

Registered number
03691656

Women's Prize Trust

Accounts

30 June 2022

Women's Prize Trust Company Information

The trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, present the annual report together with the financial statements of the charitable company for the year ended 30 June 2022

Directors

Debbie Woskow
Anna Ollard
Alison Barrow
Sandeep Mahal
Joanna Prior - Resigned 28.02.22
Felicity Blunt
Louise Jury
Anita Anand
Aliceson Robinson
Scarlett Curtis
Raifa Rafiq
Sarah Davis – Appointed 11.10. 2021
Jenny Fry - Appointed 26.01.2023
Zainab Weller - Appointed 26.01.2023

Secretary

Lilidh Kendrick - Appointed 24.11.21
Rosie Beaumont-Thomas - Resigned 24.11.21

Accountants

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Kettering
Northamptonshire
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Registered office

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London
EC4A 3BF

Registered number

03691656

Women's Prize Trust

CHAIR'S REPORT

I am honoured to be writing this letter for the first time as the new Chair of the Board for the Women's Prize Trust. The Women's Prize Trust works to champion access and equity for women in the world of books, always celebrating women's stories and voices. For over 27 years, the Women's Prize for Fiction – the greatest celebration of female creativity in the world - has celebrated, rewarded, inspired and encouraged women writers and all readers.

From 2018, when we became a registered charity, we began to do even more. In addition to the Prize, we now run partnerships, projects and programs, all designed to unlock potential, boost confidence, increase skills and knowledge and ultimately to dissolve the barriers women may face when telling their story. We work with women writers at all stages of their creative and publishing journey, mentoring and encouraging them as well as giving them very practical help and support.

For instance, Discoveries; our flagship talent discovery and development programme, aims to find the writers of tomorrow, today. We're particularly focussing on helping the women who may not have yet had access or opportunity for a creative life. In its inaugural year of 2021, there were over 2,500 entries, 73% of which were from writers who lived outside London. In 2022, this figure rose to 76%, with 25% of entries from women over 55; in fact, there were more entries from women aged between 65-74, than 18-24. We were delighted to be reaching an often under-served older generation of creative women.

This year's winner, Sui Annukka, accepted an offer of representation from Curtis Brown literary agency, and I'm delighted to say she has already received her first commercial writing commission. Sui said "In more ways than I can say, writing has saved me. The opportunity to now share my work more widely is a huge privilege".

Our plan is to continue developing and scaling this programme and others like it, breaking down barriers to opportunity and offering practical support for women to own their story: the winner of Discoveries receives an offer of representation from a literary agent and £5000. We are proud to deliver impact beyond just a single winner too; creative teaching and mentoring for the longlist, free tutorials with a panel of experts to help all interested in submission. In the year to come, we plan to expand awareness and access to the programme, directly partnering with local libraries, reading groups, organisations and institutions and providing them with materials and running events for their local populations.

We are very proud of the difference we are making to readers as well as writers too, for instance with the Women's Prize Podcast; it's thriving year-on-year and growing into a entertaining and joyful experience. Our social media footprint and distribution of free online resources has also grown, inspiring many millions more readers with more characters, stories and reading inspiration to sample, connect over and enjoy. We plan to continue scaling this free content distribution for readers in the years to come.

The Women's Prize Trust cares about reading, writing, compassion and feminism and we focus our impact accordingly. We're able to deliver with the help of a powerful and passion network of partners, for whom we are very grateful. I'd like to acknowledge the work of the Board of Trustees, ensuring robust governance and oversight and thank the talented and energetic executive team in continually striving for an impactful, sustainable and resilient organisation that makes a difference to thousands of writers' futures and readers' health and happiness.

Anna Ollard
Chair of the Board of Trustees
20th January 2023

Women's Prize Trust Trustees Report

The trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ending 30th June 2022, which is also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and financial statements for Companies Act purposes.

Reference and administrative information on page 1 forms part of this report.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the memorandum and articles of association and 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).

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 5th January 1999 and registered as a charity on 18th December 2018.

The company was established under a memorandum of association on 24th July 2018 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 the financial accounts.

Trustees

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law and are members of the charity, are as follows:

Anita Anand
Alison Barrow
Felicity Blunt
Scarlett Curtis
Sarah Davis
Louise Jury
Sandeep Mahal
Anna Ollard (chair)
Raifa Rafiq
Aliceson Robinson
Debbie Woskow
Joanna Prior - resigned 28.02.2022

Appointment of trustees

Under the terms of the company's Articles of Association, there shall be no fewer than eight and no more than fifteen trustees at any one time.

Trustees' term of office is four years, plus an optional additional four years. Trustees elected as Chair can be appointed for a third consecutive term.

Appointing new trustees is organised via a recruitment process run by the nominations committee. During the term of this report, one trustee resigned, and the charity ran a recruitment process for a new chair via a nominations sub-committee supported by an independent agency.

Trustee induction and training

New trustees are provided with a Trustee Handbook outlining their legal obligations under charity and company law, and are made aware of the content of the Articles of Association, the decision-making process and the financial performance and plans of the charity.

