

APRIL 2024 – APRIL 2025



ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

THE PHILOSOPHERS' YARD
CHARITY NO. 1204617

CONTENTS PAGE

Executive Summary	2
Delivery of charitable objects	3
Events	5
Education	9
Accounts and financial statement	10
Aims for the 2025-26 Financial Year	11
Annexes	
A. Annual Receipt and Payment Accounts	13

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a summary of the activities and developments of The Philosophers' Yard during the 2024–25 financial year — a year marked by remarkable growth, deepened impact, and strategic evolution.

In this period of transformation, The Philosophers' Yard experienced significant expansion across its core offerings. The number of events nearly tripled, rising from six in 2023–24 to sixteen in 2024–25. Attendance surged from approximately 200 to nearly 600 individuals, reflecting a growing appetite for thoughtful dialogue and an inclusive community for philosophical engagement. In parallel, the organisation expanded its internal capacity by welcoming new trustees, volunteers, and interns.

Amid this growth, the charity has remained steadfast in its commitment to the values and behaviours that define The Philosophers' Yard — fostering depth, openness, and inclusivity in every encounter. Attendee feedback continues to highlight the richness of conversation, the diversity of voices represented, and the unique inclusion of creative practices as key strengths of our events.

In 2024–25, we introduced monthly *Philosophy Meetups* to complement our bi-monthly *Main Events*, providing more regular opportunities for community connection. The year also saw the development of a suite of educational resources — including a *Philosophy of Disability workshop*, an ethics game, and the *Philosophical Practices course* — all set for launch in early 2025–26.

Our activities during this period were primarily supported by a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund, awarded in early 2024. As this funding is due to conclude in late 2025, securing and diversifying income streams will be a central focus in the year ahead.

As The Philosophers' Yard enters a new chapter in its organisational journey, trustees and team members have been actively revisiting and refining the charity's theory of change. A new draft has been developed and, in 2025–26, embedding this framework into our practices, policies, marketing and communications, and methods for monitoring and evaluation, will be a strategic priority.

This is a pivotal moment in the charity's evolution — one that will shape its long-term trajectory. Trustees remain committed to ensuring that The Philosophers' Yard is equipped with the strategic vision, operational resilience, and financial sustainability necessary to fulfil its growing ambitions.

DELIVERY OF CHARITABLE OBJECTS

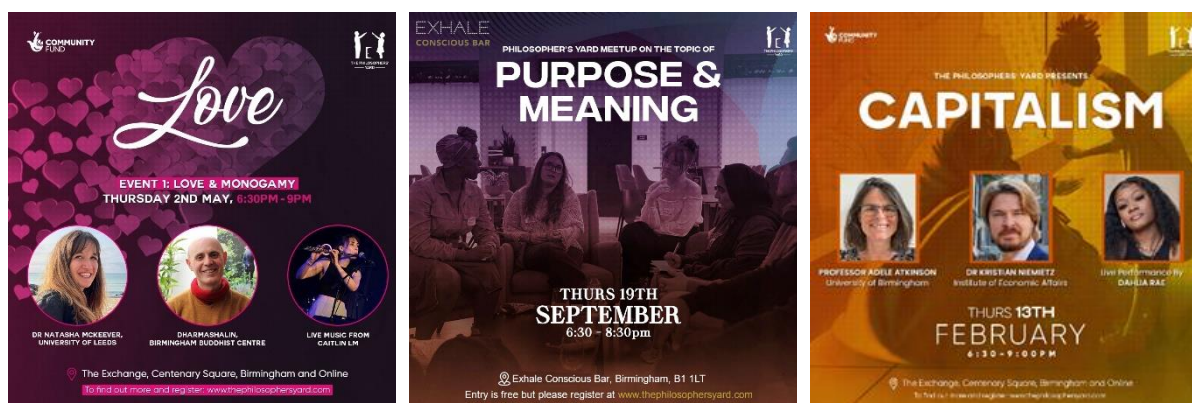
The Philosophers' Yard was established as a charity in September 2024. No updates were made to The Philosophers' Yard's charitable objects or constitution during 2024-25. Its charitable objects are to advance the education of the public in general on matters of philosophy, including the inner lives of human beings, societal norms and structures, and existence and metaphysics.

It has fulfilled these objects in the 2024-25 financial year through events held in Birmingham, UK and online.

In the 2024-25 financial year, The Philosophers' Yard organised six Main Events, eight Philosophy Meetups and two Collaboration Events.

