

# THE CULTURAL LEARNING ALLIANCE

England & Wales · Charity number 1203017

## Details

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**Status** Registered

**Legal form** CIO

**Registered** 2023-05-10

**Register** [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

## Contact

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M1 4HT

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**Website** [www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk](http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk)

## Activities

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**Objects:** THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE, FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION IN ARTS AND CULTURE, IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY, BY:(1) GATHERING EVIDENCE AND DATA ON THE VALUE OF ARTS AND CULTURAL EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE;(2) USING DATA TO PROVIDE AN EVIDENCE-BASED NARRATIVE DEMONSTRATING THE WAYS IN WHICH AN ARTS AND CULTURAL EDUCATION PROVIDE CHILDREN WITH SKILLS FOR LIFE;(3) COLLABORATING WITH RELEVANT PARTIES TO PROMOTE A RIGHT TO ARTS AND CULTURE FOR EVERY CHILD, AND TO ENCOURAGE POLICY AND PRACTICE WORK TO INCREASE THE DELIVERY OF ARTS AND CULTURAL EDUCATION; AND(4) GATHERING AND SHARING INSIGHT INTO THE EDUCATION, CULTURAL, SOCIAL POLICY AND PRACTICE LANDSCAPE TO SUPPORT THE CULTURAL LEARNING WORKFORCE IN ACTIVE CASE-MAKING AND PRACTICE.

**Activities:** CLA champions the right to arts and culture for every child. We use evidence to demonstrate the ways an arts-rich education provides skills for life and skills for work, enabling all children to fulfil their potential. We are the leading source of cultural education news, insight and opinion; leading the collective cross-arts agenda for arts/cultural learning policy change in England.

## Classification

- **How:** Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Education/training
- **Who:** Children/young People, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies

## Geography

- Throughout England And Wales

## Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£40,000	£51,979	-	-
2024-03-31	£91,379	£75,334	-	-

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
<b>Sally Elizabeth Bacon OBE</b>	Chair	2023-05-10
Alice King-Farlow		2024-06-03
Derinda Burdon		2023-05-10
Ian Thomas		2024-06-03
Jennifer Thompson		2025-09-01
Kathryn Pugh		2025-09-01
Lucy Butterfield		2024-06-03
Nicholas Harold Moser Pear		2025-09-01
Robert Elkington MBE		2024-06-03
Sarah Amy Louise McGann		2024-06-03
Stephen Moffitt MBE		2024-02-26
Tina Ramdeen		2023-05-10

**THE CULTURAL LEARNING ALLIANCE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1203017

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# Accounts

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CULTURAL  
LEARNING  
ALLIANCE

# Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

Registered Office:

91 Princess Street, Manchester, M1 4HT

Email: [info@culturallearningalliance.org.uk](mailto:info@culturallearningalliance.org.uk)

Website: [www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk](http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk)

The Cultural Learning Alliance is a Registered Charity

Number: 1203017

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# Company information

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## Incorporation

This charitable company Cultural Learning Alliance was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023

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## Trustees

Sally Bacon OBE – Executive Co-chair  
Derri Burdon – Co-chair  
Lucy Butterfield (appointed 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024)  
Rob Elkington MBE (appointed 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024)  
Alice King-Farlow (appointed 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024)  
Amy McGann (appointed 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024)  
Steve Moffitt MBE  
Tina Ramdeen  
Ian Thomas (appointed 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024)  
Andria Zafirakou MBE (resigned 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025)

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## Independent Examiner

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 44 Peter Streets  
Manchester  
M2 5GP

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## Bankers

Unity Trust Bank  
4 Brindley Place  
Birmingham  
B1 2JB

## Solicitors

Counterculture Partnership LLP  
Unit 115  
Ducie House  
Ducie Street  
Manchester M1 2JW

## Co-chairs' Statement

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This has been a defining year for the Cultural Learning Alliance. We have built momentum, deepened our evidence base and used the collective voice of the sector to influence change where it matters. As we completed our second full year as a registered charity, our focus remained clear: to champion every child's right to an arts-rich education.

Our Strategy Map continues to serve as both compass and anchor. It holds us steady in a rapidly shifting policy landscape, defining CLA's distinct role within the wider arts education ecology. It keeps us focused on four interconnected areas: gathering evidence, shaping narrative, sharing insight and influencing policy and practice. This clarity of purpose has been vital as we respond to national developments while keeping our sights fixed on long-term impact.

The publication of the 2025 Report Card came at a moment of real opportunity. It has already shaped thinking and strategy across schools, multi-academy trusts, cultural organisations and government. We've seen it cited in research, articles and consultation responses, and have received strong feedback from professionals using it to inform their own work. Together, the 2025 Report Card, the Blueprint for an Arts-Rich Education and the Capabilities Framework form a connected set of tools that underpin CLA's strategy and equip the sector to navigate change, make the case and plan with confidence. They are being used nationally to guide commissioning, policy development and everyday practice, and have helped establish a stronger shared language around the value of arts-rich learning. This shared language, and the resources that support it, continue to grow in reach and influence across education and culture. Through webinars, bulletins and consultation responses, we are sharing practical insight and advocacy tools that help professionals take action with clarity and purpose.

As our work expands, so too does our governance. In September 2025, we will be delighted to welcome three new Trustees to our Board, strengthening our links with the education sector at a pivotal moment.

Looking ahead, the coming year is likely to bring meaningful change for arts education in England. As new policy initiatives take shape, there is a growing opportunity to embed parity for arts subjects within the national curriculum and move closer to a true entitlement for all children. CLA will continue to lead with purpose and evidence, equipping our members and allies with the tools they need to advocate powerfully in their schools, communities and sectors. Together, we are building the conditions for every child to flourish through the arts.

**Sally Bacon and Derri Burdon**  
Co-chairs, Cultural Learning Alliance

# Trustees' Annual Report

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In preparing this report, Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

## Charitable objects

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The objects of the CIO are, for the public benefit, to promote the advancement of education in arts and culture, in particular but not exclusively, by:

1. gathering evidence and data on the value of arts and cultural education and participation for children and young people;
2. using data to provide an evidence-based narrative demonstrating the ways in which an arts and cultural education provide children with skills for life;
3. collaborating with relevant parties to promote a right to arts and culture for every child, and to encourage policy and practice work to increase the delivery of arts and cultural education; and
4. gathering and sharing insight into the education, cultural, social policy and practice landscape to support the cultural learning workforce in active case-making and practice.

## Vision

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A world in which the value of an arts-rich education is widely recognised, & clearly visible in sustained & equitable practice across schools and other settings, & at national policy level.

## Mission

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The CLA champions a right to arts and culture for every child. It uses evidence to demonstrate the ways in which an arts-rich education provides skills for life & skills for work, enabling all children to fulfil their potential.

## Values

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***We are evidence-based:*** We find & use robust evidence to support better understanding of the difference the arts can make in children's lives.

***We are narrative-led:*** We consistently make the evidence accessible in multi-modal ways, for all audiences, to influence change.

***We are collaborative:*** We collaborate with others across the education, culture & youth sectors, including our members, & more widely.

***We are inclusive:*** We are actively inclusive & view all our work through a social justice lens.

## Activities - how the charity spends its money

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The CLA champions the right to arts and culture for every child. We use evidence to demonstrate the ways an arts-rich education provides skills for life and skills for work, enabling all children to fulfil their potential. We are the leading source of cultural education news, insight and opinion; leading the collective cross-arts agenda for arts/cultural learning policy change in England.

## Strategy & Methodology

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As identified in our founding document, the objects of our charitable organisation are to promote the advancement of education in the Arts and culture for the public benefit, in particular but not exclusively by:

- gathering evidence and data on the value of Arts and cultural education and participation for children and young people;
- using data to provide an evidence-based narrative demonstrating the ways in which an Arts and cultural education provide children with skills for life;
- collaborating with relevant parties to promote a right to Arts and culture for every child, and to encourage policy and practice work to increase the delivery of Arts and cultural education; and
- gathering and sharing insight into the education, cultural, social policy and practice landscape to support the cultural learning workforce in active case-making and practice.

We continued to use our [Strategy Map](#) (see below) to communicate our vision, mission, impact areas, activity strands and values. It remains an important statement of intent for us and set the direction for all of our work within a shifting policy landscape and context.

# The Cultural Learning Alliance strategy map



## Why

### Vision

A world in which the value of an arts-rich education is widely recognised, and clearly visible in sustained and equitable practice across all schools and other settings, and at national policy level.

### Mission

The CLA harnesses the power of its alliance to champion a right to arts and culture for every child. It uses evidence to demonstrate the ways in which an arts-rich education provides skills for life and skills for work, enabling all children to fulfil their potential.

## What

### Impact 1

Independent evidence and advocacy work leads to positive shifts in arts and cultural learning opportunities and experiences in schools & other settings.

### Impact 2

Independent evidence and advocacy work leads to positive and sustained shifts in arts and cultural learning in terms of policy, infrastructure and funding.

## How + Who

### Social justice and inclusion

Apply social justice and inclusion lens to all activity, supporting, platforming and empowering change.



