

Curiosity Sussex
(A registered CIO)

Report and Financial Statements
Year ending 30 April 2025

Charity number 1185269

Report of the trustees for the year ending 30 April 2025

The trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the consolidated financial statements of the CIO for the year ending 30 April 2025 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a Trustee's Report and Accounts for the Charity Commission.

Chair's Report

Building on the renewed momentum following the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2024 marked a year of continued growth and consolidation for Curiosity Sussex. Our programme expanded in scale, reach, and ambition, reflecting both sustained community interest and the dedication of those who make our activities possible.

In November 2024, we delivered two flagship events on consecutive days: the Lewes Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Fair and the Lewes STEM Speakers Festival. The STEM Fair once again proved hugely popular, welcoming over 1,100 visitors and hosting around 30 interactive exhibits during its four-hour opening period. The atmosphere was energetic and engaging throughout, with families, students, and educators exploring hands-on activities and speaking directly with scientists, engineers, and local innovators.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many attendees praising the variety and quality of exhibits, the accessibility of the presenters, and the inspiring environment created for young people. Indeed, the only consistent criticism was that the event was not open for long enough—an encouraging indication of the appetite for science engagement within the community.

The Speakers Festival, held in collaboration with the Lewes Astronomical Society, complemented the Fair by offering a programme of thought-provoking talks, broadening the depth of engagement and providing opportunities for audiences to explore STEM topics in greater detail.

None of this would be possible without the commitment and enthusiasm of our supporters, volunteers, trustees, exhibitors, and partners. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone involved, as well as to the public whose continued participation and encouragement enable Curiosity Sussex to thrive and grow.

Prof. Stephen Wilkins
Chair

Our Purpose

The objects of the CIO are:

For the public benefit, promote learning for pleasure by people of all ages across Sussex in such ways as the charity trustees think fit, including but not limited to:

- a. Produce live events that enable diverse audiences across Sussex to participate in informal STEM (science, technology, engineering, maths) learning;
- b. Enable and promote local STEM events, through online promotion and logistical support;
- c. Invite local people to contribute their knowledge and interests, celebrating and exploring their curiosity while fostering understanding between people from diverse backgrounds.

Our Activities & Projects

Lewes STEM Festival fair 2024

Our flagship event, the Lewes STEM Festival Fair, was held on Sunday 17 November and once again proved to be a highlight of our annual programme. As in 2024, the Fair welcomed more than 1,100 visitors over the course of the afternoon, with families, young people, and educators engaging enthusiastically with a wide range of interactive exhibits. The atmosphere throughout the event was lively and inspiring, with exhibitors reporting thoughtful questions, sustained engagement, and strong interest from attendees of all ages.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many visitors praising the breadth and quality of activities on offer and the opportunity to interact directly with scientists, engineers, and local organisations. The only consistent criticism related to the limited opening hours. While this reflects the clear appetite for a longer event, we continue to limit the Fair to four hours in order to avoid placing excessive demands on our volunteers and exhibitors, whose goodwill and energy are essential to its success. We will, however, continue to explore ways of balancing accessibility and sustainability as the Festival continues to grow.

Lewes STEM Speakers Festival 2024

The Lewes STEM Speakers Festival was a new initiative for 2024, delivered in collaboration with the Lewes Astronomical Society (LAS). The programme featured four

invited speakers and one science entertainer, covering a diverse range of engaging STEM topics.

The event was well received overall and represented a positive step in broadening our activities beyond hands-on exhibits. It also generated a modest net surplus for both Curiosity Sussex and LAS. While a small number of tickets remained unsold for some sessions, the festival provided valuable experience and a strong foundation on which to build and refine the format in future years.

Financial Review

The CIO concluded the reporting period with a modest deficit of £249.88, primarily due to publicity and insurance costs exceeding those originally anticipated in our grant application to Lewes Town Council. Despite this shortfall, the organisation remains in a sound financial position and continues to hold a positive overall balance.

Income during this reporting period comprised a grant from Lewes Town Council (£900), individual donations (£50), and ticket sales from the Lewes STEM Speakers Festival (£544.04). Expenditure covered venue hire, marketing and publicity, catering, and other minor operational costs associated with delivering our events.

Reference and administrative details

Charity number:1185269

Principal Office: 53 Christie Avenue, Ringmer, BN8 5JT

Trustees

Professor S Wilkins (appointed 11 September 2019) (Chair)

Ms J Currie (appointed 11 September 2019)

Mr P Goodman (appointed 11 September 2019)

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Curiosity Sussex is a CIO governed by its Constitution dated 11 September 2019. It is registered with the Charity Commission.

Appointment of trustees

No new appointments have been made in the reporting period.

Trustee induction and training

There has not been a requirement to hold a trustee induction since the charity's formation, as there has been no turnover of trustees.

Organisation

The board of four trustees administers the charity. The board meets at least quarterly, with sub-committees covering individual activities/events. The board has a Chair of trustees who coordinates the board and charity operations.

Related parties

None of our trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or senior manager of the charity with a contracted company must be disclosed to the full board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported.

Risk management

The trustees have a risk management strategy which is focussed on individual activity/event risks

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

By order of the trustees
Prof. S Wilkins (Chair)
24th July 2024

Curiosity Sussex
Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities
(including income and expenditure account)
for year ending 30 April 2025

	Note	Total Funds, £
Funds carried forward		£992.55
Income		
Lewes Town Council Grant		£900
Donations		£50
Ticket Sales		£544.04
TOTAL INCOME		£1494.04
Expenditure		
Lewes STEM Fair 2024 - Lewes Town Hall Hire		£851.05
Lewes STEM Fair 2024 - Publicity		£305.56
Lewes STEM Fair 2024 - Catering		£192.00
Lewes STEM Fair 2024 - Insurance		£154.15
Lewes STEM Fair 2024 - consumables		£216.16
TOTAL EXPENSES		£1718.92

TOTAL funds carried forwards		£742.67
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Signed S Wilkins

Name STEPHEN WILKINS, Chair of trustees on behalf of the trustees

Approved by the trustees on 15 February 2025