



The Education Futures Collaboration
Trustees' Annual Report
1st June 2023 – 31st May 2024



Charity name:	The Education Futures Collaboration
Registered charity number:	1157511
Charity's principal address:	19 Firs Road Houghton on the Hill Leicester LE7 9GU
Trustees:	Prof Marilyn Leask - co-chair Prof Sarah Younie - co-chair Mr Michael Blamires Mr Jonathan Noakes Mr Stephen Hall Mr Richard Procter
Organisation type:	CIO
Governing document:	Constitution

Aims

The Education Futures Collaboration is an education sector developed and managed initiative, providing an e-infrastructure to support education as it transforms into a knowledge focused collaboration and supporting knowledge transfer, collaborative knowledge building and sharing within education sectors in individual countries as well as worldwide.

We aim to professionalise teaching and to support professional judgement with evidence through the creation of a sustainable model for knowledge mobilisation and collaboration using digital tools in the education sector.

Objectives

We define success as increasing numbers of educators, worldwide, using the MESHGuides to support decision making. For a number of subject areas, we have been inundated with expressions of interest.

- Transform the quality of learning and teaching in education by providing accessible relevant research informed professional knowledge.
- Create a joined-up education profession linking pockets of excellence in teaching, research, and evidence-based practice.
- Provide diagnosis and intervention strategies to help educators and students overcome misconceptions and break through barriers to learning threshold concepts.
- Develop models of transformational and translational research in education, using scalable and cost-effective technologies.

Activities

International partnerships - UNESCO ITTF panel

The EFC (MESH project) was formally appointed as an NGO to the UNESCO International Teacher Task Force (ITTF) in 2020. This involves regular meetings with the ITTF panel, and EFC membership to the thematic sub-groups of this panel.

International partnerships - VSO

EFC has been working collaboratively with VSO (International Volunteer Services Overseas) on multiple projects this year;

including 'ROTLIC' - Radically Open Technology to tackle the Learning Crisis: Improving Learning Outcomes of Primary School Children, based in West Africa. The ROTLIC project was undertaken in Sierra Leone from 2022 to 2024 and explores the use of an education app to support literacy and numeracy development with primary school children.

Co-chair Sarah Younie, working with Debra Laxton, from Chichester University ran the evaluation of the ROTLIC project, which included an in-country site visit to Sierra Leone to undertake data collection in primary schools and conduct interviews with project stakeholders. The trip also included a meeting with the Ministry of Education in Sierra Leone.

Mike Blamires has continued to work with VSO on the 'Psycho-Social Development' project and has published information on this on the MESH website.

International partnerships - ICET

ICET is a global network of teacher educators from across the UN regions. The EFC working collaboratively with ICET enables sharing of knowledge that is of benefit to both organisations

The EFC co-chair Sarah Younie was the charity representative at the ICET face-to-face World Assembly at Minho University, Portugal from 13-16 June 2024. EFC undertook dissemination of the EU funded EFC/MESH project BRIST (Building a Research Infrastructure for Teachers).

A BRIST presentation by Profs Sarah Younie and Sarah Jones was given, which demonstrated how an innovative mobile app was designed and developed to support teachers as active consumers of research, enabling them to translate, use and share research to enhance their classroom practice.

International partnerships - Global Network of Deans of Education (GNDE)

The EFC co-chairs (Profs. Marilyn Leask and Sarah Younie) were invited to present on the MESH project at the Global Network of Deans of Education at Innsbruck University in Austria on 2-4th September 2024. This provided an opportunity to both disseminate about the MESH project and run knowledge exchange discussions with GNDE members on how the MESH website can link to education resources hosted on university websites, working with Deans of Education from across the UN regions that attended the GNDE event.

Research Project BRIST Project - 2019-2022 (Building a Research Infrastructure for Teachers)

This project was completed this year in December 2022. Erasmus is a European grant to help develop global citizens. Academics from the Education Futures Collaboration Charity, working on the MESH project, joined forces with the University of Hull, to lead a three-year international project that will develop teachers' research skills and networking practices. The researchers were awarded €354k of European funding for the project, to develop teachers into teacher-researchers and evidence-informed practitioners through an innovative Infrastructure and an app. The budget was allocated for specific actions allocated to different partners in the project.

