



Charity number 1181088

**Annual report and financial statements
For the period 1st April 2024 - 31st March 2025**

Young Identity
Reference and administrative information
for the year ended 31 March 2025

Charity number 1181088

Registered office and operational address 7 Brooks Road Old Trafford Manchester M16 9GG

Legal name: Wordsmith Awards Trading as Young Identity

Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Jonah Earle (Completed term as Chair of Trustees – 6 November 2025)

Adeola Adelakun

Dr (Mary) Elisabeth Cordingley (Interim Chair, then Chair from 7 November 2025)

Ekua Bayunu

Emma Louise Mould

Jonathan Vincent McGrath (Resigned 21 Nov 2024)

Lucy Kathleen Jackson

Muhammad Fazeel Babur

Nasima Begum

Rosie Stuart (Completed term as Trustee – 17 July 2025)

Sylvia Lee

Tolulola Agbelusi

Udokanma Onwudike

Emma Ford (from 17 July 2025)

Key Management	Jonah Earle	Chair of Trustees (to 6 November 2025)
Personnel	Lis Cordingley	Chair of Trustees (from 7 November 2025)
	Shirley May	CEO & Artistic Director
	Nicole May	Executive Director

Bankers National Westminster Bank
438 Barlow Moor Road
Chorlton-Cum-Hardy
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Independent examiner
Slade & Cooper Limited
Beehive Mill
Jersey Street
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Young Identity
Trustees' annual report
for the year ended 31 March 2025

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

Reference and administrative information on page 1 form part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the charity's constitution 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 charity's aims, objectives and activities 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 remain focused on its stated purposes.

The trustees confirm that throughout the planning and implementation of these activities, they have complied with their duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in determining the activities undertaken by the charity.

CHARITABLE PURPOSE

Young Identity's objectives, as set out in its constitution, are to:

1. To advance the education of young people, in the study and appreciation of the arts, in particular poetry and literature, including but not exclusively, by organising workshops, performances and other educational programmes as determined by the trustees.

2. To act as a resource for young people up to the age of 30 living in Manchester by organising poetry workshops and events as a means of:

(a) Advancing in life and helping young people by developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals.

(b) Providing recreational and leisure time activity in the interests of social welfare for people living in the area of benefit who have need by reason of their youth, age, disability, poverty or social and economic circumstances with a view to improving the conditions of life of such persons.

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VISION & MISSION

Young Identity's vision is of a world in which every young person is equipped with creativity, confidence and self-expression gained through literature, the practice of poetry and performance.

Our mission is to nurture, develop and champion the voices and creativity of underrepresented young people through literature, writing and performance; by giving young people the skills and the platforms to speak out, telling their original stories, sharing their narratives with others and diversifying the arts sector.

Young Identity's voice cuts through the noise: We are unique, different and stand out.

We believe in the transformative power of the arts in young people's lives. We develop literacy, critical thinking and active citizenship for young people through experimenting with literature and combined arts.

We create a distinctive range of high-quality creative opportunities, writing and performance workshops, events and participatory work that supports young people from all backgrounds to progress creatively and realise their ambitions. Developing core skills that help young people be more employable, socially included, resilient and enterprising, becoming the writers, performance artists and theatre-makers of tomorrow.

Our ambition is to impact and inspire the artistic and cultural landscape of the North-West of England and further afield nationally and internationally.

ACTIVITIES

Young Identity delivers its mission through three core strands: Community, Development and Productions. These strands empower young people through a youth-led, community-focused and partnership-driven approach, ensuring every activity is high-impact, inclusive and transformative.

Community

We widen access to the arts through workshops, showcases and wellbeing sessions in schools and community settings. Partnering with education providers, youth services and specialist organisations, we reach young people who might otherwise miss creative opportunities while fostering intergenerational dialogue and personal growth.

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Development

We nurture emerging artists to build sustainable creative careers. Specialist workshops, creating pathways training programme, mentoring and paid commissions equipping young people with skills, experience and funding opportunities to progress professionally and creatively.

Productions

We platform young talent on local, national and international stages. Through our flagship poetry slam *One Mic Stand*, our publishing imprint *No Disclaimers* and collaborations with cultural organisations, we showcase creativity while expanding opportunities, visibility and professional credibility.

Together, these strands enable Young Identity to engage, inspire and empower young people, ensuring their voices are celebrated and their creative potential realised.

We achieve our mission through the following activities:

- **Running projects with underrepresented groups:** We actively work with communities that are often marginalised or under-represented, inspiring them to get involved in writing and performance. By doing so, we strive to make literature and the arts more inclusive of society in the UK.
- **Training the next generation of writers:** We are passionate about nurturing and developing young writers, both on the page and on the stage. Through our training programs, we equip them with the necessary skills and provide them with opportunities to showcase their work.
- **Diversifying the creative arts sector:** In order to foster a more diverse and inclusive creative arts sector, we focus on developing future producers, finance managers, and events coordinators from underrepresented communities. We provide training and support to help them succeed in their chosen fields.
- **Producing dynamic and provocative poetry productions:** We create and produce professional poetry productions, events, projects, and educational materials. Through these initiatives, we aim to stimulate critical thinking,

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provoke discussions, and support educational institutions in their teaching of literature and combined arts.

