



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25

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DIRECTORS' MESSAGE

Dear supporters,

It's been another incredible year at UniArk. Now in our fourth year, we've clocked countless hours of mentorship, awarded two scholarships, supported students through hardship funds - and most importantly, helped change lives.

We're proud to share highlights from the 2024-25 academic year. This year's mentorship programme was especially competitive, with a strong pool of applicants showing great potential. With a renewed focus on fundraising, our small but mighty team of mentors has worked hard to help students gain university places.

So, grab your drink of choice, get comfy, and enjoy catching up with all things UniArk.

With many thanks,

Shukria, Najib and Goncalo



ONE YEAR ON: SHUKRIA RAHIMI, UNIARK'S FIRST SCHOLARSHIP WINNER



Shukria Rahimi

MA Transitional Justice, Human Rights, and the Rule of Law

(2024-25)

Geneva Academy, Switzerland

Award: £35,000

Has Geneva and your programme met your expectations?

The program has been very rich, and I learned a lot. One of the things I really appreciated was studying in a very diverse classroom. We were from different nationalities, and this was something very special for me. Listening to others' stories, learning about their struggles in their own countries, and becoming friends with them really enriched my knowledge. Also, I found the Geneva Academy and the two institutions behind it, the Geneva Graduate Institute and the University of Geneva, very supportive. I felt that I was in a modern and welcoming place, both in terms of education and how they treat students. Being in Geneva itself, where so many international organisations are based, also gave me the chance to attend events, connect with professionals, and feel close to real-world issues.

Were there any moments outside of your studies where you felt especially proud?

There were many moments that made me feel proud. In several classes, I shared my personal story or talked about the situation in Afghanistan. Speaking as a Hazara woman and activist, I didn't expect people would listen so closely or feel touched. But many classmates told me how strong and inspiring they found my words. It made me feel proud, but also helped me see myself differently. When you go through hard things for a long time, you get used to them and forget how strong you are. But hearing that from others made me reflect and be more kind to myself. One moment I'll never forget is during the exam period in the first semester, when I lost one of my close friends. He was killed by the Taliban while I was trying, with the volunteer group I work with, to help him leave Afghanistan. It was a very painful time, but I continued with my exams and studies.

Looking back, I feel proud that I managed to stay strong and focused, even in that situation. Also, in some discussions, like on mental health, I realised that my experiences were not just theory. They were very real. Some things that were new to others were already part of my life for years. That helped me see how much I've survived and grown.

Did you face any challenges during your studies and living in Geneva?

To be honest, adjusting to life in Geneva was not very hard for me. The Geneva Academy provided a very detailed guide at the beginning about residence permit, housing, transport, and everything else and they were always available to answer our questions. Also, I had some classmates and friends already here, so that helped too. Even though I don't speak French, most people in Geneva speak English, so I didn't face many language problems either. Emotionally, I had mixed feelings. On one hand, I felt happy, more at peace, and freer to speak, to study, to move. These are basic rights, but I didn't have them back home. On the other hand, having these rights while millions of women in Afghanistan don't have them made me feel sad and even guilty sometimes. I kept asking myself why I have this opportunity while others don't.

How do you see your education contributing to the future of Afghanistan and the struggle for women's rights in Afghanistan generally?

This education is not just for me, I believe it's for my country and for Afghan women too. It gives me the tools and knowledge to speak louder to

document what's happening, and to make sure the world doesn't forget Afghanistan. I hope to use what I've learned to support Afghan women's voices, and to push for justice, both for those still inside the country and those who are in exile. In the future, I want to help build better legal systems, and make sure Afghan women are part of the decision-making processes.

How do you balance your education with activism work?

Honestly, it was very difficult. The program was full-time and very intense, sometimes we had classes from early morning to evening. So, I didn't have much time or energy to do activism like I used to. Still, I stayed active in some ways. I gave interviews to the media, wrote about women's issues, and read public statements. I'm also working voluntarily with a group that helps people in Afghanistan, especially in crisis situations. But I couldn't do as much as I wanted. Now that I'm finishing my studies, I hope I can be more active again and give more time to the work I care about.

What's next for you after graduating?

