

Company number: 07560997

Charity Number: 1140827

Science Media Centre

Report and financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

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For the year ended 31 March 2025

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Reference and administrative information

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Company number 07560997
Country of incorporation United Kingdom

Charity number 1140827
Country of registration England & Wales

Registered office and operational address 215 Euston Road
London
NW1 2BE

Trustees Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Nicholas Hillier	Chair
Amanda Borton	Treasurer
John Davidson	
Jonathan Brüün	
Alex Keenlyside	
Alice Henchley	
Joanne Manning	
Richard Fisher	
Prof Azra Ghani	
Prof Peter Openshaw	Appointed 23 October 2024
Prof Charlotte Summers	Appointed 23 October 2024
Prof Kevin McConway	Resigned 23 October 2024

Key management personnel	Fiona Fox OBE	Chief Executive
	Tom Sheldon	Senior Press Manager
	Selina Kermode	Head of Operations
	Fiona Lethbridge	Senior Press Manager

Reference and administrative information

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Bankers	HSBC Bank PLC 16 King Street Covent Garden London WC2E 8JF
	CCLA Senator House 85 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4ET
Independent examiner	Fleur Holden Sayer Vincent LLP Chartered Accountants 110 Golden Lane London EC1Y 0TG

The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 and 2 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association, the requirements of a directors' report as required under company law, and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Objectives and activities

The trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the charity each year. This report looks at what the charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period. The trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the trustees ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remained focused on its stated purposes.

The Science Media Centre (SMC) works to promote the views of the scientific community on issues of importance and helps to ensure that their expertise is available to the national news media, and through them policy-makers and the public.

Introduction

The SMC has its roots in the influential House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee's third report on Science and Society, which sought to renew public trust in science. The overall goal of the SMC is therefore to help achieve this aim by working to promote more balanced, accurate and measured coverage of the important science, health and environment stories that appear in the media.

The SMC was originally set up in April 2002 as a division of the Royal Institution of Great Britain (RIGB, Charity Registration No. 227938), and its financial structure was that of a restricted fund maintained by the RIGB. In April 2011 the SMC became independent and registered as a charity and a company limited by guarantee. The period ended 31 March 2025 is the SMC's fourteenth year as a fully independent organisation, but also its twenty third year of existence.

Public opinion surveys demonstrate that the public values science, with 91% saying health research is either extremely, very, or somewhat beneficial, 66% saying that health research has had a positive impact on their lives, and a large majority (82%) of people report being very or fairly interested in hearing directly from scientists about their research – an increase from 63% in 2015¹. A separate survey suggests that 70% of people think that it's important for the Government to invest in scientific research². The most recent survey of its kind reported high levels of public trust that scientists (79%), engineers (90%), and doctors (88%) tell the truth³. Furthermore, the

¹ Wellcome Monitor 2020, How the British public engage with health research

² CaSE Public Attitudes to R&D and the Government's Missions 2024

³ Veracity Index 2024, Ipsos MORI survey of trust in professions

public are interested in health research, with 82% saying they are very or fairly interested in health research⁴, while other surveys report that the vast majority (74%) agree that science will make people's lives easier, and think that scientists (89%) and engineers (87%) make a valuable contribution to society⁵.

In 2023, the SMC published the results of an Ipsos poll about where the British public gets their information from about science⁶. The results suggested that British adults are more likely to get information about science from traditional news media than from social media (with TV news being the biggest source (52%), and non-newspaper online news outlets such as BBC News, ITN and Sky News also being a significant source (34%). A similar number of participants cited national newspapers and social media as sources of science information (30%). On delving into the origin of science information seen on social media, traditional news media outlets was the most common source (50%), and even some of those who had said they didn't typically get science information from the news media actually went on to cite it as the source of what they were seeing on social media, suggesting news journalism still has significant reach including to many of those people who only look on social media.

As such working with the mainstream news media provides an opportunity for accurate, evidence-based information to reach a mass audience. The SMC's priority is to promote, for the benefit of the public and policymakers, accurate and evidence-based information about science in the media, particularly on controversial and headline news stories as this is when most confusion and misinformation occurs.

The objects of the SMC are as follows:

"To advance the education of the public in science and engineering and all their related branches and disciplines, particularly by the dissemination of research and information about science to the media."

In order to meet its charitable objectives, the SMC's main activities include:

- working with scientists, engineers and other experts from the scientific community, and supporting them to engage with the media;
- working with journalists and providing them with information about science and its related disciplines;
- supporting press officers when they are working on complex and contentious science, health and environment stories that could be misrepresented;
- providing expertise and advice on issues relating to science and the media;
- help raise standards in science reporting and communication.

⁴ Wellcome Trust Monitor Report Wave November 2019, Public interest and engagement with health research

⁵ Public Attitudes to Science 2019, carried out by Kantar, on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

⁶ 'Summary report – Ipsos survey on science and the media' 2024, Science Media Centre

There has been no change during the period in the policies adopted in furtherance of the objects, and the Trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the SMC should undertake.

Purposes and aims

The SMC's philosophy is:

"The media will do science better when scientists do the media better."

Our main activities allow us to achieve our philosophy and our objectives – by ensuring that the accuracy of science represented by the mainstream media is improved. As an organisation we predominantly work on new research and the breaking news of the day, meaning our long and short-term aims are very similar. For us, the most important thing is that we continue to be able to proactively respond to the next breaking news story or controversial research paper so that the public have access to the best expertise on these issues via the media.