- **Nurturing new artists:** We are committed to nurturing emerging artists and providing them with guidance and support. We facilitate individual and group artistic practice, developing progression pathways and offering initiatives and opportunities for their growth. We also assist artists in starting their own companies or collectives, empowering them to navigate the local, national, and international cultural sectors.
- **Increasing accessibility to the arts:** We actively work towards expanding access to the arts by reaching out to new and diverse audiences. Our aim is to break down barriers and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to engage with and enjoy artistic experiences. Through these activities, we strive to make a long-lasting impact on the artistic and cultural landscape, championing inclusivity, diversity, and creativity.

Achievements and performance

The charity's principal activities are set out below. All charitable activities are carried out in furtherance of Young Identity's charitable purposes and for the public benefit.

Young Identity supports young people who are predominantly from ethnically diverse, LGBTQ+ and working-class backgrounds. Currently, 52% of participants are from ethnically diverse backgrounds; 43% identify as disabled; 54% as neurodivergent; 49% as LGBTQ+; and 55% live in areas ranked within the most deprived 30% nationally.

The charity has over 600 active members and engages hundreds of young people annually. Our award-winning work is recognised both nationally and internationally.

Over the past 12 months:

Young Identity has continued to demonstrate strong demand for its work. The charity supported 603 active members, delivered over 200 workshops, facilitated more than 1,000 young people visits, and enabled over 50 young people to progress through structured development and progression pathways. In addition, Young Identity reached audiences of over 20,000 people annually through its public programmes and events.

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Particular highlights include:

1. Voice.Sealed.Shut (Poetic Theatre Production)

The development of Voice.Sealed.Shut, along with the wider poetic production strand, represented a significant artistic milestone for Young Identity. The project brought together a new cohort of emerging poets and performers who took part in a complete creative journey. This included script development, devising, rehearsal, ensemble building and public performance. The work drew on Young Identity's long-standing practice of nurturing young voices through poetry, performance and mentorship and it aligned with the organisation's mission to provide high-quality artistic opportunities for young people across Greater Manchester.

Voice.Sealed.Shut explored themes that resonated strongly with participants and audiences. These included ambition, apathy, emotional resilience and the lived experiences of students who are negotiating their futures within challenging social and educational landscapes. The creative approach encouraged young people to examine their personal narratives and to transform these reflections into a poetic theatrical piece. The depth of the writing and the honesty of the performances were praised by audience members, partners and the wider Young Identity community.

For many of the young poets involved, this was the first time they had the opportunity to perform a poetic theatrical piece in a professional theatre space. Z- Arts generously provided the venue as part of its commitment to supporting the creative development of young writers. This partnership with Young Identity made it possible for the group to rehearse, refine and present the work in an environment that valued youth-led creativity and artistic ambition.

Participant feedback reflected a strong sense of confidence gained through the process. Many reported that the project helped them to grow as writers, performers and collaborators. The production also contributed to Young Identity's broader programme of artistic development, showcasing the talent within the organisation and strengthening pathways into professional creative practice. Voice.Sealed.Shut demonstrated the power of poetry to connect communities, to reflect young people's realities with integrity and to offer a platform where new voices can emerge with clarity and purpose.

One Mic Stand

One Mic Stand continued to be one of Manchester's most influential platforms for youth spoken word, offering a welcoming space where emerging artists, alumni and professional poets come together to perform, learn and build community. The series has

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become a cornerstone of Young Identity's artistic identity, reflecting our commitment to nurturing new voices and celebrating the diversity of contemporary poetry.

A significant highlight of the year was the special edition of One Mic Stand delivered in London at Tara Theatre. This event was part of our expanding national reach and demonstrated the growing reputation of Young Identity within the wider literary landscape. Young people from Manchester shared the stage with London-based poets, alumni who have progressed into professional creative practice, and established spoken word artists who recognised the importance of platforms that champion youth-led expression. The atmosphere reflected the spirit of One Mic Stand, which centres authenticity, creative freedom and intergenerational exchange.

The partnership with the Forward Prizes Youth Summit further elevated the work. Young Identity collaborated closely with Forward Arts Foundation to engage young writers in workshops, masterclasses and performance opportunities. A key moment of pride was the Youth Summit Slam, which was won by a Young Identity member. This achievement highlighted the quality of our development programmes and affirmed the organisation's leadership in cultivating original voices who can compete and excel on national stages. Participants described the summit as inspiring, encouraging and transformative, with many recognising it as an important stepping stone in their creative journeys.