Organisation

Trustees are responsible for the overall administration of the charity and for making strategic decisions. The implementation of strategic plans is carried out by the Executive, which includes:

- Charity Director who receives an annual fee plus reimbursement of expenses
- Commercial Director who receives an annual fee plus reimbursement of expenses
- Founder Director who receives an annual fee plus reimbursement of expenses
- Administrator who receives an annual salary

The charity also has a roster of contractors and service providers to assist in the delivery and promotion of programmes and activities. Payment of fees to other consultants, agencies and suppliers are negotiated individually based on the services provided, taking account of expertise and experience, and reviewed on an annual basis.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of the Women's Prize Trust 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.

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.

Governance

During the year, the organisation embarked on a governance programme with a policy review timetable and a series of new sub-committees to manage the growing complexity of our work.

We now operate the following:

- Equality and Diversity Sub-Committee (chaired by Sandeep Mahal)
- Finance and Personnel Sub-Committee (chaired by Anna Ollard)
- Nominations Sub-Committee (chaired by Aliceson Robinson)

The sub-committee structure allows trustees to engage with our work and operations at a deeper level and helps the organisation to take forward significant areas of work on a more formal basis. During the year the groups all established or reviewed Terms of Reference and met quarterly.

Risk Management

The trustees examine on a quarterly basis the major strategic, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to minimise these risks.

Purposes and aims

This report looks at what the Trust 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 Trust has brought to those groups of people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the Trustees ensure the trust's aims, objectives and activities remained focused on its stated purposes.

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.

The Trustees have complied with the duty in section 4 of the 2006 Charities Act to have due regard to guidance published by the Charity Commission. In particular, the Trustees refer to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit both when reviewing how well past activities have satisfied the Trust's stated objectives, and when planning how future activities may best continue to do so.

In 2021/2022, the Trust has undertaken work to develop our governance and decision-making processes to ensure all activity drives our core purpose, as well as focusing on embedding social impact across everything we do.

The main means through which the Trust's objective is met is the organisation and promotion each year of a series of activities designed for public benefit.

Objects of the charity

The Women's Prize Trust's objects are:

'Restricted specifically to the advancement of the art of literature for the public benefit and in particular to foster and promote literature of merit written by women in all its forms, including by the encouragement of diversity and greater gender equality amongst writers and by the award of an annual prize for a full-length novel written by a woman of any nationality and published in English.'

About the Women's Prize Trust

The Women's Prize Trust is the home of women's voices, championing women writers on a global stage and nurturing new writing talent for the public's benefit. The Trust empowers all women to raise their voice and own their story, shining a spotlight on outstanding and ambitious fiction by women from anywhere in the world, regardless of their age, race, nationality or background.

The Trust's charitable programmes are aimed at supporting two core beneficiary groups: readers and writers. We work with aspiring and emerging women writers at all stages of development, providing coaching, inspiration and networks, to unlock potential, boost confidence, and increase skills and knowledge. We are providing access routes to creative self-expression to women of all backgrounds to diversify the talent pipeline, and helping to dismantle the barriers writers tell us they face, including lack of confidence, absence of role models, and scarcity of information around the publishing process.

We support all readers, men and women, showcasing the very best writing by women through an online library that illuminates diverse perspectives. We place access to books at the heart of our work, ensuring that women's stories are heard by those who need them most. We work with readers from under-represented backgrounds, providing free books, resources and a ready-made community to increase empathy, expand imaginations and empower connection.

The Trust showcases the very best writing by women for everyone through the Women's Prize for Fiction; established in 1996, the Prize is one of the most respected and celebrated literary awards in the world, honouring outstanding, ambitious, original fiction written in English by women. In any year, the primary objective of the Women's Prize Trust is to ensure that the Women's Prize for Fiction is awarded, so that the organisation is ensuring women are represented in literature and advocating for women's equality through equity in society.

Activities, Achievements and Impact

The Women's Prize for Fiction

The Women's Prize for Fiction is awarded annually to the female author of the best full-length novel written in English published in the UK in the relevant year, irrespective of nationality and citizenship.

The Prize follows an impartial and robust judging process, decided every year by an independent judging panel, who base their deliberations for the longlist, shortlist and winner on three core tenets which have remained the same since the Prize was founded: excellence, originality and accessibility. The winner receives a £30,000 prize, endowed by an anonymous donor, and the 'Bessie', a limited-edition bronze figurine by sculptor Grizel Niven.

In its 27 years, the Prize has cemented its reputation as the greatest international celebration of female creativity, helping to launch and define writing careers and making a significant impact on the long-term profile and sales of associated authors. The Prize is accompanied by a programme of reader activity to promote high-quality fiction by women to the widest audience. The Prize's founding purpose of advocating for the fair representation of women in literature – elevating women's voices so that they are as prevalent and valued as those of men – remains just as vital in today's publishing landscape.

Women's Prize for Fiction 2021: Winner

The annual Women's Prize for Fiction cycle traditionally culminates with the winner announced at a live, in-person award ceremony in June. However, due to ongoing disruptions and uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, we took the decision to postpone the winner ceremony twice in 2021, eventually holding the celebration at Bedford Square Gardens in September.