#### Activity 1: Evidence

Gather new data and high-quality evidence to support better understanding of the value of an arts-rich education for all children and young people



#### Activity 2: Narrative

Craft accessible new evidence-based value narrative and disseminate it through a communications strategy to influence change



#### Activity 3: Insight

Gather and share insight into education, cultural, youth and social, policy and practice landscape to support case-making



#### Activity 4: Advocacy

Use narrative and insight to collaborate with educators and policy makers on advocacy for improved and more inclusive practice and policy work

## Values

### Evidence-based

We are evidence-based: we find and use robust evidence to support better understanding of the difference the arts can make in children's lives

### Narrative-led

We are narrative-led: we consistently make the evidence accessible in multi-modal ways, for all audiences, to influence change

### Inclusive

We are inclusive: we are actively inclusive and view all our work through a social justice and inclusion lens

### Collaborative

We are collaborative: we collaborate with others across the education, culture and youth sectors, including our members, and more widely

# Review of Achievements and Performance in 2024/25

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This period covers our second full year of operation as a charity (a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, or CIO) following more than a decade operating as an informal alliance – and there have been several significant milestones over the period.

## Governance, Associate roles and operations

During the year the six newly appointed Board members (who joined the founding board of four Trustees) were active contributors in bringing their wide experience to CLA. The Trustees were able to assess what skills and experience might also be needed across the Board. Plans were developed to recruit up to three new Trustees from the education sector, ideally across primary, secondary, SEND or FE, and bringing a diversity of lived experience, expertise and regional representation. These appointments will be made later in 2025.

Working with our new CLA Associates continued to bear fruit during the period. Early in 2025 Professor Pat Thomson, our Senior Evidence Associate, launched a new monthly ‘Research Spotlight’ section in the monthly CLA Newsletter, in which she summarises a recent piece of research that is relevant for our sector. This is a welcome addition to our Newsletter and continues to deepen and enrich our core evidence function. During this period Professor Thomson was able to support CLA contributions to a series of consultations and calls for evidence, including from the Curriculum and Assessment Review. It has been extremely helpful to have all of our submissions grounded in detailed evidence and Professor Thomson has been key in enabling CLA to this.

Meanwhile we continued to work with Baz Ramaiah, CLA Policy and Evidence Associate. During the period Baz authored our first CLA annual Report Card, published in May 2024, and worked on our 2025 Report Card which was published in early April 2025. Baz’s skill at taking government data sets and additional surveys and scrutinising them in relation to Expressive Arts subjects and experiences has been a valuable asset for the CLA.

CLA was pleased to appoint Jacqui O’Hanlon MBE (Deputy Executive Director and Direction of Learning and National Partnerships at the Royal Shakespeare Company) as CLA Evidence Associate in spring 2024. Jacqui played a key role in Chairing our Evidence and Value Narrative Working Group and steering our evidence work during the year, working alongside Professor Thomson, Sally Bacon, our Co-Chair, and Group member Anna Cutler. CLA was pleased to acknowledge Jacqui’s invaluable contribution to CLA’s evidence work and to formalise the working partnership in this way.

Whilst CLA is a relatively new charity, it continues to remain true to its origins in still being a genuine ‘alliance’ of individuals and organisations working together to champion an Arts-rich education for every child. This means that board members are active contributors beyond their formal governance roles in a range of different ways. During the period some led ‘task and finish’ groups for particular tasks or CLA activities, and some contributed more practical support. There was discussion about one of the Co-Chairs taking on an Executive Co-Chair role for an interim period and this is likely in the coming year.

CLA remains grateful to Curious Minds for providing important back office functions at cost during the period under review (spanning finance, communications and administration). This arrangement has been put in place until such time as CLA establishes what staffing requirements will be needed in the longer term. In its early years some of these services had been provided by the CLA's funders (originally Clore Duffield Foundation and then Paul Hamlyn Foundation) as part of their 'hosting' role for CLA.

The outsourcing of our administrative and financial back-office functions to Curious Minds, as well as our vital communications work, enabled us to focus on our policy, evidence and insights work through the year. Having operated for many years without existing as a formal entity, it was good to continue to grow and develop our work as a charity – and to work with so many supportive colleagues and organisations who share our mission as we did so. We will continue to assess what public affairs support we need into the future, particularly around the launch of important pieces of work such as our Report Card.

As a small organisation, we continue to be mindful of cost efficiency, efficacy and impact – and are confident that we are balancing significant output with a careful approach to resourcing through active board support and our Associate roles.

## **Website and visual identity**

Our new website and new visual identity were launched during the period under review to mark the shift in becoming a new charity after more than a decade as an informal alliance. Having a more active and image-based visual identity has worked extremely well for us, particularly across social media platforms, whilst we retain a visual link to the seminal Arts in Schools reports (funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and published in 1982 and 2023) in applying the same colour across all our resources. The use of speech marks in our new logo reflects that CLA has much to say, but more importantly that children and young people have lots to say through their Arts experiences, in whatever form. It makes their – and our – voice visual. We wanted our new look to demonstrate the ambition we have for young people's voice and exciting Arts experiences, and for their futures.

## **Blueprint for an Arts-rich education**

Just before the 2024 general election was called, CLA published its Blueprint for an Arts-rich education to set out the course correction necessary to halt and reverse the decline in Expressive Arts education that we have seen since 2010. This had been informed by consensus workshops held in person and online during the previous year and enabled CLA to present a clear picture of the foundational education policy changes needed from any incoming government during 2024.

The Blueprint informed CLA's advocacy work throughout the period under review and continues to do so. The education policy changes set out span setting new purposes for schooling – with the Expressive Arts as one of the group of core and equal curriculum areas mapped onto the new purposes; the need for a minimum mandatory four-hour Arts entitlement beyond qualifications within the school week to the end of Key Stage 3 and an entitlement during KS4 and KS5; complete reform of the school accountability system to ensure it no longer adversely impacts expressive Arts subjects – scrapping the EBacc and reforming Progress 8; changes to student assessment in line with

the recommendations of Rethinking Assessment; and an entitlement to teacher training and teacher development opportunities for Expressive Arts subjects.

The Blueprint also sets out three principles necessary to underpin these system changes: an emphasis on a rounded learning experience for the personal development and wellbeing of the ‘whole child’ – for the present as well as for the future; a focus on representation, breadth and relevance across the Arts curriculum, resources and practice; and a commitment to ensuring that the cultural sector can respond strategically and collaboratively to meet the needs of young people in schools and in their communities, and is resourced specifically to support this work. In order for children to fully engage with their education, they need to see themselves reflected in what they are learning. Representation in schools has to be considered across the diversity of genres, course materials and activities, and through partnerships with Arts organisations.

These published ambitions, created through a consensus-building approach, have enabled CLA to maintain clear objectives through a period of intense political change with a new government and therefore a new set of government policy objectives which includes the objective of breaking down barriers to opportunity.

When the government announced an independent Curriculum and Assessment Review in 2024, the Blueprint meant that CLA was already clear in what changes it wanted to see through the Review. When the Review put out a call for evidence in September 2024 CLA was able to use its Blueprint as a cornerstone of its submission, together with 2024 Report Card and its emerging Capabilities Framework (see below). Together these set out the problem for Arts education (our Report Card); the reason equitable access to an Arts education matters (our Capabilities Framework); and the solutions (our Blueprint for an Arts-rich education) – or, as we occasionally summarise it, ‘the what; the so what; and the now what?’. These three things set the cornerstones of our work.

## **CLA annual Report Card**

In May 2024 we published our first annual Report Card. CLA had regularly gathered data on Arts GCSE and A-Level take up, and on Arts teaching hours, but this was the first time that key Arts education data (2010-2023) was comprehensively gathered together in one place to present a full picture of provision. Working largely from government data sets we gathered together all the relevant information across five new key indicators to provide a detailed survey of children’s and young people’s access to the Arts through their schooling in England. The key indicators we identified were: GCSE entries for Arts subjects; A-Level entries and Higher Education progression; the number of Arts teachers and hours of Arts subjects taught; Arts teacher recruitment and attention; and an ‘enrichment gap,’ i.e. young people from wealthier backgrounds having much greater access to Arts provision and opportunities compared to their peers from lower-income backgrounds.

We wanted to be ready with a state-of-the-nation overview for our sector to enable policymakers in a new government to be clear-sighted in understanding the landscape as they began to consider education system change. And we particularly wanted to provide evidence of the decline of Arts

subjects in schools to support the development of a new approach to valuing the expressive Arts within schooling.

By early 2025 we were ready with a new set of data analysis to inform our second Report Card, which was published in early April 2025. Late in 2024 we decided to extend our data gathering for this new Report Card to include vocational and technical qualifications – an important part of the qualifications landscape – and also to apply free school meal data and Office of National Statistics Index of Multiple deprivation data to Arts take-up data. We started to frame this new analysis as an Arts Entitlement Gap. We don't aim to stand still with our reporting: we want to broaden and extend our findings to provide the richest possible snapshot of what is happening in relation to Arts opportunities in schools and beyond, applying a social justice lens to all of our data collection work.

Because of this data gathering, the sector is now able to evidence that there is a clear relationship between the poverty of an area and pupils in that area not studying the Expressive Arts in school. Expressive Arts take up at GCSE and A Level is lowest in regions and local authorities with the highest level of free school meals and highest levels of deprivation. There is a clear socioeconomic disparity in young people's study of the Arts at both GCSE and A Level: the 'Arts entitlement gap'. Where a child grows up, and their family's socioeconomic status, are significant social determinants in whether or not they will pursue Expressive Arts options from the age of 14.