After graduation, I hope to continue working in the human rights and humanitarian law field, especially focusing on conflict, migration, and women's rights. I'm exploring both professional jobs and possible research opportunities. In the long term, I want to be a bridge between the people on the ground and the international world, so that policies and actions are based on real experiences and not just theory. I want to keep working for Afghan women and those who have been silenced.

NEMATULLAH AHANGOSH: FROM UNIARK SCHOLAR TO PUBLISHED POET

Nematullah Ahangosh

MA Development, Conflict and Security Studies
(2022-23)

University of Sussex, UK

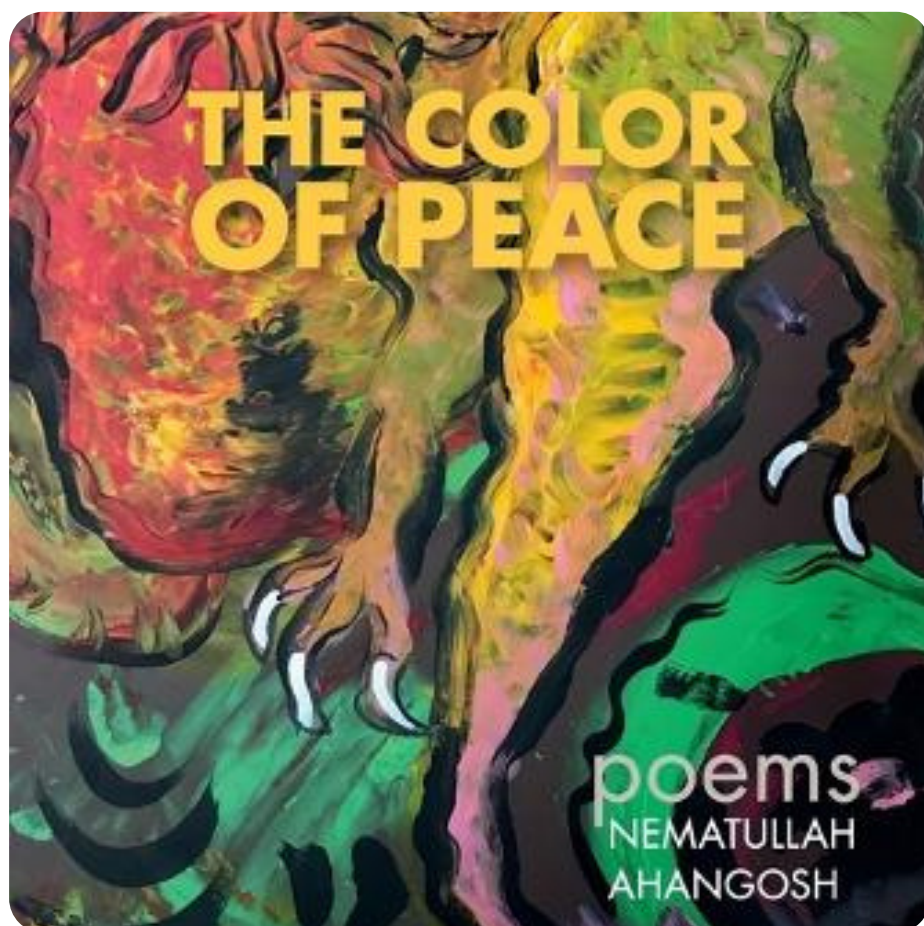
Award: £ 21,000



In 2022, Nematullah Ahangosh received a UniArk scholarship to pursue a Master's in Conflict, Security, and Development at the University of Sussex. Just a few years later, he is a published poet, disability rights advocate, and founder of **Stretch More** - an initiative supporting disabled individuals in conflict and disaster-affected areas. Born with muscular dystrophy and raised in Afghanistan, Nemat began writing poetry in English in 2017 while working as a peace activist in Kabul. His poems draw on lived experience, exploring themes of resilience, war, and the quiet strength of hope. His long-standing commitment to education led him from Kabul to India, where he earned a bachelor's degree with support from the Jesuit Refugee Service.

With UniArk's support, Nemat was able to continue his studies in the UK and invest in his creative voice.