The winner of the 2021 Women's Prize for Fiction was announced as part of a hybrid, live and digital, ceremony, allowing people to tune in from across the globe to join in the celebration. The winner was *Piranesi* by Susanna Clarke, a fantastical tale about a man living alone in a labyrinthine house. *Piranesi* is Clarke's second novel, published 17 years after her debut and written whilst living with a chronic illness. Susanna's powerful acceptance speech on stage talked about the power of shared communing and creative expression the award had facilitated to aid positive wellbeing: *'As some of you will know, Piranesi was nurtured, written and publicised during a long illness. It is the book that I never thought I would get to write – I never thought I'd be well enough. So this feels doubly extraordinary; I'm doubly honoured to be here. And my hope is that my standing here tonight will encourage other women who are incapacitated by long illness.'*

The news was met with a universally positive reception from readers and the media alike, with commentators praising the honouring of often overlooked 'genre fiction'. The announcement was filmed from Bedford Square Gardens and announced live on Radio 4 Front Row, meaning that a global community of readers could tune in and take part in the celebrations. The winner's announcement reached 8.7 million people on social media and the livestream gained 15,000 views across YouTube, Twitter and Facebook, a 14% increase year-on-year.

Women's Prize for Fiction 2022

The call for submissions for the 2022 Women's Prize for Fiction opened in September 2021, followed by the announcement of the judging panel in November. This year's chair of judges was Mary Ann Sieghart, former Assistant Editor of *The Times*, broadcaster and bestselling author. She was joined by Lorraine Candy, award-winning journalist and editor; Dorothy Koomson, global bestselling novelist; Anita Sethi, literary journalist and author; and Pandora Sykes, journalist, podcaster, broadcaster and author.

Throughout the longlist and shortlist promotional period, from March to June 2022, the Trust devised a programme of events, digital content strands and campaigns to support readers and bring them along on the Prize journey, with involvement from the judges and authors. Through this activity, we sought to broaden the reach of the Prize to give the authors a global platform, increase engagement with the books and the issues they explore, and ultimately promote the key goals of the Women's Prize Trust – to provide access to reading for all and ensure all readers feel represented by the wide range of stories available.

The winner of the 2022 Women's Prize for Fiction was announced in June at an awards ceremony in London, livestreamed across the globe. The winner this year was American-Canadian author and Zen Buddhist priest Ruth Ozeki with *The Book of Form and Emptiness*. Ozeki's novel, which explores themes including grief and loss, neurodiversity and coming of age, was praised by the judges for its '*sparkling writing, warmth, intelligence and poignancy*'. At the awards ceremony, Ruth Ozeki gave a generous speech, acknowledging the crucial support women give one another: '*I would not be here without the support of women and women's institutions. This is why this Prize is so important.*'

In analysis completed by *The Bookseller* in January 2023, three spots in the top ten of authors boosted by literary prizes were awarded to the Women's Prize for Fiction, with two shortlistees (Elif Shafak, Meg Mason) and one longlistee (Miranda Cowley Heller) outselling the winner Ruth Ozeki in value. Journalist Tom Tivnan comments, '*This collective success may just be down to what seems a concerted push by the prize of promoting its nominees as a group more than any other award.*' This links to our strategic goals of realising gender parity in the world of books, enabling writing as a career for women, and elevating women's voices.

Events programme for readers

Our Women's Prize LIVE programme comprised a series of virtual and in-person events throughout the year, bringing together readers from all over the world to celebrate the shortlisted titles and interact with the authors.

One of the highlights of the programme was the return of the popular Virtual Shortlist Festival running over three nights in May 2022, which allowed us to deliver content to both an international audience and those UK fans who are unable to attend live events. We paired all six shortlisted authors in conversation with Women's Prize for Fiction Founder Director Kate Mosse, and commissioned readings from leading actors Naomie Harris, Gillian Anderson, Alex Kingston, Jason Isaacs, Louise Brealey and Irene Bedard. We were delighted to partner with Bookshop.org this year to offer a book + ticket option, with the majority of sales profits going to local, independent booksellers across the UK as per Bookshop.org's business model.

Hundreds of viewers per night tuned in from across the world – from Florida to Denmark, deepest Dorset to Nairobi – and engaged in lively conversation in the chat panel, reacting to the readings, expressing opinions on the books' themes, and taking the opportunity to put their questions to the authors.

The following is a selection of feedback from virtual festival attendees, expressing the feeling of shared connection through exploring the shortlisted books together:

'The silver lining of so many events being virtual is that they can be more inclusive and it's such a valuable reminder that like-minded readers live all over the world. It's such a pleasure to share excitement over wonderful literature with those beyond my immediate circle.'

'The main thing I took away was how unifying women's stories are. I loved hearing the questions shared in the comments sections and seeing how each story had influenced people in such unique and transformative ways.'

'I had a sense of becoming part of a community of thoughtful, intelligent women who know the power of the written world to transform people's lives.'

'The conversations with the authors were so insightful. I thought it was wonderful that such an event was offered online; I wouldn't have been able to afford travel and accommodation if it had been in person in London. By making this an online event, you have opened it up to so many more people. Thank you!'

