

Scottish Centre of PEN International

Scotland · Charity number SC008772

Details

Known as	International Pen Scottish Centre or Scottish Pen
Status	Active
Legal form	SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation)
Registered	1989-06-24
Register	View on the OSCR register

Contact

Address	Scottish PEN Office Writers' Museum Lady Stair's Close Lawnmarket Edinburgh EH1 2PA
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Website	www.scottishpen.org
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Activities

Activities: 'It carries out activities or services itself'

Purposes: 'the advancement of education', 'the advancement of the arts, heritage, culture or science', 'the promotion of equality and diversity'

What the charity does: Scottish PEN is a centre of PEN International and not-for-profit organisation that champions freedom of expression and literature across borders. We are a membership organisation and work with a range of writers, campaigners, activists and communities across Scotland and around the world.

Beneficiaries: 'Children or young people', 'People with a particular ethnic or racial origin', 'No specific group, or for the benefit of the community'

Objectives: 4 The organisation's purpose is the advancement of the education of the public by the following means: 4.1 The encouragement and promotion of writing in and about Scotland nationally and internationally 4.2 The support of writers worldwide in the interest of freedom and artistic expression 4.3 The fostering of international understanding through the appreciation of literature 4.4 The attendance of Scottish PEN representatives at conferences, symposia and other meetings of writers worldwide 4.5 The organisation in Scotland of conferences and other literary events 4.6 The undertaking of any legal activity to further these charitable objects provided that Scottish PEN shall in no circumstances engage in political activities.

Geography

- **Main operating location:** City of Edinburgh
- **Geographical spread:** Operations cover all or most of Scotland

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£11,277	£6,744	-	0
2024-03-31	£10,722	£19,929	-	1
2023-03-31	£15,376	£25,428	-	2
2022-03-31	£39,739	£33,726	-	2
2021-03-31	£32,141	£30,591	-	2

Accounts

International Pen :: Scottish Centre

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registered Charity No. SC008772

Report and Financial Statements

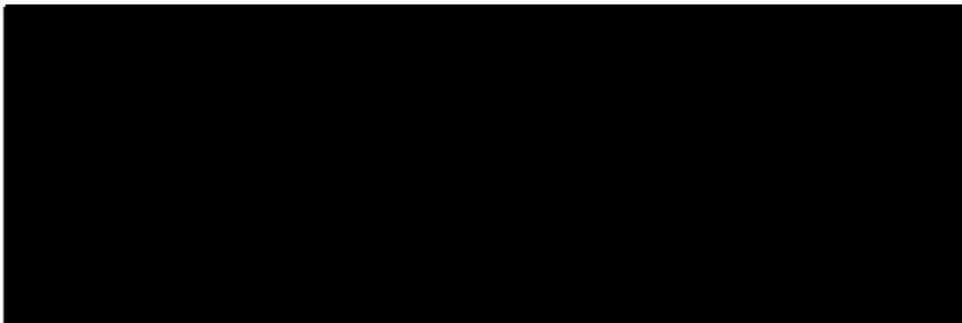
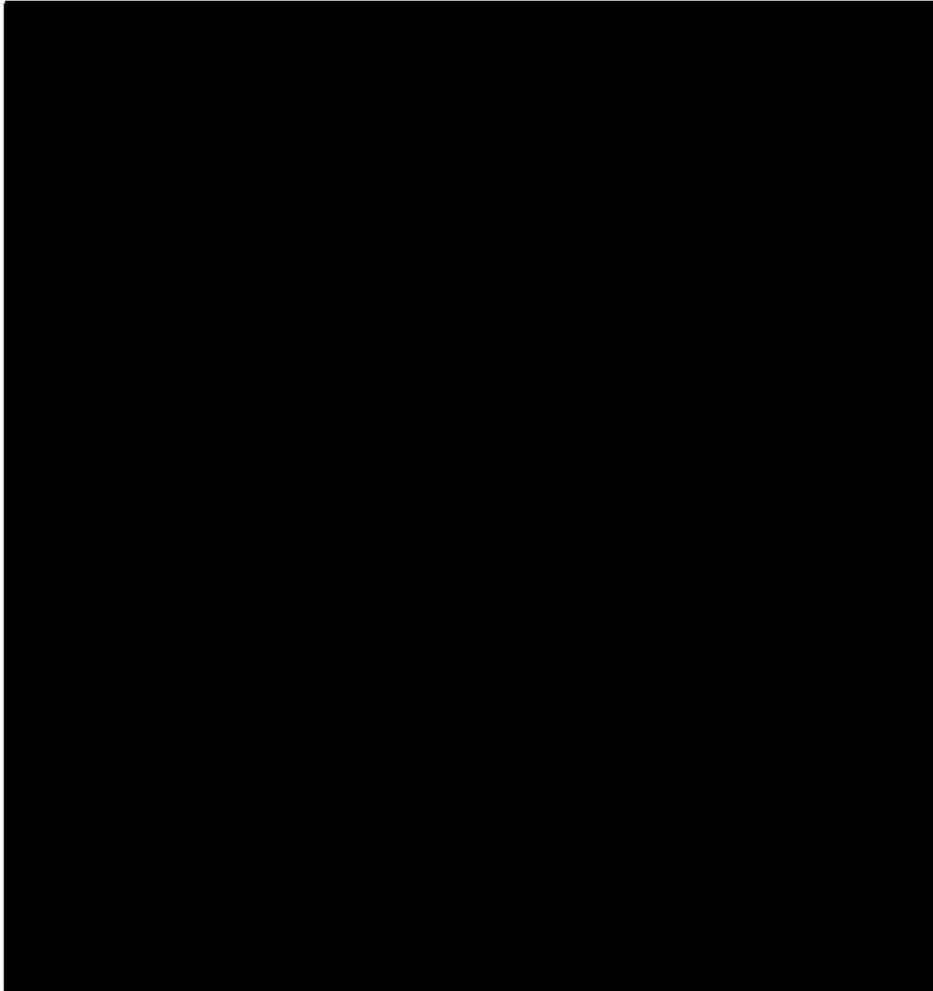
For the year ended 31 March 2025

