

**WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST**  
**REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**Charity Number: 325003**

**WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST**  
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# **WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

## **TRUSTEES' REPORT**

### **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

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The Trustees submit their annual report and the financial statements of the charity and group (consisting of Writers and Scholars Educational Trust and its subsidiary – Writers and scholars International Limited) for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The Trustees have complied with statutory requirements and the requirements of the charity's Trust Deed, in preparing the financial statements

#### **ABOUT INDEX ON CENSORSHIP**

Index on Censorship is a non-profit organization, based in the UK, but with a global remit. We campaign for, and defend freedom, of expression worldwide. We believe everyone should be free to express themselves without fear of harm or persecution.

Our aim is to raise awareness about the value of free speech and highlight threats to free expression as the first step to tackling censorship. To do this, we publish work by censored writers and artists, promote debate, and provide information and expertise on free speech issues, as well as run campaigns protecting the right to freedom of expression both online and in real life.

Our ultimate goal is to be a voice for the persecuted and to expose the threats of totalitarian regimes and actions wherever they may be.

#### **CHAIR'S STATEMENT**

As we marked our fiftieth anniversary, there might have been some who hoped that we could look back and tell ourselves that the generations born since the launch of Index on Censorship have established their fundamental right to share their thoughts and emotions freely, irrespective of the nature of their societies – democratic, theocratic, rich or poor.

The explosion of social media should have offered the means to share our experiences, test our ideas and to imagine contesting versions of our future. In theory, the smartphone should outwit even the most authoritarian of regimes.

This is not how it is. At the extreme end of the spectrum of repression, war has brought with it the familiar silencing of difference, with conformity clothed as patriotic duty. Entire populations have had their voices stilled, supposedly in the interests of national unity. And the brutal intimidation of communities in states where the line between the governing and the gangster classes is increasingly blurred, has re-introduced a murderous new front in our work.

In short, the reordering of global power, reinforced by novel technologies has made the work of Index even more urgent than ever. Our magazine's coverage of Eastern Europe, the Middle East, China and Latin American for example, has charted the intensifying of injustices in the past year; sadly there are always too many stories to tell, and more landing on the page every day.

The shadow over freedom of expression isn't just falling on people in faraway countries of whom we hear little. The cancellation of speakers, the marginalisation of those with minority opinions, the pressure on authors to bend to fashionable norms, and the unspoken self-censorship of journalists are all subtly stifling the breadth of public debate in supposedly liberal democracies.

This is why we at Index continue to be an advocate for those persecuted everywhere. But the courage of those individuals is not enough by itself to lift that shadow. It requires resources that allow people whose livelihoods are destroyed by repressive regimes to have the means to publish and broadcast. It needs partners that those in danger can count on to come to their aid in times of need. And it needs those who enjoy the greatest measure of freedom to be ready to amplify the voices of the persecuted. That continues to be the mission of Index.

We could not carry out that mission without the support of those who take freedom of expression as seriously as we do and who have helped us to become a stable and effective partner to many around the world. We are grateful to our funders, in particular Sage, who distribute our magazine around the world; and to our staff, who make up in their expertise and enthusiasm, what we lack in resources.

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I would also like to thank my fellow Trustee Sarah Sands who has completed her terms of office this year; and welcome Nick Timothy and Helen Mountfield KC who have joined us. I look forward to working with them, and all those who share our mission. It remains vital to people all over the globe.

Trevor Phillips

## OUR AIMS

**Inform** Index seeks to broaden and deepen public understanding of global threats to freedom of expression as the first step to addressing those threats. Without such information, individuals are unable to make the informed decisions that are crucial for full participation in a free society. We raise awareness through our magazine, website and social media; monitoring and reporting of freedom of expression violations; and events and media.

**Support** Index supports censored writers, academics, artists and those facing censorship and threats to free expression, especially those operating under repressive regimes. We achieve this through the publication and promotion of original written material in our magazine and online, through legal support, and through our Freedom of Expression Awards.

**Influence** Index uses the expertise and information gathered in its award-winning magazine, in its online reporting, and through research and monitoring projects to campaign for change on specific freedom of expression issues. We achieve this through media campaigns, and by lobbying governments, multi-national organisations such as the Council of Europe and specific authorities on different issues. We work with other organisations to strengthen the power of our advocacy by sharing resources and information.

**Debate** Open debate is a central tenet of free expression and so Index actively promotes and leads discussion about the limits and concerns surrounding free expression, tackling subjects that are often ignored by mainstream media, or by taking discussions to different audiences.

## Overview of the year 2022-23

This was another busy year for the Index team. Amid the ongoing fallout from the invasion of Ukraine, we have been increasingly reverting to our organisational roots by developing and investing in our relationships with dissident writers and artists, anchored in Belarus and Russia, but also working with people from around the world. Many dissidents from Hong Kong have now made the UK their home and Index has championed them, we have also been working closely with Afghan dissidents.

As we look ahead, next year will mark the 40th anniversary of the publication of Samuel Beckett's "Catastrophe" and Vaclav Havel's "Mistake" in the pages of Index on Censorship magazine. We are currently exploring how we can mark this anniversary and pay tribute to a new generation of dissidents in Europe. At the same time, we have continued to work on pre-existing areas and have been able to secure new funding streams for a range of policy areas.

## SLAPPs

Index remains a leading partner organisation in the EU, UK and the island of Ireland anti-SLAPP coalitions, campaigning against the use of vexatious lawsuits. We have continued to successfully secure funding in relation to our SLAPPs work, this year from OSF, the Joffe Trust and from the Justice for Journalists Foundation.