For our live and in-person events offering, we opened Bedford Square Gardens to the public, welcoming people into the site where the Women's Prize for Fiction winner would be crowned, with a full day of events, including:

- A lunchtime live Bookshelfie podcast recording with actor Minnie Driver, hosted by Vick Hope
- An intimate, interactive creative writing 'Mistressclass' with Kate Mosse and Jojo Moyes, with four subsidised places available to women on a low-income
- A sold-out (500 capacity) shortlist readings event with the six authors, moderated by 2022 Chair of judges Mary Ann Sieghart

We encouraged ticket-holders to arrive early to mingle with fellow book lovers, browse the bookshop and enjoy a drink at the bar, making the most of a summer's day in the gardens. Our retail partner Waterstones ran a busy book signing after each event, facilitating further interaction between the authors and their readers.

Feedback from our events programme clearly demonstrates the ways in which reading can empower connection and support positive wellbeing – enabling meaningful interactions between authors and readers, and readers and other readers. Whether it's the quickfire back-and-forth of a Zoom chat box or the excited buzz of a packed-out live audience, there is a clear sense of community at Women's Prize LIVE events.

Supporting readers and reading groups

We continued to work closely with regional reading groups, providing free books and creating engaging resources to facilitate discussions. We ran another year of our successful shortlist shadowing programme for reading groups interested in the Women's Prize for Fiction, in partnership with The Reading Agency, inviting groups to apply to read, discuss and review one of the six shortlisted books and share their experiences on social media.

This year, to tie in with the 'Men Reading Women' campaign (see Campaigning section, below), we put out a call targeting groups with male members, or groups who were interested in inviting male readers to take part in this opportunity. Whether encouraging new groups to form, or building on the strong foundations of existing reading groups, we wanted to explore how gender affected the group members' responses to their allocated books, as well as whether the experience impacted men's willingness to engage with fiction by women and participate in book clubs.

Following the experience, one male reading group member commented:

'Prior to joining the book club I was mostly focused on reading Fantasy and Historical Fiction mixed in with a sprinkling of Crime, mainly because these felt safe and I knew what I was going to get. However, by staying within my comfort zone I began to find that I was often reading books with similar themes and perspectives (largely male) and often written by male authors ... I am now beginning to develop a sense of what I do and don't like and have found some new authors whose work I have really enjoyed. This includes many amazing female writers that I would not have picked up without recommendations from the group.' **A member of Coventry City Council Reader**

All groups received free resources, including bespoke reading guides highlighting key themes within the shortlisted books – from climate change to neurodiversity and gender violence. By offering groups resources, opportunities to interact with authors, and the space to share their reflections in a public forum, we are supporting readers to increase their knowledge and understanding of issues through fiction, as well as recognising the value of their own opinions and developing the ability to express them with confidence.

'We really loved that because of the connection we made with the author, we were able to have her join us for a discussion about the book, something we hadn't done before. Having the guidance of the Women's Prize and The Reading Agency really made us feel like we were part of something bigger. Members enjoyed being exposed to literature that they may not have been had they not participated. ... We felt a sense of community with others reading books from the shortlist ... Fundamentally, it has built on the pre-existing foundation of the book club: collaboration, support, and enthusiastic discussion and inclusive engagement every step of the way.' **The Brunch Book Club**

The reading guides were also made available on the Women's Prize website for free download, as well as free print point-of-sale packs for libraries and bookshops, which included postcards and posters.

To encourage libraries to promote the Women's Prize for Fiction, The Reading Agency offered promotional packs from their online shop for the longlist, shortlist and winner. These packs, containing social media assets and promotional guides, were free to order and download. Packs were sent to multiple representatives from all 210 UK library authorities. Libraries used these materials to create eye-catching displays and promote the books online, as well as, to facilitate reading group discussions.

'It went very well, a number of comments received that people would not normally have read "this type of book" but they were inspired to due to the images and posts.' **Hertfordshire Library**

'The promotional materials drew attention to the books on the shortlist and their authors. One lady commented under our social media post that she didn't know about these books, but now they are on her reading list and she thanked us for recommending them. We have had 101 copies borrowed of the shortlist with 142 on the reserve list.' **Essex Library**

As a result of this reader-focused activity, we were able to build engagement with the longlist and shortlist – with #WomensPrize trending on Twitter on the day of the longlist announcement – and further strengthen a community built around a love for brilliant books by women.

Readers' access

The Trust is committed to providing access to reading for all and gives a number of large books donations to those from low-income backgrounds throughout the year. Donations of books to prisons, schools, community centres (dig out names and rough estimate of numbers) Hounslow Action for Youth, Men's Sheds (50 books), HMP Thameside male prison (50 books), Book Aid International and school libraries (100 books).

As part of our outreach work to make the very best contemporary fiction by women writers accessible to all readers, the Trust made the files of the 16 titles longlisted for the 2022 Women's Prize for Fiction available to the Royal National Institute for Blind People to ensure that visually impaired people have access to the books in a range of formats, including braille, Talking Book and giant print.