International PEN :: Scottish Centre

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INTERNATIONAL PEN: SCOTTISH CENTRE
Legal and administrative information



Charity number SC008772

Correspondence

Telephone

E-mail

Bankers

Triodos Bank NV, Deanery Road,
Bristol BS1 5AS

Bank of Scotland plc
George Street, Edinburgh

Independent Examiner

THE CHARTER OF INTERNATIONAL PEN

A worldwide association of writers : founded 1927

The PEN Charter, to which all members of Scottish PEN subscribe, is based on resolutions passed at its International Congresses and may be summarised as follows:

PEN affirms that:

Literature knows no frontiers and must remain common currency among people in spite of political or international upheavals.

In all circumstances, and particularly in time of war, works of art, the patrimony of humanity at large, should be left untouched by national or political passion.

Members of PEN should at all times use what influence they have in favour of good understanding and mutual respect between nations; they pledge themselves to do their utmost to dispel race, class and national hatreds, and to champion the ideal of one humanity living in peace in one world.

PEN stands for the principle of unhampered transmission of thought within each nation and between all nations, and members pledge themselves to oppose any form of suppression of expression in the country and community to which they belong, as well as throughout the world wherever this is possible. PEN declares for a free press and opposes arbitrary censorship in time of peace. It believes that the necessary advance of the world towards a more highly organised political and economic order renders a free criticism of governments, administrations and institutions imperative. And since freedom implies voluntary restraint, members pledge themselves to oppose such evils of a free press as mendacious publication, deliberate falsehood and distortion of facts for political and personal ends.

Membership of PEN is open to all qualified writers, editors and translators who subscribe to these aims, without regard to nationality, ethnic origin, language, colour or religion.

International PEN :: Scottish Centre : SCIO

Report of the trustees for the year ended 31 March 2025

Introduction

The trustees present their annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025. The legal and administrative information given on page 1 and 2 form part of this report.

Governing document and objectives of the charity

Scottish PEN is a Scottish charitable incorporated organisation and its purposes are set out on page 3 in the charter of International PEN.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

All of Scottish PEN's trustees are appointed or reappointed by the members at our annual general meeting each year.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PLANS

The achievements and plans of Scottish PEN in 2024-25 are reported by President [REDACTED] on pages 5 to 8.

