



REPUBLIC OF CONSCIOUSNESS FOUNDATION

Registered Charity Number 1197829

Trustees' Annual Report and Unaudited Financial Statements  
for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

## Contents

Reference and Administrative Information	3
Annual Report by Trustees	4
Approval of trustees' report and unaudited financial statements	11
Independent examiner's report	12
Financial statements	13

## REPUBLIC OF CONSCIOUSNESS FOUNDATION

### REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025

Charity's name	Republic of Consciousness Foundation
Status	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (registered on 8 February 2022)
Charity Registration Number	1197829
Registered office	20 Parklands Road London SW16 6TE
Trustees (at date of report and during period)	Professor Leigh Wilson (Chair) John Mitchinson Paul Fulcher (Treasurer)
Administrator	Neil Griffiths
Independent examiner	Claire Davies
Bankers	Metro Bank 1-2 Wimbledon Bridge London SW19 7NW

## REPUBLIC OF CONSCIOUSNESS FOUNDATION

### ANNUAL REPORT BY THE TRUSTEES YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025

#### Introduction

The Trustees present their annual report and unaudited financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2025.

The financial statements are prepared on a receipts and payments basis, in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and the Guidance 'Charity reporting and accounting: the essentials November 2016' issued by the Charity Commission, as updated on 14 June 2023.

The Republic of Consciousness Foundation (the "Foundation") was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with the Charities Commission on 8 February 2022.

#### Purpose and governance

*The charity is governed by its Constitution, dated 1 July 2021.*

*The Charitable Purpose of the Foundation is as follows: "To promote for the public benefit the art of literature and in particular to promote literature of high merit published by small presses in the UK and Ireland by the provision of grants to practitioners and producers of literary fiction and the promotion of such literature to the public."*

The Trustees confirm that they have had due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit when exercising their powers and directing the activities of the Foundation, as described in the next section.

## Achievements and activities

### The Republic of Consciousness Prize 2025

The key activity of the Foundation is the running of the Republic of Consciousness Prize (the 'Prize'), which both promotes literary fiction by small presses in the UK and Ireland via the publicity and events organised around the Prize, and supports the works of small presses via the distribution of grants as prize money.

The Republic of Consciousness Prize 2025 was for fiction first published in the calendar year 2024 by eligible small presses based in the UK and Ireland. This was the 9<sup>th</sup> year for which the Prize has been awarded, and the third year with charitable status. The Prize accepts both long-form fiction and collections of short-stories, as well as translated works alongside English language originals, which is, we believe, close to unique amongst UK literary prizes, and which reflects the purpose of the Foundation.

We received 50 submissions for the 2025 Prize from small presses in the UK and Ireland. This was a small drop in entries to the prior year, in part due to a further change in eligibility criteria designed to ensure the funds from the Prize were focused on those with the greatest need. In particular, we've been pleased to see that a number of independent presses now have National Portfolio Organisation funding, which contributes to core costs, cushioning the impact of low sales for risk-taking books, but this essentially duplicates our purpose. The criteria for entry for the 2025 Prize were:

- A small press must be completely financial independent of any other business - larger publisher, bookshop etc.

And meet two of the following three criteria:

- Publish 8 or fewer original titles a year
- 4 or fewer fulltime workers (regular freelancers must counted)
- A turnover, including all grants, of less than £100,000 per year in two of the last three financial years.

The judges, who are remunerated for their time and expenses as shown in the financial statements, were chosen with our charitable purpose in mind.

- **Alice Jolly**

Alice Jolly's novel *Mary Ann Sate* (2018), published by Unbound, was runner up for the Rathbones Folio Prize. Alice has also won the Pen Ackerley Prize for memoir and the V.S. Pritchett Memorial Prize for one of her short stories. She was awarded an O.Henry Prize in 2021. Her latest novel *The Matchbox Girl* (which is about Dr Asperger) is published in autumn 2025. She reviews for various newspapers and literary journals.

- **Houman Barekat**

Houman Barekat reviews books for various outlets including the Guardian, the Sunday Times, the Irish Times and the Spectator; and theatre for the New York Times. He is co-editor (with Robert Barry and David Winters) of *The Digital Critic: Literary Culture Online*.