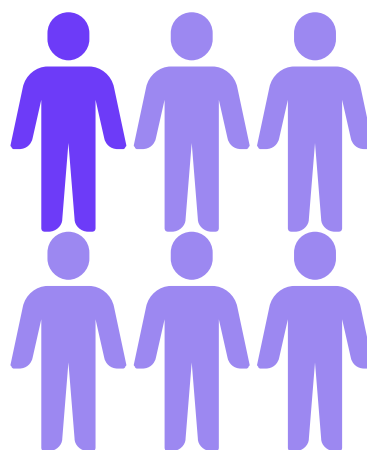
In February 2025, he published his debut poetry collection, **The Color of Peace** - a powerful reflection on the trauma of war, the challenges of disability, and the enduring possibility of peace. To celebrate this milestone, the UniArk team, in collaboration with the University of Sanctuary scheme, hosted a public poetry reading on 13 June 2025 at Mansfield College, University of Oxford. The event brought together students, academics, and community members to honour Nemat's work and the stories it tells. Nemat's story is a reminder of the lasting impact of meaningful support. His journey shows that when opportunity meets potential, individuals can not only thrive - they can uplift others and inspire change.



OUR WORK (2024-25)

UniArk's backbone is not formed of interlinking vertebra stacked one on top of the other, but rather pairwise mentor-mentee relationships that stretch through time. Our focus of providing direct, one-to-one support with deserving students has enabled many students make competitive applications to the UK, the US and other global universities worldwide.

- *6 mentees*
- *1 full scholarship*
- *1 partial scholarship*
- *4 admissions without scholarship*



1 of 6 mentees was awarded a fully funded-scholarship.

What these numbers do not adequately convey is an enormous amount of hard work and dedication, countless iterations of personal statements, hours spent sifting through university after university, funding calls and visa requirements, the plans A, B, and C for each student, and underpinning it all, the hopes and dreams of students who have endured so much. We are grateful to connect with every student we work with and celebrate their growth on an individual basis.

MENTEE SUCCESS STORY

Abdul Rauf Hasanyar

BSc Computer Science (2025 - 2029)

Recipient of Lester B. Pearson International Scholarship

University of Toronto, Canada

Award: £ 2,000



We were proud to celebrate the success of UniArk mentee Abdul Rauf Hasanyar, who was awarded the **Lester B. Pearson International Scholarship** — the University of Toronto's most prestigious and fully funded scholarship for international students.

Rauf became the first student from Afghanistan to be named a Pearson Scholar and began a four-year BSc in Computer Science at the University of Toronto. The Pearson Scholarship recognised his outstanding academic achievement, creativity, and leadership - qualities he consistently demonstrated throughout his educational journey.

Born in rural Ghazni, Afghanistan, Rauf grew up facing poverty, conflict, and insecurity, yet remained determined to pursue his studies. Alongside his own education, he taught English to support his family and contributed to community projects aimed at expanding access to education.

Through the Homa Foundation, he helped establish classrooms and a library in his home village.

This achievement represented a significant milestone in Rauf's academic journey, and UniArk was proud to have supported him - both through our mentorship programme and by providing financial assistance for his travel and visa costs from Kabul to Toronto. We look forward to the impact he will continue to make at Toronto and beyond.

Read more about Rauf on our website [here](#).

THE LAUNCH OF UNIARK SCHOLARS AI

At UniArk, we are also excited about harnessing technology and innovation to further our mission of empowering talented students. We developed **UniArk Scholar AI**, an innovative AI-powered tool specifically designed to support students in crafting compelling and competitive scholarship applications that thoroughly researches scholarships to identify key information (such as evaluation metrics) before analysing student essays.

UniArk Scholar AI provides holistic, personalised feedback tailored to the unique requirements of scholarship essays, helping students clearly articulate their stories, strengths, and aspirations. Despite being in the early stages of development and having limited promotion, this tool marked a significant advancement for our charity.

During our initial trial phase, one of our supported students used UniArk Scholar AI and provided highly positive feedback, highlighting the potential value of this resource. Additionally, the tool attracted private usage from several other students, generating £44 through subscription payments. While modest, this unexpected private engagement underscores the relevance and value of our innovation, even in its preliminary phase.

Given our current resource constraints, we have no immediate plans to commercialise UniArk Scholar AI. Nevertheless, this successful pilot has validated our belief in leveraging AI for educational empowerment. We remain enthusiastic about exploring further technological advancements and AI-driven solutions to better serve our students and enhance our impact.