FINANCIAL REVIEW AND RESERVES POLICY

In its combined funds the charity earned a surplus of £4,533, (2024 deficit £9,207). A more detailed review is given on pages 9 and 10.

Reserves at year end were £12,411.

The trustees consider the current level of reserves to be satisfactory; the reserves have been accumulated to give the opportunity for the orderly planning of future projects.

RISKS TO WHICH THE CHARITY IS EXPOSED

The Trustees consider that due to its small size and its simplicity there is no material risk to which it is exposed. The situation is reviewed at each meeting of trustees.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with regulations made under the Charities Act. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are also responsible for the contents of the trustees' report, and the responsibility of the independent examiner in relation to the trustees' report is limited to examining the report and ensuring that, on the face of the report, there are no inconsistencies with the figures disclosed in the financial statements.

This report was approved by the board of trustees on 13 December 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

[REDACTED]

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

One of the highlights of any year for the PEN International movement is the coming together of PEN chapters around the world for the PEN International Congress. It is always encouraging to be reminded that the poets, playwrights, editors, essayists and novelists who make up the backbone of the PEN International movement, and the international community of readers and writers more widely, are continually working to advance the aims of that brief work of genius and inspiration that is the PEN Charter.

2025 was no exception in this regard. Once again this year, I was inspired by the wide and enthusiastic range of PEN members who put themselves forward to take leadership roles in the international organisation. The officers who have been in post during the past few years have now completed the process of updating the organisational and constitutive documents of the international movement for the modern world with the advice of experts in the field. I note that PEN International has offered individual chapters the opportunity to take advantage of the expertise gained in this process. I wonder, as I prepare this report of the President of Scottish PEN, if this is an offer of which Scottish PEN should avail itself as our organisation approaches its centenary. Something to consider during the coming year.

The organisation of PEN International also excelled itself in presenting a slate of resolutions that could be, and were, able to be overwhelmingly passed by the chapters present at Congress. Having said that, the content of these resolutions set forth the challenges that PEN International and its constituent chapters must face now and in the coming years as the world passes from the optimism of the era of anticipated "peace dividends" into a world in which international tensions and conflict remain the norm. Furthermore, the slate of resolutions and the representatives of PEN International and the international chapters all spoke of challenges which face all the chapters around the world: increased threats to freedom of expression, and financially straitened times in the worlds of literature and journalism, as well as for charitable institutions.

These challenges face Scottish PEN, just as they face our sister organisations around the world. During 2025, Scottish PEN has had to issue statements in the face of clampdowns on freedom of expression in Scotland and beyond. Among the matters of most concern was the proscription of the protest group Palestine Action by the Westminster parliament.

When that proscription was first proposed, Scottish PEN joined PEN International, English PEN and Wales PEN Cymru in calling on the UK Government directly to refrain from proscribing Palestine Action and to ensure that counter-terrorism laws would not be misused to suppress legitimate expression or protest. We also urged the UK Parliament to scrutinise the broader implications of the proscription action for the rule of law in the UK.

Unfortunately, the UK Government and Parliament have run roughshod over the concerns of hundreds of thousands of their fellow citizens who have been so appalled by this development that they have taken to the streets to protest. And it is sad to say, also, that

this is not just a United Kingdom problem, but also specifically here in Scotland. Scottish PEN was gravely concerned by the arrest under terrorism laws this year of award-winning Scottish screenwriter, [REDACTED] in Edinburgh. At the time of his arrest, [REDACTED] was among activists who had turned out for a peaceful protest outside St Leonards Police Station in support of [REDACTED] who had previously been charged under terror laws for wearing a t-shirt that has been alleged to indicate support for Palestine Action.

Prior to this event [REDACTED] the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, had warned that the proscription of Palestine Action put the UK at odds with international law, and the Scottish Human Rights Commission had warned that policing of protests against the genocide in Gaza risked infringing on people's rights to freedom of expression and assembly. Unfortunately, the validity of our concerns and those of the PEN International movement, the High Commissioner and the SHRC were confirmed once again.