We were also able to share the data to indicate that recruitment into Expressive Arts subjects is in crisis and that we are seeing a significant trajectory of Arts decline in secondary education: a 42% decline in Arts GCSE take up since 2010, with more than 40% of schools no longer offering Drama or Music GCSE. This is all vital evidence for the Arts education sector and has been invaluable for our members and more widely.

Our annual Report Card is now a vital publication for the sector and we are glad to have found a way to communicate a clearly evidenced picture of what is happening in schools. There is more to do: the government does not collect any data for primary so we still do not know how many Arts specialist teachers there are or how many taught Arts hours there are in primary schools. And we are yet to widen our data collection to Scotland and to Wales. We are considering how our scope can be expanded if we can secure further funding.

## **CLA Evidence and Value Narrative Group**

CLA's new Evidence and Value Narrative Working Group (founded October 2023) was chaired by Jacqui O'Hanlon MBE, our Evidence Associate. The Group met throughout the year to advise on, oversee and develop CLA's evidence gathering and analysis – on the value of an Arts-rich education for every child and young person, and with a particular focus on social impact.

The Group included representatives from several UK universities, together with leading Arts education organisations and specialists, considered a range of research approaches. In partnership with (and funding from) the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), and support from Midlands4Cities, it co-commissioned university-led subject-based Rapid Evidence Reviews (RERs) for Dance, Drama and Music and a refresh of the 2021 RER for Art and Design. These RERs have been overseen by Professor Pat Thomson, our Senior Evidence Associate, and will be published in autumn 2025.

Working in consultation with sector colleagues through a consensus workshop approach, the Group also scoped the possibility of an Arts Education Evidence Hub through an RSC feasibility study supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies. This was finalised in the autumn of 2024. CLA's partnership working with the Royal Shakespeare Company was particularly important and productive throughout the year.

Importantly, the Evidence Group worked on an accessible evidence-based value narrative to make clear the value of studying Arts subjects. All of this work continued throughout 2024, with the group meeting in alternate months, and a smaller sub-group meeting more regularly to develop the detailed value narrative. CLA is extremely grateful to all those who gave their time for this important work.

CLA was able to start to publish this thinking towards the end of the year under review and now has much more detail on its website. There is much more work to do to mobilise this Framework, and to map it to the aggregated summary evidence gathered through the Rapid Evidence Reviews when they are available, but we are delighted to already have a set of the seven benefits of an Arts-rich education to build – for the first time – a valuable shared language for how we talk about the benefits of an Arts-rich education. This is a hugely significant step for CLA. We look forward to developing this work in the coming year.

The Working Group – always conceived as a 'task and finish' group – stood down in April 2025 having achieved its objectives, and a new Group will be formed in autumn 2025 to undertake the next stage of mapping RER evidence to the Framework and considering how it might be further developed and mobilised.

## **Insights during the year**

In our 'Latest News' bulletins from spring 2024 we shared a call for evidence from the new Commission on the Future of Oracy Education; school accountability news regarding Progress 8; and news of yet more erosion of creative arts courses at England's universities. We also launched our first annual Report Card – and published our manifesto asks in advance of the July general election. We shared the winners of the Northern Cultural Education Awards; new reports on working class representation in the creative industries; why children's social and emotional development – supported by Expressive Arts subjects – is important in countering violence; the loss of teaching assistant posts and why this matters for Arts subjects; an update on Music Hubs – and criticism of the changes – and a new report on enrichment through youth provision.

When the new government was elected we shared news of key new government education appointments, including the important announcement about the curriculum and assessment review; news about the alarming increase in child poverty and details of the new government taskforce to tackle it; the challenges in children's lives revealed by DfE census data; warnings about the lack of specialist teachers; parental concerns about school funding and the lack of specialist teaching; and the link between mental health and school absences.

In the summer we reported on GCSE and A Level entries and grades, and that students were selecting a narrower range of subjects, with Arts and humanities subjects suffering; and DCMS

announcements about the importance of opportunities for all children to engage with the Arts and sport. We also reported that Bridget Philipson had called for young people to develop critical thinking through a renewed curriculum.

In the autumn we shared news about CLA's presence at the Labour Party Conference; details of a major new report on curriculum and assessment in secondary education; details of Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Teacher Development Fund; news of a series of new Ofsted advisory groups and about government investment in a music pilot scheme for disadvantaged pupils; the first report from Skills England; information about university application figures; and details of a Children's Commissioner Report on the number of children missing from education.

We shared important information on evidence to use in responding to the government's Curriculum and Assessment Review; the launch of the important new report from the Education Oracy Commission; a new report on the role that parental education and wealth plays in the acquisition of 'assumed knowledge' from the Social Market Foundation; and news that Russell Group university admission metrics would no longer be used in grading England's schools.

In the winter we shared news of the demise of the National Citizenship Service and a new national youth strategy; news that private and state school GCSE results were now the same (when results are adjusted for socioeconomic background), with only creative subjects performing worse at state schools; research that revealed stark class inequalities in access to the creative industries; a summary of the autumn budget implications for children, schools and families; and new data that revealed one in five disadvantaged pupils are suspended.

At the start of the year we reported on warnings of school budget challenges for 2025; Ed Sheeran using CLA data to inform his work in setting up a new music education foundation; the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill; details of the new Creative Industries Taskforce (without education expertise); news about the first state school in the country to be set up in conjunction with a professional symphony orchestra; news from the head of Ofsted that SEND was the biggest issue facing schools; why the impact of the pandemic on children was not sufficiently analysed and researched; how Arts and creative subjects were being impacted through Higher Education cuts, including at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School; and our regular look back to what we did in 2024. This was followed by news of an important new consultation from Ofsted; the launch of a new Arts education campaign from the National Education Union – Arts and Minds; how Arts teacher shortages are particularly affecting deprived schools; DfE cuts to cultural education; a DEMOS report on the National Music Plan; issues for dance education; and continuing cuts to Arts university courses and staff. In cultural sector news we covered the new government funding announcements for Arts and culture and the review of Arts Council England; and creative industries news.

In March we reported on the publication of the interim report of the Curriculum and Assessment Review and covered the important announcement of the creation of a National Centre for Arts and Music Education and that Arts Council England would no longer be the fundholder for Music Hubs from 2026 as they would transfer to the new Centre. We reported on an NFER report on challenges in teacher recruitment; new research on the link between enrichment and attendance; the launch of an inquiry into a 'love of learning' by the Education All Party Parliamentary Group; the new 'Child of

the North’ report; news about music learning hub hotspots for the North of England; and the news that the number of NEETs has hit an 11-year high. We also covered the important news from Arts Council England that it was delaying its next funding round for a further year.

In ‘Latest Thinking’ from April 2024 onwards Baz Ramaiah reflected on the rapid expansion in the impact of AI and what that means for the Arts in Schools and Rachael Woodhead (then Curator: Families, Schools, and Young People at Tate St Ives) reflected on how the cultural sector needed to think differently to better support schools and learning colleagues in delivering an Arts-rich education for every child. In May, the focus was on sharing our Report Card and Blueprint for an Arts-rich education. In June Saphena Aziz, Director of Inclusion and Workforce Development at Curious Minds, reflected on the value of Arts education in countering hate, and Paul Reeve, former CEO of Into Film, wrote about the potential role of film and digital media in the curriculum in response to CLA’s manifesto asks – which proposed the inclusion of film within the Expressive Arts curriculum area. We also covered the party manifestos in relation to Arts, education, and skills.

In July we invited two music subject association heads – Bridget Whyte from Music Mark and Deborah Annetts from ISM – to reflect on what was happening with Music Hubs following the announcement of a reduction in the number of Hubs, and to address some of the concerns. We thought it would be worth sharing a full update on the Music Hubs given the complexities of changes and also given the level of investment music had received since 2010. In the autumn we focused on youth provision with perspectives from Tina Ramdeen, Associate Director of Young People at the Roundhouse in London (and CLA Trustee) on what can happen when youth work is fully embedded within an Arts organisation; and from Manchester-based artist and creative practitioner, Kirsty Gbasai, on her experience as creative practitioner and community artist in a youth centre in Bolton.

In the winter we shared guidance on how to respond to the government’s Curriculum and Assessment Review by sharing the evidence we were using for our own submission, and Professor Pat Thomson set out why Arts and cultural learning matter and the importance of responding to the Review.

We started 2025 with an international perspective from one of the authors of a British Council report highlighting practice that is responding to global agendas on young people’s creative rights and futures. In February, marking the publication of a major study into Arts-rich primary schools, Professor Pat Thomson, the report’s co-author, presented its key findings, and reflected on what is needed to build an Arts-rich school system. And in March we introduced our new Capabilities Framework in a piece by the Evidence Working Group’s Chair, Jacqui O’Hanlon and CLA Co-Chair Sally Bacon. They both reflected on a step change in building a shared language around the evidenced value of Arts and cultural learning.

We also shared our thoughts on seeing the Review’s interim report, giving our headline takeaways, covering what we found, what we liked – and how it aligned perfectly with our own data and recommendations – and a couple of points we would question or challenge.

We would like to thank all those valued colleagues, both old and new, that shared their thinking and their articles with us through the year. We hugely value their generosity and commitment to sharing their perspectives and expertise with our members.