'Main' events	Philosophy Meetups	Collaboration events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love series (2 events), May 2024 • Democracy, June 2024 • Free Will, Oct 2024 • Capitalism, Feb 2025 • Astrology, Mar 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human connection, July 2024 • Spirituality, Aug 2024 • Purpose and meaning, Sep 2024 • Creativity, Oct 2024 • Inner Peace, Nov 2024 • New Year's resolutions, Dec 2024 • Sobriety & Health, Jan 2025 • Capitalism, Feb 2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity (w/ Empower Poetry), Nov 2024 • Ant-racism (w/ Birmingham Race Impact Group), Mar 2025

Further information on the definition and level of engagement with these events is provided in the next section.

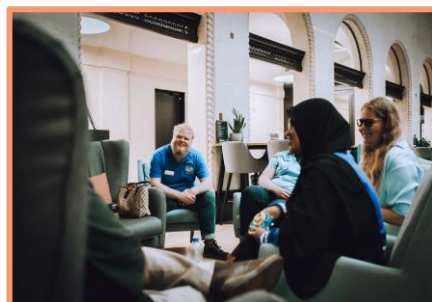


Above: Social media designs for a selection of events.

The Public Benefit

The Philosophers' Yard aims to maximise benefit to the public by making activities accessible:

- In 2024-25 all main events were offered as **hybrid**, allowing attendees to join and participate online. However, due to cost increases, main events will no longer be held at The Exchange and future events are unlikely to be offered as hybrid.
- It provides **flexible ticketing prices**, including free tickets to ensure that cost does not provide a barrier to participation.
- Where permission is granted by speakers and contributors, recordings of talks and performances are **shared via YouTube** for people to enjoy for free after the event.
- The Philosophers' Yard employs a **democratic model** for selecting the themes of events and activities.
- All events begin with a creative activity to 'ground' attendees.
- Events follow a **structured, tailored, and guided** format led by knowledgeable and experienced professionals and experts and promote discourse between people from diverse backgrounds.
- The vast majority of events end with breakout rooms (see image to the right), providing a welcoming format to share and develop ideas.



Trustees and Delivery Team

In 2024-25, The Philosophers' Yard added one new trustee to the cohort of four trustees whom have all continued in post. The newly appointed trustee is Dr Laura D'Olimpio, Associate Professor of Philosophy of Education and College of Social Sciences Director of Postgraduate Research at University of Birmingham. Laura brings a wealth of experience in public philosophy and is co-founding editor of the Journal of Philosophy in Schools and a regular contributor to public philosophy outlets.

The remainder of the delivery team is comprised of:

- Eight volunteers.
- Two interns (funded through the University of Birmingham).

The Philosophers' Yard currently has no employees.

EVENTS

The Philosophers' Yard hosts three main types of events, each designed to foster thoughtful dialogue, community, and engagement with big ideas.

Main Events take place every two months and offer attendees access to rich philosophical insights from a diverse range of speakers and practitioners. These sessions revolve around a central topic, democratically chosen by participants, and feature experts such as university researchers, faith leaders, charity workers, think tank directors, and politicians. Each event opens with a form of creative expression—live music, spoken word, or meditation—and concludes with breakout discussions, providing space for meaningful conversation in small groups.

Philosophy Meetups are held monthly and offer a more informal setting for members to connect and converse (see image to the right). Focused on topics like *Human Connection*, *Inner Peace*, or *Creativity*, these gatherings begin with icebreaker questions and are followed by a short talk from a community member or guest speaker. The emphasis is on open dialogue and building community through shared curiosity.



Collaboration Events occur occasionally in partnership with other organisations, extending The Philosophers' Yard's mission to new audiences. Notable recent examples include a session on *Creativity* at the 4 The Arts Festival organised by Empower Poetry (November 2024), and a co-hosted discussion with Birmingham Race Impact Group on *building an anti-racist Birmingham* for the UN Day for Anti-Racism (March 2024 – see event flyer to the right).