SMALL FUNDS, BIG IMPACTS

While full scholarships are at the heart of UniArk's work, we also recognise that smaller financial hurdles - like exam fees or travel costs - can become major roadblocks for students on the brink of opportunity. A delayed TOEFL test, missed travel window, or lack of emergency funds can mean deferred dreams or lost chances.

That's why we're proud to have offered small grants that meet students at these critical moments.

This year, we've supported:

- **Husna Hashim** sit her TOEFL exam; (award: £160)
- Granted **Abdul Rauf Hasanyar** funds to support his travel from Kabul to the Canadian Embassy in Islamabad - and onwards to Toronto, Canada to begin his studies in the autumn of 2025; (award: £2,000)
- and provided a hardship fund to **Nematullah Ahangosh** when he faced financial difficulties toward the end of his master's degree at Sussex. (award: 250)

These acts of support may be modest in size - but they've helped keep futures on track.

FINANCIALS

UniArk's funds raised are on the rise, thanks to the generous donations from our supporters. This financial support has enabled us to fund small grants for three students so far. Their dreams to pursue their higher education have been fraught with challenges, and UniArk has been there to support them every step of the way.

Calendar year 2024

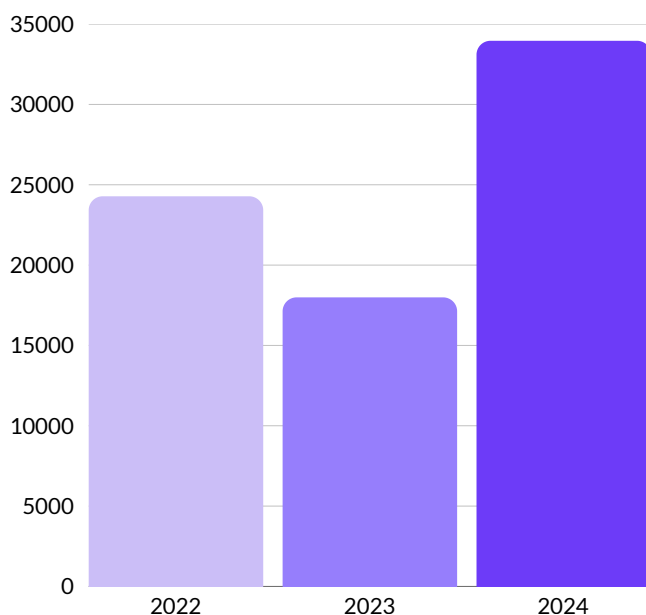
£33,961

RAISED FUNDS

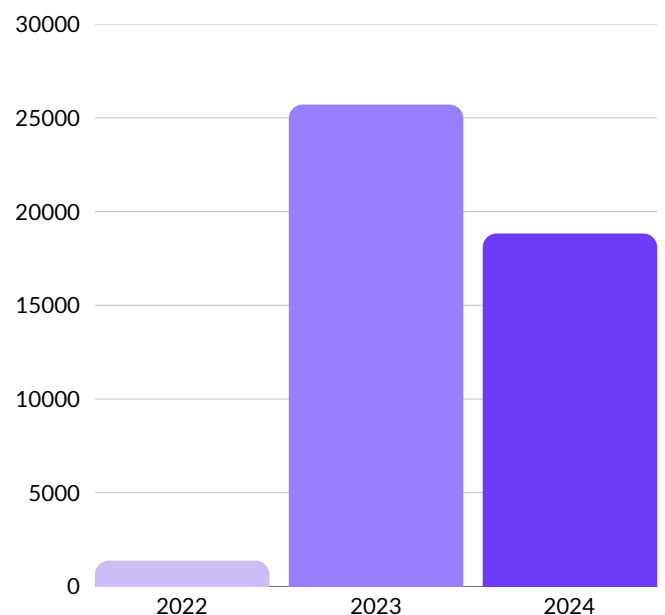
£18,828

ALLOCATED FUNDS

Funds raised for period 2022-2024



Funds allocated for period 2022-2024



For a complete financial review of the UniArk accounts - see the charity commission website [here](#).