## **Consultations, calls for evidence and public presentations**

Given that a new government was elected during the period under review, it was not surprising that there were many calls for evidence and consultations launched. CLA worked on putting together detailed responses to many of these. The most significant was undoubtedly the Curriculum and Assessment Review call for evidence which closed in November 2024. This was a significant piece of work for CLA and we prepared the ground early so that we could share detailed guidance in our Newsletter to support the submissions of others. Our Report Card and Capabilities Framework, as well as our Blueprint, were invaluable for all of these submissions.

When the Review's Interim Report was published in March, CLA swiftly pulled together a detailed response to share with the sector in our Newsletter so that colleagues could see the extent to which our submission – and those of many Arts education sector colleagues – had fed into the Review's thinking.

Beyond the Curriculum and Assessment Review, we worked closely with our CLA Senior Evidence Associate to spend time preparing detailed evidence for the Arts Council England Review; the Education All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) consultation on loss of a love of learning; the Ofsted Review; and a call for evidence on Inclusive Practice in Schools. Many of these were submitted in April/May 2025. In all of these consultations CLA has worked to turn up the volume of the importance of Expressive Arts subjects and Arts education on behalf of the sector.

CLA also contributed evidence to the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology's POST note on Children's wellbeing in schools and was pleased to have its evidence included.

During the year CLA presented at several conferences and events including for the Royal Ballet and Opera (RBO), the PTI, the FED at their annual conference in Manchester – all to teachers and school leaders – Bath Spa University, the Group for Education in Museums (GEM – at their annual conference in Bristol), the British Educational Research Association conference in Manchester, Goldsmith's, National Drama, and One Dance UK. CLA also had a presence at the Labour Party Conference in September in conjunction with Curious Minds.

## **Partnership working**

During the year under review CLA continued to develop its relationship with policy makers, elected government representatives, Arts subject associations and colleagues across the sector. CLA also joined the National Education Union's Arts and Minds campaign coalition, along with several Arts subject associations, due to the alignment of the campaign's central objectives with CLA's own, and its use of CLA data and evidence. One example of partnership working is the role CLA now plays on a small Arts education task force which meets weekly and which reports to a group of 40+ performing Arts sector CEOs. This collegiate work is important in ensuring that the Arts and education sectors convene around a clear set of policy at a time when curriculum, assessment and accountability

measures are under review, and when many new national initiatives are being announced, such as a National Youth Strategy and an Enrichment Framework. CLA looks forward to further supporting this collegiate working in the coming year.

## **CLA webinars and Advisory Panel**

During the year CLA moved away from running gatherings for its large Advisory Panel in order to work to a principle of equitable access and enabling anyone to join us when we have excellent speakers and topics to share. Traditionally CLA has held occasional online Advisory Panel gatherings to which only CLA Advisory Panel members were invited but we have long felt that these should be more widely available.

The first CLA webinar was held in February 2025 to launch Professor Thomson's important Researching the Arts in Primary Schools (RAPS) report, with additional speakers being co-authors Professor Christine Hall and Liam Maloy. A panel discussion including school leaders was chaired by Jacqui O'Hanlon. Given the paucity of primary school data about Arts teaching, the RAPS report is an important piece of evidence for CLA to share.

This new series of webinars was a significant new step for CLA and we subsequently created a CLA YouTube channel to further extend access. The event was followed by a 2025 Report Card launch in April and CLA looks forward to hosting more webinars on important topics in autumn 2025.

CLA is currently reviewing its Advisory Panel structure and composition to consider how best to ensure that it has representative specialist expert advice and guidance on all aspects of its work: from subject disciplines to SEND; from primary to secondary; from FE to HE; from the cultural sector to creative careers. It is likely that new Expert Panel plans will be announced in autumn 2025.

## **National Centre for Arts and Music Education**

In March 2025 the government announced there was to be a new National Centre for Arts and Music Education, to be launched in 2026. CLA was immediately able to launch a consensus workshop roadshow in different parts of England (in person and online) having established this process through its 'Blueprint for an Arts-rich education' work in the run-up to the 2024 election, and to develop plans for an Evidence Hub. These workshops took place during June and July 2025 and will inform a blueprint for the National Centre which will be shared with DfE and published on the CLA website. All plans for the Centre will be mapped against this blueprint – which will represent the sector's collective ambition for the new entity. It is CLA's intention to back any high-quality bid for the Centre which matches the values, principles, purposes and ambition for the Centre which is reflected in this blueprint.

CLA shared its view that the sector now needed to come together around this new ambition and support the DfE as it worked to develop its plans for the Centre – which will succeed if it is a collective endeavour built on foundation stones of ambition, leadership, equity, experience and expertise – on behalf of all children and young people.

## **Our funders**

We remain extremely grateful to our two core funders, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Paul Hamlyn Foundation, for their continued support. They enable us to continue to champion the value of Arts subjects and cultural learning on behalf of all children and young people and have supported us in applying a social justice lens to our work by connecting us to important organisations with which CLA is aligned, such as the Fair Education Alliance. Their funding has been invaluable for CLA to continue its work to champion every child's right to an Arts-rich education at a time when positive policy developments might be possible for the first time in a decade and a half. Fundraising to build a sustainable future for CLA will be an important strand of our work for 2025/6.

## Future plans

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Over the coming year we will continue to gather and use evidence to inform our value narrative and to champion an Arts-rich education for every child. We will work to grow our representation across our team and governance structures and continue to apply a social justice and inclusion lens to all activity, supporting, platforming and empowering change.

We will continue to develop our team – across Associate roles, back office and possibly permanent staff roles – now that we are an established charity. We will appoint three new Board members from the education sector and launch a new Expert Panel to advise the Board.

We will continue to navigate through a complex period of policy development with changes imminent for the curriculum, accountability measures and assessment processes in England. We remain committed to preparing detailed responses to all consultations and calls for evidence. We will develop our 2026 Report Card and continue to expand the range of data we survey; mobilise our Capabilities Framework; co-publish four new Rapid Evidence Reviews; work towards the creation of an Arts Education Evidence Hub; and curate a useful programme of webinars for our members and more widely. We will support the development of the new National Centre for Arts and Music Education and work in support of all enrichment funds directed at children and young people where the Arts can add value.

We will review our Newsletter format and continue to improve our communication channels for our members and more widely, and we will continue to support our members and to keep them informed about all relevant policy developments in our sector.

And finally we will fundraise for CLA to put it on a sustainable footing into the future and will continue to collaborate with existing and new partners far and wide, across England and other nations, including internationally.

### In conclusion ...

The period under review has been busy and fruitful for CLA. Its evidence work, the clarity of its theory of change focused on equity, and the development of its Capabilities Framework to underpin these have all served to position CLA as a vital sector support organisation. Its partnership working has developed significantly through dialogue with a number of subject associations and with DfE, and there has been a significant step change in its research outputs. It has important new assets and these are widely used by its members and beyond to inform policy, practice, case-making and planning. An energetic board, a new visual identity and website, a new webinar series, vital Associate roles, a Blueprint for change, our first annual Report Cards, and important new evidence and value narrative work have all proved invaluable for the sector during 2024/5. We look forward to these continuing to bear fruit into 2025/6 when the outcome of the Curriculum and Assessment Review will be known.

Most significantly, CLA's work during the year evidenced the direct link between poverty and low Arts take up and this served to set the vital context for all government policy making in relation to Arts education for the future.

# Financial Review

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## Financial Results

The Trustees were pleased to receive funding towards their activities from the Esmée Fairbairn and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation during the period and have utilised funding in accordance with the plans outlined under these agreements. At the period end, there was a surplus of £1 (2024: £11,980) remaining, with further funding due as detailed below and which will enable continuance of our work in the next financial period.

## Core Funding

Grant funding from Esmée Fairbairn and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation is awarded to cover core running costs of the Charity.

Esmée Fairbairn awarded £80,000 for the period 2024 – 2026, with £40,000 received in November 2023 and £40,000 received in November 2024.

Paul Hamlyn awarded £100,000 for 2024 – 2026, with £50,000 received February 2024 and £50,000 due in 2025.

## Financial Risk Management

The Board of Trustees monitors and assesses financial risks to which The Cultural Learning Alliance may be exposed and assesses their potential impact on the Charity.

## Reserves Policy

The level of unrestricted reserves has been set to meet the costs of retaining sufficient capacity and cover overhead costs for six months in order to pursue our charitable objectives as a newly independent charity. The current target reserves level we are working towards is £50,000. At the end of this reporting period free reserves stood at £1 (2024: 11,980). Trustees review this policy annually.

## Financial Control and Audit

The organisation's finances are overseen by Curious Minds' Finance and Operations Team under a Service Level Agreement.

Curious Minds' Finance Manager maintains financial records and bank accounts, preparing management accounts for each meeting of the Board of Trustees, including use of funds and available balances. All payments made from the bank accounts are approved by trustees and authorised in line with the bank mandate.

Curious Minds follows robust financial control policies which are applied to any outsourced support agreements, in compliance with statutory requirements, risk management and financial planning.

The Board appoints Independent External Examiners to report on and verify the financial statements.

# Structure, Governance & Management

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## Governing Document

The Charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and is governed by its constitution dated 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 and registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with the Charity Commission of England and Wales.

## Trustee Recruitment

Transparent procedures are an important element of good governance. All new Trustees to the Board are appointed through a transparent open recruitment process when skills and knowledge gaps in the Board are identified. A Trustee Induction and Development Framework has been designed and implemented this year to ensure all new and existing Trustees are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to undertake the role to the highest standard.