Content and Community

We further engaged with and built on our reading community through our digital platforms and social media channels, running weekly Facebook read-alongs, sharing video content and publishing author interviews and open source resources for readers and writers. We offer our community a 365-publishing platform on all things bookish, topical and feminist, focussing particularly on sharing recommendations and utilising user-generated content in order to improve reader experiences, represent a diversity of perspectives and reflect the now.

We continued to produce our hugely popular Women's Prize podcast, with listens now exceeding 500,000. Season 5 ran from 30th March to mid-June 2022, with new host Radio DJ and presenter Vick Hope at the helm. Guests this season included sports presenter Gabby Logan, Love Island host and author Laura Whitmore, Bridgerton actor Adjoa Andoh, musician Joy Crookes, activist Gina Miller and a live episode with Hollywood actor Minnie Driver. The podcast has built up an engaged cultural community, while also promoting the Women's Prize brand on a global platform.

Discoveries

In September 2021 we launched the second year of the Discoveries programme, the Trust's development programme for unpublished and unagented writers, designed to shine a spotlight on diverse and exceptional emerging writing talent in the UK and Ireland. We were delighted to welcome Audible as new partners this year, joining Curtis Brown Literary Agency and Curtis Brown Creative.

Between September 2021 and January 2022, women were invited to submit the opening of a novel in any genre – up to 10,000 words – for free to be considered by the Discoveries judging panel. The panel was chaired again by Women's Prize Founder Director Kate Mosse, who was joined by esteemed authors Ayisha Malik and Irenosen Okojie; Lucy Morris, Curtis Brown literary agent; and Anna Davis, Founder and Managing Director of Curtis Brown Creative writing school.

While the judges are tasked with selecting a longlist, shortlist, winner and one promising 'Scholar', Discoveries is more than a traditional literary prize. Rather it is an impactful development initiative that aims to support all entrants, creating an inclusive space where women feel welcome to write – including those completely new to writing – and helping them to craft their submissions, with the aim that every entrant comes away with new skills, industry insight, increased confidence, and an awareness of the opportunities available to them.

Discoveries outreach

Throughout the four-month outreach period, we continued to work in partnership with writing and arts organisations to extend our offer to women from communities traditionally underrepresented in publishing. Whilst Discoveries is open to all women, we were particularly focused on engaging women of colour, women from working class backgrounds, women from outside of London and the South East, and women who have never previously written creatively.

Together with our partners we curated a programme of free writing resources and virtual events centred around two main strands: the craft of writing and demystifying the publishing industry. Our Writer's Toolkit, housed on the Women's Prize and Curtis Brown Creative websites, provided accessible expertise and resources to aspiring writers, with contributions from judges, Women's Prize for Fiction alumni and publishing professionals.

A highlight of the events programme was a virtual panel hosted in partnership with a new festival for working-class writers, Class Fest, which sat as part of the Bristol Festival of Ideas. The panel discussion focused on finding your voice in fiction, with Kate Mosse, novelist Ayisha Malik and agent Viola Hayden.

We also partnered with New Writing North, a literature organisation operating in the north of England, to host a free online panel event, with advice for pitching a novel, Q&As and a workshop providing constructive feedback on submitted pitches. The event was chaired by Tinder Press Publisher Mary-Anne Harrington and the panel included: author Monique Roffey, author Sairish Hussain, literary agent Lucy Morris, and Kadija Sesay, Publications Manager for Inscribe.

Here is a selection of feedback from event attendees:

'You can feel, when you're unconnected and new and getting rejections, that publishing is a world populated by people who are out of your league and your work will never be worthy ... so it was great to hear from a group of people who totally knew their industry and were clearly very talented but were also really empathetic, warm and down to earth about it all too. A great evening all round and nice to be in the company of – if virtually – all those other writers too. Thanks!'

'Thank you for putting it on for free. I've struggled to get involved in many literary events because I can't afford it so it's nice to be able to attend without worrying about breaking the bank'

'All the speakers were engaging and encouraging. They were very kind and positive about the entries to the competition and acknowledged our feelings and emotions and they also have excellent actionable advice for the future. It left us feeling very positive about the work-in-progress even if we don't get through to the next round!'

'I was at the point of giving up writing but felt encouraged to carry on.'

Discoveries events are designed to be as accessible as possible for aspiring writers, with common barriers to entry in mind – tickets are always free, and panels are inclusive with a range of writing experiences and backgrounds represented. Feedback from participants demonstrates that writers come away with greater confidence to tell their stories, increased knowledge about the publishing industry and clear, accessible expertise to help them craft their submissions.

The 2022 Discoveries writers:

By the closing date, Discoveries received over 2,500 entries, an increase on the previous year, 76% of which were from outside of London, with a marked increase in entries from Scotland and Northern Ireland. 25% of entries were from women over the age of 55 and entries from women aged 65-74 exceeded those in the 18-24 age bracket. The entries were whittled down to 16 longlisted writers, then six shortlisted writers, then one winner and one Discoveries Scholar.

Based on feedback from year one's cohort – and with new support from Audible – we enhanced the support package offered to longlisted writers. The 16 writers took part in a brand-new bespoke, two-week online Discoveries Writing Development Course designed by Curtis Brown Creative and taught by author Charlotte Mendelson, who was shortlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction in 2008 and longlisted in 2021.