- **UK:** In the UK, Index has continued to co-chair the UK Anti-SLAPP Coalition, a coalition of more than 50 academics, lawyers, and individuals representing dozens of non-profit organisations in the UK. Through the coalition, we have continued to uncover, investigate and highlight cases of SLAPPs in the UK, and support those who are affected. We are continuing to push for a standalone anti-SLAPP law, using the template of the model developed by the Coalition. In the meantime, we are working with the Ministry of Justice and parliamentarians to ensure that the best possible anti-SLAPP amendments are included in the Economic Crime Bill. Earlier this year, we launched our UK Anti-SLAPP Coalition website (developed with funding from OSF) and will continue to use the site as a repository for our work in the months and years ahead.

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- **Ireland (EU):** Index established the Ireland Anti-SLAPP Network last year and has continued to chair meetings with stakeholders on a monthly basis. In Ireland, Index organised the first anti-SLAPP conference on the island of Ireland in March 2023. The conference was held at Trinity College Dublin (TCD), with keynote speeches from Bill Browder and UN Special Rapporteur Mary Lawlor. The fact that TCD refused to share and publish the recording of the conference (as previously agreed) due to legal concerns demonstrates the need to engage in this work in Ireland. In the summer of 2023, Index coordinated the submission of written evidence to the Department of Justice in response to the government's defamation proposal. Index also gave expert oral evidence on SLAPPs to the Justice Committee in July 2023. We continue to actively engage with the Coalition against SLAPPs in Europe (CASE) through our work in Ireland.

#### **Online Safety Bill**

Index also led the campaign in the UK against the worst excesses of the Online Safety Bill where freedom of expression was most vulnerable. The legislation is much improved but there remain clear threats to freedom of expression, not least a clear threat to end to end encryption. Our digital rights work also included activities in the European Union as we seek to protect political speech in the upcoming Political Advertising Regulation.

#### **New website and newsletter**

Our rebrand is now complete with a new website and associated newsletter launched in the spring. While we are still at the early stages of assessing the success of the new platforms, early indications are positive.

#### **Index Index**

We relaunched the Index Index for the first time in twenty years providing a global ranking of freedom of expression, in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University. Using a machine learning programme, we were able to incorporate open source data into one ranking and demonstrate the current global challenges to freedom of expression. The ranking was divided into academic freedom, digital freedom, and media freedom. We had hoped to incorporate artistic freedom into the ranking also, but there was not enough open-source information available in that area. The Index Index received widespread interest from media outlets and has re-established us as a go-to organisation for comment regarding freedom of expression challenges globally.

#### **Banned by Beijing / China's transnational repression**

We have continued to develop our work investigating and highlighting China's transnational repression through our Banned by Beijing project. We had a headline event for this project at the end of June, which was attended by over 200 people. The event opened an adjoining exhibition featuring dissident Chinese and Hong Kong artists. The exhibition remained open for a three-week period and was attended by over 1000 people. The event received overwhelmingly positive feedback and significant media coverage, including in the Hong Kong diaspora media outlets.

As part of the work, we have been involved in the campaign seeking to secure the release of the Hong Kong publisher and political prisoner Jimmy Lai. In April, Index participated in a panel discussion with his son Sebastian Lai. In the summer, we began a campaign aimed at gathering messages of solidarity to send to him ahead of his upcoming trial (he is facing a life sentence).

In the run up to the 35 anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Massacre we are developing partnerships to commemorate the event - especially important as next year will be the first milestone anniversary of the Massacre that will not be openly commemorated in Hong Kong. It will therefore be especially important to mark it abroad to make sure it is not forgotten. The Tiananmen Massacre continues to be one of the most censored issues by the CCP at home and abroad.

#### **Letters from Lukashenka's Prisoners / Belarus**

We are no longer actively sourcing and publishing letters from political prisoners in Belarus as our funding period has come to an end, however we are actively seeking an alternative funder in order to continue and develop the project. Belarus has slipped from international focus, which is why it is all the more important that we continue to highlight the human rights crisis there, where nearly 1500 people remain behind bars. On the third anniversary of the botched election on 9

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August 2023, Index highlighted our letters project via a 10-minute segment on BBC Radio. We are preparing to mark our former colleague Andrei Aliaksandrau's 1000th day in prison in October at the awards. He and his partner have been behind bars, as a result of their support for the protestors, since January 2021.

### ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

#### Magazine

Since its establishment in 1972, Index on Censorship magazine has published some of the greatest names in literature including Sir Salman Rushdie, Samuel Beckett, Nadine Gordimer, Mario Vargas Llosa, Hilary Mantel and Kurt Vonnegut. It also has published some of the greatest campaigning writers of our age from Vaclav Havel, Amartya Sen and Ariel Dorfman.

The magazine is available in more than 9,000 universities worldwide and had over a million article downloads in 2022/3.

#### Summer 2023: Express yourself: Overcoming neurodiversity stereotypes

The Summer 2023 issue of Index explores neurodiversity, the term coined in the late 1990s to identify and promote the positives of variation in human thinking which has become more widely used in the past few years. Are old stereotypes still rife? Has the perception of neurodiversity improved? If not, was this because of censorship? Using neurodivergent voices, we wanted to know about this in a global context.

The majority of the articles are written by neurodivergent people, as we wanted to put their voices front and centre. Many said they did have more of a voice, awareness had shot up and the word "neurodiversity" empowered and welcomed a growth in onscreen representation. However, at the same time it was clear that conversations around neurodiversity were playing out along society's current fault-lines and were far from immune.