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

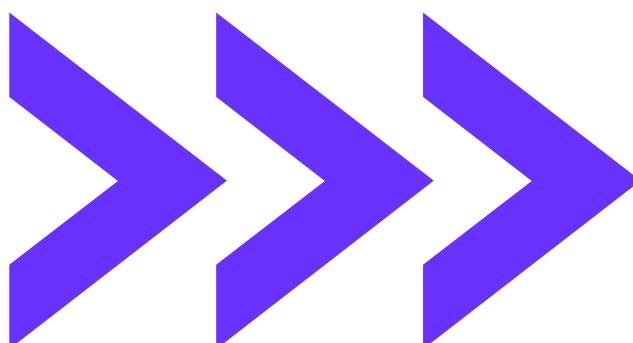
Here are some of our immediate goals:

- **Fundraise another fully funded scholarship through public donations and school charity fundraising.**

Following the successful completion of our 'Invest in Her Future' campaign, we're determined to fundraise for another scholarship and grow our supporter base.

- **Explore the role of technology assisted mentorship in furthering UniArk's mission.**

Providing 1-on-1 mentorship can be resource-intensive, requiring many hours of online research. One of the strengths of UniArk is the diverse talent present in the team. Leveraging the expertise of members with backgrounds in engineering, technology, and software, we are actively investigating ways to optimise our mentoring service and use tech innovation to address this challenge that our mentorship programme faces. The efforts of the team aim to streamline processes, reducing time commitments for both mentors and mentees alike.



THANK YOU

Dr Alison Wood
Dr Soraya Jones
Mark Hardie
Judith Coplowe
Dr Georgie Horrell
Prof Jason Howk
Kerry Ritz
Joe Divana
Evelyn Gilbert-Bair
Ishaan Sethi
Dr Bashir Kazimi
Amna Farooq
Yat Li Lung
Hardika Kukreja
Ritheka Sundar
Puja Pallavi
Swetha Umashunkar
Gul Imaan Ali
Evelyn Atat
Eleanor Luxton
Sophie Dodman
Jacob Huckle
Adam Poole
Mohammad Sadiq
Dr Andre Lo
Mehdi Ahmedi

Rob Harley
Sir Philip Pullman FBE FRSL
Susannah Herbert
Kate Clanchy MBE
Pooya Kamvari
Shirin Dehghan
Giorgia Sensi

UNIARK CIO
Financial Statements
For the Period Ended
31st December 2024

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UNIARK CIO
Legal and Administrative Details

Trustees

Shukria Rezaei (Chair)
Najib Sharifi
Goncalo A Regado
Danielle Kurtin

CIO Address

71 Hawkeshead Road
Manchester
M8 0QZ

Legal Status

Charity Registration Number 1199070

Bankers

Barclays Bank
9-11 St Andrew's St
Cambridge
CB2 3AA

UNIARK CIO

Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees present their Annual Report and the financial statements for the period 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024. This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions under section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 which allows for the preparation of receipts and payments accounts by charities with income less than £250,000.

Trustees

The trustees who held office during the period were:

S Rezaei (Chair)
 N Sharifi
 G A Regado
 D Kurtin

Legal Status and Objects

UniArk is a registered charity with Charity Registration Number 1199070.

The objects of the Charity are to advance the education of persons of disadvantaged backgrounds in such ways as:

- Providing general academic advice and in particular, any guidance, advice or work done relating to university applications which includes providing interview practices and feedback on personal statements and assisting on the preparation for admissions tests and scholarship applications
- Awarding to such persons subsidies, maintenance allowances or grants associated or in connection with their university application process, including
 - application fees for admissions aptitude tests (such as, amongst others, the BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT), Mathematics Admissions Test (MAT), National Admissions Test for Law (LNAT), Sixth Term Examination Paper (STEP) and University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT)), and
 - Shall include the travelling or transportation fees incurred for the purpose of taking such tests or for attending university entrance interviews.

In reviewing its activities, the Trustees have been mindful of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The charity may:

- Raise funds, receive grants and spend funds in order to further the charity's objectives;
- Cooperate with and support other charities with similar purposes; and
- Do anything which is lawful and necessary to achieve its purposes

Appointment of Trustees

There must be a maximum of ten and a minimum of three trustees in any year, drawn from its members. Up to two additional trustees may be appointed during the year. All the trustees must retire at the AGM. The members must elect the trustees at the AGM. The trustees should hold at least three meetings a year.