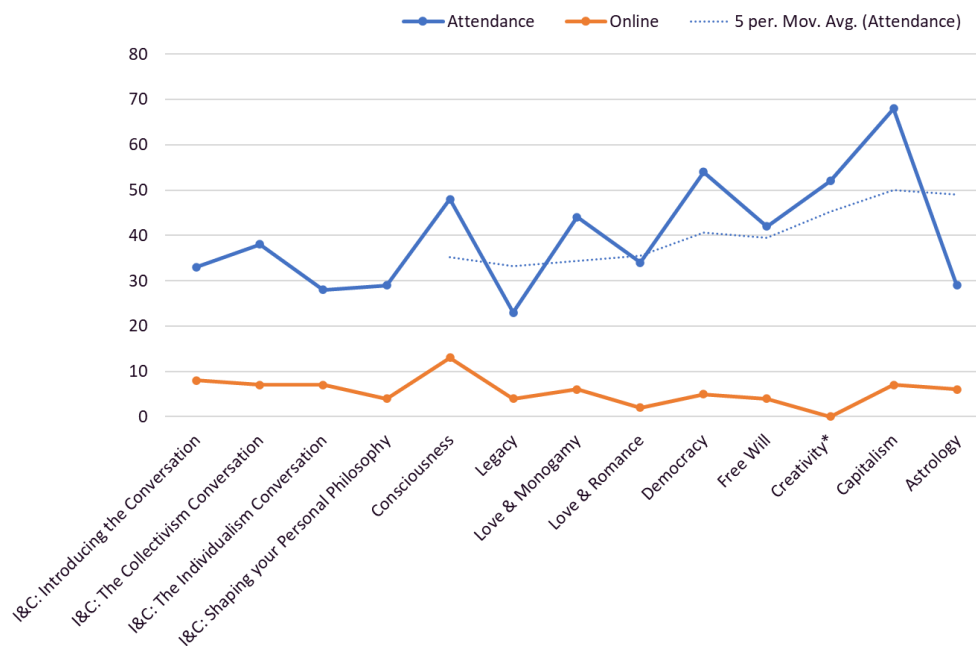
While less frequent, these collaborations are a vital part of encouraging public engagement with pressing societal questions.



Attendance Data and Evaluation

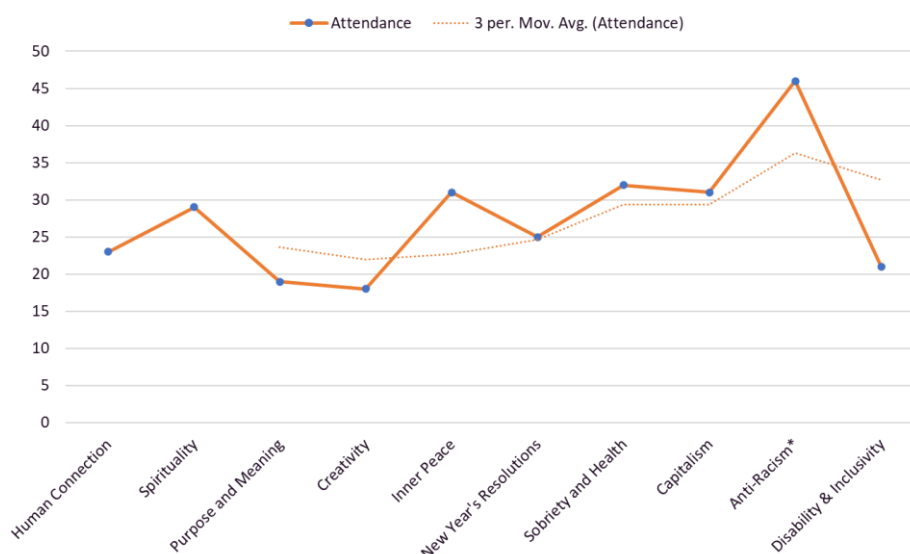
The number of participants at Philosophers' Yard events is **797** (an increase in more than 600 from April 2024). Although the level of interest in each event may vary - due to the popularity of the chosen topic - the overall trend of attendance at Main Events and Meetups is positive.