#### Spring 2023: Modi's India: The Age of Intolerance

Index explores the current state of free expression in Narendra Modi's India. Our investigations paint a bleak picture: The press, once vibrant, is being strangled; the judiciary is no longer independent; laws have been amended to throw protesters in jail; opposition figures are harassed; minorities live in fear. Beyond our special report we publish an essay from Nariman Dzhelyal, who is the leader of the Crimean Tatars, written from his prison cell. Celebrated Ukrainian writer Andrey Kurkov introduces Dzhelyal and explains why he is such a formidable character. The academic and author Kerry Brown wades into the contentious issue of whether we should ban Confucius Institutes, while Jo-Ann Mort talks about the inventive tactics used by US organisations to fight abortion bans. Finally, Martin Bright reminds us of those Afghan journalists still living under Taliban rule.

#### Winter 2022: Crown Confidential: How Briton's Royals censor their records

The message of one of our founders, Stephen Spender, was that Index wouldn't be doing a good job if it didn't keep an eye on attacks to free expression that happen on home soil. With this in mind and with the recent death of Queen Elizabeth II putting the UK under increased global scrutiny, we spoke to the royal historian Andrew Lownie. He told us about his battle to access archives on the Mountbattens, part of the British royal family's inner circle. While Lownie was ultimately successful, but at great personal cost, he told us the files he struggled to access were just some of hundreds that are denied to the British public for no good reason. We decided to look into this censorship of British royal history, and the results of our special report are eye-opening. The number of historic files on the Royal Family which are unavailable, and the absurdity of the reasons for denying access to some of them, is staggering. Many historians and journalists are unable to carry out their work as a result. In one instance an entire book was dropped because of lack of access. We end the year with a simple request: to end this culture of secrecy by opening up official archives related to the Royal Family. Beyond our special report, we interview the Ukrainian author and 2022 Index on Censorship Freedom of Expression Awards winner Andrey Kurkov; Vandana Shiva tells us how the control of seeds silences farmers in India; and Kaya Genç looks at how the Turkish government has waged a convenient war on 'misinformation' ahead of next year's general elections.

#### Autumn 2022: The beautiful game? Qatar, freedom and football

The hosting of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar caused global outrage, with many calling for a boycott of the event. In the run up to the tournament we turned the lens to the question of football and freedoms. We set out with a simple question: "Is

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football bad for free speech?" And yet the answer was complex. Kaya Genc writes about Turkish President Recep Erdogan buying up sporting clubs to stop the arenas being used for protest; China's leader Xi Jinping force-feeds the nation's kids a diet of soccer while Uyghur footballers playing for Chinese teams are paraded as examples of racial harmony. Against these negatives are stories of remarkable positivity. Permi Jhooti, the real-life inspiration for Bend It Like Beckham, says football gave her a voice to challenge the traditions she had been raised in. The same applied to Khalida Popal, the first captain of Afghanistan's women's team. We asked a leading philosopher, Julian Baggini, whether we should expect the world's footballers to speak out against atrocities. His answer was no. We asked an activist from Qatar whether we should boycott the tournament. His answer was yes. Beyond the special report, we interview the activist Benedict Rogers, Martin Bright looks at the history of reggae in Poland, we report on "banned books clubs" in the USA and Flo Marks writes about the erasure of bisexual identities.

#### **Online**

Our website and social media accounts provide us with a vital platform to showcase our advocacy, magazine and events work as well as to report on and analyse topical freedom of expression threats and issues as they arise. Over the last year Index has continued in our online efforts with more original analysis and comment commissioned directly for the website. We have revamped the output of our social media offering and have seen a steady increase in followers and engagement.

#### **SUPPORT**

##### **Commissioning writers and artists**

Index supports artists and writers by directly commissioning them and featuring their stories in the magazine. We also shine a light on their experiences and seek to provide both practical support and solidarity. In the past year, we have also supported artists by featuring their work in an exhibition we hosted in St John's Waterloo and intend to continue developing our support for artists in the year to come.

##### **Giving a voice to political prisoners**

A key aspect of our work continues to be driven by events in central and eastern Europe. One of our former colleagues, Andrei Aliaksandrau, remains behind bars in Belarus for paying the fines of those protesting the contested election in August 2020. In October 2023, we will mark his 1000th day in prison. We have supported political prisoners through our Letters from Lukashenka's Prisoners project, which seeks to give a voice to those facing persecution for their pursuit of human rights and democracy.

##### **Raising money for Afghan dissidents**

Index also worked with partners to support Afghan dissidents after the re-emergence of the Taliban in 2021.

##### **Advising SLAPP targets**

We continue to support and advise those affected by legal harassment (SLAPPs) by connecting them with legal support, helping to coordinate trial monitoring for their cases, and preparing submissions to the court where relevant. In the case of journalists, we also file media freedom alerts to the Council of Europe Platform, through which states are informed of cases of legal harassment against the media.

#### **Awards**

Our work to support individuals is complemented through our Freedom of Expression Awards, where we seek to support those who are targeted for defending free expression. Awards are offered in three categories: arts, campaigning and journalism. Anyone who has had a demonstrable impact in tackling censorship is eligible, and preference is given to those who have not received significant support or recognition elsewhere. As part of the awards programme the winners are given a financial grant and we seek to give them and their work more profile than they would otherwise have.

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#### INFLUENCE

Index on Censorship is one of the world's leading experts on the principles of freedom of expression. Our advocacy work has three main areas of focus:

- campaigning on behalf of individuals facing censorship
- exposing new and emergent threats
- providing contemporary analysis of comparable restrictions.

#### Legal harassment (SLAPPs)

A core element of Index's work is to analyse and expose the impact of legal harassment of journalists and other public watchdogs (SLAPPs) across Europe. This is dominating our media advocacy work as we lead efforts for changes in the legal framework which enable SLAPPs currently.

#### Transnational repression

Through a combination of diplomatic, cultural and economic levers, repressive regimes are increasingly seeking to shape international discourse according to their own narrative. Our funding for phase one of our "Banned by Beijing" work programme, investigating and highlighting how the Chinese Communist Party is leveraging its power in order to censor people in Europe, has now come to an end. We will continue to challenge China's efforts to transnationally repress discussions that fall outside of their own boundaries.