The funding was awarded through the Erasmus+ programme, which supports international partnerships seeking to enhance education. The Education Futures Collaboration Charity and the University of Hull joined with research partners from across Europe, including the Republic of Ireland, Poland, Greece and Spain. The project has sought to inform teacher education practice in its partner countries and more widely.

International Research Projects - Teacher Voice Series 2

EFC/MESH and ICET: this project focuses on providing teachers with an opportunity and space to share their experiences of practice and provides a forum for knowledge exchange. This project is running in three phases: phase I was a Global Webinar in 2023 and phase II in 2024 is to undertake research to gather empirical evidence from teachers via a series of interviews with EFC/MESH and ICET researchers. Phase III will be the dissemination of outcomes in 2025.

MESH, led by Sarah Younie and Karen Blackmore, and ICET led by Carol Hordatt-Gentles (ICET President, University of Jamaica) collaborated on running the second ICET/MESHGuides Teacher Voice Global Webinar that took place on November 15th, 2023. Entitled Future proofing education systems: learning from the legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, the theme focused on 'Lessons learned from the Covid-19 experience'.

The objective was to capture teachers' experiences of managing their work and what they have learned from this to take forward. We successfully attracted x122 global participants, and ran x16 break out rooms, with ICET and MESH facilitators leading the discussions in each group. The technical support was provided by ICET Deb Elridge, working with John Sorrentino (both from the USA). The EFC/MESH co-chair Prof. Sarah Younie gave the opening keynote address.

This phase 1 event provided initial data for the EFC/MESH and ICET research project on this topic, with the findings being presented at the 2024 ICET World Assembly, then followed up in phase 2, with developing a set of questions for in-depth teacher interviews (October 2023 – July 2024).

The research project, for which ethical clearance is has been successfully sought, with thanks to Dr Karen Blackmore at Worcester University, will comprise recruitment of co-researchers from EFC/MESH and ICET and partner networks, who will conduct the interviews with teachers across the UN regions, and undertake an analysis to elicit initial findings to submit to the principal researchers for meta-analysis and interpretation. A report, which will have been verified by the co-researchers, will be produced in phase 3, in 2025. This builds on the Teacher Voice research from earlier years).

Communication and Publicity

Building on the 2023-2024 publicity plan where we focused in particular on a seasonal newsletter that might appeal both to existing stakeholders who use or work with MESH as well as prospective users and contributors to creating MESHGuides.

A more accessible approach to publicity has therefore been adopted and is being coordinated into a revision of the MESHGuides website so that materials in a revised newsletter format and associated

podcasts provide links to the updated website which in turn would reflect the style of the podcasts and overview in the newsletters.

This revision of the forward-facing profile of MESH, particularly in the light of the increased international involvement of MESH and MESH Exec members with the UN's Teacher Task Force (TTF) has been influenced by the work of MESH member Jon Audain, whose passion for Education and drive for the work of MESH until his recent sad and untimely passing has been an inspiration to all of us. We plan to record colleagues' memories about him and write an article from this material. Thank you Jon. We will continue to build on your work to make MESH a key part of the future international education environment.

The publicity team have been involved in various projects throughout the year with a combined focus of promoting 'research into practice/practice into research' through continued involvement with VoiceEd radio in Canada along with the current challenge in EdTech of collating and making freely available valuable EdTech resources from previous initiatives that have either reached their shelf-life.

Website Reach

The main point of access for people is the website. The website is getting good coverage with the Guides site getting the most users, with a good number of users being in the Philippines. For the Guides site we are now over 1,000,000 page views over the last seven years.

Further Work

Members of the steering group continue to contribute to education research and development across the world. Members have developed audio podcasts on the work of MESH.

EFC Board

The EFC trustees are supported by the EFC board. This group sets and reviews the short-term and long-term strategy. Decisions are normally made on the basis of consensus at board meetings, but the trustees have the ultimate legal responsibility. The name below are the list of current board members and the roles they have on the board:

Marilyn Leask	Co-chair
Sarah Younie	Co-chair and Rep on UN TT Panel and thematic group for Inclusion
Jon Audain	Newsletter and social media
Mike Blamires	Core editorial team on MESHGuides and badging development
Linda Delvin	Twitter strategy and Rep on UN TTF – thematic group for school leadership
Stephen Hall	Communications & media lead and Rep on UN TTF school leadership
Christina Preston	Press lead
Richard Procter	MESHGuides website & software development officer
Matt Scase	Finance officer and secretary
Chris Shelton	Teacher education lead

Memorial

It is with deep regret that we share the sad passing of our dear colleague Jon Audain, who has been with us since the inception of MESH and has been an inspiration to us as we have worked collaboratively to build MESH.