Staff are the main resource of the SMC and five permanent members of staff are dedicated to the press office element of the Centre with the remaining three members of staff providing essential support to the running of the Centre. We also recruited our second trainee press officer, who has joined the SMC on a year traineeship to learn about press work, with the plan for now to continue having a new trainee each year. Additionally, we have continued the Global Coordinator role that is dedicated to working with the global network of SMCs, and forging links with people and scientific societies worldwide to inform other countries about the SMC model.

Volunteers

The SMC continues to benefit from volunteers through our database of expert scientists, who willingly give up their time to help achieve the aims of the SMC through engagement with the media.

Scientists might help with an article for the Guardian on a controversial science subject, give an interview for BBC News on a breaking news story, or speak to a journalist at the Times about a planned exclusive article in their area of expertise. They speak on panels at our press briefings and send written comments in response to breaking stories and in advance of the publication of new research helping journalists to assess the significance of these new stories and papers. Many of these requests to scientists are made at short notice and outside normal working hours. Without their contributions, the SMC would not exist.

The Trustees wish to record their sincere thanks to all those who gave up their time to help the SMC achieve its charitable objectives and improve media coverage of science stories.

Public benefit statement

The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

Achievements and performance

The charity's main activities and those it tries to help are described below. All its activities focus on communicating science to the public and are undertaken to further the Science Media Centre's charitable purposes for the public benefit.

Summary

The Science Media Centre exists to respond to complex and often controversial stories in the national news media. When a science story breaks, or new research is published, the SMC encourages appropriate experts to engage with the media to ensure that the resulting coverage is accurate and measured while also providing evidence-based information to the journalists covering the story.

The SMC works on stories across science, health, environment, technology and engineering, with a focus on the potentially messy, controversial or politicised issues that make headlines in the UK national press. This meant providing journalists with regular access to the best experts on infectious diseases, cancer, climate change, dementia, AI and diet among many others, helping to ensure that this scientific evidence and expertise was central to media reporting, and that the public had access to accurate information.

This year we ran 51 press briefings. We sent out 332 roundups and rapid reactions. This is on par with other average years excluding 2019–2020, 2020–21, and 2021–22, which were unusually high due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Working with scientists, engineers and other experts, and supporting them to engage with the media

Support of scientists is one of the most valued aspects of the SMC's work, and by working with individuals and press officers we encourage them to engage with and help inform the media coverage of their area of expertise.

The SMC provides direct day-to-day support to scientists who want help getting their work into the media, with the SMC press officers frequently advising academics on press matters even when they don't fall directly into our core work. We also help scientists achieve recognition and acknowledgement from their peers and institutions for the work they do to improve public understanding of science, particularly on the most challenging topics. This ranges from writing

citations and supporting nominations to providing personal recommendations based on their media engagement work with us.

Working with journalists and providing them with accurate information about science and its related disciplines

The main services that the SMC provides to journalists are:

Rapid Reactions

When a science or science-related story hits the headlines, the SMC encourages leading scientists in relevant fields to engage rapidly with the story, and offer evidence-based expert comments. The SMC then makes these experts and their comments available to journalists at all major UK news outlets. The media can follow up with further queries or interview requests. This activity helps to inject accurate information and valuable context from experts into the reporting of rapidly-developing news stories, which in turn reduces the likelihood of inaccurate speculation which may mislead or alarm the public. Rapid Reactions therefore satisfy both the desire of journalists for credible experts and appropriate information, and the public's need to hear from the best experts at the time when it is most critical.

Rapid Reactions have once again played a vital role in the accurate media reporting of newly developing stories such as various cases of avian flu in humans and mammals, cases of a new strain of Mpox in the UK, the NICE and MHRA decision on Alzheimer's disease drugs Lecanemab and Donanemab, the mass global IT outage, social media posts about cattle feed additive Bovaer, the launch of AI model Deepseek, the Heathrow airport substation fire, flash floods in Spain, claims heavy rain in Dubai was caused by cloud seeding, deaths in Laos from methanol poisoning, and many more.

Roundups

This service is unique to the SMC and is a key tool for the Centre and for specialist science, health and environment journalists to ensure accurate coverage of new scientific research. The SMC gathers and issues written comments from qualified, relevant experts on embargoed science studies and reports ahead of their publication. These third-party comments offer a critique and valuable insights that science journalists can use to cover the story in an accurate and responsible way. Statements from independent scientists can help reporters identify the strengths and weaknesses of a new study and put it into the context of wider scientific knowledge. These comments can indicate how surprising or important the findings are and describe any implications for policy, patients or the public. Print and broadcast journalists can lift quotes for their reports and follow up for further interviews with the experts.

For example, it may involve gathering independent expert comments on observational studies where it is important that the limitations and caveats of the work be properly understood by the public, such as roundups this year on ultra-processed food consumption and premature deaths,

screen time before 2 years of age and risk of autism at 12 years of age, and air pollution and higher risk of male infertility. It could also involve responding to studies on commonly taken medications or novel tests, where inaccurate reporting could lead to people being misinformed of the benefits and risks of these drugs and tests, such as a roundups on side effects of weight loss drugs such as improved smoking cessation, increased risk of suicidality, and reducing alcohol use disorder, or a new blood test for Parkinson's disease. A roundup may also be done in response to a press release on an abstract being presented at a scientific conference, which has not been through the peer-review process and doesn't have the full data available for scrutinizing, in order to highlight these important caveats, such as on an abstract on red meat intake and risk of dementia or excessive screen time being linked to early physical development.