#### Digital

Our work this year has continued to focus on the UK's proposals to regulate social media platforms to enhance user safety. Index is a leading member of the Legal to Type, Legal to Say campaign and is actively engaged with a wide range of stakeholders on this issue - from government to civil service to technology companies to media organisations. Along with other free speech organisations, we are ensuring that freedom of expression is a key item on the agenda.

#### DEBATE

Index has made it one of our primary goals to reach new audiences. Annually Index staff take part in more than 50 public events, including book launches, panel discussions, and performances of banned plays.

We host our own events, including our launches of our four magazines a year which feature lively speakers and interesting discussions that connect to magazine content.

In addition to public events, Index is actively engaged in outreach through the media. We are regularly quoted by outlets such as the BBC, Guardian, the Times, and the Telegraph on freedom of expression issues and are the go-to commentator on matters of freedom of expression.

#### PLANS FOR 2023/24 AND BEYOND: A NOTE FROM THE CEO

I am so proud of everything that my team achieved over the last financial year. Working together they have punched well above their collective weight and for a small team, delivered more than NGO's ten times our size. From promoting new anti-SLAPP legislation, to driving a UK Government review into aspects of the Holocaust not previously acknowledged, they have shaped the discussion on free expression both at home and abroad.

In terms of what comes next, the current economic outlook is more challenging for Index than it has been over the last three years. Index will therefore be seeking to consolidate after our recent growth and refocus our efforts on areas where we have funded workstreams and where we know we can make the most impact.



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In addition to our ongoing work on SLAPPs and in the digital rights sphere, we will be seeking to launch a new project - building on our previous workstream - Banned by Beijing, exploring how the Chinese Communist Party is seeking to censor both Chinese dissidents who no longer live in the mainland and those people who are supporting them.

Index is also seeking to establish a new project - building on our success at publishing letters from political dissidents in Belarus, we hope to publish first-hand accounts from Rohingya women currently in camps in Bangladesh - after fleeing from Myanmar.

The magazine will remain the anchor to our work and I want to thank both our publisher, Sage, and our subscribers for their continued support.

On a personal note, I want to thank both our board of Trustees and our professional staff whose collective efforts have enabled us to achieve so much together in the name of freedom of expression.

As you can tell we have ambitious plans and look forward to working with you to make sure we stay a Voice for the Persecuted.

#### **Ruth Anderson**

#### **FUNDING**

Index on Censorship receives funding from a variety of sources. Our independence is of central importance to us and is ensured by an independent board of trustees. Funders do not – and are not able to – set the policies of the organisation or of the projects they fund, nor may they have input into, or preferential access, to any research, editorial output or policy development. Funders may not request or require board representation as a condition of their grants.

We are grateful to the support of the following during the year:

Arts Council England  
Clifford Chance  
Edwardian Hotels  
The Elaine and David Potter Foundation  
Fritt Ord  
Google  
Hachette  
Hollick Family Foundation  
Human Rights House  
Joffe Foundation  
Justice For Journalists Foundation  
Liverpool John Moores University  
Kate Maltby  
Meta  
Microsoft  
Mishcon De Reya  
New Philanthropy Capital  
Oak Foundation  
Open Society Foundation  
Profile Books  
Sage Publications  
Sky UK  
The Times & Sunday Times  
Twitter

and various individuals who have supported the organisation through individual donations or through subscription to the magazine.

The charity is a member of the Fundraising Regulator and has not received any complaints about our practices. It does not employ third-party fundraising agencies, nor does it directly court the general public.

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##### **Fundraising**

The financial year 2022-23 saw total income rise from £1,136,618 to £1,591,114, mainly accounted by new project funding from Oak Foundation, Open Society Foundation (OSF), the Joffe Charitable Trust, Human Rights House and Meta (formerly Facebook) and renewed project funding from Human Rights House and Meta (formerly Facebook). We received continued core funding from The Armitage Foundation (New Philanthropy Capital), OSF, Fritt Ord and Arts Council England and Wales. We held our second post-pandemic annual Freedom of Expression Awards fundraising evening, which secured £54,000 (2022: £48,500) in sponsorship.

The charity's income rose from to £840,240 in 2021-22 to £1,073,120, largely due to project funding for our charitable activities. Our individual giving fell from £44,734 to £39,788. The company's income rose from £296,380 to £517,994, largely due to two grants from Meta totalling £265,000.

At the date of these accounts, much of the above core funding has been renewed.

##### **Financial Report and going concern**

The Trustees are delighted to report that for the second year in a row, we have had an exceedingly strong financial performance and bolstered our reserves considerably. Consolidated surplus/profit was £324,026, though it must be borne in mind, of this, £194,000 is restricted funding, so that the amount added to free reserves is actually £129,000. This leaves a consolidated free reserves position of £296,000.

The charity made a surplus of £129,000 of which half was free reserves. Its free reserves level now sits at £181,000. The Company made a profit of £194,715, of which £64,000 goes into free reserves, giving a total of free reserves of £113,285.

On turnover, we showed an increase of almost a half a million pounds on the previous year, with our income being £1,591,114. However, this has been swollen considerably by disbursement grants, of the order of £650,000 (and reflects the restricted reserve levels discussed above). The Company increased turnover on previous year, from £296,000 to £518,000, largely due to two grants from Meta totalling £265,000. The Charity was able to secure three new grants for its SLAPPs work as this is showing itself to be a fertile area for us. Core donors OSF, Armitage Foundation, Arts Council and Fritt Ord continue to support us. Individual donations fell, from £44,734 to £39,788. It still remains a challenge for us to make this a more significant income stream.