Across the year Young Identity continued to produce four One Mic Stand events, with one designed as a national or international night that connects our community with wider networks of poets and cultural partners. These events showcase the vibrancy of Manchester's spoken word scene and create opportunities for collaboration, artistic growth and visibility for young people who may not otherwise access professional platforms.

One Mic Stand remains a vital part of Young Identity's mission. It strengthens confidence, develops performance skills, builds audience engagement and affirms the power of the spoken word to bring people together. The growth of the platform, both locally and nationally, demonstrates the lasting impact of sustained investment in youth creativity.

2. Creating Connections Hubs: Deepened Quality and Artistic Growth

Creative Connections continued to play an important role in Young Identity's mission to widen access to high-quality creative opportunities for young people. Over the past twelve months, the programme has delivered a series of creative writing and performance workshops in Central Library (AIU), HOME, OT Creative Space.

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Additionally, through our partnership with Respect and Dignity Arts, we support the delivery of creative workshops for young people in Nelson.

These Creative writing and performance hubs have created consistent points of engagement that supported young people who might not otherwise encounter poetry or spoken word.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, we have recognised a significant change in the nature of arts participation and in the ways young people engage with the cultural sector.

Although attendance dipped slightly during some terms, the smaller group sizes allowed facilitators to concentrate more fully on individual development. This created an environment where thoughtful critique, attentive mentoring and close reading of original work could flourish.

Each hub followed a twelve-week structure that enabled facilitators to guide participants through a well-paced creative curriculum. Workshops explored writing techniques, performance skills, storytelling, emotional expression and critical reflection. Young people were encouraged to draw from their lived experience and to use poetry as a space for personal growth. As a result, the writing produced within the programme became increasingly refined, and there was a noticeable strengthening of artistic quality across all hubs.

Creative Connections also provided important pathways into the wider Young Identity ecosystem. Participants were signposted to opportunities such as One Mic Stand, editorial projects, commissions, festivals and the Young Producers Group. Several young people progressed from their hub into further development programmes, demonstrating the value of sustained engagement and consistent mentorship. Facilitators reported increased confidence among participants, greater willingness to take creative risks and stronger bonds within the groups.

The programme contributed to Young Identity's broader commitment to community-rooted artistic practice. It created safe spaces for dialogue, encouraged peer support and fostered a sense of belonging. Creative Connections remains a key strand of our work, offering young people the chance to build skills, develop their craft and grow as writers and performers within a supportive network of artists, facilitators and partners.

3. Creating Wordsmiths: Young Identity's Schools Programme

Young Identity's schools work continued to grow in depth and impact over the past twelve months, with significant outcomes for young people participating in the Creative Wordsmiths Programme. This programme remained central to the charity's schools delivery, providing high-quality poetry and spoken word workshops that supported

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students to develop confidence, imagination and critical thinking. Engagement extended across a range of partner schools including: William Hulme's Grammar School, Altrincham Grammar School, Trinity Church of England School, St Paul's and Moorlands Junior School. Each school received a tailored programme designed to meet the specific needs of its students, delivered through assemblies, classroom workshops and extended creative projects.

Workshops encouraged young people to explore identity, climate change, equality, heritage and personal storytelling. Facilitators created safe and supportive spaces in which students were encouraged to reflect on their lived experiences and articulate their ideas with clarity and creative confidence. This approach reflects Young Identity's long-standing ethos of nurturing young writers through active listening, high-quality teaching and thoughtful mentorship. Teachers consistently reported positive impacts on literacy confidence, presentation skills and emotional expression, particularly among students who had previously struggled to find a voice within traditional classroom settings.

A range of skilled facilitators contributed to this strand of delivery. Poets from Young Identity's progression pathways played an important role in leading sessions and modelling professional creative practice for students. They were supported by members of the core staff team and guest freelance poets who brought a wide range of styles and artistic perspectives into schools. This combination of early-career artists and experienced practitioners enriched the learning environment and demonstrated clear progression routes for young people wishing to continue their writing beyond the classroom.

Alongside classroom-based activity Young Identity delivered performances, assemblies and celebration events that enabled students to share their work with peers, parents and wider school communities. These events reinforced confidence building and demonstrated the transformative power of spoken word when young people take ownership of the stage and speak with authenticity. Partnerships with schools also extended to CPD training for teachers seeking to integrate creative writing more confidently into their teaching practice.

Overall, the Schools and Creative Wordsmiths Programme has become a vital route for widening access to the arts and strengthening the creative lives of young people across Greater Manchester and East Lancashire. Through consistent delivery high-quality facilitation and strong relationships with schools, this strand continues to inspire young writers and support the development of the next generation of confident communicators.

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4. Creating Exchange: International Creative Exchanges

Creating Exchange is Young Identity's international programme, which supports artists to develop their practice through meaningful exchange with practitioners and artists from around the world.