Briefings

The SMC runs regular press briefings for specialist science journalists at the UK national news outlets. These briefings provide an opportunity for scientists and journalists to meet regularly, and allow scientists to explain their complicated work in a detailed and measured way. This gives journalists the opportunity to get fully to grips with a difficult or significant area of science, with the end result being more accurate media coverage. News briefings allow scientists to explain new findings in a more nuanced way, while background briefings address a wide range of topical issues where experts feel that accurate, evidence-based information has been missing from the media and public debate. SMC briefings have proved to be instrumental in ensuring scientifically-accurate media coverage of many high-profile and ongoing scientific issues. Average attendance at press briefings remains high, especially with the majority of press briefings being online only now (over Zoom), and in-person briefings having a hybrid dial-in option, which has been available since the pandemic. In 2024/2025 we had an average attendance of 14 journalists from national news outlets attend our media briefings.

We have run briefings on significant new reports and papers on the evidence of important headline issues of the day including reports on wastewater and public health, and deepfakes and election misinformation; studies on a new norovirus vaccine, personalised cancer vaccines, and withdrawal effects of antidepressants; and the announcement of the identification of a glyphosate resistant weed on a UK farm. Background briefings we have run- in which we host experts in a field to answer journalists' questions on a topical media issue- include sessions on plastic and microplastic pollution, the MHRA decision and NICE draft guidance on lecanemab, deep sea mining, scientific approaches to reduce methane emissions from farm animals, the future of cell-cultivated products, and many more.

Additional services

In addition to responding to the most important news stories of the day, providing accurate information about the latest developments in science to journalists, and running regular press briefings, the SMC also handles *ad hoc* enquiries from journalists seeking an expert to interview, or background information on a science, health or environment story which they may be working on.

The SMC also organised one 'Introduction to the News Media' event in 2024/2025, which is a seminar devised and refined over our twenty-year history aimed at persuading the best scientists of the case for engaging with the media. The event was held in collaboration with King's College London (KCL) on 5 February 2025, and was attended by 166 scientists and press officers.

Supporting press officers working on complex science, health and environment stories

Many of the SMC's core activities rely on working with and supporting press officers at other organisations, including when they have experts on an issue in the headlines, or when their own institution or scientists are the subject of media interest. Press officers regularly approach the SMC for its guidance and expertise on media stories, particularly when an issue is complex and controversial. This can include advice on drafting accurate and responsible press releases, how best to do responsible press work on preprints, or whether to run an SMC press briefing on a new piece of research.

The SMC also recognises and champions the crucial role press officers play in responsible science communication. SMC staff are often invited to give talks and presentations at scientific organisations and meetings, both aiding the press officers and encouraging their scientists to engage with the media, whilst also raising awareness of the SMC's work.

Providing expertise and advice on issues relating to science and the media

The SMC is often called upon to comment on and provide expertise in relation to its overview and experience of science in the media.

SMC staff members additionally engage and share their expertise with the wider scientific community through their roles on boards and advisory committees of other scientific organisations. Fiona Lethbridge sits on the Advisory Board of the Maria Leptin EMBO Science Journalism Fellowships. Freya Robb and Ed Day are both Stempra committee members.

In June 2024, SMC Chief Executive Fiona Fox participated in the Nature Marsilius Visiting Professorship for Science Communication at the University of Heidelberg in Germany. As a visiting professor, Fiona delivered a series of workshops for students and delivered a public lecture. Fiona's workshops explored the importance of scientists engaging with the media on controversial issues; the changing job responsibilities of science communications professionals; and the question of whether scientists should engage in political matters.

Additionally, this year, Fiona Fox, was invited by the Royal Society to chair a working group to update the 1985 Bodmer report on Public Understanding of Science for its 40th anniversary. Fiona is leading the chapter on media and misinformation, which will produce up to six recommendations to the UK science community on how to best engage with these topics for the public interest. Fiona has appointed a working group composed of journalists, science communications professionals, and scientists heavily involved in public engagement work. The final report will be delivered in September 2025.

Fundraising

The SMC continues to have strong goodwill and support from funders. The planned deficit allowed staff resource to be focused on a review of fundraising approaches.

Donations continue to make up the majority of the income of the SMC and are mostly from organisations which have supported the SMC for many years. Fundraising at the SMC is carried out in-house by two members of staff as part of their roles. The Centre has high levels of retention within those organisations supporting the SMC and continues to be successful in attracting new supporters.

For the second time in September 2024 an event exclusively for funders of the SMC was held. Dame Angela McLean spoke on issues affecting the wider community and Fiona Fox highlighted to funders the activities the SMC had carried out using their funding. We intend this to be an annual event, with plans already underway for autumn 2025.

Impact

The work of the SMC is often difficult to judge through numbers alone. Success can mean a poor study or unpublished conference abstract is not covered in the newspapers, or is on page eight rather than the front page. It might also mean front pages explaining a significant new scientific development or paper with nuance or balance, or standfirsts explaining that leading scientists questioned the latest findings or cautioned against overinterpretation of the results.

Commentary on the objectives as described in last year's trustee report follows:

1. Continue to keep up to date with new contentious issues in the media, responding with expert comment, media briefings and supporting the scientists working in these areas to speak out about their research.