Attendance at Main Events



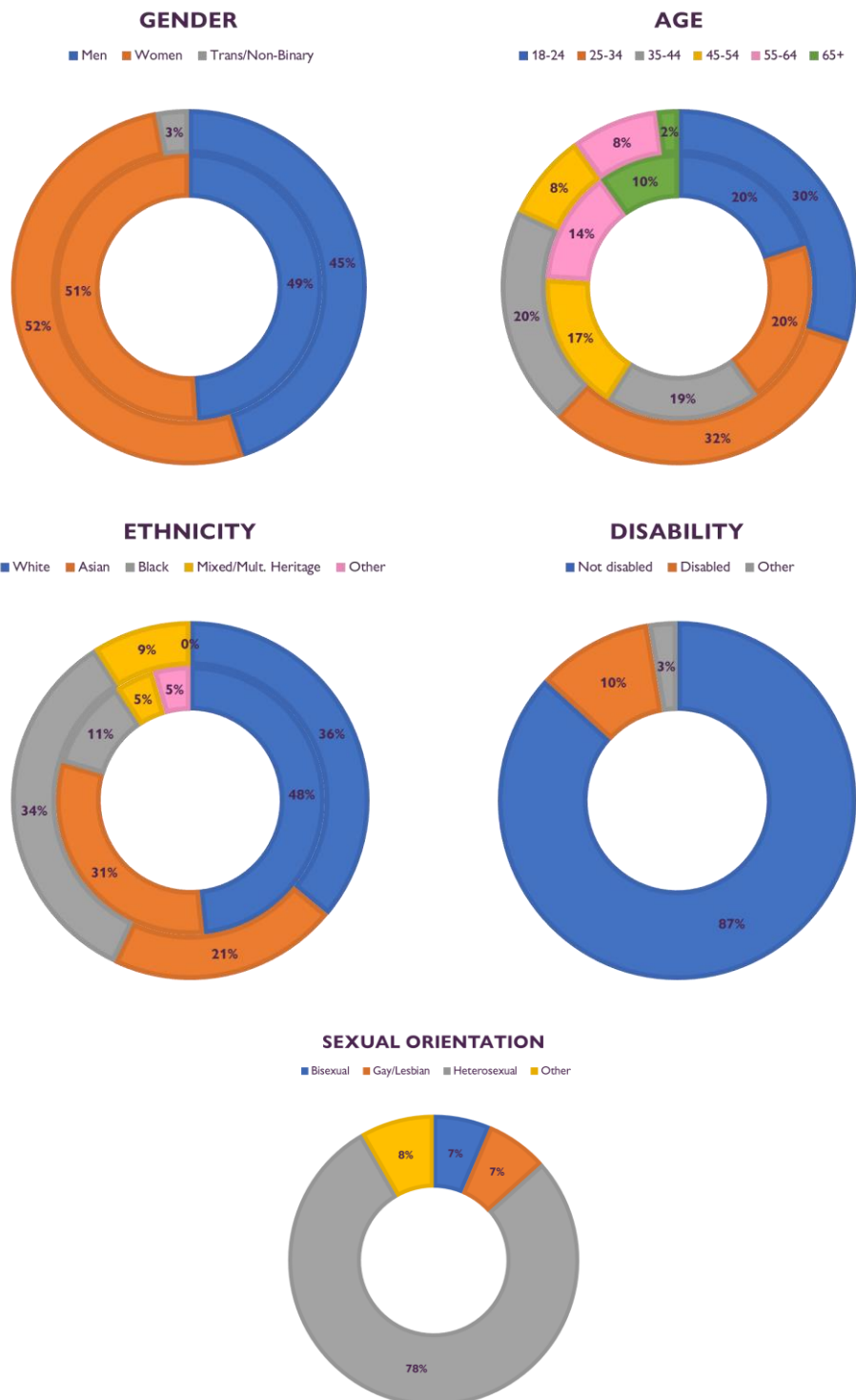
*Collaboration Event

Attendance at Meetups



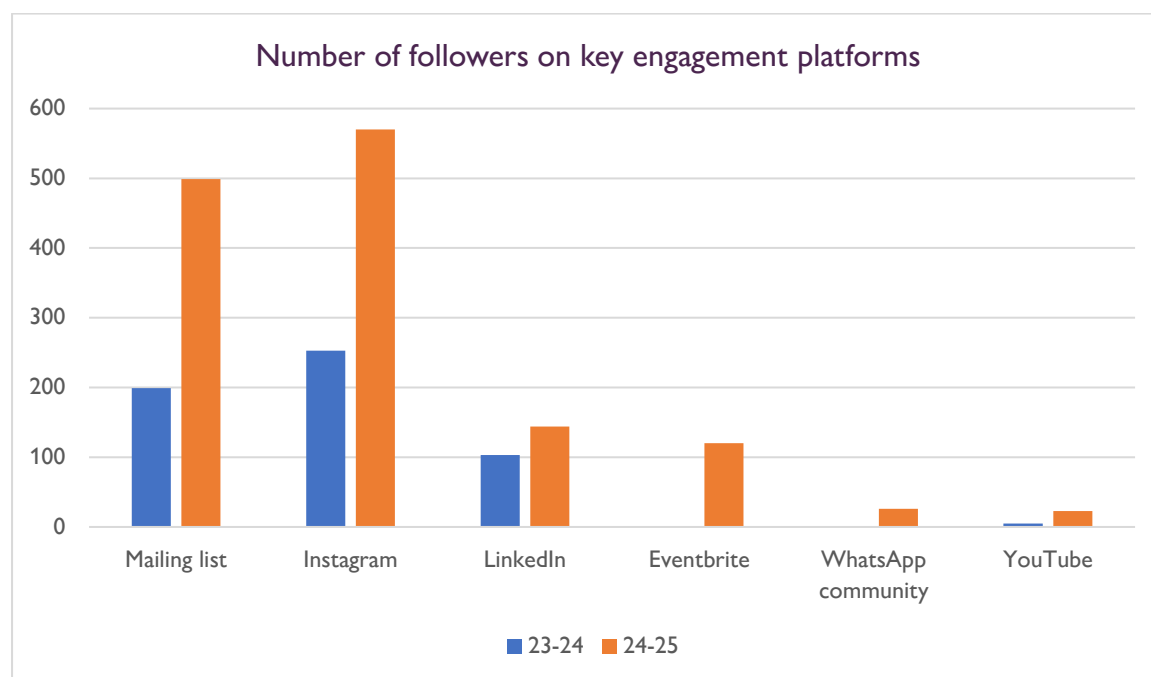
*Collaboration Event

The Philosophers' Yard continues to have an incredibly diverse set of attendees. In the charts below, demographic data for the city of Birmingham, where available, is provided in the inner circle (source, census 2021), with data from attendees of Philosophers' Yard events in the outer circle.



Note: As under 18s cannot attend Philosophers' Yard events, census 'age' data for Birmingham has been adjusted to only include data for eligible individuals.

The Philosophers' Yard mailing list has almost 500 registered users who receive a quarterly newsletter on Philosophers' Yard activities and early information on upcoming events. There has been significant growth among all key platforms of engagement (see chart below):



The Philosophers' Yard remains committed to learning. Evaluation activities are included at all events to determine those aspects of delivery that are working well or could be improved.

Generally, attendees enjoy:

- The openness of discussion
- The quality of speakers
- The diversity of attendees and speakers
- The refreshments
- The live / creative performances
- The friendly and welcoming atmosphere
- The small group / break out room conversations
- Having space to think and explore (and learn about new topics)

Attendees have stated that they would like:

- More time in breakout rooms to discuss the ideas of the speakers
- An improved online experience (main events only)
- More frequent events
- Recommended reading materials

EDUCATION

Throughout 2024–25, *The Philosophers' Yard* has continued to expand and refine its educational offerings. These initiatives are designed to bring philosophical thinking into diverse settings—such as workplaces, schools, and community organisations—making philosophy both accessible and practically relevant. At the heart of these efforts is a commitment to delivering transformative educational experiences that combine rigorous teaching with experiential learning.