During 2024 - April 2025 Young Identity strengthened its international footprint through a series of high quality artistic exchanges, performances and partnerships. These activities formed part of our Creative Exchange and International Programme strands, which aim to broaden opportunities for young artists, deepen cultural understanding and build creative networks across borders. These activities sit within Young Identity's wider international programme which has a long history of producing globally minded artists who have performed and collaborated in locations such as Berlin, Amsterdam, New York and Rotterdam. The work is guided by a belief that creative exchange supports artistic excellence, encourages personal growth and builds cultural bridges that enrich both local and international communities.

Our vibrant programme of activity included representatives of One Mic Stand travelling to Berlin and Rotterdam to share work, collaborate with local partners and present performances influenced by Manchester's spoken word culture. These events placed young poets in dialogue with international artists and communities, encouraging cultural exchange, shared learning and inspiration. They also provided an important opportunity for emerging writers to showcase their talent in established European arts spaces and to build relationships that strengthen our long-term international connections.

Across the year, the impact of this strand has been clear. Young people gained confidence through travel and cultural exchange, partners recognised the professionalism and talent of our artists and audiences responded with enthusiasm to performances that reflect contemporary lived experience. The programme has shown that youth-driven poetry and performance can move with ease across countries and cultures. It has also demonstrated the value of sustained investment in opportunities that allow young people to learn, collaborate and create within a global context.

Young Identity enters the next year with strong international relationships and a growing reputation as a cultural organisation that supports young people to speak boldly on both national and world stages.

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5. Rhymes and Bars: EP, Workshops and Industry Showcase

Rhymes and Bars, delivered in partnership with Youth Music and KYSO, became one of Young Identity's most ambitious cross-artform programmes of the year. The project supported young people to explore the meeting point between poetry, lyricism and music production. It offered a structured pathway into songwriting, vocal development, live performance and digital skills. Sessions were delivered by a blend of Young Identity facilitators, visiting producers and early career artists who guided participants through the process of shaping original work for recording and performance.

The programme opened space for young creatives who wished to deepen their artistic practice beyond the written page. Participants learned about studio etiquette, beat making, collaborative writing, mic technique and the creative use of digital audio tools. They also gained confidence in navigating professional music environments. Many of the young people involved described the project as transformative, noting that it provided space to express identity and emotion in ways they had not previously experienced.

Despite early logistical challenges, the project concluded with significant success. Young people recorded original tracks that reflected their voices and experiences. A public EP listening session allowed them to present this work to peers and industry guests. This was paired with an industry insight panel where music professionals shared guidance on career development, networking, creative resilience and entry routes into the sector. The event created an important bridge between youth creativity and real-world industry knowledge.

The final showcase became a major highlight of the year, attracting an audience of more than 70 young people along with parents, community members and partners. The atmosphere reflected the pride and energy of the group as they performed new work shaped through the project. The success of the event also demonstrated the value of Youth Music's support and the importance of creating accessible routes into music for young people who may face barriers to participation.

Rhymes and Bars strengthened Young Identity's commitment to cross-disciplinary artistic growth. The project produced high-quality creative outcomes, encouraged a new generation of performers and established a foundation for future music-based collaboration across Greater Manchester. It also highlighted the importance of partnership, with KYSO playing a central role in ensuring that young people had the tools, skills and encouragement needed to explore music and spoken word with confidence and purpose.

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Special thanks

Special thanks to our funders: Arts Council England, National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund, Youth Music, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Garfield Weston, The Goethe Institute (Cultural Bridge programme), L&Q Foundation, and commissioning partners (including Hyndburn Borough Council and Lancashire County Council in support of Respect & Dignity) and individual donations.

Financial review

Throughout the financial year, Young Identity's financial team has diligently monitored and managed our resources, ensuring our stability. Our focus is on optimising operational efficiency, identifying new revenue streams, and making necessary adjustments to our expenditures to enhance our overall financial stability. We continuously assess our finances to prioritise initiatives that will foster long-term sustainability. Our commitment to financial discipline remains unwavering, and we proactively make adjustments to ensure a robust financial foundation for the future.

Financial Overview

Year-End Financial Overview

1. Introduction

The financial year remained stable, with income and expenditure closely aligned to projections. Our mixed revenue model, combining earned income and grants continued to effectively support our operations. No significant variances arose, and overall we stayed on track with regards to income and expenditure throughout the year.

2. Revenue Overview

Total income for the year was £460,616. Revenue is derived by earned income and grants, with 94% derived from grant funding and 6% from earned income.

- **Earned Income:** Our earned income remained consistent, contributing £29,317. This included revenue from commissions, book sales, donations & bank interest. We met our targets for these revenue streams, and performance was steady across the year.
- **Grants:** Grant funding for the year totalled £431,299. We successfully secured funding from Arts Council England (NPO), National Lottery (Reaching Communities), The National Foundation for Youth Music

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(Trailblazer Fund), The Goethe Institute (Cultural Bridge programme) and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (Arts Fund). These funds were directed towards our programme costs, operational costs and additional project work, contributing to the stability and growth of our operations.