Review of Activities and Financial Performance

In an exceptional year, UniArk has reached new milestones in its mission to support educational opportunities for students facing adversity. The "Invest in Her Future". Shukria Rahimi as the recipient of the UniArk Women's Scholarship for Afghanistan, started her masters at Geneva Academy with UniArk funding her travel from Afghanistan to Switzerland. Our mentorship program continues to thrive, with 17 out of 21 mentees gaining admissions to top universities, including a notable full scholarship to Stanford for Morteza Ehsani from Herat, Afghanistan.

The financial activities of UniArk include helping a number of students financially, these include scholarships to Roqia Ibrahimi and Shukria Rahimi who has been fully funded by UniArk to study a masters. UniArk also provided a hardship grant to Nematullah Ahangosh, one of previous scholars as well as providing financial support for students that were unable to fund their TOEFL tests required as part of the admissions.

A more comprehensive review of our activities and achievements can be found in the annual report also provided alongside this document.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the legislative requirements of the Charities Act 2011 as applicable to smaller charities in England and Wales.

The Trustees have taken the option available to them to prepare the accounts on a receipts and payments basis because the gross income of the charity is less than £250,000. The accounts have been subject to an independent examination in accordance with the Charities Act 2011.

Independent Examiner: Jason Zhanfeng Si, MBA Jason Zhanfeng Si holds an MBA and has professional experience in the financial sector. He acts as the independent examiner for these accounts. He reported that nothing came to their attention which required modification of the financial statements or documentation in accordance with the guideline provided from charity commission. This report is provided alongside this document.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees are satisfied that the level of cash funds, currently, are adequate to meet the objects of the Charity.

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Dr Najib Sharifi

Date: 10/10/2025

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

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

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 state of affairs of the Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees should follow best practice 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; and

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Charity, and which enable them to ascertain the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, supporting regulations and the Trust Deed. 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.

UNIARK CIO**Receipts and Payments Account****for the period from 1st January 2024 to 31 December 2024**

	Note	Restrict ed Funds 2024 £	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Receipts					
Donations		25980.3	4378.8	30359.09	15990.77
Grant		-	0		2000
Gift aid		0	3601.99	3601.99	
Total Receipts For Year		25980.3	7980.79	33961.08	17990.77
Payments:					
Debt		0	0	0	3031.55
Grants to individuals	3	17316.25	1011.69	18327.94	22491.76
Content generation		0	500	500	184
Insurance		-	-	-	-
Travel and subsistence		-	-	-	-
Purchase of equipment		-	-	-	-
Total Payments for Year		17316.25	1511.69	18827.94	25707.31
Net (Payments)/Receipts being Net Movement in Funds		8664.05	6469.1	15133.15	-7716.54
Transfer from unrestricted funds					
Cash Funds At Last Year End		12452.69	2736.77	15189.46	-
Cash Funds At This Year End		21116.74	9205.87	30322.6	-

UNIARK CIO
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
31 December 2024

2024

£

Monetary Assets

Cash at bank

Bank account 1 (Barclay's bank)

29833

Bank account 2 (PayPal)

489

Debtor

Gift aid receivable

0

Total Monetary Assets

30322

Non Monetary Assets

Equipment

-

Total Assets at Cost

30322

Liabilities

None

Approved by the Trustees and Signed by:

Dr Najib Sharifi

Trustee

Date: 10/10/2025

UNIARK CIO
Notes to the Financial Statements

1 Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared under Section 42(3) of the Charities Act 2011 and the Statement of Recommended Practice on “Accounting and Reporting by Charities” issued March 2005.

Particular accounting policies adopted by the trustees are described below.

a) Income and Expenditure

Income and expenditure are accounted for on a receipts and payments basis.

2 Trustees’ Remuneration

None of the trustees received remuneration or expenses during the current or previous period.

3 Grants

UniArk experienced technology problems with the bank account where transfer to students and payment for student admissions costs were not possible. In these cases, a UniArk trustee (Shukria Rezaei) paid for the students from her own private account. These payments were reviewed and approved by two other trustees. Receipts are available for all payments and transfers.



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
UNIARK CIO

**On accounts for the year
ended**

December 31st, 2024

**Charity no
(if any)**

1199070

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31 /12 / 2024**.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trust'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 (other than that disclosed below *) 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.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

司占峰

Date:

30/9/2025

Name:

Jason Zhanfeng Si

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

Address:

142 Flamsteed Close

Cambridge

CB1 3FE

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

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.