In another chilling series of events, Scottish PEN was called upon to support the Chair of its Writers At Risk Committee, [REDACTED], upon her arrest for peaceful protest against the proscription. [REDACTED] and other campaigners who have been arrested under similar circumstances have often been made subject to bail conditions that have the effect of outlawing their right to protest and even make a living. It is of some comfort that, with the support of Scottish PEN, a numbers of people subject to these conditions have had them modified and lifted. Nevertheless, as has been noted too many times in recent years, the process is the punishment, and the process is the threat that is wielded to chill dissent.

It is interesting to note in this context that it was ever thus, and that Scottish PEN's work over nearly a hundred years to support democratic dissent has consistently made an impression on the authorities. Earlier in the year, *The Times* published an article by senior news reporter [REDACTED] regarding the release of security service files that had recently been opened and placed in the UK National Archives at Kew. These documents disclosed that MI5 and the police had monitored [REDACTED] (JF) Hendry, the poet, editor and writer for decades over his suspected links to radical left-wing causes and the "Scottish Nationalist Movement".

As had previously been set forth in the landmark report prepared by Scottish PEN with the University of Strathclyde, *Scottish Chilling*, Scottish PEN members remain concerned to this day that they might be monitored by the authorities over their political views. Indeed, as Scottish PEN member [REDACTED], the Francis Hutcheson Professor of Scottish Literature at the University of Glasgow, observes in the *Times* article, it would be naïve in the extreme not to assume that writers advocating for freedom of expression and campaigning for peace – principles to which all members of the PEN International movement subscribe – would be subject to security service observation.

I was quoted in the article, saying that *[g]iven the stance of today's UK and Scottish Governments regarding political speech, we must assume that today's advocates for change are also subject to such monitoring. Indeed, at the time of the 88th PEN International*

Congress in 2022, Scottish PEN had to reflect that the UK was an outlier in European terms in having two writers imprisoned in Scottish and United Kingdom prisons.

That is to say, the work of Scottish PEN is as important now as it has always been. In fact, given the contemporary climate noted by our colleagues in the PEN chapters across Wales, Ireland and England, and around the world, it may be more important than ever. In that context, Scottish PEN is grateful to its committees and committee chairs for the sterling work they have done throughout the year. Special mention is due, I think, to the aforementioned [REDACTED] for being a key facilitator of the visit of the young Palestinian writer [REDACTED] to the U.K. for a series of talks and lectures on the ongoing conflict in Gaza. Our thanks are due to Women Writers Committee chair [REDACTED] and the WWC, including [REDACTED] for their continuing efforts to reinvigorate the activities of the Committee, not least in programming another year of successful events including for International Women's Day and the Naomi Mitchison Lecture. Thanks are also due to the Futures Institute at the University of Edinburgh and the University of Glasgow for being part of facilitating these events. I am glad to have this opportunity to note that Trustee and Writers for Peace Committee member [REDACTED] is currently working on facilitating a Helen Cruickshank Lecture for the early part of 2026.

Amid all this campaigning, it was also pleasing to note throughout 2025 that, notwithstanding the issues facing the literary and the creative sectors in Scotland and the many, many issues that might tear their attention away from their endeavours, Scottish PEN members have continued to be active and present in their communities, sharing their work. I would like to join all of the Trustees in expressing our great gratitude to [REDACTED] who continues to do such sterling work in soliciting, collecting and collating our members' news for the monthly member newsletter.

Turning to that other concern shared by all of our fellow PEN chapters, I am pleased to note that 2025 has seen an improvement in the financial position of Scottish PEN. I am grateful to our small body of Trustees, as well as and in particular to our Finance Worker, [REDACTED] for the sterling work she has done in maintaining and advancing the work of Scottish PEN on a shoestring in recent years.

I am glad to say that this work has put Scottish PEN in a position where we are now advertising to fill the position of Project Manager once again with a dedicated employee, which I am sure will take some of the pressure off the people who have been working so hard, and further advance our aims as an organisation.

In the meantime, and in the face of the work that Scottish PEN is committed to doing, the Board is keen to increase our membership and the pool of available committee members. To that end, 2026 will see the launch of what we hope will be a series of member social events. These will give members an opportunity to hear directly about Scottish PEN's ongoing work, as well as join our community of like-minded – and diverse and free-thinking! – readers and writers. It is the Board's intention that these events will feature keynote presentations from noted members on ongoing work and events, as well as an opportunity

for members at large to share news of their works and events, in an extension of the community [REDACTED] has fostered in the member newsletter.