This year was quite varied in terms of media stories. Two big stories continued to be the potential health impacts of ultra-processed foods (UPFs), and weight loss drugs and their potential side effects and impacts on other diseases as well as obesity, with the SMC continuing to provide roundup comments from third-party experts on new studies in these fields. Another huge story this year was Alzheimer's drugs, with the first two disease modifying drugs, Lecanemab and Donanemab, being evaluated by NICE and the MHRA. In response, the SMC organised an explainer briefing on the decision around Lecanemab and sent out expert comments on the decision around Donanemab. Other topics of significance included outbreaks of H5N1 avian influenza in animals, cases of a new strain of Mpox, artificial intelligence, climate change, vaping, and screentime and mental health. These are all ongoing issues for the SMC and so we are already well acquainted with the top experts in these fields and how to advise scientists engaging with the media.

2. Scientific conferences

The SMC has begun its work on scientific conferences, identifying a group of people with experience in conference communications and organisation, journalists who report on conference proceedings, scientists who have previously been involved in critiquing conference papers, and scientists who specialise in research integrity. We have selected a number of high profile medical and health conferences as case studies where early-stage conference work has been heavily publicised to the media before peer-review and where the accuracy of the science was particularly important for public health/understanding. Work is now starting on interviewing the people in those different groups, identify patterns in approaches and opinions and gather ideas for how the pipeline of conference proceedings to public consumption might be improved.

3. Pilot SMC for Ireland

This year, the UK SMC, in collaboration with Irish charity Airfield Estate, initiated a one-year pilot SMC for Ireland. A Dublin-based senior press manager, line managed by the UK SMC Chief Executive, was appointed to run the yearlong pilot, beginning June 2024. The pilot's activities are limited to two of the core SMC services delivered right to journalists' inboxes: Rapid Reactions — comments by expert scientists or engineers to breaking news related to their fields of study — and Roundups — 3rd party comments on new scientific findings. The senior press manager developed press lists composed of Irish and Northern Irish journalists to receive comments and utilise the SMC as a resource to quickly reach scientists with relevant expertise to their story. They also populated an expert database with a broad range of scientific experts from across Ireland and Northern Ireland who signed up to be contacted for comment.

4. Social sciences project

The SMC met with key organisations within the social sciences including Campbell Collaboration, The British Academy, The Academy of Social Sciences, Leverhulme Centre for Demographic Science, and UK in a Changing Europe. These meetings helped clarify the role that social scientists can have in the stories the SMC works on. We have and will continue to recruit experts from the social sciences which overlap with the key issues that the SMC works on, such as population science, mental health, vaccination, and AI.

Financial review

Funding

The SMC is funded principally by scientific bodies, trusts and foundations, and other organisations, companies, charities, and government and related agencies. The SMC is independent from its funders who do not gain influence over the SMC's work in return for their financial support.

To protect the SMC from any undue influence we cap contributions from any one institution at 5% of the SMC's annual income. The cap for 2024–25 was £40,000. The SMC's Trustees and Advisory Group have agreed on two exceptions to the 5% upper limit: the Wellcome Trust and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). UKRI's contribution is over the 5% cap as this represents the consolidated amounts from several Research Councils which is now paid via the umbrella organisation UKRI set up in 2019.

The SMC is open and transparent regarding its funding. All funders are listed on the SMC website under bands for their total amount recognised within a financial year. A list is also included on page 20.

Transactions and financial position

In its fourteenth year of operation as a fully independent organisation, the SMC has continued to maintain a good financial position. The 2024/25 deficit result, in line with the deficit budget planned by the Trustees, is partly due to donations received earlier than expected and therefore recorded in the 2023/24 financial year, and the cost of short term project activities approved by the Trustees.

The Statement of Financial Activities shows that the total income for the year was £774,832 (£784,201 in 2024–25).

Total expenditure for the year was £867,876 (£796,398 in 2023–24) of which 95% (94% in 2023–24) was spent on charitable activities directly carrying out the Charity's key objectives.

The activities for the year therefore resulted in a deficit of £96,623 (£8,487 surplus in 2023–24). This includes £3,579 loss on investments (£20,684 gain in 2023–24).

Investment policy

The SMC has approximately £190,000 invested for growth. It is the intention of the Trustees to keep 12 months' running costs as cash in saving accounts, with lower risk and quicker access. Funds in excess of this are to be invested for the furtherance of the Charity's aims.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the SMC is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate that exposure. These risks are detailed on the Risk Register for the SMC with information on the current practice and strategy used to mitigate the risk. This register is reviewed annually by Trustees in June, with responsibility delegated to the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee to review the register at each meeting.

The current risk register pays particular attention to the risks around funding, conflicts of interest, cybersecurity, the loss of data, our reputation and staffing.

Risks for loss of funding are mitigated by close monitoring of the finances of the SMC, by seeking new income each year and by having a number of supporting organisations from across the sector. The independence of the Centre from funders is maintained by the current 5% cap and clear communication with new and existing funders on the separation between the funding and editorial activity of the SMC.

Best practice around conflicts of interests of scientists contributing to the media continues to be monitored by staff. Our policy on this was updated in February 2025. A further review of the policy is planned for early in the next period. The Centre clarifies when no competing interests have been received and when there are none to declare. Any criticism received regarding a conflict is met with open discussion and passed on to the scientist in question.

Cybersecurity risks to the SMC are addressed by ensuring the sector best practice is followed. This includes, but is not limited to: firewalls, secure staff passwords, regular upkeep of emails, antivirus software and regular off-site backups. The SMC is supported by an experienced third party supplier.