3. Expenditure Overview Total expenditure for the year was £348,218. The budgeted costs were closely followed, with no unexpected major outlays.

- **Operational Costs:** Operational expenditures accounted for £265,586. This included operational expenses, such as salaries, office costs, programme delivery. These costs were in line with expectations and contributed to the smooth functioning of day-to-day activities.
- **Programme and Project Costs:** Programme-related spending made up £82,632. We successfully kept costs within the planned budget, ensuring that projects were delivered efficiently.

4. Financial Performance and Stability Throughout the year, our financial performance remained stable. We successfully balanced income and expenditure, with no unexpected fluctuations. The reserve position remains strong, and we are well-positioned to continue our operations without concern for liquidity or cash flow challenges.

- **Surplus/Deficit:** The overall financial result for the year was a surplus, which reflects our careful management of resources. This result takes into account the recognition of income, excluding deferred income, which will be recognised in the coming periods
- **Cash Flow and Liquidity:** Our cash flow position remains healthy and will support ongoing and upcoming activities. We have maintained adequate reserves to ensure that we can meet both our short-term obligations and long-term goals.

5. Conclusion In summary, this has been a year of financial stability, with income and expenditure tracking as expected. We successfully managed our mixed revenue model of earned income and grants, ensuring that our financial position remained strong and sustainable. We look forward to building on this foundation in the coming year.

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Acknowledgements and Advancements

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to our funders, customers and contributors for their unwavering support and commitment during this challenging period. We recognise the hurdles the arts sector faces and the UK as a whole and are confident in our collective ability to overcome them and emerge stronger.

As we approach the new financial year, our focus will be on implementing prudent financial practices, exploring new revenue opportunities, and strategically managing our expenses to restore and enhance our financial health. Our commitment to excellence, innovation, and financial prudence will remain steadfast as we strive for continued success.

Reserves policy and risk management

The trustees review the level of reserves that is prudent for Wordsmith Awards to have when agreeing to the annual budget. Consideration is given to the future strategy, potential redundancy liabilities, and any other significant factors that should be taken into account if the charity were to wind up or move to new premises. The Trustees review the charity's reserves policy annually and have agreed that the minimum provision required for winding down is £52,944. The remaining unrestricted reserves are to support ongoing core activities and projects.

Our Commitment to Growth and Impact

As a leading literature and performance organisation, Young Identity is dedicated to improving the quality and reach of our work while addressing contemporary trends in creativity, well-being, and inclusivity. Our plans for the next year reflect this commitment.

Expanding Access to Creativity

We aim to increase participation among young people from protected characteristics and lower socio-economic groups in *Creating Connections*, our weekly community creative writing and performance workshops. These workshops are designed to nurture creativity, self-expression, and a sense of belonging.

Pathways to Arts Careers

We remain committed to helping young people from diverse backgrounds progress into careers in the arts through our *Creating Pathways* programme. By offering practical support, mentoring and opportunities, we aim to equip young creatives with the skills and connections they need to succeed professionally.

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Publishing Diverse Voices

Through the continued development of No Disclaimer Press, Young Identity will strengthen the representation of diverse young artists within poetry publishing. The charity also aims to expand distribution beyond online sales by developing relationships with national and independent book retailers including Waterstones Blackwell's and specialist outlets. This will enable publications to be more widely accessible within Young Adult and Poetry sections. This approach responds to the growing popularity of poetry among 16 to 25-year-olds and ensures that Young Identity's work reaches broader and more diverse audiences.

Inspiring Schools Through Poetry

We plan to develop our *Creating Wordsmiths* schools programme, providing students with greater access to poetry and performance in educational settings. By embedding creative writing and spoken word into the curriculum, we aim to inspire confidence, self-expression, and a lifelong appreciation for literature.

Strengthening Financial Sustainability

We will continue to focus on securing additional grant funding and increasing earned income to ensure the organisation's long-term financial health and sustainability.

Structure, governance and management

Young Identity is a charitable incorporated organisation administered by eleven trustees and governed by its constitution dated 27th November 2018. It was registered with the Charity Commission on 10th December 2018.

All trustees are appointed by a vote by the trustees for a minimum term of three years. Trustees are permitted to be reappointed for a maximum of two terms (six years). The minimum number of trustees permitted under the constitution is three, and there is no maximum.

The trustees are charity members; nonetheless, this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity. All trustees give their time voluntarily in their capacity as trustees and receive no benefits for this role. Certain trustees received payments for services provided to the charity outside of their trustee duties. These payments are disclosed, along with any expenses reclaimed from the charity, in note 8 to the accounts.