With the prospect of a new Project Manager joining our team, a committed group of Trustees, a Finance Worker who has done an astonishing amount in recent years to advance the aims of Scottish PEN in supporting the aims of the international movement, and a reasonably healthy financial situation for our organisation, I believe that this is a good time for me to step down as President of Scottish PEN, and allow our new President to take the reins in the new year. I look forward to supporting them in their work and goals, easing the transition to a new presidency, and maybe take some time to work on translation and linguistic rights in Scotland.

Around five years seems to me to be long enough to stay in the role of President, and long enough to try keeping the ship steady in choppy waters. I am proud to have had the opportunity to represent Scottish PEN and its members in that capacity. I am particularly pleased to have kept our goals opposing any form of suppression of freedom of expression in the country and community to which we belong, as well as throughout the world wherever this is possible, to the forefront of our activities. Having Scottish PEN be a key part of the PEN International movement's campaign for [REDACTED] is a matter of particular pride, spearheading the adoption of the resolution calling for his release at the 88th PEN international Congress in Uppsala. Amid all the moments of darkness that one must address as an active member of Scottish PEN, I was glad to get to see the release of [REDACTED] during my term as President, as well as [REDACTED] for whom we have also campaigned behind the sterling leadership of one of his home PEN International chapters, English PEN.

Reading about the historic activities of Scottish PEN this year, I am aware that among the prime goals of its Trustees is to maintain the organisation, a member organisation. With this in mind, I hope that I have been able to open the workings and activities of Scottish PEN to the membership a little more clearly, and maintain a degree of unity of purpose among a group of – I will say again! – free-thinking readers and writers.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the members' continued support for Scottish PEN and the principles of the PEN International movement that are represented by the PEN Charter. I offer my thanks to the members, and I look forward to writing and reading and campaigning with them in future.

[REDACTED]
President, Scottish PEN

Finance Committee Report on behalf of the Board of Trustees

Presented to the AGM of Scottish PEN for year ended 31st March 2025

Charitable Objectives & Activities

Scottish PEN was founded as the Scottish Centre of PEN International in 1927. Then as now our objectives are to advocate freedom of expression, advance human rights, increase understanding of different cultures, and to promote Scottish literary & linguistic heritage across Scotland and around the world. Over the past twelve months Scottish PEN has continued to progress its work in several areas, campaigning on behalf of writers imprisoned under various regimes around the world, and defending freedom of expression in Scotland.

Income

Annual income in 2024-25 was £11,277, up from £10,722 in the previous year. Income to the organisation came from:

- £9,528 received from membership fees and donations
- £888 claimed from HMRC in Gift Aid
- £60 in bank interest
- £801 in receipts from charitable activities

Increased income from the previous financial year is due to several factors.

Membership fees and donations increased slightly over 2023-2024, including £1,000 granted by Canongate Books and donations given in the name of former President of Scottish PEN, [REDACTED] after his passing. Event and book sales income saw the most significant increase over the previous year.

Expenditure

Annual expenditure for 2024-25 was £6,744, down from £19,929 in 2023-24. This reduction is mainly attributable to the loss of remaining staff capacity to administer funded projects, with most charitable activity being undertaken by the Trustees and Committees in unfunded campaigning and events, such as the Naomi Mitchison memorial lecture. The Come Here event and pamphlet printing in association with the

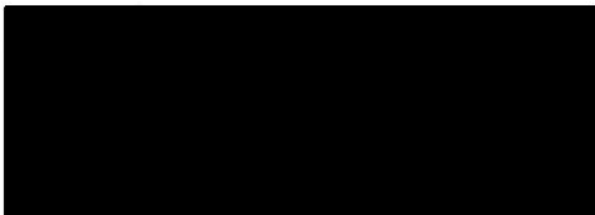
Hands Up Project was organised by members and was unfunded by Scottish PEN, but attracted income for Scottish PEN. Of charitable expenditure, £250 was spent on design work for PENning magazine and £90 on venue hire for the [REDACTED] Lecture presented by member [REDACTED]

Closing Balances

On 31st March 2025, Scottish PEN had £12,410 cash on hand, compared to £8,378 at the end of the previous financial year. The former sum is entirely general/unrestricted funding after the Creative Scotland Four Nations grant was closed and the remaining £500 was moved to unrestricted funding.