Two core programmes have been the focus of development during this period:

Philosophical Practices: Scheduled to launch in May 2025, *Philosophical Practices* is a four-part course that introduces a transformative approach to philosophy, one that fosters intellectual curiosity alongside personal development. The course engages participants in a range of reflective and thought-provoking practices aimed at cultivating philosophical skills, deepening self-awareness, and enriching everyday life. Designed to support both individual growth and collective inquiry, the course promotes a more thoughtful and connected way of engaging with ideas and with others.



Disability Advocacy Workshops: These in-person workshop offers an accessible and applied introduction to key philosophical concepts related to disability. Using real-world examples, the programme equips participants — particularly within workplaces, schools, and faith-based organisations — to create safer, more inclusive environments for disabled individuals. The workshop blends conceptual clarity with practical relevance, encouraging critical reflection on accessibility and advocacy.

As both initiatives remain in early stages of implementation, a more comprehensive progress update will be included in next year's annual report.

ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

A summary financial statement for the 24-25 financial year is provided below. The full set of annual receipt and payment accounts is provided at Annex A.

INCOME

Grants	7,850 ⁱ
Fundraising / donations	4
Event ticket sales	442 ⁱⁱ
Sponsorship	-
Corporate sales - Education	-
In-kind support	3000 ⁱⁱⁱ
Total	11,296

PAYMENTS

Events (Main events)	4,344 ^{iv}
Events (Meetups)	778
Marketing and Communications	616 ^v
Education	67
Overheads / operations	58
In-kind support	3000
Total	8,863

VARIANCE	2,433
-----------------	--------------

Notes:

ⁱ The Philosophers' Yard was awarded a grant of £7,850 by the National Lottery Community Fund to support the delivery of activity from April 2024 to August 2025. This amount is an estimation of the in-kind value (as set out by the university) and is not included in the receipts and payment account.

