the academic year, by July 2023.

12 Analysis of net assets between funds

	2023		2022		2023	2022
	General Funds	Restricted Funds	General Funds	Restricted Funds	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	<u>1,020,073</u>	<u>145,060</u>	<u>700,033</u>	<u>476,979</u>	<u>1,165,133</u>	<u>1,177,012</u>
	<u>1,020,073</u>	<u>145,060</u>	<u>700,033</u>	<u>476,979</u>	<u>1,165,133</u>	<u>1,177,012</u>

13 Operating lease commitments

The charity has no commitments under operation leases for premises (2022: NIL).

14 Corporation tax

The company is a registered charity and is entitled to claim annual exemption from UK corporation tax.

15 Related Party Transactions

Mustafa Hassan claimed travel expenses to attend recruitment meetings of £26.40 during the year.

Derri Burdon, Chief Executive, was a Co Chair of Trustees of Blaze Arts which was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in July 2018.

Blaze Arts have received grant funding and project commissions during the year of £13,800.

Curious Minds have a service agreement to provide Blaze Arts with back office support, for which fees paid during the year amounted to £2,000 (2021/22 £5,000).

Blaze Arts also reimbursed Curious Minds for salary costs of seconded staff members of £37,082 (2021/22: £35,335).

Derri's daughter, Amy Burdon, was commissioned for programme support and facilitation, receiving fees £3,900 and travel expenses of £80 in 2022/23 (2021/22 NIL).












Curious Minds TAR & FS to 31 March 2023

Final Audit Report

2023-12-08

Created:	2023-12-08
By:	Sue Langfeld (sue.langfeld@curiousminds.org.uk)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAA2k5NkF_ShuV7j49_6ZAzX77q5lt1CmxB

"Curious Minds TAR & FS to 31 March 2023" History

-  Document created by Sue Langfeld (sue.langfeld@curiousminds.org.uk)
2023-12-08 - 11:51:09 AM GMT
-  Document emailed to Derri Burdon (derri.burdon@curiousminds.org.uk) for signature
2023-12-08 - 11:51:17 AM GMT
-  Document emailed to Jonathan Robinson (jonrobinson8@hotmail.co.uk) for signature
2023-12-08 - 11:51:17 AM GMT
-  Document emailed to Jamielee Johnston (jamielee.johnston@mitchellcharlesworth.co.uk) for signature
2023-12-08 - 11:51:18 AM GMT
-  Email viewed by Derri Burdon (derri.burdon@curiousminds.org.uk)
2023-12-08 - 12:18:09 PM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Derri Burdon (derri.burdon@curiousminds.org.uk)
Signature Date: 2023-12-08 - 12:18:29 PM GMT - Time Source: server
-  Email viewed by Jonathan Robinson (jonrobinson8@hotmail.co.uk)
2023-12-08 - 12:53:18 PM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Jonathan Robinson (jonrobinson8@hotmail.co.uk)
Signature Date: 2023-12-08 - 12:53:47 PM GMT - Time Source: server
-  Email viewed by Jamielee Johnston (jamielee.johnston@mitchellcharlesworth.co.uk)
2023-12-08 - 1:44:17 PM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Jamielee Johnston (jamielee.johnston@mitchellcharlesworth.co.uk)
Signature Date: 2023-12-08 - 1:45:08 PM GMT - Time Source: server
-  Agreement completed.
2023-12-08 - 1:45:08 PM GMT



Adobe Acrobat Sign