## Related Parties and Links with other Organisations

Trustees are required to declare any interest – when considering what interests to declare, the principal rule is that if members of the general public could reasonably conclude that the interests might have an influence on an approach taken by The Cultural Learning Alliance to an application or contract award, to funding received by The Cultural Learning Alliance, or general organisational decisions taken by The Cultural Learning Alliance, then they must declare them.

In December 2024, the board proposed creating an interim executive role which was offered to Co-Chair Sally Bacon, requiring Sally to take on a more public role and represent the organisation in external contexts. This resulted in a consultancy contract and payment to Sally for the period January to March 2025. Sally was not part of the board discussion or decision, but willing to undertake the role and report to the board at each board meeting in this capacity.

No other Trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from the work with the charity.

## Decision Making

CLA Trustees have delegated the day-to-day management and decision making to the Executive Chair working alongside a small team of trusted Associates. Significant decisions that impact on, for example, staffing, recruitment, business planning, financial stability and the sustainability of the charity are brought to the Board for approval prior to action taking place.

## Risk Management

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review risks to which The Cultural Learning Alliance is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. The Cultural Learning Alliance has a thorough risk management procedure wherein risks to which the organisation may be exposed are monitored and assessed as to their potential impact and likelihood. Appropriate controls are then identified and put in place to provide reasonable assurance against their occurrence.

# Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

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The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and 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.

In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity Statement of Recommended Practice (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;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to 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.

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

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

On behalf of the Board of Trustees:

*Sally Bacon*

[Sally Bacon \(Oct 10, 2025 13:57:57 GMT+1\)](#)

Sally Bacon

Co-chair of the Board of Trustees

*Derri Burdon*

[Derri Burdon \(Oct 7, 2025 17:21:30 GMT+1\)](#)

Derri Burdon

Co-chair of the Board of Trustees

# Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees of The Cultural Learning Alliance

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I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Cultural Learning Alliance (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

## Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2022 (the 2012 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2022 Act.

## Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of 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
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (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 financial statements to be reached.



[Jamielee Johnston \(Oct 6, 2025 10:58:21 GMT+1\)](#)

06/10/2025

Jamielee Johnston CA  
For and behalf of  
Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited  
3rd Floor, 44 Peter Street  
Manchester  
M2 5GP

# Statement of Financial Activities for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 (Including income & expenditure account)

	Note	2024/25 Unrestricted Funds £	2024/25 Total Funds £	2023/24 Unrestricted Funds £	2023/24 Total Funds £
<b>INCOME</b>					
Voluntary Income - Transfer of Funds	2	-	-	1,379	1,379
Incoming resources from charitable activities	2	40,000	<b>40,000</b>	90,000	90,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>40,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	91,379	91,379
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Expenditure on charitable activities	3	51,979	<b>51,979</b>	79,399	79,399
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>51,979</b>	<b>51,979</b>	79,399	79,399
<b>NET INCOMING / (OUTGOING) RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>(11,979)</b>	<b>(11,979)</b>	11,980	11,980
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:</b>	7				
<b>BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD</b>		11,980	<b>11,980</b>	-	-
<b>BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	11,980	11,980

The notes on pages 25 to 29 form part of these accounts.

## Balance Sheet as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>10,145</u>		<u>22,540</u>	
		<b>10,145</b>		<b>22,540</b>	
<b>CREDITORS</b>					
Amounts falling due in one year	5	<u>10,144</u>		<u>10,560</u>	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			<b>1</b>		<b>11,980</b>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>			<u><b>1</b></u>		<u><b>11,980</b></u>
<b>FUNDS</b>					
Unrestricted	7		<b>1</b>		<b>11,980</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>			<u><b>1</b></u>		<u><b>11,980</b></u>

The notes on pages 25 to 29 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

And signed on their behalf by

*Sally Bacon*

[Sally Bacon \(Oct 10, 2025 13:57:57 GMT+1\)](#)

Sally Bacon

Co-chair of the Board of Trustees

Charity registration number 1203017

*Derri Burdon*

[Derri Burdon \(Oct 7, 2025 17:21:30 GMT+1\)](#)

Derri Burdon

Co-chair of the Board of Trustees

# Statement of Cash Flow for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

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	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Cash used in operating activities</b>		
Net movement in funds	(11,979)	11,980
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	(416)	10,560
<b>Net cash flow from / (to) operating activities</b>	<u>(12,395)</u>	<u>22,540</u>
<b>Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period</b>	<b>(12,395)</b>	22,540
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	22,540	-
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	<u><u>10,145</u></u>	<u><u>22,540</u></u>

## Analysis of changes in net debt

The charity did not hold any overdraft or loan facilities nor finance lease obligations at the start or during the period covered by these accounts.

# Notes to the Financial Statements for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

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## 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 2019).

The Cultural Learning Alliance meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s). The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

### *Going concern*

These accounts are prepared on the going concern basis. At the time of approving the financial statements the directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus, the directors continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements. The Charity has confirmed grant funding to 31st March 2026 and has sufficient cashflow to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

### *Incoming resources*

Income is recognised in the accounting period in which it is receivable, except in the following circumstances, when the income is deferred and included in creditors:

- The income is unrestricted core funding for a specified future period.
- A sales invoice has been raised ahead of work being carried out and there is no contractual entitlement to the income until the work has been done.
- Not all the terms and conditions for the receipt of the grant instalment have been met.
- The project has been completed and the grant conditions are such that unspent grant must be refunded.

Income includes grants in respect of revenue and capital items.

### *Resources expended*

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

### ***Allocation and apportionment of costs***

Support costs have been allocated between the cost centres: board meeting costs, trustee expenses and sundry support costs.

### ***Taxation***

The Charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

The Charity is not registered for VAT and therefore all its input VAT is irrecoverable. Expenditure is analysed inclusive of VAT where this has been incurred.

### ***Fund accounting***

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes. No restricted funds have been received during the period of these accounts.

### ***Cash and cash equivalents***

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

### ***Financial instruments***

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

### ***Basic financial assets***

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

### ***Basic financial liabilities***

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method. Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

***Derecognition of financial liabilities***

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

## 2. INCOME

	2025	2024
	£	£
<b>Voluntary Income:</b>		
Transfer of funds from prior entity Cultural Learning Alliance	-	1,379
	<u>-</u>	<u>1,379</u>
<b>Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities:</b>		
<b>Unrestricted Grant Income</b>		
Esmée Fairbairn	40,000	40,000
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	50,000
	<u>40,000</u>	<u>90,000</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>40,000</u>	<u>90,000</u>

## 3. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

### a. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	2025			2024		
	Direct costs	Support costs	Total	Direct costs	Support costs	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Delivery costs	41,551	8,668	50,219	75,334	1,444	76,778
Governance costs	-	1,760	1,760	-	2,621	2,621
	<u>41,551</u>	<u>10,428</u>	<u>51,979</u>	<u>75,334</u>	<u>4,065</u>	<u>79,399</u>

## 4. Analysis of governance and support costs

	2025	2024
	£	£
<b>Governance Costs</b>		
Independent examination fee	1,560	1,560
Support costs	200	1,061
<b>Total Governance costs</b>	<u>1,760</u>	<u>2,621</u>

	2025			2024		
	Delivery	Governance	Total	Project Delivery	Governance	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Support Costs</b>						
Board meeting costs	-	200	200	-	1,061	1,061
Sundry support costs	8,668	-	8,668	3,004	-	3,004
<b>Total Support costs</b>	<u>8,668</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>8,868</u>	<u>3,004</u>	<u>1,061</u>	<u>4,065</u>

<b>5. Creditors falling due within one year</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade creditors	-	6,600
Accruals	<b>10,144</b>	3,960
	<b><u>10,144</u></b>	<b><u>10,560</u></b>

Cultural Learning Alliance pays all suppliers within 30 days of receipt of invoices due for payment.

<b>6. Statement of funds</b>	Balance			Balance			Balance
	1/4/2023	Income	Expend- iture	31/3/2024 & 1/4/2024	Income	Expend- iture	31/3/2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>							
General Fund	-	91,379	(79,399)	<b>11,980</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>(51,979)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>91,379</b>	<b>(79,399)</b>	<b>11,980</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>(51,979)</b>	<b>1</b>

#### Notes on Statement of funds

The balance of unrestricted funds represents the balance of grant funding received for general running costs.

## 7. Analysis of net assets between funds

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2025</b>	2024	2024
	<b>General Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	General Funds	Total
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Net current assets	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	11,980	11,980
	<b><u>1</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>	<b><u>11,980</u></b>	<b><u>11,980</u></b>

## 8. Operating lease commitments

The charity has no commitments under operation leases for premises.

## 9. Corporation tax

The company is a registered charity and is entitled to claim annual exemption from UK corporation tax.

## 10. Related Party Transactions

Sally Bacon, Co-Chair and Trustee of the Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA), was contracted in January 2025 to provide an Executive Director role on a part time basis for which she was paid £5,000.

Derri Burdon, Co-Chair and Trustee of the Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA), is also Chief Executive Officer of Curious Minds. Curious Minds provided the CLA with back office support from December 2023, for which fees of £6,000 were paid in 2024/25 (£1,100 - 2023/24).











