



Annual Report 2024

Overview of WEST

There is a clear and longstanding under-representation of girls and women in engineering, science and technology subjects and careers. There is a greater under-representation of girls and women in non-traditional trades. WEST have run a bursary scheme for more than 10 years which aims to offer a little support and encouragement to girls and women who face financial hardship or other challenges near the start of their study or career. Funding for our bursaries comes from donations or special fundraising events. (Bursaries are available in spring for girls and women in Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire).

Girls do not easily aspire to engineering subjects and non-traditional trades, so over the last 10 years we have developed resources that are trusted and creative. We deliver outreach to primary and secondary schools in our region, with the help of our female role models. Our funding for this work usually comes from grant applications but we are also commissioned based on our track record.



In 2024 we were commissioned by UKAN (UK Acoustics Network) to develop resources to promote Acoustic Careers in schools – with a focus on raising awareness of acoustics careers in schools at Primary and Secondary Schools.

Our Objectives: to introduce female role models in acoustics / sound related science and engineering careers to primary and secondary schools – to raise awareness of careers and of women working in related areas of acoustics – science / engineering / design and media; in primary to use sound in a simple and fun activity / activities linked to curriculum topics and to develop activities linked to careers awareness; to evaluate and get feedback.

We proposed two new outreach schemes as a pilot, one in 6 primary schools and the other in 6 secondary schools in Sheffield. The schemes were adapted from previously well-received WEST

STEM outreach projects but now focused on a new area - sound and acoustics careers resources and careers information.

We set up the scheme by recruiting female role models working in sound and acoustic careers (female only to counter a male dominated perspective of sound engineering and other acoustics careers that are physics-based). Our aim was to develop the view in all pupils that women and men can follow these careers. We also wanted to improve inclusivity by drawing on schools across Sheffield to diversify the background and cultures of groups who are under-represented in STEM including Sound and Acoustics.

The project was very successful and additional funding to share the knowledge we gained was promised for the following year.

Some Key points

Primary

- Careers events are not an everyday event in primary schools. This can make it harder to reach – schools are very busy and such events may be seen as ‘a nice thing to do’ but lack the time and space. WEST have a good record of delivering school events across Sheffield and this has helped us access primary schools.
- Sourcing appropriate resources that can engage pupils from a wide background and a young age is important. Too often we found activities were not inclusive or age appropriate and science-based activities were usually designed for already academic students. We needed simple, fun but ‘subject related’ activities with easy to obtain materials that could appeal to all in the group.
- Existing good acoustics / sound UK careers online video resources were hard to find. The majority seem to be aimed at a much higher age group – secondary or graduate - rather than our primary age Y5/Y6 (9-11). Some resources were dated or too complex. Those resources with women working in sound / acoustics were rare. Note: we did draw on <http://salfordacoustics.co.uk/careers> which was the most helpful.
- Sourcing female role models was initially difficult, mainly because of the specific requirement of sound / acoustics as part of the career. However, with support from UKAN, and thinking laterally and using contacts together with lots of persistence we found enough, and all were ‘fantastic’. The pupils really enjoyed hearing from the role models and there were some great questions from the pupils.
- There remains a need to widen recruitment of female role models in building acoustic design or more generally in acoustic materials design.
- The feedback from pupils, teachers and role models was very positive across all the schools we visited and all provided helpful feedback, advice and general comments.



Secondary

- Careers is part of the secondary curriculum but single specific events like we were doing with UKAN took a lot of persuasion. Secondary Schools are very busy places, and we had to use our contacts and our own knowledge of careers work to promote the events.
- We adapted our events to fit in with the school's needs so that we were able to join in with planned and already organized careers events where possible.
- The importance of the role models in our events cannot be overstated. The saying 'see it to be it' was constantly referred to in feedback. The human stories really make a difference.
- It is important to have a teacher there – not necessarily for keeping order but for other assistance e.g. helping to get the shy students to ask questions.



WEST Bursaries

We have again raised sufficient funds to provide small bursaries in support of women working and studying in non-traditional subjects and careers. We awarded 17 college / trade bursaries (across Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire) and 5 Bursaries to Sheffield Hallam Engineering students (each student given £150) in 2024.



We would like to thank all our funders for helping WEST in our aims to advance the education and careers of women and girls in non-traditional subjects.

Finally, in 2024 we welcomed a new member to WEST: Alice Arnold, a Computer Studies Lecturer at Sheffield Hallam University joined us as a volunteer and hopefully to become a future Trustee.

Agreed by WEST Trustees

Dr Pat Morton	Chair of Trustees
Dr Ros Wollen	Trustee
Saj Parveen	Trustee
Anna Childs	Trustee
Alice Arnold	New Volunteer (Trainee Trustee)

Annual Report 2024 for Charity Commission Submission October 2024

www.westskills.org.uk



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name
WEST

No (if any)
1152219

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

Period start date
1.1.2024

To

Period end date
31.12.2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
GRANTS	6,345	-	-	6,345	10,000
INTEREST ON DEPOSIT ACCOUNT	232	-	-	232	287
FUNDRAISING / DONATIONS	10,308	-	-	10,308	271
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	16,885	-	-	16,885	10,558
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	16,885	-	-	16,885	10,558
A3 Payments					
INSURANCE	325	-	-	325	305
BURSARIES	3,300	-	-	3,300	2,250
INTERNET AND WEBSITE	554	-	-	554	397
CATERING	-	-	-	-	60
PRINTING / PHOTO	925	-	-	925	133
CONSULTANTS OUTREACH	5,930	-	-	5,930	2,561
CONSULTANTS FILM	-	-	-	-	1,002
TRAVEL & EXPENSES	24	-	-	24	160
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	11,058	-	-	11,058	6,868
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	11,058	-	-	11,058	6,868
Net of receipts/(payments)	5,827	-	-	5,827	3,690
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	5,827	-	-	5,827	3,690

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Current Account	15,986	-	-
	Savings Account	9,214	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	25,200	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
	P Morton	P Morton		
	R Wollen	R Wollen		