- **Jude Cook**

Jude Cook's novels are *Byron Easy* (2013) and *Jacob's Advice* (2020). He reviews fiction for the Guardian, the Spectator, Literary Review, New Statesman, TLS, the i-Paper, Review 31 and 3AM Magazine. His essays and short fiction have appeared in a number of publications. He is also an editor for The Literary Consultancy, and currently teaches Creative Writing at the University of Westminster.

The longlist of 10 books was announced on 30 January 2025, a shortlist of 5 books on 26 February 2025 and the winner on 1 April 2025. The featured presses and titles were:

Winner:

**Bullaun Press** for 'There's A Monster Behind the Door' by Gaëlle Bélem, translated by Karen Fleetwood & Laëtitia Saint-Loubert

Shortlisted:

**CB editions** for 'Invisible Dogs' by Charles Boyle

**Divided Publishing** for 'How to Leave the World' by Marouane Bakhti, translated by Lara Vergnaud

**Les Fugitives** for 'Célina' by Catherine Axelrad, translated by Philip Terry

**Peninsula Press** for 'Mother Naked' by Glen James Brown (Shortlisted)

Longlisted:

**Holland House Books** for *Crooked Seeds* by Karen Jennings

**Prototype** for *The Seers* by Sulaiman Adonia

**Rough Trade** for Good Lord by Ella Frears

**Scotland Street Press** for Somewhere Else by Jenni Daiches

**Splice**, for Daybook by Nathan Knapp (Longlisted)

The Republic of Consciousness Prize has now recognised the work of 55 different small press in the UK and Ireland in the 9 years for which it has been awarded.

All of the featured presses receive prize money in the form of a grant and, as a condition for entering the Prize, are required to explain how funds will be used to further the purpose of the Foundation. The prize fund for the 2025 Prize was £10,000, as with the previous year. It was split between the 10 longlisted presses (£500 each) and then a further £1,000 was awarded to each of the shortlisted presses, divided 70% to the press, 30% to the writer (or 15% to the original author, and 15% to translator for translated works). The winner does not receive further monetary prizes, but rather the recognition of the award.

Shortlist readings were held at Deptford Lounge part of Lewisham Libraries, a conscious attempt to move the centre of gravity away from the centre of London and reach people who might not ordinarily go there for book events. Our award ceremony was hosted by Foyles, Charing Cross.

#### The Republic of Consciousness Book Club

A second key activity of the Foundation is a Book of the Month club, where a curated choice of a book from a small press is sent out monthly to subscribers who can choose from the selected title or opt for a book previously featured on our longlist. This serves both to promote literary fiction of the highest merit from small presses, to provide revenue for small presses, and also to raise funds for the Foundation.

#### Support for Book Banks

As part of the application for the Arts Council grant (see 'Financial Overview' below), the Foundation pledged to provide £800 per annum of support to help literary fiction reached underserved audiences. In the year to 31 March 2025, this took the form of support for the charity Bookbanks (charity registration number: 1204919) both as cash donations and in the

form of books purchased from small presses and passed to them for distribution via their book banks.

### Trustees and Officers

The Trustees of the Foundation throughout the period were:

- Professor Leigh Wilson, Professor of English Literature at the University of Westminster, with research interests including the contemporary small press, who serves as Chair of Trustees.
- John Mitchinson, a writer and publisher and the co-host of the award-winning books podcast, Backlisted.
- Paul Fulcher, a qualified Actuary and a keen reader and reviewer of literary fiction, who serves as Treasurer.

Neil Griffiths, an award-winning author, co- founder of Weatherglass Books, and the founder of the Republic of Consciousness Prize serves as the Administrator and Literary Consultant.

### Financial overview

During the financial year the Foundation received a number of generous donations from the following sponsors:

- Fondation Jan Michalski
- Laura Kinsella Foundation
- Turnaround
- University of Westminster

Revenue from Book Club subscriptions increased 38% to £17,178 against associated costs of £9,404, generating a net surplus of £7,774 (PY: £6,246) which is a key source of support for the Prize. These costs include £4,219 paid to small presses for books.