# CLA Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024-25


Final Audit Report

2025-10-10


Created:	2025-10-02
By:	Sue Langfeld (sue.langfeld@curiousminds.org.uk)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAI6NY3Umb3RfkSEU9CVIXtRpu1psOajKZ

## "CLA Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements 2024-25" History

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-  Document emailed to jamielee.johnston@mitchellcharlesworth.co.uk for signature  
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2025-10-02 - 4:18:37 PM GMT
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2025-10-03 - 1:46:13 AM GMT
-  Signer jamielee.johnston@mitchellcharlesworth.co.uk entered name at signing as Jamielee Johnston  
2025-10-06 - 9:58:19 AM GMT
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2025-10-10 - 12:57:55 PM GMT

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 Agreement completed.

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**THE CULTURAL LEARNING ALLIANCE**

England & Wales - Charity number 1203017

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# Accounts

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CULTURAL  
LEARNING  
ALLIANCE

# Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the period 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to  
31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Registered Office:

91 Princess Street, Manchester, M1 4HT

Email: [info@culturallearningalliance.org.uk](mailto:info@culturallearningalliance.org.uk)

Website: [www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk](http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk)

The Cultural Learning Alliance is a Registered Charity

Number: 1203017

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# Company information

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## Incorporation

This charitable company Cultural Learning Alliance was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023

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## Trustees

Sally Bacon OBE (appointed 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023) – Executive Co-chair

Derri Burdon (appointed 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023) – Co-chair

Lucy Butterfield (appointed 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024)

Rob Elkington MBE (appointed 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024)

Alice King-Farlow (appointed 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024)

Amy McGann (appointed 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024)

Steve Moffitt MBE (appointed 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024)

Tina Ramdeen (appointed 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023)

Ian Thomas (Appointed 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024)

Andria Zafirakou MBE (appointed 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023)

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## Independent Examiner

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 44 Peter Streets  
Manchester  
M2 5GP

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## Bankers

Unity Trust Bank  
4 Brindley Place  
Birmingham  
B1 2JB

## Solicitors

Counterculture Partnership LLP  
Unit 115  
Ducie House  
Ducie Street  
Manchester M1 2JW

## Co-chairs' Statement

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As Co-chairs of the Cultural Learning Alliance, we are delighted to share our reflections on the remarkable progress made by our organisation in its first year operating as an independent charity. We have witnessed first-hand the dedication and passion that drives our network across England, and we are incredibly proud of the strides we have taken together.

Whilst CLA is a new charity, it also continues to hold true to its origins in remaining a genuine 'alliance' of organisations, and individuals, working together to champion the value of a rich arts education for every child. We have always recognised that strength and optimism are developed in coalition with others, and this informs all that we do.

However, access to Expressive Arts education is still not equal. We continue to apply a social justice and inclusion lens to all our activity. This was the case for all areas of our work, including our monthly newsletters. This year, we have seen significant advancements in our mission, thanks to the unwavering support of our members, partners, and funders. Our collective efforts have resulted in impactful evidence gathering and consultation work which, at the time of compiling this report with a new government in power, is helping to begin to turn the tide on more than a decade of decline of expressive arts provision in English schools.

One of our most notable achievements has been the development of a new Blueprint for an Arts Rich Education, which takes the recommendations from the 2023 Arts in Schools report to provide a clear roadmap for our future endeavours. This has enabled us to focus our resources more effectively, ensuring that we can continue to advocate for the importance of cultural learning in education policy and practice.

We are particularly proud of the progress made in our CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) status. This transition has strengthened our governance and operational capabilities, allowing us to better serve our cross-sector Alliance and achieve our long-term goals. The dedication and hard work of the CLA Board, Advisory Panel and new Associates was pivotal in this success, and we are grateful for their commitment to our shared vision.

We would like to extend heartfelt thanks to our funders, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, whose generous support has been crucial in enabling our work. Their commitment to our cause has been instrumental in our achievements, and we are deeply grateful for their partnership.

As we look ahead, we remain steadfast in our mission to champion cultural learning for all. We are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and are confident that, with the continued support of our growing membership, the CLA's influence and impact will continue to make a difference in the lives of children and young people across the country.

With warm regards,

Sally Bacon and Derri Burdon  
Co-chairs, Cultural Learning Alliance

# Trustees' Annual Report

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In preparing this report, Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

## Charitable objects

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The objects of the CIO are, for the public benefit, to promote the advancement of education in arts and culture, in particular but not exclusively, by:

1. gathering evidence and data on the value of arts and cultural education and participation for children and young people;
2. using data to provide an evidence-based narrative demonstrating the ways in which an arts and cultural education provide children with skills for life;
3. collaborating with relevant parties to promote a right to arts and culture for every child, and to encourage policy and practice work to increase the delivery of arts and cultural education; and
4. gathering and sharing insight into the education, cultural, social policy and practice landscape to support the cultural learning workforce in active case-making and practice.

## Vision

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A world in which the value of an arts-rich education is widely recognised, & clearly visible in sustained & equitable practice across schools and other settings, & at national policy level.

## Mission

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The CLA champions a right to arts and culture for every child. It uses evidence to demonstrate the ways in which an arts-rich education provides skills for life & skills for work, enabling all children to fulfil their potential.

## Values

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***We are evidence-based:*** We find & use robust evidence to support better understanding of the difference the arts can make in children's lives.

***We are narrative-led:*** We consistently make the evidence accessible in multi-modal ways, for all audiences, to influence change.

***We are collaborative:*** We collaborate with others across the education, culture & youth sectors, including our members, & more widely.

***We are inclusive:*** We are actively inclusive & view all our work through a social justice lens.

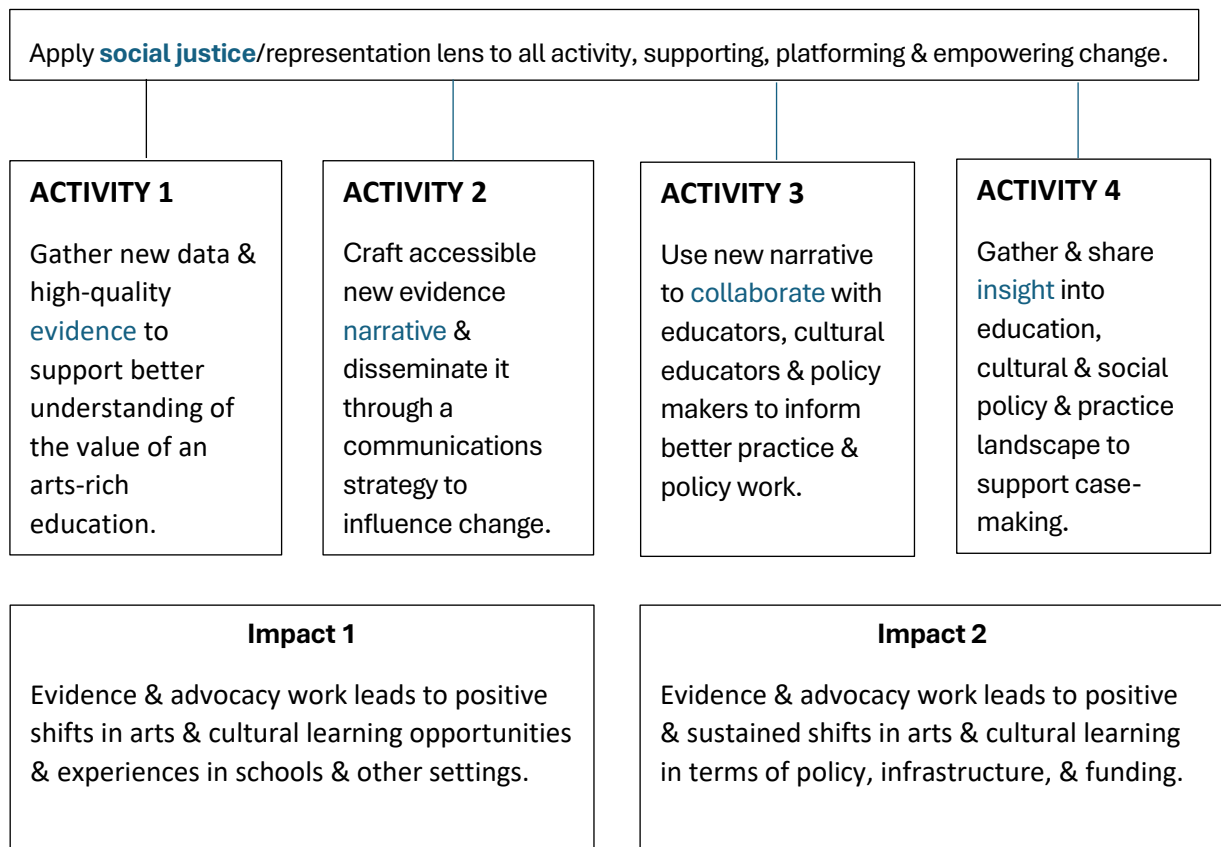
# Activities - how the charity spends its money

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The CLA champions the right to arts and culture for every child. We use evidence to demonstrate the ways an arts-rich education provides skills for life and skills for work, enabling all children to fulfil their potential. We are the leading source of cultural education news, insight and opinion; leading the collective cross-arts agenda for arts/cultural learning policy change in England.

## Methodology

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# Review of Achievements and Performance in 2023/24

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This period covers our first full year of operation as a new charity following more than a decade operating as an informal alliance. And there have been many significant milestones over the period.