The fundraising landscape will prove considerably tougher this year, with the plight of Tech companies who have supported us in recent years now meaning that they will cut back on support. We are well placed to absorb this shortfall with our reserves level, though of course we will be pursuing other avenues to fill the gap they leave.

Of the £793k of charitable activity costs, the disbursement grants accounted for £500k of this. Salary costs came in at £238k, compared to £203k the previous year. There were several factors behind this. First of all, there were the two cost of living allowance payments to all staff, accounting for an unbudgeted £20k. There was an additional £12k in staffers which was fully funded by one of our NED grants. The freelance expenditure was £38k rather than £24k, of which £5k was funded by one of our Clifford Chance project funding. Finally, the holiday pay accrual, was increased by £3k from previous years.

With a first full year working remotely, overheads have come down from £63,806 to £38,910. This is despite a considerable hike in our insurance premiums, reflecting the decreased appetite for risk in the insurance industry. Governance costs have risen from £16,226 to £18,701 due to increased audit fees. With remote working, staff travel for meetings was £7,000 which was almost a quarter up over budget and this has been adjusted for in next year's budget. Staff travel is on public transport rather than private motor cars. On other variance, computer costs at £2,300 was double over budget, but this is due to having to kit (software, security etc) four staff members with new laptops. Despite salary costs coming in over budget as above, overall variance showed 3% under budget on all expenditure.

##### **Reserves policy**

The reserves policy has been established by the Index board, with the desired level of reserves being based on a consideration of at-risk funding. The board feel this represents the most and measurable way of arriving at a reserves target. The target carried forward from last year was £123k of unrestricted funds, which equated to three months operating costs at then level (£41k per month). The trustees are pleased to report that this target has been exceeded, with a free reserves

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position at the end of the year of £296k. A recalculation of the reserves level was carried out within the year, setting the desired level of £135k, which again currently has been exceeded.

The level of unrestricted funds is £296,000 (2022: £166,326)

The level of restricted funds is £194,000. (2022: £nil)

There are no designated or endowment funds in the current and prior period.

#### **Public Benefit Statement**

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011, to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. The Trustees ensure that this purpose is carried out by the performance of services valued by the public both in the UK and internationally.

Both forms of editorial content (online and print) offer the highest quality of commissioned journalism and analysis, providing viewpoints from all parts of the spectrum of any free expression debate. Our expert editorial filter of censorship issues can be used to help those interested in free expression, find contextualised and verified information in support of free speech. We augment the news, picking the most important and most interesting free expression stories and pushing them out to a wider audience. The interest shown by the public in several of the current debates around free expression throughout all media has been particularly well served by the charity. Index has been at the forefront of many of such debates, able to deliver them in accessible form, through editorial content and events showcasing key figures from relevant fields and disciplines. We also have extended geographical access to our debates through podcasting and video recordings available through our website and social media digital platforms. These reflect two of our objectives to inform and to encourage debate. We have continued post-pandemic to conduct some of our events online which are geographically open to audiences worldwide, to augment in-person events which realistically are limited to local audiences.

The research and articles published in Index on Censorship magazine are of direct relevance to specialist professionals in law, media and academia, but they also serve to deepen the knowledge and advance learning of the broader public, in the understanding and analysis of human rights. Extracts from the magazine continue to be offered for free on our website, while the entire archive from years previous to the current one are available for free online. Increasing social media followers and web viewing figures attest to the widening of our audience. We have continued to support media practitioners with our guidelines for operating in difficult media environments, be it under repressive regimes or individuals and corporations who seek to 'chill' free speech.

Index continues to bring material to under-represented communities in the freedom of expression debate, and particularly expanding its reach towards greater numbers of young people and people involved in education. As part of this initiative, we work closely with several UK and international universities and offer several research roles for graduates and post-graduate.

In order to pursue our work in accordance with our mission and public benefit statements, we have a legitimate interest in holding and processing the data of both individuals and organisations.

#### **Governance and Management**

##### **Trustee Board**

Trustees serve for a period of five years. Existing Trustees select members of the Trustee Board. Currently recruitment has occurred through personal recommendation and word of mouth. Rules and guidelines published by the Charity Commission on the responsibilities of being a Trustee are provided to all new Trustees. In addition, new Trustees are inducted in the charity by the Chief Executive and Chair of Trustees. Training is offered to the Trustees on ongoing basis in relation to best practice and good governance.

Every effort is made to ensure that all specialist areas of the Charity's operation are represented. Candidates that strengthen the Board are always considered, with no upper limit on the number of Trustees. Trustees meet four times a year to review strategy, risk and performance and to approve the operating plans and budgets. The majority of Trustee meetings take place at location provided by the Trustees or occasionally online. Individual staff members meet the Trustees on a regular basis.

Responsibility for strategy, planning and the day-to-day management of operations is delegated to a management team led by the Chief Executive. Formal reporting by the Chief Executive takes place in writing a week prior to each Trustee meeting. The key issues arising from this report and any other matters are then discussed in detail at the Trustee meeting. Minutes are then circulated, within seven days, for approval at the subsequent Trustee meeting. In addition, the Treasurer

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meets monthly with the Head of Finance and quarterly the Chief Executive joins these meetings. The Treasurer acts as a check on financial best practice and oversees financial matters where segregation of duties are not possible due to the relative small size of the staff.

The pay of the senior management team ('key management personnel') and all staff are regularly reviewed and where there are increases these are in line with average earnings and any cost of living adjustment. With the sharp and sudden increase in the cost of living in the UK in 2023, the Board implemented two one-off payments to help staff in this regard. Another is earmarked for October 2023 subject to the economic situation and review by the Board. In view of the nature of the charity, the Trustees benchmark against pay levels in other charities. The remuneration benchmark is the mid-point of the range paid for similar roles in equivalent sized charities

#### **Risk Review**

With a full risk register in place, throughout the year the Trustees consider the top five or ten risks anticipated or actually faced in the year, in terms of likelihood, impact, mitigations and responsibility. These are then added to the risk register as an update. The Trustees are satisfied that systems have been developed and are in place to mitigate identified risks to a satisfactory level. The last risk review was carried out by the Trustees in March 2023.

