

Annual Report 2023/24

The LabAid Foundation

Registered charity no: 1168144

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In the last couple of years, the Trustees of the LabAid Foundation have been surprised at the very high level of used scientific equipment donated to us by schools and colleges across the UK. This is enabling LabAid to continue, and improve on, the work started more than thirty years by the late Alan Welch, MBE. Indeed, we have been slightly embarrassed about the amount coming in, which has put some pressure on our storage space.

We continue to be grateful to ASE (through *Education in Science*) and CLEAPSS (through its *Bulletin*) for informing teachers and technicians about the ability of LabAid to accept donations of school science equipment for which they no longer had a use. Thanks, too, to *The Entertainer*. Their toy shops throughout the country transported boxes of



Namasagali College, Kamuli, Uganda.

LabAid despatched equipment to this school in June 2021, with transport arranged and paid for by their alumni. It arrived in July 2022 and in April 2024 the school reported that, as a result, their students are more attentive in lessons, have developed a better understanding of science, and improved their examination grades as well as developing practical skills, which are expected to be of value in everyday life.

apparatus to their warehouse in Amersham, whence one of our volunteers made a number of journeys, with his car boot full.

We placed an advertisement in a local free magazine, asking for (unskilled) volunteers and were very successful in recruiting a number of people ranging from retired maths teachers and accountants to current science sixth-formers. They have been able to help packing boxes, as well as sorting huge numbers of bungs into different sizes and making sense of the range of metric and Imperial threads used on clamp stands. One volunteer managed to return 147 working microscopes (plus some scrap metal) to our store in the first 7 months of 2024. As a result, of all these contributions, last year we were able to send about 17 boxes of equipment per month, as against 12 per month the previous year. Sadly, we learned that Ron Howe, a former turkey farmer, who was our packer-in-chief for many years, had died.

We only supplied 11 educational establishments in developing countries between July 2023 and June 2024, as against 14 educational establishments the previous year. However, they received a total of 206 boxes of equipment, an almost 50% increase on the previous year's total of 145 boxes. That included 25 boxes, containing 31 microscopes (amongst other items) going to a health college in Nigeria and 33 destined for the Somali National University in Puntland. Although we don't generally supply university-level equipment, this was for a foundation-type course for otherwise competent students whose practical background was almost non-existent. The 11 establishments we supported were in 6 countries: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Uganda.

The Royal Society of Chemistry again made a significant donation to support our work. This supplements what we are able to raise by selling unsuitable or broken equipment as scrap metal, at car boot sales or by auction. We need the money not only to cover administrative costs but also to purchase those items of equipment we are rarely given, for example burettes. We are grateful to the Amersham Free Church for allowing us to store our stocks of equipment in their Sycamore Hall although they are moving us from 5-year licences to use the building to rolling 1-year licences.

We rely on the receiving school having a UK agent who can organise transport so we do not have to pay transport costs. Whilst this mostly this works well, we had some problems last year. Generally speaking, our waiting list stays reasonably constant, although in the past year, by sending out extra boxes to fewer establishments, our current waiting list would probably take about 18 months to clear.

Dr Peter Borrows (*Chair of the Trustees of the LabAid Foundation*).

LabAid Foundation Financial Report 1July 2023 - 30 June 2024

Starting Balance	£1643.81
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Receipts

Donations	£882.50
Auctions	£1289.72
Internet sales	£460.00
Car Boot sales	£210.00
Scrap sales	£133.16

Total Receipts	£2975.38
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Expenditure

Purchase of stock	£2121.01
Premises rent	£510.00
Other	£433.34

Total Expenditure	£3069.13
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End Balance	£1550.06
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