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## CLA Blueprint for An Arts-rich Education

In advance of the general election being called, we consulted on the creation of a manifesto – or what we came to call a ‘Blueprint for an arts-rich education’ – to set out the course correction necessary to halt and reverse the decline in expressive arts education that we have seen over the past 15 years. We ran an in-person consensus workshop at Roundhouse Works in July 2023, and held the same with our Advisory Panel at the close of the year. Both events, and many consultation discussions in between, were extremely helpful in enabling us to draw up a clear picture of the foundational education policy changes needed from any incoming government during 2024.

The blueprint was developed in the context of widespread calls for education system change, and is as much about the wider context for schooling as it is about the specific issues for arts education. The foundational education policy changes that emerged from our consultations during this period spanned setting new purposes for schooling – with the expressive arts as one of the group of core and equal curriculum areas mapped onto the new purposes; the need for a minimum four-hour arts entitlement within the school week to the end of Key Stage 3 and beyond; complete reform of the school accountability system to ensure it no longer adversely impacts expressive arts subjects – scrapping the EBacc and reforming Progress 8; changes to student assessment in line with the recommendations of [Rethinking Assessment](#); and an entitlement to teacher training and teacher development opportunities for expressive arts subjects.

We also identified three principles necessary to underpin these system changes we called for three foundational principles: an emphasis on a rounded learning experience for the personal development and wellbeing of the ‘whole child’ – for the present as well as for the future; a focus on representation, breadth and relevance across the arts curriculum, resources and practice; and a commitment to ensuring that the cultural sector can respond strategically and collaboratively to meet the needs of young people in schools and in their communities, and is resourced specifically to support this work.

These ambitions, created through a consensus-building approach, have enabled CLA to maintain clear objectives through a period of political change.

## 2024 Report Card

During 2023 we started work on our first annual Report Card. CLA had regularly gathered data on arts GCSE and A-Level take up, and on arts teaching hours, but this was the first time that key arts education data (2010-2023) was comprehensively gathered together in one place to present a full picture of provision. Working largely from government data sets we gathered together all the relevant information across five new key indicators to provide a detailed survey of children’s and young people’s access to the arts through their schooling in England. The key indicators we

identified were: GCSE entries for arts subjects; A-Level entries and Higher Education progression; the number of arts teachers and hours of arts subjects taught; arts teacher recruitment and attention; and an 'enrichment gap,' i.e. young people from wealthier backgrounds having much greater access to arts provision and opportunities compared to their peers from lower-income backgrounds.

We wanted to be ready with a state-of-the-nation overview to enable policymakers in a new government to be clear-sighted in understanding the landscape as they began to system change. And we particularly wanted to provide evidence of the decline of arts subjects in schools to support the development of a new approach to valuing the expressive arts within schooling. The resulting Report Card was launched in May 2024.

## **CLA Evidence and Value Narrative Group**

CLA's new Evidence and Value Narrative Working Group was first convened in October 2023, chaired by Jacqui O'Hanlon MBE, Deputy Executive Director at the Royal Shakespeare Company. This was a significant new step for CLA, reflecting the centrality of evidence and value narrative work as two of CLA's four key activity strands.

Since October 2023 the group has been advising on, overseeing, developing and commissioning CLA's evidence gathering and analysis – on the value of an arts-rich education for every child and young person – with a particular focus on social impact.

The Group includes representatives from several UK universities, together with leading arts education organisations and specialists, and considered a range of research approaches, including university-led and subject-based Rapid Evidence Reviews (now underway, with funding from Midlands4Cities). They have been overseen by Professor Pat Thomson, our Senior Evidence Associate.

The group also started to scope the possibility of an arts and cultural learning evidence hub through an RSC feasibility study supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies. Importantly, the Group started to work on an accessible evidence-based value narrative to make clear the value of studying arts subjects, and to build a shared language for this. All of this work continued throughout 2024, with the group meeting in alternate months, and a smaller sub-group meeting more regularly to work on the value narrative. CLA is extremely grateful to all those giving their time for this important work.

# Organisational Development

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## New Governance and Associate roles

Late in 2023 we started recruiting for new trustees to join the four existing trustees. We were aiming for more diverse sectoral and regional representation and were delighted to appoint six new Trustees to the CLA board. Our new colleagues brought a range of experience across cultural learning, research, and communications, and from leading national and area-based organisations. Our new Trustees are Lucy Butterfield, Sky Arts; Rob Elkington MBE, Director, Arts Connect; Alice King-Farlow, Director of Learning and National Partnerships at the National Theatre; Amy McGann, Head of National Schools Programmes, Royal Opera House; Steve Moffitt MBE, CEO, A New Direction; and Ian Thomas, Head of Research and Insights, Arts, British Council.

The new Trustees joined CLA Co-chairs, Sally Bacon OBE and co-author of *The Arts in Schools* report, and Derri Burdon, CEO of Curious Minds, alongside Trustees Tina Ramdeen, Associate Director: Young People, at the Roundhouse, and Andria Zafirakou, Art and Design teacher and Global Teacher of the Year in 2018. We are now looking to appoint two more new board members bringing diverse representation from the education sector.

We were also fortunate in being able to appoint Professor Pat Thomson to the role of CLA Senior Evidence Associate. Pat is Professor of Education at the University of Nottingham and University of South Australia, and researches arts and creativity in schools and communities, as well as school change and the work of school leaders. Pat's appointment enabled her to have a key role working with our CLA Evidence and Value Narrative Working Group, and we greatly value the huge amount of wisdom and experience she brings to CLA.

Baz Ramaiah (Head of Policy at the Centre for Education and Youth) had worked with CLA from 2022 as our interim Head of Policy and in March 2024 became CLA Policy Associate. We were delighted to retain Baz's link to CLA and to continue working closely with him, largely through our new annual Report Card, which he worked in through late 2023 and early 2024.

## New website and visual identity

CLA's former visual identity was developed in 2010 and served us well. With the shift to becoming a new charity after 13 years as an informal Alliance we were keen to revisit this during 2023. All the new assets were developed and finalised in the period of this report and launched shortly afterwards. We knew we needed a more active and image-based visual identity that would work well on all social media platforms. With *The Arts in Schools* report project resources also coming over to CLA in 2024, we thought we could apply a single colour across all our resources. The original *Arts in Schools* Gulbenkian report from 1982 had a high-impact red cover which informed the design of the 2023 report, and we decided to adopt the same colour for CLA. The use of speech marks in our new logo reflects that we have lots to say, but much more importantly that children and young people have lots to say through their arts experiences, in whatever form. It makes their – and our – voice visual. We hope that our new look demonstrates the ambition we have for young people's exciting arts experiences, and for their futures.

## Operations

During the period we set up our first charity bank account and began to outsource our administrative and financial back-office functions to Curious Minds, as well as communications, helpfully enabling us to focus on our policy, evidence and insights work through the year. We considered our staffing needs and moved forward with our partnerships with Curious Minds and the Centre for Education and Youth, and our new Associate roles, while we considered what staffing requirements we might need in place for the future. We were in start-up mode whilst also not really being a complete start-up, having operated for so long without existing a formal entity: it was good to find our feet as a new charity and to work with so many supportive colleagues and organisations – who shared our mission – as we did so.

## Our Funders

We continue to be grateful to our core funders, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Paul Hamlyn Foundation, for so generously supporting all that we do. They enable us to continue to champion the value of arts subjects and cultural learning on behalf of all children and young people. Their funding has been invaluable for CLA to continue its work to champion every child's right to an arts-rich education.

## Looking Ahead

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The period under review has set us up extremely well as a new charity and many of CLA's new assets were developed during this period. A new board, visual identity, website, Associate roles, manifesto, our first annual Report Card, and important new evidence work strands, all emerged during the period and will continue to bear fruit for CLA and its members during 2024/25 and well into the future.

While we remain determined to keep the operational costs of the charity to a minimum, it became clear towards the latter end of the year that the charity needed an executive leadership role to create the necessary momentum for fundraising and sustainability, and provide the necessary separation between governance and operations. In December 2024, Trustees appointed Founding Chair Sally Bacon into the role of Executive Chair on a part-time basis. Sally will continue to work alongside Co-chair Derri Burdon who, in her non-executive role, will oversee Board and Governance. They will be supported by a small but mighty team of specialist Associates, Baz Ramaiah (Policy Associate), Professor Pat Thompson (Senior Evidence Associate), and Jacqui O'Hanlon (Evidence Associate).

In the year ahead we look forward to finalising our first Capabilities Framework evidencing the value of studying Expressive Arts subjects. We also look forward to seeing our Blueprint for an arts-rich education, together with the evidence we set out in our first Report Card, informing new thinking about what needs to change. We want to see the arts in our schooling system revalued, as a core and equal curriculum area, and to have an Expressive Arts entitlement in place that enables high-quality, progressive learning experiences for all children and young people at every stage of their schooling.

In our first year of operating as a new charity, strong foundations have been laid to ensure the CLA will continue to play a pivotal role as a national backbone organisation in the field of arts and cultural education, championing access to high quality arts and culture as an entitlement for all children and young people.

# Financial Review

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## Financial Results

The Trustees were pleased to receive funding towards their activities from the Esmée Fairbairn and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation during the period and have utilised funding in accordance with the plans outlined under these agreements. At the period end, there was a surplus of £11,980 remaining, which is to be used in continuance of our work in the following financial period. Further funding is also due as detailed below.

## Core Funding

Grant funding from Esmée Fairbairn and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation is awarded to cover core running costs of the Charity.

Esmée Fairbairn awarded £80,000 for the period 2024 – 2026, with £40,000 received in November 2023 and £40,000 received in November 2024.

