



**Trustees' Annual Report  
for the year ended  
31st August 2023**



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# Administrative details

Charity Number: 1199402

Company Number: 12365206

**Registered address:**

1st Floor

Observer Building

53 Cambridge Road

TN34 1DT

**Trustees at the time of submission and for the duration of the year:**

Edith Susanna Eriksson-Lee

Eleanor Rachel Trunkfield

Richard Thomas Francis Fleming

Amrita Devaiah

Joanna Elizabeth Smith

Dr Mark Roderick Womald

**Independent Examiner:**

Multiply Accountancy Limited

71-75 Shelton Street

London

WC2H 9JQ

**Bankers:**

Natwest

Business Banking PO Box 16204

Birmingham

West Midlands

B2 2WP

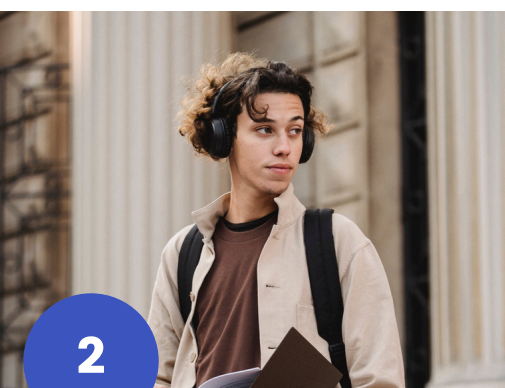




## **The Bridging Project presents its second Trustees' report and financial statement for the financial year ended 31st August 2023.**

The Bridging Project is a private Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital. We operate in England (12365206) and are registered with the Charity Commission (1199402).

The Company's objects are to advance the education of people, especially but not exclusively those from low income, socially and/or economically disadvantaged areas, who are engaged in or intending to engage in higher or further education.



# Mission and objectives

The Bridging Project's mission is to support undergraduates from under-represented backgrounds to succeed at university and beyond.

1 in 12 freshers from low income families drop out of university each year, compared to 1 in 20 of their classmates\*. Once at university, under-represented students face additional barriers in engaging fully with university life.

These statistics worsen for care leavers, a group we have focused support on this year. Nationally, 38% of care experienced students drop out of university compared to 8% of other groups\*\*.

**The Bridging Project believes that all students, regardless of their background, should be able to thrive at university.**

We offer a programme of tailored coaching support to equip young people with the tools they need to navigate the transition to university. Each student is matched with an experienced coach, external to the university, who usually has lived experience of attending university from an under-represented group. Coaches support students through one-to-one sessions during their first year of university.

**The programme supports students to:**

- **Improve their sense of belonging**
- **Develop soft skills including time and stress management**
- **Increase their ability to access support**
- **Improve engagement in university life**

In turn, this improves student retention and builds more positive outcomes for students from under-represented groups.

We are in our fourth year of operation. This is our second year as a company registered with the Charity Commission.

\*Social Mobility Commission, Progress made by high-attaining children from disadvantaged backgrounds

\*\*HEPI July 2023, Breaking new ground – understanding care experience students, Fiona Ellison

I have become more confident as a student but also as a person in general, the coaching meetings were always a safe place and I couldn't be more grateful for the support.

– Student on The Bridging Project, Murray Edwards College



# Activities in 2022/23

- The Bridging Project provided an in depth programme of support to 27 students in the transition to university.
- We changed our approach to focus on building more in depth partnerships with the universities where students are based.
- This activity took place through university partnerships at the University of Oxford (Balliol and Trinity Colleges), the University of Cambridge (Murray Edwards College) and University College London (UCL).
- The partnership at UCL focused on supporting a cohort of care experienced students.
- The Bridging Project recruited and trained 19 volunteer coaches. 64% of coaches had a Master's level qualification or certification in coaching and positive psychology and 52% had lived experience similar to the students they supported.
- Students were provided with monthly coaching sessions throughout their first year at university.
- Sessions focused on areas such as growing confidence, accessing support, building positive relationships with staff and students, time and stress management.
- Coaches acted as an important intermediary, signposting students to additional support as and when they needed it. This included additional mental health support, accommodation or financial support, or academic help and advice.
- The Bridging Project also provided a series of group workshops for students focusing on building networks and developing stress and time management skills.