Reserves policy and going concern

The SMC has agreed that reserves would be used for support during a short, defined period of a deficit budget, allowing for new sources of income or reductions in expenditure to be identified.

It is therefore the policy of the Charity that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level equivalent to twelve months' expenditure (approximately £750,000 for this period).

The Charity holds £770,731 in reserves as of 31 March 2025 (2024: £867,354). On this basis the Trustees are satisfied the SMC is a going concern.

Our year end fund position of £770,731 is in excess of our £750,000 reserves target. The Trustees feel that it is prudent to hold a slightly higher level of reserves as a deficit budget has been planned for 2025–26.

Trustees periodically review the reserves policy of the Charity.

Plans for the future

The Trustees feel that the SMC is continuing to operate from a position of strength, in terms of both its core activities and financial security. The expertise of senior management and staff at the SMC will ensure that these future plans are given sufficient resources and achieved.

The following priorities have been identified for the coming year:

1. Continue to keep up to date with new contentious issues in the media, responding with expert comment, media briefings and supporting the scientists working in these areas to speak out about their research.

We will continue to monitor the news for developing stories and issues where scientific expertise can help play a role in accurate reporting. On these issues, we will work closely with scientists who can provide third party comments on breaking news and new research as well as host them at press briefings for journalists on important new papers being published to ensure the science at hand is reported on in an accurate and measured way.

2. Social media and changing trends in the media

This year we plan to do a piece of work to get the SMC up-to-date with the latest media trends and changes in where public audiences access information and news about science. The SMC will closely follow the latest media consumption reports and will speak with those organisations that run polls and gather evidence on these sorts of trends to identify where there might be gaps in data specifically about science news. The SMC will also meet with news media outlets about their efforts to get their journalism onto new platforms and to reach younger and different audiences, to explore whether there is a role for the SMC in further supporting science journalism, and in making sure the public continues to have access to accurate information about science, health and environment topics, in the current information landscape.

3. Data journalists project:

The SMC will do some focused work on data stories. This project will include meetings with journalists and press officers who work on data-lead stories to learn how they come about and if/how science, health and environment specialists are involved to work out if there is additional work the SMC can do in supporting accurate and measured reporting in this area.

4. Assisting with the transition of the pilot SMC in Ireland to a fully-fledged SMC.

After the pilot finishes in June 2025, the UK SMC will produce a formal report assessing whether the pilot met the success criteria laid out in the initial consultation report. After that, we will be stepping back from formal involvement – it will be over to the Irish science community to decide whether to establish a fully-fledged SMC in Ireland. However, we are planning on assisting with the transition in an informal capacity, continuing to forward UK SMC roundups and rapid reactions to Irish press lists and sending out Irish expert comments to Irish press lists on an ad-hoc basis.

Structure, governance and management

Organisational structure and decision making

The SMC is an independent charity and company limited by guarantee (Company Registration No. 7560997, England & Wales; Charity Registration No. 1140827). The Board of Trustees is the major decision-making body and it meets at least three times a year.

The organisation incorporated on 11 March 2011 and registered as a charity on 18 March 2011.

The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 7 to the accounts.

Trustees are individuals distinguished in the field of science, engineering, medicine, journalism, communications, finance, law and policy. The SMC considers each of the Trustees to be independent in character and judgement, and understands that they have no relationships that are likely to affect, or could appear to affect, their judgements regarding the SMC. Declarations of interest are required from new Trustees upon appointment and are updated annually, whilst every meeting of the Board of Trustees also requires that any new interests are declared.

All Trustees also act as directors of the company, but none has any beneficial interest in the company and no remuneration is provided except for reasonable travel and subsistence costs. Policy is determined by the Trustees, on the advice of the Advisory Group (see below) and others, and its implementation is delegated to the Chief Executive who, in conjunction with a team of nine additional staff, the Advisory Group and Trustees as appropriate, undertakes the necessary work.

A Senior Management Team comprising of the Chief Executive, two Senior Press Managers and Head of Operations allows for better distribution of organisational responsibility and both staff and Trustees continue to be happy with the structure.

A review of governance of the charity was carried out in 2022. The previously named Advisory Committee was renamed the Advisory Group to make clear it is not a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees nor does it have delegated authority or decision-making powers. All Trustees are also members of the Advisory Group. The Advisory Group is an independent, advisory group whose purpose is to provide independent, expert insight on matters concerned with science and engineering reporting in the media. It is a voluntary group of distinguished experts from the fields of science, engineering, medicine, journalism and communications, who provide expertise and advice. The Advisory Group meets three times a year.

The Finance, Audit & Risk Committee is a principal committee of the SMC and deals with issues such as financial planning, pensions, the annual audit and risk review and management. The

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Committee consists of a minimum of three members, with a majority of Committee members being Trustees, including the Treasurer. The remaining Committee members may be external members. Currently the Committee comprises three Trustees, including the Treasurer, and two external members. The Senior Management Team attend in an observational capacity. The Committee meets three times a year.

The Remuneration Committee is another principal committee of the SMC and deals with issues of staff pay and reward. The Remuneration Committee is comprised of a minimum of three members, all of whom are Trustees. The committee meets once a year and reports directly to the Trustees.

The SMC is very grateful to the members of all committees and groups for their valuable contributions.

The Trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the period are:

Nicholas Hillier	Chair
Amanda Borton	Treasurer
John Davidson	
Jonathan Brüün	
Alex Keenlyside	
Alice Henchley	
Joanne Manning	
Richard Fisher	
Prof Azra Ghani	
Prof Peter Openshaw	Appointed 23 October 2024
Prof Charlotte Summers	Appointed 23 October 2024
Prof Kevin McConway	Resigned 23 October 2024

Staff

Trustees delegate day-to-day responsibility to the Key Management Personnel:

Fiona Fox OBE	Chief Executive
Tom Sheldon	Senior Press Manager
Selina Kermode	Head of Operations
Fiona Lethbridge	Senior Press Manager

The SMC has ten members of staff and the Trustees record their appreciation of the efforts of the staff, who have again made an enormous contribution to the success of the SMC during the year.

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2025

During the year the SMC also benefited greatly from ten interns who each spent five weeks assisting with administrative duties and experiencing life within a busy press office.

Trustees would also like to record their appreciation for the efforts of the interns, and are pleased to note that many previous interns go on to obtain full time permanent roles within the science communication field.

Pay and remuneration

The following principles of the pay system are agreed by Trustees

- The SMC should not have a system which the charity cannot afford
- The system should not reward staff who are underperforming
- The system should have some built-in mechanism to monitor the competition and react to changes in the job market
- The system should recognise the developmental nature of the roles at the SMC

All permanent staff are appointed into salary bands, dependent on the role and its responsibilities. Reflecting the developmental nature of the roles, these salary bands each have room for progression. Benchmarking is conducted every two years to ensure the salary bands are comparable to similar roles outside the SMC. The Remuneration Committee recommends changes to salary bands based on affordability, wider economic circumstances and the financial performance of the SMC. The Board of Trustees considers salary band recommendations and makes final decisions on updating salary bands. Managers decide staff progression through salary bands based on annual performance reviews. The Remuneration Committee acts as a sounding board for the Chief Executive to discuss staff performance.

The salary of the Chief Executive is considered separately by the Remuneration Committee who will consider the wider economic circumstances and any benchmarking before making recommendations to the Trustees.

Benefits provided to staff currently include income protection insurance, health and dental insurance, ability to buy or sell leave, gym membership and membership of professional-body Stempra.

Appointment of trustees

Trustees are appointed in accordance with the SMC's Memorandum and Articles of Association.

In 2022 a new policy on trustee recruitment and induction was adopted, bringing the SMC in line with current practice. Trustees and staff consider the skills gaps formed by departing Trustees, and advertise for potential Trustees with skills to match. Applications are reviewed and interviewed as necessary by current Trustees and staff. Consideration is given to the benefits of appointing a person who is able, by virtue of his or her personal or professional qualifications, to make a

contribution to the pursuit of the objects or the management of the Charity. Prospective trustees are then proposed and appointed at October meeting each year.

Trustee induction and training

The SMC undertakes a comprehensive induction programme for all new Trustees, which includes induction materials relating to its purposes and finances, the powers of the Trustees and information about day-to-day running of the SMC. Key documents are provided, such as the SMC's Memorandum and Articles of Association and terms of reference, the Charity Commission's Essential Trustee guide, up-to-date accounts, and minutes of the most recent Trustee meetings. New trustees may also attend a Trustee meeting in the summer before their formal appointment at the October meeting as an observer as part of the induction process. Trustees continue to be supported through on-going training, with skills requirements regularly reviewed.

Related parties and relationships with other organisations

Related party transactions are detailed in Note 9 in the financial statements.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Science Media Centre for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year 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 these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice 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 charity will continue in operation

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

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2025

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.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £10 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2025 was 11 (2024:10). The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

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

The trustees' annual report has been approved by the trustees on 15 October 2025 and signed on their behalf by

Nicholas Hillier
Chair of Trustees

Funders list

For the year ended 31 March 2025

£2,000 and under

Association of Medical Research Charities
Institute of Physics & Engineering in Medicine
Keele University
National Nuclear Laboratory
National Oceanography Centre
New England Journal of Medicine
Society for Radiological Protection
The Times
UK Cleaning Products Industry Association
University of Exeter
University of Portsmouth
University of Reading
University of Sheffield
University of Southampton
University of Surrey
University of York

£2,001 – £4,999

Alan Turing Institute
Alzheimer's Research UK
Biochemical Society
British Ecological Society
British Pharmacological Society
British Society of Immunology
Cystic Fibrosis Trust
Durham University
Earlham Institute
Food & Drink Federation
FoodDrinkEurope
Health Data Research UK (HDRUK)
Institute of Cancer Research
Institute of Physics
John Innes Centre
London School of Hygiene & Tropical
Medicine
Medicines and Healthcare Products
Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
Microbiology Society
Motor Neurone Disease Association
Newcastle University
Nuclear Industry Association
Queen Mary, University of London
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
Sainsbury Laboratory
Taylor & Francis
UK Dementia Research Institute
University of Birmingham
University of East Anglia
University of Glasgow
University of Leeds
University of Leicester
University of Manchester
University of Nottingham
University of Warwick
Wellcome Sanger Institute