The issues considered were as follows:

- 1) Loss of key personnel. While staff retention has been good since the outbreak of the pandemic and the switch to working from home, we are prepared for significant positions becoming vacant in the next financial year.  
Mitigations: We have plenty of notice for this and have made provision in the budget for 23-24 for recruitment costs and any transitional budgetary requirements.
- 2) Funding landscape changes. We receive a proportion of our funding in the form of sponsorship and project work from global technology companies in the digital communications sphere. This sector has recently undergone downsizing and we can expect that to impact our funding from these sources.  
Mitigations: We are working on an assumption that we will see this funding reduced and have factored this into the budgeting. The organisation is habitually striving to widen its funding base to as many donors as possible as a mitigation against these sorts of downturns in various sectors and will continue to do so as a matter of good business and charitable practice.
- 3) Our work on SLAPPs exposes us to receiving a SLAPP ourselves.  
Mitigations: We ensure there is a full paper trail of our activities and publications and that the Board are kept informed so that they can continually assess their risk appetite for each and every action undertaken in this sphere.
- 4) Under the proposed new National Security legislation, funding received from overseas can potentially cause a UK organisation to be flagged as a foreign agent. This could seriously impact our funding from overseas, (the US, Norway, Sweden, Hungary, Ireland) either in it being less likely to be received, or causing us problems if received and getting flagged. Mitigations: This was already part of our campaigning and advocacy work on the proposed legislation and we have built up a network of partners to seek clarification if and when the Bill is passed in its current form.

#### **Management**

The systems of internal control are designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss. They include:

- A strategic plan and annual budget overseen by the Trustees
- Regular consideration by the Trustees of financial results, variance from budgets, non-financial performance indicators and benchmarking reviews
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties
- Identification and management of risk as above

## **WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

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#### **STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Charity law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and its financial activities for the 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 Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation

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

The Trustees confirm that so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditors are unaware. They have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the Charity's auditors are aware of that information.

#### **POWERS AND RESTRICTIONS**

The Trustees have absolute discretion to decide which of the Trust's purposes to forward, and no limitations on the means they adopt to do so. In particular they have complete discretion to invest money as they wish and are therefore not bound by the provisions of the Trustee Investment Act.

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by:

*Trevor Phillips*

**Trevor Phillips**

**Chair**

**Date:** 14 September 2023

## **WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

### **LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

#### **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

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#### **STATUS**

The Writers and Scholars Educational Trust is a registered charity, number 325003, constituted by the Trust Deed dated 25 March 1971. In June 2016 the charity was converted into the status of a corporate trustee, WSET Trustee Ltd, company registered number 10188386. The Trustees of WSET resigned on 23<sup>rd</sup> June and were immediately appointed as Directors of the corporate trustee WSET Trustee Ltd.

The directors of WSET Trustee Ltd are:

Trevor Phillips (Chair)  
Sarah Sands (resigned 15/09/2022)  
Kate Maltby  
James Goode (Treasurer)  
Andrew Franklin  
Nick Timothy (appointed 12/07/2023)  
Helen Mountfield KC (appointed 12/07/2023)

#### **Management**

Ruth Smeeth – Chief Executive  
David Sewell – Finance Director  
Jemimah Steinfeld – Editor

#### **The principal address and contact details**

86-90 Paul Street  
London  
EC2A 4NE

E-Mail: [ceo@indexonensorship.org](mailto:ceo@indexonensorship.org)  
Website : [www.indexonensorship.org](http://www.indexonensorship.org)

#### **Auditors:**

Haysmacintyre LLP, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1AG

#### **Bankers:**

Triodos Bank NV, Brunel House, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5A

## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

### TO THE MEMBERS OF WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST

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#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Writers and Scholars Educational Trust for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Group and Charity Balance Sheets, Statement of Consolidated Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the parent charity's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of the group's net movement in funds for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

#### Basis for opinion

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder. We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustee's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

#### Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Trustees' Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

#### Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the parent charity, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the parent charity financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

### TO THE MEMBERS OF WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST

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#### **Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 11 the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

#### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charity and the sector in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations is related to regulatory requirements of the Charity Commission, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Charities Act 2011.

We evaluated management's opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to posting inappropriate journal entries and management bias in certain accounting estimates and judgements such as the income recognition policy. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inspecting correspondence with appropriate regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Review of minutes of meetings to identify instances of fraud;
- Identifying and testing journals, in particular journal entries posted with unusual account combinations, postings by unusual users or with unusual descriptions; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.



## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

### TO THE MEMBERS OF WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST

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#### Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity's trustees as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

*Haysmacintyre LLP*

**Haysmacintyre LLP**  
Statutory Auditor

10 Queen Street Place  
London  
EC4R 1AG

19th September 2023

haysmacintyre is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

**WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2023 £	Restricted Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>					
<b>Donations &amp; legacies</b>	2	254,306	305,000	559,306	384,059
<b>Charitable activities</b>					
Publishing fees & royalties	3	118,881	-	118,881	114,264
Other income from charitable activities	3	63,119	793,529	856,648	589,716
<b>Other trading activities</b>					
Events income	3	54,400	-	54,400	48,500
<b>Investments Income</b>		1,879	-	1,879	79
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<u>492,585</u>	<u>1,098,529</u>	<u>1,591,114</u>	<u>1,136,618</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>					
<b>Raising funds</b>					
Donations and legacies	4	20,764	305,000	325,764	270,123
Fundraising activities	4	442	-	442	3,962
<b>Charitable activities</b>	4	147,353	793,529	940,882	728,028
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<u>168,559</u>	<u>1,098,529</u>	<u>1,287,088</u>	<u>1,002,113</u>
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		324,026	-	324,026	134,505
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>					
Total funds brought forward		166,326	-	166,326	31,821
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<u>490,352</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>490,352</u>	<u>166,326</u>

None of the charity's activities were acquired or discontinued in the year.