# Achievements and Performance in 2022/23

## Survey responses from students on the 22/23 programme

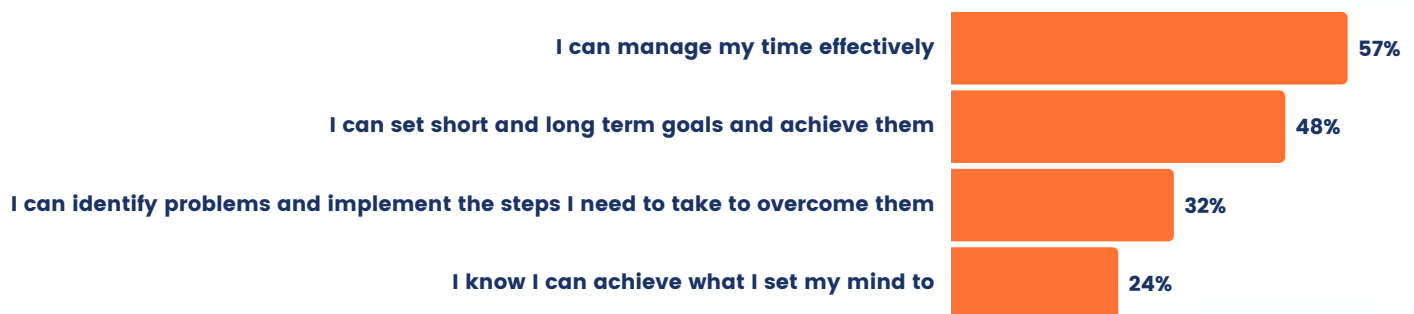
### Soft Skills

Students reported improved self-assessments of a range of soft skills between the start and the end of the programme, with the largest increase appearing to relate to time management and goal setting.

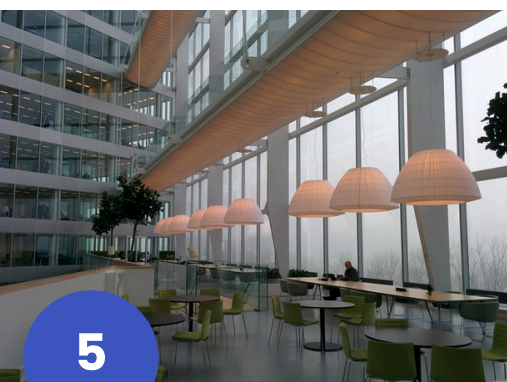
**95%**

of students felt the programme had helped them develop their soft skills

### Student ratings of soft skills – % change from pre- to post-programme



I have been on top of my studies throughout the year and I have drastically improved my soft skills such as public speaking.  
– Student on The Bridging Project



**91%**

of students felt the programme had helped them access support at university

## Access to support

Students reported improved knowledge and understanding of different forms of support available and increased confidence in making the most of it. The largest increases related to students' self-assessments of their support networks, in terms of knowing people who had been to university, who attended the same university as them, and who worked in careers that interested them.

### Student ratings of access to support – % change from pre- to post-programme



## Retention

**100%**

of students on the programme planned to continue their studies

**77%**

of students felt the programme had helped them remain at university during their first year

The difference the programme has made is amazing and the insight given is so valuable. It makes me really happy to know that such good support is out there for others to benefit from.

– Student on The Bridging Project



## University life

Students reported improved knowledge, understanding and confidence in relation to various aspects of university life between the start and end of the programme. The largest increases appeared to relate to students' engagement in co-curricular activities and their overall confidence about university life.

**91%**

of students felt the programme had helped them feel more confident at university

## Process

When asked to describe the programme in three words, the most common descriptors were 'supportive', 'helpful' and 'encouraging'.



**86%**

of students rated their experience on the programme as 5/5

**95%**

of students would recommend the programme to others

My coach has made a huge difference to my first year at university and their support has been so valuable. I'm not sure I would have stayed without them.  
- Student on The Bridging Project

# Case study:

## University College London

In 2022-23 we delivered our programme to a group of 10 care experienced young people starting at UCL. The aim was to develop their sense of belonging, confidence and engagement in wider university life. The survey results are below.