During the financial year, the Foundation distributed £14,000 in grants, by way of prize money, to small presses in the UK and Ireland. This consisted of £4,500 relating to the previous prize year and £9,500 for the 2025 Prize, with the remaining grants for the 2024 and 2025 Prizes paid after the end of the financial year.



The accounts show a net deficit on payment versus receipts of £3,552 for the year. However, as reported last year, the Foundation received a grant from the Arts Council of £21,000, with £18,900 (90%) paid up front in the year to 31 March 2024. The amount received was, under the receipts and payments basis, accounted for in the year to 31 March 2024, but was available to support the operation of the Foundation during this financial year.

#### Reserves and fund accounting

The Foundation ended the year with a cash balance of £9,807, of which £2,200 represented payment due to creditors, leading to a net balance of £7,607.

Furthermore, £6,300 of the cash balance represents the final year of the Arts Council grant received in advance but intended to support the operation of the Foundation in the coming financial year.

The Foundation's Reserve policy is that the Foundation does not need to hold material cash reserves, as the amounts awarded each year to the presses featured in the Prize are set by the Trustees toward the end of the financial year, based on funds available generated during the year. Amounts awaiting payment, or where public funding or sponsorship has been received that is intended to provide support over more than one year, such as the Arts Council grant are excluded when considering the amount of reserves.

The Trustees aim to hold, as a minimum, sufficient cash for payments committed e.g. to the judges of the Prize, net of any committed sponsorship, as well as to cover 3 months of expected expenditure, which amounts to around £2,000. If reserves were to increase above £15,000, representing 150% of the current annual prize fund, the Trustees could consider increasing the prize fund, or finding other ways to distribute funds to further the Foundation's charitable purpose, although this would be balanced against the need for a buffer to ensure the future operation of the Foundation given the uncertain nature of external funding.

The cash balance is held in unrestricted funds which the Trustees are free to use for any purpose in furtherance of the Foundation's Charitable Purpose. There are no designated or restricted funds.

## Outlook

From 2026 the Republic of Consciousness Foundation is partnering with Queen Mary University, London to rebrand our Prize for Small Presses as the Queen Mary Small Press Fiction Prize. Their shared commitment to nurturing fiction from the margins - having already sponsored the Queen Mary Wasafiri New Writing Prize - makes it a perfect partner for us as we rebrand and further our support of small presses.

The support, including financial sponsorship, from Queen Mary University, London, alongside that of our other sponsors, will also help secure the future of the Prize and the Foundation.

REPUBLIC OF CONSCIOUSNESS FOUNDATION

APPROVAL OF TRUSTEES' REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025

This report was approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Fulcher'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P'.

Paul Fulcher, Trustee

Date: 1 September 2025



**Independent Examiner's Report**

Report to the trustees of

Republic of Consciousness Foundation

On accounts for:

Year ended 31 March 2025

Charity no

1197829

Set out on pages

13

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("Foundation") for the year ended **31 / 03 / 2025**.

**Responsibilities and basis  
of report**

As the charity trustees of the Foundation, 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 Foundation's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed 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 material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

11<sup>th</sup> Jan 2026

Name:

Claire Davies

Relevant professional  
qualification(s):

ACMA

Address:

30 Leigh Road, London N5 1AH

## REPUBLIC OF CONSCIOUSNESS FOUNDATION

### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR PERIOD 1 APRIL 2024 TO 31 MARCH 2025

#### Receipts and Payments

##### Receipts

Public Funding	£	-
Sponsorship	£	13,000
Book of the Month Subscription	£	17,178
Earned Income	£	-
Total	£	30,178

##### Payments

Prize Money	£	14,000
Staff costs	£	6,075
Judges	£	2,741
Book of the Month – books	£	4,219
Book of the Month – other costs	£	5,184
Event costs	£	200
Overheads/expenses	£	710
Donations	£	600
Total	£	33,730

Net receipt/(payments)	£	(3,552)
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Cash funds at start of period	£	13,360
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Cash funds at end of period	£	9,807
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#### Statement of Assets and Liabilities at end of period (all unrestricted funds)

Cash funds at end of period	£	9,807
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##### Creditors at year-end

Prize Money	£	1,500
Judges	£	500
Donation to Bookbanks	£	200
Total	£	2,200

Total Net Assets	£	7,607
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