Approval

Annual accounts and this report will be presented to the membership of Scottish PEN by the Finance Committee at the Annual General Meeting to be held on 13th December 2025. Accounts and report should be proposed, seconded and passed by a majority of voting members present at the meeting.



On behalf of the Finance Committee, Scottish PEN

1st December 2025

INTERNATIONAL PEN :: SCOTTISH CENTRE

Financial Activities

Statement of Balances as at 31 March 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
ASSETS		
Bank and cash in hand		
Treasurers Account Bank of Scotland	2,330.40	86
Treasurers Account Triodos Bank	9,906.78	8,103
Paypal	67.18	83
NS&I - Congress and General Purpose Account	106.00	106
Total balances	12,410.36	8,378
RESERVES		
	£	£
Creative Scotland - Four Nations	-	500
	-	500
Unrestricted Fund		
General Fund	12,410.36	7,878
	12,410.36	8,378
Other Balances		
	£	£
Furniture and fittings	700	800
Computer equipment	250	300
Stock of CDs and publications	250	300
	1,200	1,400

These statements were approved by a committee of the Trustees held on

.....13 December 2025 and signed on their behalf by



INTERNATIONAL PEN :: SCOTTISH CENTRE
Financial Activities
Incorporating Statement of Receipts and Payments
Year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted Fund	Restricted Fund	Total Funds	Total Funds
		General	Creative Scotland Four Nations	2025	2024
		£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS					
Subscriptions and donations	1	9,528		9,528	8,758
HMRC Gift Aid Claims	1	888		888	1,864
Bank interest received	1	60		60	52
Receipts from charitable activities	1	301	-	301	48
		<u>10,777</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,777</u>	<u>10,722</u>

PAYMENTS					
Cost of generating funds					
Charitable activities: services and supplies		340	-	340	-
Charitable activities: salaries allocated	1	-	-	-	9,843
Administration services and supplies	1	5,164		5,164	6,273
Administration salary	1	1,000		1,000	3,593
Governance costs: independent examiner	1	240		240	220
Total payments		<u>6,744</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,744</u>	<u>19,929</u>
Net surplus/(deficit) before transfers		4,033	-	4,033	(9,207)
Transfers between funds		500	(500)		
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year		<u>4,533</u>	<u>(500)</u>	<u>4,033</u>	<u>(9,207)</u>
Fund balances brought forward		7,878	500	8,378	17,585
Fund balances carried forward		<u>12,411</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,411</u>	<u>8,378</u>

Notes to the Accounts

Year ended 31 March 2025

Note 1	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2025 Total £	2,024 Year Total £
RECEIPTS				
Subscriptions	-	8,469	8,469	8,318
Bank interest	-	60	60	52
Donations	-	1,059	1,059	440
HMRC Gift Aid Claim	-	888	888	1,864
	-	10,476	10,476	10,674
Charitable Activities Receipts				
	£	£	£	£
Book sales	-	258	258	48
Event	500	43	543	-
	500	301	801	48
Total receipts	500	10,777	11,277	10,722
Charitable Activities Payments				
	£	£	£	
Creative Scotland : Four Nations	-	-	-	1,000
[REDACTED] vent	-	90	90	-
PENning magazine - design work	-	250	250	-
	-	340	340	1,000
Administration costs				
Salaries, fees and NIC	-	1,000	1,000	12,437
International PEN Subscription	-	2,880	2,880	2,793
Web-site and internet	-	728	728	1,094
Telephone	-	610	610	570
Other administrative costs	-	396	396	375
Committee travel and AGM expenses	-	130	130	918
Bank and Paypal charges	-	149	149	136
Insurance	-	271	271	386
Subscriptions	-	-	-	-
	-	6,164	6,164	18,709
Governance: independent examination	-	240	240	220
	-	6,404	6,404	18,929
Total Payments	-	6,744	6,744	19,929
Net surplus (deficit) for year			4,533	(9,207)

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of International PEN : Scottish Centre : SCIO

I report on the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 11, 12 and 13.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10 (1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44 (1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an opinion on the view given in the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:

to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44 (1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and

to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations,

have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Date 13 December 2025