Funders list

For the year ended 31 March 2025

£5,000 – £9,999

Abbvie Ltd
Academy of Medical Sciences
Applied Microbiology International
Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry
BP International
Bristol University
British Heart Foundation
Cancer Research UK
Chemical Industries Association
Cochrane Collaboration
Francis Crick Institute
Genomics England
Gilead Sciences
Institution of Engineering and Technology
John Wiley & Sons
King's College London
LifeArc
Met Office
Moderna Biotech
National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)
National Institute for Health Research
National Physical Laboratory
Nestle UK Ltd
Nutrition Society
Office for National Statistics
Quadram Institute Bioscience
Rolls-Royce Plc
Royal Academy of Engineering
Royal College of Psychiatrists
Royal Society of Biology
Shionogi
UK Biobank
UK Centre of Ecology & Hydrology
Ulster University
University College London
University of Cambridge
University of Edinburgh
University of Oxford

£10,000 – £19,999

AstraZeneca
Cambridge University Press
CropLife International
Ellison Institute of Technology
Elsevier
Food Standards Agency
Government Office for Science
Imperial College London
Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD)
Orsted (UK) Limited
Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Royal Society
Sanofi Aventis

£20,000 – £40,000

Diageo Plc
DMG Media
Gatsby Charitable Foundation
GlaxoSmithKline
Springer Nature Ltd

Over £40,000

UK Research & Innovation

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Science Media Centre

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Science Media Centre for the year ended 31 March 2025.

This report is made solely to the trustees as a body, in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. My examination has been undertaken so that I might state to the trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the trustees as a body, for my examination, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Company you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act')/Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the Company's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

Independent examiner's statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1 Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- 2 The accounts do not accord with those records; or
- 3 The accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- 4 The accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities.

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Science Media Centre

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

Signed:

Name: Fleur Holden FCA

Address: Sayer Vincent LLP, 110 Golden Lane, London, EC1Y 0TG

Date: 24 October 2025

Science Media Centre

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

		2025			2024		
	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Income from:							
Donations	2	720,926	–	720,926	751,749	–	751,749
Charitable activities	3	–	41,000	41,000	–	21,500	21,500
Investments	4	12,906	–	12,906	10,952	–	10,952
Total income		733,832	41,000	774,832	762,701	21,500	784,201
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5	41,486	–	41,486	48,596	–	48,596
Charitable activities	5	785,390	41,000	826,390	723,019	24,783	747,802
Total expenditure		826,876	41,000	867,876	771,615	24,783	796,398
Net income / (expenditure) before net gains / (losses) on investments		(93,044)	–	(93,044)	(8,914)	(3,283)	(12,197)
Net gains / (losses) on investments		(3,579)	–	(3,579)	20,684	–	20,684
Net income / (expenditure) for the year	6	(96,623)	–	(96,623)	11,770	(3,283)	8,487
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		867,354	–	867,354	855,584	3,283	858,867
Total funds carried forward		770,731	–	770,731	867,354	–	867,354

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15a to the financial statements.

Science Media Centre

Balance sheet

Company no. 07560997

As at 31 March 2025

	Note	£	2025 £	£	2024 £
Fixed assets:					
Investments	11		186,823		190,402
			<u>186,823</u>		<u>190,402</u>
Current assets:					
Debtors	12	171,045		96,100	
Cash at bank and in hand		461,540		621,532	
		<u>632,585</u>		<u>717,632</u>	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(48,677)		(40,680)	
				<u></u>	
Net current assets			<u>583,908</u>		<u>676,952</u>
Total net assets			<u><u>770,731</u></u>		<u><u>867,354</u></u>
The funds of the charity:	15a				
Restricted income funds			-		-
Unrestricted income funds:					
General funds		770,731		867,354	
		<u></u>		<u></u>	
Total unrestricted funds			<u>770,731</u>		<u>867,354</u>
Total charity funds			<u><u>770,731</u></u>		<u><u>867,354</u></u>

The opinion of the directors is that the company is entitled to the exemptions conferred by Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The directors acknowledge the following responsibilities:

- (i) The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476
- (ii) The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts

Approved by the trustees on 15 October 2025 and signed on their behalf by

Nicholas Hillier
Chair of Trustees

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	2025		2024	
	£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities				
Net (expenditure)/income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(96,623)		8,487	
Loss/(gain) on investments	3,579		(20,684)	
Interest from investments	(12,906)		(10,952)	
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(74,945)		41,459	
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	7,997		(3,540)	
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	(172,898)		14,770	
Cash flows from investing activities:				
Interest from investments	12,906		10,952	
Net cash provided by investing activities	12,906		10,952	
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	(159,992)		25,722	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	621,532		595,810	
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	461,540		621,532	

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Science Media Centre is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales.

The registered office address, which is also the operational address, is 215 Euston Road, London, NW1 2BE.

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

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

d) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. The year end funds position is £770,731 (2024: £867,354) which is in excess of our reserves target.

e) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations are recognised once the Charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

f) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charity in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1 Accounting policies (continued)

h) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £2,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- Fixtures, fittings & equipment 4 years

i) Listed investments

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at their fair value as at the balance sheet date using the closing quoted market price. Any change in fair value will be recognised in the statement of financial activities. Investment gains and losses, whether realised or unrealised, are combined and shown in the heading "Net gains/(losses) on investments" in the statement of financial activities. The charity does not acquire put options, derivatives or other complex financial instruments.

j) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

k) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

l) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

m) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

2 Income from donations

	2025 £	2024 £
Donations and gifts	500,426	494,249
Grants receivable for core activities	53,000	103,000
Government grants:		
British Antarctic Survey	–	1,000
Food Standards Agency	10,000	10,000
Genomics England	6,000	6,000
Government Office for Science	10,000	10,000
Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency	3,000	3,000
Met Office	5,000	–
National Institute for Clinical Excellence	5,000	5,000
National Institute for Health Research	8,000	10,000
National Nuclear Laboratory	2,000	2,000
National Physical Laboratory	5,000	5,000
Office for National Statistics	6,000	–
Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust	12,500	7,500
UK Research & Innovation (UKRI)	95,000	95,000
	720,926	751,749

All income from donations is unrestricted.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

3 Income from charitable activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Global SMCs Coordinator	36,000	15,000
Pilot SMC for Ireland	5,000	6,500
Total income from charitable activities	41,000	21,500

All income from charitable activities is restricted.