There were no recognised gains or losses other than those included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The notes on page 18 to 26 form an integral part of these financial statements.

**WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST****GROUP AND CHARITY BALANCE SHEET****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

		<b>Group</b>		<b>Charity</b>	
	<b>Notes</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
Tangible assets	7	4,042	1,057	-	-
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Debtors	8	52,291	59,270	162,758	27,209
Cash at bank and in hand		585,825	292,303	163,074	165,900
		638,116	351,573	325,832	193,109
<b>CREDITORS: Amounts</b>					
falling due within one year	9	(151,806)	(186,304)	(79,997)	(76,587)
Net current assets		486,310	165,269	245,835	116,522
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		490,352	166,326	245,835	116,522
<b>FUNDS</b>					
Unrestricted income funds	10	490,352	166,326	245,835	116,522
Restricted income funds	11	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		490,352	166,326	245,835	116,522

The accounts were approved by the Trustees and authorised for issue and signed on their behalf by:

*Trevor Phillips*

**Trevor Phillips**  
**Chair**

Date: 14 September 2023

The notes on page 18 to 26 form an integral part of these financial statements

**WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

**STATEMENT OF CONSOLIDATED CASH FLOW**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>		
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities (see below)	297,397	143,725
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>		
Purchase of fixed assets	(3,875)	(866)
<b>Net cash (used in) investing activities</b>	<b>(3,875)</b>	<b>(866)</b>
<b>Net cash provided by financing activities</b>		
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>	<b>293,522</b>	<b>142,859</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	292,303	149,444
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	<b>585,825</b>	<b>292,303</b>

**RECONCILIATION OF NET EXPENDITURE TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Net (expenditure) for the reporting year (as per the statement of financial activities)</b>	<b>324,026</b>	<b>134,505</b>
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation	890	1,508
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	6,979	(24,103)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(34,498)	21,938
Loss on disposal assets	-	9,878
<b>Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities</b>	<b>297,397</b>	<b>143,725</b>

**ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT**

	At 1 April 2022	Cash flows	Other non- cash changes	At 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£
Cash and bank	292,303	293,522		585,825

# WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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#### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of financial statements is as follows:

##### **Basis of accounting**

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 Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities (SORP 2015) (Second Edition, effective 1 January 2021), and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Writers and Scholars Educational Trust 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).

##### **Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis**

The Group has recorded a surplus in the year of £324,026 with overall funds in surplus by £490,352. The charity has taken the opportunity to restructure the organisation. This has resulted in less reliance on specific projects with fewer staff being required with a redundancy having taken place and other staff not being replaced. A cost cutting exercise has also been undertaken resulting in the charity giving up its office. Forecast budgets and cash flows have been prepared for the period to 30 September 2024. These forecasts indicate that the group has sufficient cash to continue its operations for the foreseeable future. The trustees consider there to be no material uncertainties relating to going concern.

As a result of the above, the accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis which the trustees consider to be appropriate.

##### **Basis of consolidation**

The group financial statements consolidate those of the charity and its subsidiary company, Writers and Scholars International Limited (“the Company”) drawn up to 31 March 2023. Surpluses or deficits on intra-group transactions are eliminated in full.

Results of the company which engages in activities similar to those of the charity are consolidated on a line-by-line basis in the SOFA and balance sheet.

##### **Fixed assets**

Fixed assets are recorded at cost. Assets acquired with a value of less than £100 are not capitalised but are written off as revenue expenditure.

Depreciation has been provided at the following rates in order to write down the cost or valuation, less estimated residual value, of all tangible fixed assets over their expected useful lives as follows:

Computers	25% straight line
Fixtures & Fittings	10% straight line

##### **Income recognition**

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income can be measured reliably.

Income from grants and fees is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grant have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Donations are recognised when the charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those.

# WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

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#### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Where income is received in advance of its recognition it is deferred and included in creditors. Where entitlement occurs before income being received the income is accrued.

#### **Expenditure**

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred, inclusive of VAT, which cannot be recovered.

All expenditure has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs relating to the following categories:

**Charitable Activities** – Costs of charitable activities comprise all costs identified as wholly or mainly attributable to achieving the charitable objectives of the charity, including the costs of disseminating information in support of charitable activities. These costs include staff costs, wholly or mainly attributable support costs and an apportionment of general overheads.

**Governance costs** – These comprise all costs identified as wholly or mainly attributable to ensuring the public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulations.

Staff costs are allocated by the trustees between direct charitable expenditure and support expenditure on the basis of time spent on these activities. Other costs are ascribed directly to the relevant heading.

#### **Pension costs**

Writers & Scholars Educational Trust operates a defined contributions scheme for the benefit of the employees. The assets of the Scheme are held independently from those of Writers & Scholars Educational Trust in an independently administered fund. The pension costs charged in the financial statements represents the contributions payable during the year.

#### **Operating lease agreements**

Rentals applicable to operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor are charged against profits on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

#### **Restricted funds**

Where grants are to be spent in accordance with terms agreed with the funders, the income and related expenditure are shown as 'Restricted'. Any unspent restricted income at the year-end is deferred for spending to future years.

#### **Unrestricted funds**

Core income and such other income for which there are no restrictions on the way it can be spent are termed 'Unrestricted'. Such unspent income at the year-end is termed 'Unrestricted funds'.