The course took place in July 2022 and focused on the works-in-progress of the longlisted writers, using one-to-one tutorials, live teaching on Zoom, and writing exercises and group discussion on Curtis Brown Creative's online learning platform, culminating in a teaching session with Curtis Brown literary agents. The course was also designed to bring the group of writers together through their shared Discoveries experience, and to encourage peer-to-peer support going forward, recognising that writing can be a solitary exercise.

The six shortlisted were offered a mentoring session with a Curtis Brown agent plus free enrolment on a Curtis Brown Creative six-week online course, and all six writers took part in a studio session with Audible in Autumn 2022. The winning writer, Sui Annukka, has been signed by Curtis Brown agent Jess Molloy, and has since received an original commission from Audible.

'I am fifty this year. For me, writing has been a lifelong conversation with parts of myself that are mostly invisible to the world. In more ways than I can say, writing has saved me. The opportunity to now share my work more widely is a huge privilege.'

'Winning this prize marks the start of a new adventure. It is a lot to take in ... I want to develop as a writer. I want to create work that is beautiful. And I want to support and champion the writing of the fifteen other wonderful women with whom I was longlisted. We are on this path together and we have so much to learn from each other. Thank you to the Women's Prize, Curtis Brown and Audible for giving us all this extraordinary opportunity.' **Sui Annukka, 2022 Discoveries winner**

'Most valuable of all was the short one-to-one tutorial I had with Charlotte Mendelson, in which we discussed the opening 3,000 words of my novel and a one-page synopsis of the plot. She was enthusiastic, generous with her advice and charmingly invested in my characters. ... But what I appreciated most was how candidly Charlotte identified her doubts about the framing of my novel. She questioned whether a significant aspect of the format I had outlined could end up sapping the reader's energy and distracting from the main thrust of the novel ... In the months since, that conversation has fundamentally changed the way I engage with my story. Her willingness to ask the big provocative question has pushed me to do the same, over and over again as I continue to work on the novel. From submitting a year ago through to now, Discoveries has helped me to find new joy, challenge and potential in writing.' **Niamh Ní Mhaoileoin, 2022 shortlisted writer**

'Being part of Discoveries 2022 was about a lot more than prizes. It was about meeting a group of intelligent, lively and vibrant women, and being able to be vulnerable and open with them ... It was about sharing work and thoughts and fears, and stepping outside my comfort zone in the company of other writers. It was about finding a sense of community in what can be a deeply solitary pursuit. Through Discoveries, I was lucky enough to be signed by the wonderful Lucy Morris and Jess Molloy at Curtis Brown, and with the support of them, my fellow longlistees and the whole Discoveries team, I have begun, finally, to accept the idea of myself as a writer – and to have the courage and new-found confidence to say it out loud.' **Tara O'Sullivan, 2022 longlisted writer**

From the first and second Discoveries cohorts, 12 writers have now been signed by literary agents, and the first Discoveries publishing deal was secured in October 2022, a major milestone for the programme, which enters its third year in 2022/2023.

As the community of Discoveries writers grows, the Trust is committed to supporting all writers involved from those early pages to long-term writing careers, offering ongoing pastoral support, coaching and networking opportunities, which we are formalising as we move into next year.

Futures

In January 2022, the Women's Prize Trust partnered with *Good Housekeeping* magazine to launch 'Futures', a new year-long initiative to honour and support the success of authors aged 35 and under. The pandemic was shown to disproportionately affect those under the age of 35 – particularly women – and so Futures sought to highlight the next generation of female writers and help them to find their audience and achieve the acclaim they deserve.

We invited established publishers and literary organisations to nominate women authors of fiction, with at least one novel published, seeking *'leading voices in exciting, boundary-changing, authentic, inspirational, heart-breaking fiction.'* The judges were Women's Prize Founder Director Kate Mosse, broadcaster Naga Munchetty, award-winning author Sara Collins, *Good Housekeeping* editor-in-chief Gaby Huddart and *Good Housekeeping* books editor Joanne Finney.

The panel of judges decided on a final list of ten women authors – the Futures ten – with the public invited to vote for the overall winner throughout the year. The ten authors selected were:

- **Jessica Andrews** for *Saltwater*
- **Natasha Brown** for *Assembly*
- **Candice Carty-Williams** for *Queenie*
- **Eliza Clark** for *Boy Parts*
- **Abigail Dean** for *Girl A*
- **Naoise Dolan** for *Exciting Times*
- **Stacey Halls** for *Mrs England*
- **Sairish Hussain** for *The Family Tree*
- **Daisy Johnson** for *Sisters*
- **Chibundu Onuzo** for *Sankofa*

Through this initiative, we were able to leverage the joint reach and reputation of our two brands to elevate women's voices on a global stage, and bring together and honour a group of young writers at a pivotal point in their career. These future stars of fiction were offered an unrivalled promotional platform, with an editorial package including a full-page interview and photoshoot in *Good Housekeeping* magazine – the UK's largest Women's magazine with over 410k monthly readers and 9 million monthly visitors to their website – online content, virtual events, social media support and retail promotion.

The public vote closed in December 2022 and its results and accompanying ceremony will be reported in the annual return for 2022/2023.