4 Income from investments

	2025	2024
	£	£
Interest	12,906	10,952
	12,906	10,952

All income from investments is unrestricted.

5a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Staff costs (Note 7)	31,886	608,844	–	–	640,730	588,800
Event costs	–	23,797	–	–	23,797	23,513
Premises costs	–	–	–	43,465	43,465	43,065
Office costs	–	–	–	72,686	72,686	59,201
Travel, meetings and subsistence	–	–	405	39,005	39,410	12,970
Insurance	–	–	–	13,806	13,806	13,586
Professional fees	–	11,336	–	–	11,336	33,957
Accountancy	–	–	1,602	15,926	17,528	16,588
Independent examiner's fee	–	–	4,620	–	4,620	4,440
Bank charges	–	–	–	498	498	278
	31,886	643,977	6,627	185,386	867,876	796,398
Governance costs	331	6,296	(6,627)	–	–	–
Support costs	9,269	176,117	–	(185,386)	–	–
Total expenditure 2025	41,486	826,390	–	–	867,876	

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

5b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2024 Total £
Staff costs (Note 7)	41,090	547,710	–	–	588,800
Event costs	–	23,513	–	–	23,513
Premises costs	–	–	–	43,065	43,065
Office costs	–	–	13	59,188	59,201
Travel, meetings and subsistence	–	–	351	12,619	12,970
Insurance	–	–	–	13,586	13,586
Professional fees	–	33,957	–	–	33,957
Accountancy	–	–	1,434	15,154	16,588
Independent examiner's fee	–	–	4,440	–	4,440
Bank charges	–	–	–	278	278
	41,090	605,180	6,238	143,890	796,398
Governance costs	312	5,926	(6,238)	–	–
Support costs	7,195	136,696	–	(143,890)	–
Total expenditure 2024	48,596	747,802	–	–	796,398

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

6 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

	2025 £	2024 £
Independent Examiner's Fee (excluding VAT):		
Independent Examination	3,850	3,700
Other services	–	1,850
	<u>3,850</u>	<u>5,550</u>

7 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Salaries and wages	494,628	496,694
Social security costs	53,885	53,923
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	92,217	38,183
	<u>640,730</u>	<u>588,800</u>

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs and employer's national insurance) during the year between:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
£60,000 – £69,999	–	1
£110,000–£119,999	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £373,987 (2024: £347,679).

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2024: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2024: £nil).

Trustees' expenses represents the payment or reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs totalling £405 (2024: £351) incurred by 4 (2024: 4) members relating to attendance at meetings of the trustees.

8 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 12 (2024: 11).

9 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year (2024: £nil).

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

10 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

11 Listed investments

	2025 £	2024 £
Fair value at the start of the year	190,402	169,718
Additions at cost	–	–
Net gain/(loss) on change in fair value	(3,579)	20,684
Fair value at the end of the year	<u>186,823</u>	<u>190,402</u>

Investments comprise:

	2025 £	2024 £
UK Common investment funds	186,823	190,402
	<u>186,823</u>	<u>190,402</u>

12 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	106,941	75,326
Other debtors	47,440	4,993
Prepayments	16,664	15,781
	<u>171,045</u>	<u>96,100</u>

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	4,795	8,731
Taxation and social security	13,599	14,369
Accruals	30,283	17,580
	<u>48,677</u>	<u>40,680</u>

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Investments	186,823	–	186,823
Net current assets	583,908	–	583,908
Net assets at 31 March 2025	770,731	–	770,731

14b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	190,402	–	190,402
Net current assets	676,952	–	676,952
Net assets at 31 March 2024	867,354	–	867,354

15a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2024 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds:					
Global SMCs Coordinator	–	36,000	(36,000)	–	–
Pilot SMC for Ireland	–	5,000	(5,000)	–	–
Total restricted funds	–	41,000	(41,000)	–	–
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds	867,354	733,832	(830,455)	–	770,731
Total unrestricted funds	867,354	733,832	(830,455)	–	770,731
Total funds	867,354	774,832	(871,455)	–	770,731

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

15b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds:					
Global SMCs Coordinator	3,283	15,000	(18,283)	–	–
Pilot SMC for Ireland	–	6,500	(6,500)	–	–
Total restricted funds	3,283	21,500	(24,783)	–	–
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds	855,584	783,385	(771,615)	–	867,354
Total unrestricted funds	855,584	783,385	(771,615)	–	867,354
Total funds	858,867	804,885	(796,398)	–	867,354

Purposes of restricted funds

Global SMCs Coordinator

To fund the post Global Coordinator to support the network of Science Media Centres around the world.

Pilot SMC for Ireland

To investigate the feasibility of a Science Media Centre for Ireland, together with Airfield Estate Dublin.

16 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.