Paul Hamlyn awarded £100,000 for 2024 – 2026, with £50,000 received February 2024 and £50,000 due in January 2025.

## Financial Risk Management

The Board of Trustees monitors and assesses financial risks to which The Cultural Learning Alliance may be exposed and assesses their potential impact on the Charity.

## Reserves Policy

The level of unrestricted reserves has been set to meet the costs of retaining sufficient capacity and cover overhead costs for six months in order to pursue our charitable objectives as a newly independent charity. The current target reserves level we are working towards is £50,000. At the end of this reporting period free reserves stood at £11,980. Trustees review this policy annually.

## Financial Control and Audit

The organisation's finances are overseen by Curious Minds' Finance and Operations Team under a Service Level Agreement.

Curious Minds' Finance Manager maintains financial records and bank accounts, preparing management accounts for each meeting of the Board of Trustees, including use of funds and available balances. All payments made from the bank accounts are approved by trustees and authorised in line with the bank mandate.

Curious Minds follows robust financial control policies which are applied to any outsourced support agreements, in compliance with statutory requirements, risk management and financial planning.

The Board appoints Independent External Examiners to report on and verify the financial statements.

# Structure, Governance & Management

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## Governing Document

The Charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and is governed by its constitution dated 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 and registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with the Charity Commission of England and Wales.

## Trustee Recruitment

Transparent procedures are an important element of good governance. All new Trustees to the Board are appointed through a transparent open recruitment process when skills and knowledge gaps in the Board are identified. A Trustee Induction and Development Framework has been designed and implemented this year to ensure all new and existing Trustees are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to undertake the role to the highest standard.

## Related Parties and Links with other Organisations

None of our Trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from the work with the charity. Trustees are required to declare any interest – when considering what interests to declare, the principal rule is that if members of the general public could reasonably conclude that the interests might have an influence on an approach taken by The Cultural Learning Alliance to an application or contract award, to funding received by The Cultural Learning Alliance, or general organisational decisions taken by The Cultural Learning Alliance, then they must declare them.

## Decision Making

CLA Trustees have delegated the day-to-day management and decision making to the Executive Chair working alongside a small team of trusted Associates. Significant decisions that impact on, for example, staffing, recruitment, business planning, financial stability and the sustainability of the charity are brought to the Board for approval prior to action taking place.

## Risk Management

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review risks to which The Cultural Learning Alliance is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. The Cultural Learning Alliance has a thorough risk management procedure wherein risks to which the organisation may be exposed are monitored and assessed as to their potential impact and likelihood. Appropriate controls are then identified and put in place to provide reasonable assurance against their occurrence.

# Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

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The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and 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.

In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity Statement of Recommended Practice (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;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to 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.

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

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

On behalf of the Board of Trustees:



[Sally Bacon \(Jan 27, 2025 18:05 GMT\)](#)

Sally Bacon

Co-chair of the Board of Trustees



[Derri Burdon \(Jan 27, 2025 16:06 GMT\)](#)

Derri Burdon

Co-chair of the Board of Trustees

# Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees of The Cultural Learning Alliance

---

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Cultural Learning Alliance (the charity) for the period-ended 31 March 2024.

## Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2022 (the 2012 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2022 Act.

## Independent examiner's statement

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

1. 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. 2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. 3 the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of 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
4. 4 the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (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 financial statements to be reached.



28/01/2025

Jamielee Johnston CA  
For and behalf of  
Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited  
3rd Floor, 44 Peter Street  
Manchester  
M2 5GP

# Statement of Financial Activities for the Period 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

## (Including income & expenditure account)

	Note	2023/24 Unrestricted Funds £	2023/24 Total Funds £
<b>INCOME</b>			
Voluntary Income - Transfer of Funds	2	1,379	1,379
Incoming resources from charitable activities	2	90,000	90,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>91,379</b>	<b>91,379</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Expenditure on charitable activities	3	79,399	79,399
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>79,399</b>	<b>79,399</b>
<b>NET INCOMING / (OUTGOING) RESOURCES FOR THE PERIOD</b>		<b>11,980</b>	<b>11,980</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:</b>	7		
<b>BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD</b>		-	-
<b>BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>11,980</b>	<b>11,980</b>

The notes on pages 18 to 22 form part of these accounts.

## Balance Sheet as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

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	Note	2024 £	2024 £
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>22,540</u>	
		22,540	
<b>CREDITORS</b>			
Amounts falling due in one year	5	<u>10,560</u>	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			<b>11,980</b>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>			<u><b>11,980</b></u>
<b>FUNDS</b>			
Unrestricted	7		<u>11,980</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>			<u><b>11,980</b></u>

The notes on pages 18 to 22 form part of these accounts.

Approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 24th January 2025

And signed on their behalf by

*Sally Bacon*  
[Sally Bacon \(Jan 27, 2025 18:05 GMT\)](#)

Sally Bacon

Co-chair of the Board of Trustees

Charity registration number 1203017

*Derri Burdon*  
[Derri Burdon \(Jan 27, 2025 16:06 GMT\)](#)

Derri Burdon

Co-chair of the Board of Trustees

# Statement of Cash Flow for the Period 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

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	2024 £
<b>Cash used in operating activities</b>	
Net movement in funds	11,980
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	10,560
<b>Net cash flow from / (to) operating activities</b>	<u>22,540</u>
<b>Increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period</b>	<b>22,540</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	-
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	<u><u>22,540</u></u>

## Analysis of changes in net debt

The charity did not hold any overdraft or loan facilities nor finance lease obligations at the start or during the period covered by these accounts.

# Notes to the Financial Statements for the Period 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

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## 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 2019).

The Cultural Learning Alliance meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s). The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

### *Going concern*

These accounts are prepared on the going concern basis. At the time of approving the financial statements the directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus, the directors continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements. The Charity has confirmed grant funding to 31st March 2026 and has sufficient cashflow to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

### *Incoming resources*

Income is recognised in the accounting period in which it is receivable, except in the following circumstances, when the income is deferred and included in creditors:

- The income is unrestricted core funding for a specified future period.
- A sales invoice has been raised ahead of work being carried out and there is no contractual entitlement to the income until the work has been done.
- Not all the terms and conditions for the receipt of the grant instalment have been met.
- The project has been completed and the grant conditions are such that unspent grant must be refunded.

Income includes grants in respect of revenue and capital items.

### *Resources expended*

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

### ***Allocation and apportionment of costs***

Support costs have been allocated between the cost centres: board meeting costs, trustee expenses and sundry support costs.

### ***Taxation***

The Charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

The Charity is not registered for VAT and therefore all its input VAT is irrecoverable. Expenditure is analysed inclusive of VAT where this has been incurred.

### ***Fund accounting***

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes. No restricted funds have been received during the period of these accounts.

### ***Cash and cash equivalents***

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

### ***Financial instruments***

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

### ***Basic financial assets***

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

### ***Basic financial liabilities***

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method. Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

***Derecognition of financial liabilities***

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

## 2. INCOME

	2024
<b>Voluntary Income:</b>	£
Transfer of funds from prior entity Cultural Learning Alliance	1,379
	<u>1,379</u>
<b>Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities:</b>	
<b>Unrestricted Grant Income</b>	
Esmée Fairbairn	40,000
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	50,000
	<u>90,000</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<u><u>91,379</u></u>

## 3. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

### a. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	2024		2024
	Direct costs	Support costs	Total
	£	£	£
Delivery costs	73,774	3,004	76,778
Governance costs	1,560	1,061	2,621
	<u>75,334</u>	<u>4,065</u>	<u>79,399</u>

## 4. Analysis of governance and support costs

	2024
<b>Governance Costs</b>	£
Independent examination fee	1,560
Support costs	1,061
<b>Total Governance costs</b>	<u><u>2,621</u></u>

	2024		2024
	Delivery	Governance	Total
	£	£	£
<b>Support Costs</b>			
Board meeting costs	-	1,061	1,061
Sundry support costs	3,004	-	3,004
<b>Total Support costs</b>	<u>3,004</u>	<u>1,061</u>	<u>4,065</u>

## 5. Creditors falling due within one year

	2024
	£
Trade creditors	6,600
Accruals	3,960
	<u>10,560</u>

Cultural Learning Alliance pays all suppliers within 30 days of receipt of invoices due for payment.

## 6. Statement of funds

	Income	Expenditure	Fund Transfers	Balance 31/03/2024
	£	£	£	£
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>				
General Fund	91,379	(79,399)	-	11,980
<b>Total Funds</b>	<u>91,379</u>	<u>(79,399)</u>	-	<u>11,980</u>

### Notes on Statement of funds

The balance of unrestricted funds represents the balance of grant funding received for general running costs.

## 7. Analysis of net assets between funds

	2024	2024
	General Funds	Total
	£	£
Net current assets	11,980	11,980
	<u>11,980</u>	<u>11,980</u>

## 8. Operating lease commitments

The charity has no commitments under operation leases for premises.

## 9. Corporation tax

The company is a registered charity and is entitled to claim annual exemption from UK corporation tax.

## 10. Related Party Transactions

Derri Burdon, Co-Chair and Trustee of the Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA), is also Chief Executive Officer of Curious Minds. Curious Minds provided the CLA with back office support from December 2023, for which fees of £1,100 were paid in 2023/24.











# CLA Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements 2023-2024

Final Audit Report


2025-01-28


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