First Chapter

In April 2022 we launched the 12th edition of the First Chapter competition in partnership with *Grazia* magazine, which sees a well-known inspirational female author write the first 100 words of a 'first chapter' and invites entrants to complete the chapter in 800-1,000 words. The chapter is published in *Grazia* magazine and online.

This year we partnered with the Arvon Foundation, who offered tutored retreats and online masterclasses to the winner and two finalists, allowing us to strengthen the prize package to place greater emphasis on ongoing writer development.

Bestselling author and former Women's Prize for Fiction winner Tayari Jones wrote the opening words, and she was joined on the judging panel by *Grazia*'s deputy editor Emma Rowley and acting senior editor Maria Lally. The competition received over 600 entries from aspiring writers across the UK, with 70% of entrants residing outside of London.

The winning entry was by Carmel Boyhan Irvine, a doctor and medical educator from Plymouth. As well as a year of one-to-one mentorship with Tayari Jones, Carmel won an invitation to the Women's Prize award ceremony, a set of the six Women's Prize shortlisted books and a five-day residential course from the Arvon Foundation.

'Coming from a family of strong female role models – with seven sisters and an inspiring mother who fostered a love of literature from childhood – I am delighted to be associated, even in a small way, with the Grazia First Chapter award and affiliated to the Women's Prize. I am particularly thrilled to have the opportunity to work with Tayari Jones, whose masterful prose and public statements serve to entertain, to inform and to advance the causes of social justice.' **Carmel Boyhan Irvine, 2022 First Chapter winner**

This year the Trust continued to connect with former First Chapter winners, offering guidance and industry connections to support them in their writing careers. We made an introduction between two previous winners, Naomi George and Abigail Moss, and a successful retired editor for one-to-one mentoring and feedback on their writing.

'I work as a freelance journalist, but I've been writing fiction since I was a teenager and I've always had an ambition to make a career of fiction writing. The mentorship with Diana was incredible, she was so kind and thoughtful and gave me some incomparable insights and feedback on my work. Winning the competition really helped me to stay motivated and I managed to complete the first draft of my novel towards the end of last year. This year, I'm working on my second draft and the Women's Prize have continued to be hugely supportive – I want to say thank you to everyone at the Women's Prize and Grazia, because their support really has made a huge difference!' **2020 First Chapter winner Abigail Moss**

Campaigning

Running parallel to the 2022 Prize cycle, in May we launched a reading campaign spearheaded by the Women's Prize for Fiction chair of judges Mary Ann Sieghart called 'Men Reading Women'. This campaign sought to highlight a gender bias in reading habits, with the ultimate aim of sparking meaningful debate around gender parity in publishing and increasing the readership of books by women.

In her bestselling book *The Authority Gap*, Sieghart undertook research revealing that men are less likely to purchase and read a book by a woman than by a man. For the top 10 bestselling female fiction authors (including Jane Austen, Margaret Atwood and Agatha Christie), only 19% of their readers are men and 81% women. But for the top 10 bestselling male authors (Charles Dickens and JRR Tolkien, as well as Lee Child and Stephen King), the split is much more even: 55% men and 45% women.

To kickstart a public debate, we asked a host of male celebrities, past judges and friends of the Prize to recommend one novel written by a woman that men should read. This was curated into a list of 60 recommended titles, housed in a hub on the Women's Prize website, through which the public were invited to vote for the essential book by a woman all men should read. We received 20,000 votes in 10 days, with readers placing Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* at number one.

The campaign launched successfully with a hero feature piece in the *Guardian*, which appeared on the masthead of the print paper and cover of the books section in the Saturday magazine. The feature had over 400k views on the *Guardian* website and 769 comments, while the Women's Prize tweet announcing the campaign had over 1 million organic impressions. Women's Prize for Fiction founder Kate Mosse and Mary Ann Sieghart discussed the campaign by taking part in numerous radio and podcast interviews including Radio 4 Woman's Hour, Radio 5 Live Naga Munchetty and the Guilty Feminist Podcast.

Through widespread media coverage and social media attention, both positive and negative, the campaign succeeded in its aim of sparking debate and shaping social discourse. By bringing our advocacy to a wider audience through a high-profile cross-channel campaign, we were able to reinforce the Trust's position as a leader in championing gender parity in the world of books, striving for women's voices to be as prevalent as those of men.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Overall for the financial year ended 30 June 2022, the charity's financial position has been stable, although the activity delays due to Covid has meant that the charity carried £245,445 in reserves into this financial year, which is unusually high.

The charity has continued to attract sponsorship and income associated with its charitable activities helping the charity to diversify revenue streams and become more resilient and sustainable for the future. The Women's Prize Trust continues to maintain a close control on its costs and expenditure.

The Women's Prize for Fiction 2022 and other Trust activity was supported by corporate sponsors Baileys and Audible. The Prize also received financial support from publishers whose books were longlisted, shortlisted and won, in addition to numerous in-kind partnerships, including AllBright and Blake Morgan.