The trustees of Young Identity perform the usual duties of trustees, including appointing and managing the Artistic Director and Executive Director, setting the strategy, and ensuring compliance with financial and other obligations.

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During the 2024/25 financial year, day-to-day management of the organisation was delegated to the artistic director and executive director, who were responsible for ensuring the charity operations are managed efficiently. The Artistic Director, Executive Director and trustees are responsible for:

- Setting strategic direction in order to fulfil goals agreed upon.
- Employing staff, setting remuneration, and related HR matters;
- Setting and oversight budgets.

Remuneration policy for key management personnel, participants and freelancers

The trustees set the remuneration for the Artistic Director & Executive Director in discussion at a full board meeting and review annually.

Risk Management

The board of trustees and key management personnel maintain a robust and active approach to risk management. Risk management is embedded within Young Identity's operational and governance framework and supports the organisation's ability to deliver its charitable objectives responsibly and sustainably.

The organisation's risk register is reviewed on a quarterly basis to ensure that it remains current, relevant and responsive to both internal and external factors. These reviews take place as part of scheduled board meetings, where risk management is a standing agenda item. The board considers emerging risks, reviews existing controls and agrees on actions to mitigate potential impacts on delivery, governance, finance and safeguarding.

In assessing risk, Young Identity takes into account its appetite for different forms of risk. This includes balancing financial prudence with the creative and artistic risks inherent in supporting young people to develop new work, test ideas and take part in public-facing activity.

This considered approach enables informed decision-making, supporting innovation while maintaining appropriate safeguards. Young Identity's risk management practice reflects its commitment to providing a safe, inclusive and resilient environment for young people, staff, freelancers and audiences. Through regular review and adaptation of its risk management processes, the organisation seeks to anticipate challenges, respond

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effectively to change and continue to fulfil its mission within the literature and arts sector.

Key Risks and Mitigation Measures

Risk Assessment Period: April 2024 to March 2025

Cost of Living Pressures and Changes in Engagement

During the reporting period, the ongoing cost-of-living pressures continued to affect both participant engagement and audience behaviour. An increasing number of young people involved in Young Identity's programmes are balancing paid employment alongside education and caring responsibilities.

This has resulted in less predictable attendance patterns and the need for greater flexibility in programme delivery. Audience engagement has also shifted, with a noticeable increase in late or last-minute booking for events. This reflects wider sector trends and ongoing financial uncertainty for audiences, impacting advance planning and income forecasting.

Mitigation and Management Actions

Flexible delivery models have been embedded across the organisation's programmes. Sessions are offered at varied times, including evenings and occasional weekends, with a combination of in person and online formats to improve accessibility for participants with work or study commitments.

Where funding allows, Young Identity continues to offer bursaries, travel support and paid progression opportunities to reduce financial barriers for young people, particularly those from lower income households. Audience development and communications activity have been adapted to reflect changing booking behaviours. This includes responsive marketing, targeted outreach through community networks and digital platforms, and clearer messaging around access, pricing and value. These approaches aim to sustain engagement while recognising the financial realities facing audiences. The organisation will continue to monitor this risk closely, reviewing data, participant feedback and audience insights to ensure that mitigation measures remain effective and proportionate.

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Financial Sustainability

While securing significant funding, including Arts Council England's NPO status and a multi-year grant from the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund, we face the challenge of developing a mixed-income business model to ensure financial sustainability and support expansion.

Mitigation Strategies:

- **Diversified Income Streams:** Explore additional revenue sources such as merchandise sales, online content monetisation, and corporate partnerships.
- **Strategic Planning:** Implement a comprehensive strategy to meet commissioning income targets, with regular reviews and adjustments based on performance and market conditions.
- **Cost Management:** Monitor and control operational expenses to maintain financial health without compromising programme quality.
By addressing these areas with informed strategies, we aim to navigate the evolving landscape effectively, ensuring the continued success and impact of our organisation.

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Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the period and of its financial position at the end of the period. In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the trustees should follow best practices and:

- 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 proper accounting records that disclose the financial position of the charity with reasonable accuracy at any time and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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

The trustees' annual report has been approved by the trustees on 23rd January 2026 and signed on their behalf by

Name: Lis (Mary Elisabeth) Cordingley
Title: Chair

Independent examiner's report
to the members of
Young Identity

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the period ended 31st March 2025 which are set out on pages 20 to 31.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no 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 charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

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.