“ People around me have also recognised the difference it has made to my overall outlook to certain situations and I really appreciate the impact that my coach has had on my life.  
- Student on The Bridging Project, UCL ”

Pre-programme	Post-programme	The Bridging Project Impact
33% of students stated they felt they <b>belonged</b> at UCL	75% of students stated they <b>belonged</b> at UCL	100% of students stated The Bridging Project improved their sense of <b>belonging</b>
20% of students stated they felt <b>confident</b> to <b>engage</b> in activities beyond their studies	100% of students stated they were <b>confident</b> to <b>engage</b> in activities beyond their studies	88% of students stated they felt the programme helped them <b>engage</b> in university life
10% of students stated they felt they could set <b>goals</b> and achieve them	100% of students currently feel they can set <b>goals</b> and achieve them	100% of students stated the programme helped them develop <b>their ability to set goals and achieve them</b>

“ Honestly these coaching sessions have changed my life, they have made me more confident and helped me overcome my fears.

- Student on The Bridging Project, UCL ”



# Public benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission's published guidance on the Public Benefit requirement under the Charities Act 2011 when reviewing the Bridging Project's aims and objectives and in planning future activities. The Trustees consider that the Bridging Project's activities are for the benefit of the public generally.

## Organisational structure

Trustees are also Directors of the Company. Trustees attend four meetings a year. The Trustees were initially recruited by a founding Trustee and the organisation's two founders. Positions were advertised publicly and candidates were interviewed for the position.

All Trustees received an induction folder containing key information about The Bridging Project. Going forward, new Trustees will be appointed by the Board of Trustees. As of 31 August 2023 there were six Trustees.

The organisation currently has one full time member of staff, one part time member of staff, four freelance lead coaches and a freelance fundraiser. The programme and coaching are delivered by volunteers.



# Plans for next year (2023/24)

- We will be shifting to a solely university-based approach, supporting approximately 40 students from three universities: University of Nottingham, University of Oxford (Trinity College and Balliol College) and University of Cambridge (Murray Edwards College). This will include a programme supporting neurodiverse students at the University of Nottingham.
- We aim to recruit and train 40 coaches. This will be in partnership with the University of East London's Master's programme in Coaching and Positive Psychology. We will provide all volunteer coaches with funded external supervision and a paid freelance member of staff to support them throughout the year.
- Coaches will continue to deliver 12 monthly 1:1 sessions to each student. These will focus on areas such as growing confidence, accessing support, building positive relationships with staff and students, time and stress management.
- Students will be offered workshops focusing on confidence, networking and stress management.
- We will work with a new Lead Coach at the University of Nottingham with expertise in coaching and supporting neurodiverse students, and will recruit experienced coaches to support this student group.
- The charity is committed to growing its work to support more students in the years to come. Work next year will be focused on looking at how the programme can reach more students in need across the UK.

## Financial review

Total incoming resources for the year amounted to £82,307. The resources expended amounted to £69,686. This results in a gain in funds of £12,621.

The Bridging Project makes year-long commitments to its university partners and student beneficiaries as well as its two employees and team of freelance workers. It is therefore an objective of the Trustees to gradually build a financial reserve to provide sustainability for the future. The Trustees have been particularly aware of building this up given the current cost of living crisis and its impact on the charity sector.

The Bridging Project aims to build a minimum financial reserve to allow the charity's operations to continue in the event of unforeseen circumstances. The appropriate amount is determined by Trustees and reviewed each year but aims to be approximately a minimum of 3 months operating costs. This year the charity has met this objective with built up unrestricted reserves of £17,607.



# Funding

The Bridging Project is funded through university partnerships and grants and donations. In 2022/23 we received grants from the National Lottery Community Fund and the Headley Trust. We also received a donation from a private individual who has committed to supporting our work through our first few years. We would like to thank all our donors for their support.

## Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

Law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the period and of its financial position at the end of the period. In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the Trustees should follow best 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;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

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

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

Approved by the Trustees on Wednesday 6th March 2024 and signed on their behalf by Susanna Eriksson Lee on 19th May 2024.