ⁱⁱ We employ a flexible ticketing model for all events, with the option for attendees to select a free ticket or a ticket with a customisable amount.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Philosophers' Yard was accepted onto the University of Birmingham's B-Experienced Internship programme and was granted two interns (fully funded through the university).

^{iv} The main costs in delivering events are speakers and contributors fees and expenses, venue hire, the design of marketing collateral, the cost of the event photographer and videographer, and refreshments.

^v Outside of events, there are general marketing and communications costs, which include the hosting and development of the website and the marketing of The Philosophers' Yard.

AIMS FOR THE 2025-26 FINANCIAL YEAR

Review of aims for the 2024-25 Financial Year

The 2023-24 annual report set out the following three aims:

Aim	Target(s)	Status	Detail
Ensure the continued delivery of high-quality events that provide a platform for a host of diverse, knowledgeable speakers to audiences with the big questions of our time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six events in the next 12 months Explore an approach for partnering with a location outside of Birmingham 	Fully met	Sixteen events were delivered in 24-25 with the successful launch of Philosophy Meetups as our chosen form of expansion
Facilitate interactions between a diverse audience that can exchange a variety of viewpoints and perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female-male ratio within 20% of each other At least 50% of our audience is from an ethnic minority background 	Fully met	52% of attendees are women and 45% are men. Attendance from people from 'ethnic minority' backgrounds is 64%
Developing educational tools and guidance for corporate organisations, community groups and schools to engage with these ideas in a variety of settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and pilot an approach for the educational arm of The Philosophers' Yard Engage at least five different organisations with tailored activities 	Partially met	Progress has been made in developing the educational offer and Philosophical Practices course but the launch of these activities will now be carried forward into 2025-26

Aims for the 2025-26 Financial Year

The key aims of The Philosophers' Yard for the 2025-26 financial year are to:

Embed a Clear Theory of Change: Integrate the organisation's theory of change across all practices, policies, communications, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

By the end of 2025-26, the theory of change and associated performance indicators will have been approved by trustees and required updates would have been made to the website, policies and evaluation forms.

Pilot and Refine Educational Offerings: Launch and assess new educational initiatives—including the Philosophical Practices course — using participant feedback to enhance content and delivery.

By the end of 2025-26, the Philosophical Practices course will have launched (with at least 12 participants) and workshops or other educational activities will have been delivered to at least five organisations.

Strengthen Financial Sustainability: Secure additional income through grants and fundraising, while adopting a long-term, sustainable approach to funding and programme delivery.

By the end of 2025-26, The Philosophers' Yard will have secured at least one additional grant and total income raised through grants, sales, and fundraising will be in excess of £10,000. Income from educational activities will be our second highest form of income, followed by ticket sales.

Declaration

This annual report has been reviewed and approved by the charity trustees and signed on behalf of the trustees by the Chair.



Daniel Stone

Chair of Trustees

Date of approval: 25 June 2025

ANNEX A: ANNUAL RECEIPT AND PAYMENT ACCOUNTS

The Philosophers' Yard		No. 1204617		CC16a
Receipts and payments accounts				
For the period from	01-Apr-24	To	01-Apr-25	

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restrict ed funds to the nearest £	Endowme nt funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants	7,850	-	-	7,850	-
Fundraising / Donations	4	-	-	4	1,732
Event ticket sales (Main events)	429	-	-	429	90
Event ticket sales (Meetups)	13	-	-	13	-
Sponsorship	-	-	-	-	-
Corporate sales	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	8,296	-	-	8,296	1,822
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	8,296	-	-	8,296	1,822

A3 Payments

Events (Main events)	4,344	-	-	4,344	1,681
Events (Meetups)	778	-	-	778	-
Marketing & Communications	616	-	-	616	141
Education	67	-	-	67	-
Overheads / operations	58	-	-	58	-
	-	-	-	-	-

	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	5,863	-	-	5,863	1,822
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	5,863	-	-	5,863	1,822
Net of receipts/(payments)	2,433	-	-	2,433	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	65	-	-	65	-
Cash funds this year end	2,498	-	-	2,498	-

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	-	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
B2 Other monetary assets		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature

Print Name

Date of approval



Lola Jones

14/04/2025



Daniel Stone

14/04/2025