Jennifer Daniel FCCA DChA
Slade & Cooper Limited, Chartered Certified Accountants
Beehive Mill, Jersey Street
Manchester, M4 6JG

Date 28th January 2026

Wordsmith Awards
Statement of Financial Activities
for the period ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Income from:					
Charitable activities:	3	292,132	166,299	458,431	400,192
Investments	4	2,185	-	2,185	1,036
Total income		294,317	166,299	460,616	401,228
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:	5	242,667	105,551	348,218	344,728
Total expenditure		242,667	105,551	348,218	344,728
Net income/(expenditure) before net gains/(losses) on investments		51,650	60,748	112,398	56,500
Realised gains/(losses) on investments		-	-	-	-
Unrealised gains/(losses) on		-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	6	51,650	60,748	112,398	56,500
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		51,650	60,748	112,398	56,500
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		105,928	37,584	143,512	87,012
Total funds carried forward		157,578	98,332	255,910	143,512

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Wordsmith Awards
Balance Sheet
as at 31 March 2025

	Note	2025	2024
		£	£
Current assets			
Debtors	10	6,623	2,928
Cash at bank and in hand		278,140	150,274
Total current assets		284,763	153,202
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due in less than one year	11	(28,853)	(9,690)
Net current assets		255,910	143,512
Total assets less current liabilities		255,910	143,512
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	-	-	-
Net assets		255,910	143,512
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds	13	98,332	37,584
Unrestricted income funds	14	157,578	105,928
Total charity funds		255,910	143,512

The notes on pages 23 to 31 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the trustees on 23/01/2026 and signed on their behalf by:

.....
Lis (Mary Elisabeth) Cordingley (Chair)

Notes to the accounts for the period ended 31 March 2025

1 Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgments and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a 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), second edition - October 2019 (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The charity has applied the exemption available to small charities in the Charities SORP (FRS 102) and does not include a Statement of Cash Flows in these Financial Statements.

The accounts (financial statements) have been prepared to give a 'true and fair view' and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following 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), second edition - October 2019, rather than the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice effective from 1 April 2005 which has since been withdrawn.

Wordsmith Awards meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

There are no key judgments which the trustees have made which have a significant effect on the accounts.

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 amount of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

c Income

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

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

d Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

Wordsmith Awards

Notes to the accounts for the period ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

e Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

f 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.

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

g Debtors

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

h 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.

i 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.

j 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 with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

2 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation, registered as a charity in England & Wales.

Wordsmith Awards

Notes to the accounts for the period ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

3 Income from charitable activities

Current reporting period	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2025 £
Commissions	22,519	-	22,519
National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities NW Region)	-	91,177	91,177
The National Foundation for Youth Music	-	722	722
Goethe Institute (Cultural Bridges)	-	4,400	4,400
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	70,000	70,000
Arts Council England NPO grant	250,000	-	250,000
Garfield Weston	15,000	-	15,000
Other income	4,613	-	4,613
Total	292,132	166,299	458,431
Previous reporting period	<i>Unrestricted £</i>	<i>Restricted £</i>	<i>Total 2024 £</i>
Commissions	39,401	-	39,401
National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities NW Region)	-	91,177	91,177
The National Foundation for Youth Music	-	13,713	13,713
Arts Council England NPO grant	250,000	-	250,000
Other income	5,901	-	5,901
Total	295,302	104,890	400,192

4 Investment income

	2025 £	2024 £
Bank interest income	2,185	1,036
	2,185	1,036

All of the charity's investment income arises from money held in interest bearing deposit accounts. All investment income is unrestricted.

Wordsmith Awards

Notes to the accounts for the period ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

5 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Salaries, Freelance, other staff costs	291,393	279,474
Insurance	1,935	1,269
Marketing	7,566	11,831
Office expenses	24,088	23,475
Activity costs	11,897	19,664
Professional fees	8,421	6,878
Governance costs	2,918	2,137
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	348,218	344,728
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2025 £	2024 £
Restricted expenditure	105,551	89,949
Unrestricted expenditure	242,667	254,779
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	348,218	344,728
	<hr/>	<hr/>

6 Net income/(expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):	2025 £	2024 £
Independent examiner's fee - accountancy fee	1,500	1,400
Independent examiner's fees - examination fee	425	400
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Wordsmith Awards

Notes to the accounts for the period ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

7 Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	209,085	51,780
Social security costs	8,461	54
Pension costs	4,835	1,335
	<u>222,381</u>	<u>53,169</u>

Staff have gradually been employed on contract from December 2023, having previously worked freelance.

No employee has employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2024: Nil).

The average number of staff employed was 7 (2024: 5).

The average full time equivalent number of staff employed was 5.4 (2024 from December 2023: 4.2).

The key management personnel of the charity are the Chair of trustees, the CEO and Artistic Director and the Executive Director.

The total employee benefits (including employer NI and pension costs) of the key management personnel of the charity were £104,437 (2024 (trustees only): £nil)

8 Trustee remuneration and expenses, and related party transactions

Three (2024:3) trustees received travel and subsistence expenses totalling £465 during the year (2024:£577).

Two trustees (Nasima Begum and Tolu Agbelusi) received fees of £4,525 and £300 respectively as workshop facilitators during this period (2024:£5,675 and £600 respectively). Tolu Agbelusi also received £300 for support with a funding bid (2024: nil).