# The Bridging Project

## Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of The Bridging Project

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Bridging Project for the year ended 31 August 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Summary Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet and the related notes.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

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

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the charity are not required to be audited and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

### Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I can confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the 2006 Act ; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements under section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

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



### Chris Conway

Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

Multiply Accountancy Limited  
71-75 Shelton Street  
London  
WC2H 9JQ

Date: 20 May 2024



## The Bridging Project

### Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the Summary Income and Expenditure Account) for the year ended 31 August 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>					
Grants and donations	2	72,595	9,712	82,307	55,704
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>72,595</b>	<b>9,712</b>	<b>82,307</b>	<b>55,704</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	3	2,313		2,313	15
Charitable activities	4	4,819		4,819	4,852
Other	5	58,987	3,567	62,554	39,908
<b>Total outgoing resources</b>		<b>66,119</b>	<b>3,567</b>	<b>69,686</b>	<b>44,775</b>
Corporation tax		-		-	(2,031)
<b>Net incoming resources</b>	6	<b>6,476</b>	<b>6,145</b>	<b>12,621</b>	<b>8,898</b>
Other gains and losses		-		-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>6,476</b>	<b>6,145</b>	<b>12,621</b>	<b>8,898</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		11,131	-	11,131	2,233
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>17,607</b>	<b>6,145</b>	<b>23,752</b>	<b>11,131</b>

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

# The Bridging Project

## Balance Sheet at 31 August 2023

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	8	<u>125</u>	<u>176</u>
		<b>125</b>	<b>176</b>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>38,411</u>	<u>37,694</u>
		<b>38,411</b>	<b>37,694</b>
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	9	<u>(14,784)</u>	<u>(26,739)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u><b>23,627</b></u>	<u><b>10,955</b></u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<u><b>23,752</b></u>	<u><b>11,131</b></u>
<b>Total net assets</b>		<u><b>23,752</b></u>	<u><b>11,131</b></u>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>			
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Restricted income funds	10,11	6,145	-
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General funds	10,11	<u>17,607</u>	<u>11,131</u>
<b>Total funds</b>		<u><b>23,752</b></u>	<u><b>11,131</b></u>

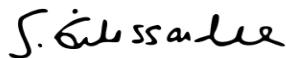
These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

For the year ended 31 August 2023 the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

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.

Approved by the board of trustees on 19 May 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Edith Susanna Eriksson-Lee  
Trustee

Date: 19 May 2024

# The Bridging Project

## Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023

### 1 Accounting policies

#### **Basis of preparation**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. They are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Amounts presented are rounded to the nearest pound.

#### **Going concern**

The Trustees have reasonable expectation that the charity will have access to adequate resources to continue in existence for the foreseeable future. In making this assessment, the Trustees have considered a period of at least 12 months from the date of authorising the financial statements. Accordingly, the charity continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

#### **Fund accounting**

##### Unrestricted funds

These are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objects of the charity.

##### Restricted funds

These are available for use subject to restrictions imposed by the donor or through terms of an appeal. See note 13 to the accounts for full information.

#### **Income**

##### Recognition of income

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity becomes entitled to, and virtually certain to receive, the income and the amount of the income can be measured with sufficient reliability.

##### Income with related expenditure

Where income has related expenditure the income and related expenditure is reported gross in the SoFA.

##### Grants and donations

Voluntary income received by way of grants, donations and gifts is included in the SoFA when receivable and only when the Charity has unconditional entitlement to the income.

##### Tax reclaims on donations and gifts

Income from tax reclaims is included in the SoFA at the same time as the gift/donation to which it relates.

##### Donated services and facilities

These are only included in income (with an equivalent amount in expenditure) where the benefit to the Charity is reasonably quantifiable, measurable and material.

##### Volunteer help

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the accounts.

##### Investment income

Income from investments is included in the accounts when receivable.

##### Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets

This includes any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value at the end of the year.

##### Gains/(losses) on revaluation on investment assets

This includes any gain or loss on the sale of investments.



# The Bridging Project

## Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

### Accounting policies

#### Expenditure

##### Recognition of expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

##### Expenditure on raising funds

These comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income, fundraising trading costs and investment management costs.

##### Expenditure on charitable activities

These comprise the costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities and services in the furtherance of its objects, including the making of grants and governance costs.

##### Governance costs

These include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the Charity, including any audit/independent examination fees, costs linked to the strategic management of the Charity, together with a share of other administration costs.

##### Other expenditure

These are support costs not allocated to a particular activity.

#### Taxation

The entity obtained charitable status on 22 June 2022. Income received prior to this registration date has been treated as taxable. Subsequent to the charitable registration, the entity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

#### Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible assets are included at cost less depreciation and impairment. Depreciation has been provided at the following rates in order to write off the assets over their estimated useful lives:

Computer Equipment	4 years straight line
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#### Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash at bank and on hand, demand deposits with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less and bank overdrafts. In the statement of financial position, bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings or current liabilities.