In addition, the Trust was awarded £65,000 through Arts Council England's Continuity Fund, helping arts organisations pivot and plan as the Trust attempts to stabilise emerging from the pandemic. Informed by the Trust's audience survey, which had over 4500 responses, long-term strategy incorporates a year-round podcast and digital events into the existing Trust model of live events, winner ceremony and outreach. This model required hiring a freelance digital strategist to maximise digital opportunities and reach segmented target audiences, as well as underpinning the retention of the executive team.

Individual giving totalled £91,078.32 in June 2022. The charity's Patrons and Prize Circle Patrons programme remained largely steady; this additional income was made up of donations of smaller amounts from a wider pool of supporters, which corresponds to a clearer fundraising ask with the development of the charity's new Discoveries creative writing programme, and offering add-on donation options via event ticket and merchandise sales, as is common with most charities.

Expanding the line of merchandise such as new colourful t-shirts and the Book Bag in collaboration with female designer Holly Ovenden Book bag not only raises brand awareness but generated £66,729 in income with event tickets.

Total income for 2021/2022 was £559,145.56 and expenditure £702,071.15; this imbalance reflecting the fact that both the 2021 and 2022 Women's Prize for Fiction prizes were largely delivered in this last financial year.

Financial Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of Women's Prize Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the report of the trustees 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 charity and of the income and application of resources, including the income or expenditure, of the charity for the year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and 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 have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- 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 charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. 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.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Signed on behalf of the Board

Anna Ollard, Chair

Date: 22 March 2023

Women's Prize Trust Accountants' Report

Accountants' report to the directors of Women's Prize Trust

You consider that the company is exempt from an audit for the year ended 30 June 2022. You have acknowledged, on the balance sheet, your responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts. These responsibilities include preparing accounts that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year.

In accordance with your instructions, we have prepared the accounts which comprise the Profit and Loss Account and the Balance Sheet from the accounting records of the company and on the basis of information and explanations you have given to us.

We have not carried out an audit or any other review, and consequently we do not express any opinion on these accounts.

AFP Services
Chartered Management Accountants

Timsons Business Centre
Bath Road
Kettering
Northamptonshire
NN16 8NQ

22 March 2023

Women's Prize Trust
Profit and Loss Account
for the year ended 30 June 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
Turnover	559,145	555,892
Staff costs	(28,455)	(26,990)
Depreciation and other amounts written off assets	(114)	-
Other charges	(673,501)	(548,245)
Loss before taxation	<u>(142,925)</u>	<u>(19,343)</u>
Loss	<u>(142,925)</u>	<u>(19,343)</u>

Women's Prize Trust
Registered number:
Balance Sheet
as at 30 June 2022

03691656

	2022	2021
	£	£
Fixed assets	1,027	-
Current assets	138,121	378,054
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(36,628)	(132,609)
Net current assets	101,493	245,445
Total assets less current liabilities	102,520	245,445
Net assets	102,520	245,445
Capital and reserves	102,520	245,445
	Number	Number
Average number of employees	12	12

The company is a private company limited by shares and incorporated in England. Its registered office is 6 New Street Square, London, United Kingdom, EC4A 3DJ.

The company is a registered charity, number 1181253.

The directors are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the requirement to obtain an audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The member has not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Act.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the micro entity provisions of the Companies Act 2006 and FRS 105, The Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the Micro-entities Regime. The accounts have been delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime. The profit and loss account has not been delivered to the Registrar of Companies.

Anna Ollard
 Director

Approved by the board on 22 March 2023

Women's Prize Trust
Detailed profit and loss account items
for the year ended 30 June 2022

This schedule does not form part of the statutory accounts

	2022 £	2021 £
Sales		
Sponsorship Fees	227,706	210,500
Winners prize donation	27,013	60,000
Publisher Contributions	59,500	101,000
Donations	91,078	90,810
Commercial Income	66,729	35,010
Grants - Exceptional	50,312	50,588
Other Revenue	30,932	7,984
Merchandise - Commercial	5,875	-
	<u>559,145</u>	<u>555,892</u>
Staff costs		
Wages and salaries	27,950	26,530
Pensions	505	460
	<u>28,455</u>	<u>26,990</u>
Depreciation and other amounts written off assets		
Depreciation	<u>114</u>	<u>-</u>
Other charges		
General administrative expenses:		
Sundry expenses	322	-
Postage	4,165	80
Podcast	23,676	26,409
Digital/social media	32,049	23,552
Judges costs	32,648	7,229
Subscriptions	4,938	1,778
Bank charges	2,235	392
Insurance	906	588
Fundraising costs	3,973	-
Administration costs	9,699	11,888
Winners Prizes	60,000	31,656
WP Exec Team and Expense	211,282	149,461
Design and POS	9,225	7,518
Content Capture & Creation	15,930	25,352
Sponsor Appropriation	14,196	3,644
Awards Ceremony	105,289	118,210
Events - Grazia and Shortlist Readings	7,336	36,890
Events	33,595	-
Merchandise	13,523	997
	<u>584,987</u>	<u>445,644</u>
Legal and professional costs:		
Consultancy fees	58,040	61,854
Advertising and PR	-	17,200
Other legal and professional	30,474	23,547
	<u>88,514</u>	<u>102,601</u>
	<u>673,501</u>	<u>548,245</u>