Toluwa Productions, a company run by Tolu Agbelusi, was paid £4,500 in this period for legal support (2024: nil).

Toluwa Productions paid in £1,346 of co-production fees on the Young Poets Summit project. There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity, including guarantees, during the year.

9 Corporation tax

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within Chapter 3 of Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. No tax charges have arisen in the charity.

10 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Prepayments and accrued income	6,623	2,928
	<u>6,623</u>	<u>2,928</u>

Wordsmith Awards

Notes to the accounts for the period ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

11 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Other creditors and accruals	6,509	3,628
Deferred income	17,070	4,000
Taxation and social security costs	5,274	2,062
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	28,853	9,690
	<hr/>	<hr/>

12 Deferred income

	2025 £	2024 £
Deferred grant brought forward	4,000	-
Grant received	17,070	4,000
Released to income from charitable activities	(4,000)	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Deferred grant carried forward	17,070	4,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>

13 Analysis of movements in restricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2025 £
National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities NW Region)	24,838	91,177	(92,133)	-	23,882
The National Foundation for Youth Music Trailblazer Fund	12,746	722	(13,043)	-	425
The Goethe Institute Cultural Bridge Programme	-	4,400	(375)	-	4,025
The Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	70,000	-	-	70,000
	<hr/> 37,584 <hr/>	<hr/> 166,299 <hr/>	<hr/> (105,551) <hr/>	<hr/> - <hr/>	<hr/> 98,332 <hr/>

Previous reporting period

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
National Lottery Community Fund (Reaching Communities NW Region)	22,643	91,177	(88,982)	-	24,838
The National Foundation for Youth Music Trailblazer Fund	-	13,713	(967)	-	12,746
	<hr/> 22,643 <hr/>	<hr/> 104,890 <hr/>	<hr/> (89,949) <hr/>	<hr/> - <hr/>	<hr/> 37,584 <hr/>

Name of restricted fund

National Lottery Community Fund
(Reaching Communities NW Region)

The National Foundation for Youth Music
Trailblazer Fund

The Goethe Institute Cultural Bridge
Programme

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Description, nature and purposes of the fund

The National Lottery's Reaching Communities fund provides grants to organisations that work to improve lives and strengthen communities across the UK. It supports projects that address social challenges, promote inclusion, and empower people by funding initiatives that create positive, lasting change.

The National Foundation for Youth Music's Trailblazer Fund provides grants to support innovative, short-term projects that give children and young people access to music-making opportunities. It funds organisations testing new ideas, developing creative approaches, and reaching those who might otherwise miss out on engaging with music.

Funding from the Cultural Bridge Programme enabled UK and German young artists and students to collaborate through art film screenings, discussions on creative techniques, and a memoir writing workshop, deepening their artistic practice and international connections.

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation supports Young Identity's core work, its partnership with Respect & Dignity Arts, and the development of new programmes across Greater Manchester and East Lancashire.

Wordsmith Awards

Notes to the accounts for the period ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

14 Analysis of movement in unrestricted funds

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2025 £
General fund	105,928	294,317	(242,667)	-	157,578
	<u>105,928</u>	<u>294,317</u>	<u>(242,667)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>157,578</u>

Previous reporting period

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	As at 31 March 2024 £
General fund	64,369	296,338	(254,779)	-	105,928
	<u>64,369</u>	<u>296,338</u>	<u>(254,779)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>105,928</u>

Name of fund

General fund

Description, nature and purposes of the fund

The free reserves after allowing for all designated funds

15 Analysis of net assets between funds

Current Reporting Period

	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Fixed asset investments	-	-	-	-
Other net current assets/(liabilities)	157,578	-	98,332	255,910
Creditors of more than one year	-	-	-	-
	<u>157,578</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>98,332</u>	<u>255,910</u>
Total	<u>157,578</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>98,332</u>	<u>255,910</u>

Previous Reporting Period

	General fund £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Fixed asset investments	-	-	-	-
Other net current assets/(liabilities)	105,928	-	37,584	143,512
Creditors of more than one year	-	-	-	-
	<u>105,928</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>37,584</u>	<u>143,512</u>
Total	<u>105,928</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>37,584</u>	<u>143,512</u>

Wordsmith Awards

Notes to the accounts for the period ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

16 Prior Year Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure account)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:					
Charitable activities:	3	295,302	104,890	400,192	192,621
Investments	4	1,036	-	1,036	62
Total income		296,338	104,890	401,228	192,683
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:	5	254,779	89,949	344,728	232,211
Total expenditure		254,779	89,949	344,728	232,211
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	6	41,559	14,941	56,500	(39,528)
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		41,559	14,941	56,500	(39,528)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		64,369	22,643	87,012	126,540
Total funds carried forward		105,928	37,584	143,512	87,012

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.