Jon was instrumental in designing the website and his creative talents and colourful graphics have been the cornerstone of our communications literature, such as the early newsletters and the promotional postcards, which are distributed at knowledge exchange events globally. Jon shared his continuing vision for the website and how we can progress at the EFC Away Day in July 2024 (see below). Co-chair Marilyn Leask and Chris Shelton represented the EFC charity at Jon's memorial celebration and our deepest condolences were sent to Jon's family. We are now working on a legacy podcast to record Jon's achievements and to remember him and his work.

Public Benefit Statement

The Trustees confirm that they 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 future activities. The trustees refer to public benefit throughout this report.

Our charity was set up to benefit the general public and in particular education professionals and students. The organisation's purpose is beneficial as it aims to advance the standards of education and in particular, teaching, learning, research and collaboration amongst education professionals. The trustees are not aware of any detriment or harm which might result from the organisation's purpose. The charity has a Conflict of Interest Register, which is updated at every Management Meeting and Meeting of Trustees.

Financial Review

It has been agreed to keep one year's worth of regular expenditure in reserve. This is to cover costs of such things like web hosting, tech support and the finance role. Therefore, it is agreed the reserves should be kept at £2,000.

On top of our reserve policy, it is agreed to make sure we carry enough money to be able to support the running of the website, hosting the MESHGuides, for at least the next five years.

Annual accounts for the financial year 1st June 2023 – 31st May 2024

Receipts and payment account
Prepared by Matt Scase
14th June 2024

Opening Balance	1st June 2023	£46,062.65
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Receipts

EFC Brist Project	17,176.72
Founder Member Contribution	1,000.00
Donations (including gift aid reclaim)	729.16
Bank Interest	100.10
Other	1,680.00

Total	£20,685.98
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Payments

EFC Brist Project	12,498.46
VSO - Sierra Leone Project	9,953.16
Finance	2,185.00
Technical Support	1,000.00
Bank Charges	60.00
Website Costs (hosting, domain,...)	15.59
Other	2,080.00

Total	£27,792.21
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Closing Balance	31st May 2024	£38,956.42
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The financial year for the Educations Futures Collaboration runs from 1st June – 31st May. The only regular income for the EFC is the founding membership contributions and we are very grateful for the financial support they offer. The regular expenditure for the EFC is mainly the payment of myself for the finance and social media work, and the admin costs of running and maintaining the website, the location of the published MESHGuides. The following finance policy is in place regarding the cost of publishing and maintaining the MESHGuides:

The following sets out the funding position and financial contributions for potential MESHGuides being produced:

- *Where the guide being produced has received no funding, the charity, EFC, will try to find the funding to publish the guide.*
- *Where the guide being produced has received funding there is an expectation that a fee will be agreed, between EFC and the party producing the guide, towards the cost of publishing and maintaining the guide long term.*

On top of the regular income and expenditure, the account also holds the money we receive for larger projects. In this financial year we received the final payment for the BRIST project that Sarah and Richard have been undertaking for a number of years now.

On the 30th May 2023 and the 6th June 2023 the EFC received a payments of £400 and £1,680 respectively. This was unknown to the EFC and after contacting the CAF bank they informed us that this was a misplaced transfer and should not have gone into our account. The CAF bank, citing GDPR, would not elaborate further on this transfer but both were returned to the sender as a misplaced credit on 16th June 2023.

Currently we hold a single account with the CAF Bank where all our reserves are held. At the end of the financial year there was £38,956.42 in the bank. This is a large amount to hold for a charity of our size, but this is down to the ongoing projects that are taking place. A full breakdown of how much is allocated to each project can be found below.

Annual reports are required by the Charities Commission and have been filed on time.

Independent Examination

As the income for the year fell below the £25,000 threshold, we were not required to carry out an independent examination of the accounts.