#### Trade and other creditors

Short term creditors are measured at the transaction price. Other creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

#### Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution plan for its employees. A defined contribution plan is a pension plan under which the charity pays fixed contributions into a separate entity. Once the contributions have been paid the charity has no further payments obligations. The contributions are recognised as expenses when they fall due. Amounts not paid are shown in accruals in the balance sheet. The assets of the plan are held separately from the charity in independently administered funds.

## The Bridging Project

### Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

			Total	Total
	Unrestricted	Restricted	2023	2022
<b>2 Income from grants and donations</b>				
Grants received	72,595	9,712	82,307	55,704
<b>3 Expenditure on raising funds</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Advertising and marketing	63	-	63	15
Freelance Fundraisers	2,250	-	2,250	-
	<u>2,313</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,313</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>4 Expenditure on charitable activities</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Governance costs				
Independent examination - current year	500	-	500	500
Other accountancy fees paid to independent examiner	3,831	-	3,831	3,257
Legal and professional fees	488	-	488	1,095
	<u>4,819</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,819</u>	<u>4,852</u>
<b>5 Other expenditure</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Staff costs (Note 7)	54,326		54,326	38,284
Travel costs	887	44	931	31
Depreciation	51		51	26
General administrative costs	3,723	3,523	7,246	1,568
	<u>58,987</u>	<u>3,567</u>	<u>62,554</u>	<u>39,909</u>
<b>6 Net income before transfers</b>			<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
This is stated after charging:				
Depreciation of owned fixed assets			51	26

# The Bridging Project

## Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

<b>7 Staff costs</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Salaries and wages	53,107	39,333
Social security costs	-	(1,069)
Pension costs	1,130	-
Staff recruitment and training costs	89	20
	<u>54,326</u>	<u>38,284</u>

In the year to 31 August 2023, no employee received emoluments greater than £60,000 (2022: nil).

No trustees (2021: nil) were reimbursed for expenses incurred (2022: nil) for travel to board meetings. No trustee received any remuneration in the year (2022: nil).

Key management personnel comprise the trustees and the founder. Total remuneration paid to these individuals was £44,040 (2023: £36,249).

The average number of staff employed, including part time staff was 2 (2022: 2)

<b>8 Tangible fixed assets</b>	<b>Computer equipment</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 September 2022	202	202
Additions	-	-
At 31 August 2023	<u>202</u>	<u>202</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 September 2022	26	26
Charge for the year	51	51
At 31 August 2023	<u>77</u>	<u>77</u>
<b>Net Book Value</b>		
At 31 August 2023	<u>125</u>	<u>125</u>
At 31 August 2022	<u>176</u>	<u>176</u>

<b>9 Creditors falling due within one year</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Other taxes and social security	1,241	3,180
Trade and other creditors	219	237
Accruals	3,324	3,324
Deferred income	10,000	20,000
	<u>14,784</u>	<u>26,741</u>

### Deferred income

Income is deferred relative to the academic year it relates to. The charity is committed to delivering a number of workshops and coaching sessions for each student.

<b>University</b>	<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Trinity College	2023/24	10,000	
Trinity College	2022/23		10,000
Balliol College	2022/23		10,000
		<u>10,000</u>	<u>20,000</u>



# The Bridging Project

## Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

### 10 Movement in funds

	At 1 September 2022	Incoming resources including other gains/(losses)	Outgoing resources	At 31 August 2023
Restricted funds:				
National Lottery	-	9,712	(3,567)	6,145
Unrestricted funds:				
General funds	11,131	72,595	(66,119)	17,607
	<u>11,131</u>	<u>82,307</u>	<u>(69,686)</u>	<u>23,752</u>

	At 1 September 2021	Incoming resources including other gains/(losses)	Outgoing resources	At 31 August 2022
Unrestricted funds:				
General funds	2,233	55,704	(46,806)	11,131
	<u>2,233</u>	<u>55,704</u>	<u>(46,806)</u>	<u>11,131</u>

### 11 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023
Fixed assets	125	-	125
Net current assets	17,482	6,145	23,627
	<u>17,607</u>		<u>23,752</u>
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022
Fixed assets	176	-	176
Net current assets	10,955	-	10,955
	<u>11,131</u>		<u>11,131</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

### 12 Trustee Liability

The entity is limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital.

Every member of the entity undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company, in the event of a winding up, such an amount as may be required not exceeding £1.