#### **Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

#### **Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes bank accounts, cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

# WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

#### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

##### Creditors and provisions

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

##### Estimation uncertainty

In the view of the trustees in applying the accounting policies adopted, no judgements were required that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements nor do any estimates or assumptions made carry a significant risk of material adjustment in the next financial year.

##### Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basis financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

#### 2. DONATIONS & LEGACIES

	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations	39,788	44,734
Grants:		
David & Elaine Potter Foundation	-	40,000
Fritt Ord	25,106	37,217
Google	20,000	114,086
Meta	265,000	-
Microsoft	8,039	-
Clifford Chance	-	83,000
John Armitage Charitable Trust	50,000	50,000
Twitter	-	10,000
Bequests	-	5,022
Future Russia Fund	40,000	-
OSF	109,930	-
Other Grants	1,443	-
	<u>559,306</u>	<u>384,059</u>

The donation from Meta of £265,000 (2022: £nil) and Future Russia Fund of £40,000 (2022: £nil) are restricted.

**WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

<b>3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - 2023</b>	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>	<b>2022 £</b>
Liverpool John Moores University	10,884	-	10,884	10,722
National Endowment for Democracy	-	346,293	346,293	419,695
Arts Council England	43,915	-	43,915	43,915
Joffe Foundation	-	29,984	29,984	-
OSF	-	80,064	80,064	-
Oak	-	220,575	220,575	-
Swedish Lottery	-	-	-	40,913
Publishing fees and royalties	118,881	-	118,881	114,264
Event income	54,400	-	54,400	48,500
Justice for Journalists Foundation	8,073	-	8,073	1,800
OSF Euroasia	-	-	-	72,509
OSF	-	47,167	47,167	-
NED	-	69,446	69,446	-
FPC	247	-	247	-
CAPA	-	-	-	162
	<u>236,400</u>	<u>793,529</u>	<u>1,029,929</u>	<u>752,480</u>

<b>3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - 2022</b>	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>2022 £</b>	<b>2021 £</b>
Liverpool John Moores University	10,722	-	10,722	10,722
National Endowment for Democracy	-	419,695	419,695	121,963
Arts Council England	43,915	-	43,915	43,915
Swedish Lottery	-	40,913	40,913	87,164
Publishing fees and royalties	114,264	-	114,264	111,048
Event income	48,500	-	48,500	-
Justice for Journalists Foundation	1,800	-	1,800	-
OSF Euroasia	-	72,509	72,509	-
	162	-	162	-
Other direct income	-	-	-	13,996
	<u>219,363</u>	<u>533,117</u>	<u>752,480</u>	<u>388,808</u>



**WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

<b>4. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE - 2023</b>	<b>Direct Costs £</b>	<b>Support Costs £</b>	<b>Total 2023 £</b>	<b>Total 2022 £</b>
Charitable activities:				
Publications	110,887	91,003	201,890	190,488
Projects	726,418	22,574	748,992	537,540
	<u>837,305</u>	<u>113,577</u>	<u>950,882</u>	<u>728,028</u>
Raising funds – donations and legacies	117,265	208,499	325,764	270,123
- fundraising activities	442	-	442	3,962
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u><u>955,012</u></u>	<u><u>322,076</u></u>	<u><u>1,277,088</u></u>	<u><u>1,002,113</u></u>

<b>ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE - 2022</b>	<b>Direct Costs £</b>	<b>Support Costs £</b>	<b>Total 2021 £</b>
Charitable activities:			
Publications	91,758	98,730	190,488
Projects	499,530	38,010	537,540
	<u>591,288</u>	<u>136,740</u>	<u>728,028</u>
Raising funds – donations and legacies	78,195	191,928	270,123
- fundraising activities	3,962	-	3,962
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u><u>673,445</u></u>	<u><u>328,668</u></u>	<u><u>1,002,113</u></u>

**SUPPORT COSTS CONSIST OF:**

	<b>2023 £</b>	<b>2022 £</b>
Staff costs	238,176	203,048
Premises	13,968	34,394
Office and administration	24,942	28,692
Professional and consultancy	22,580	24,914
Currency exchange differences	(1,573)	-
Irrecoverable VAT	4,392	9,549
Depreciation	890	1,967
Loss on disposal of assets	-	9,878
Governance (see note 5)	18,701	16,226
	<u><u>322,076</u></u>	<u><u>328,668</u></u>

**WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST****NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

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<b>5. GOVERNANCE COSTS</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Auditor's remuneration	18,701	16,226
Other fees	-	-
Meeting expenses	-	-
	<u>18,701</u>	<u>16,226</u>
	<u><u>18,701</u></u>	<u><u>16,226</u></u>

Other fees payable to the auditors amounted to £nil (2022: £nil)

No trustees received any remuneration (2022: £nil) and no trustees were reimbursed for travel costs (2022: £nil).

<b>6. EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Group staff costs were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	373,825	301,802
National insurance contributions	36,029	26,852
Pension contributions	8,411	6,635
	<u>418,265</u>	<u>335,289</u>
	<u><u>418,265</u></u>	<u><u>335,289</u></u>

The average weekly number of employees during the year were as follows:

	<b>No.</b>	<b>No.</b>
Charitable activities	13	7
Management and support	1	1
	<u>14</u>	<u>8</u>
	<u><u>14</u></u>	<u><u>8</u></u>
Number of employees earning between £60,000 - £69,999	-	1
Number of employees earning between £90,000 - £99,999	1	-
	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u><u>1</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>

Staff benefits paid to key management personnel amounted to £151,273 (2022 - £151,096).

WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

7. FIXED ASSETS	Fixtures and Fittings £	Computers £	Total £
<b>Group</b>			
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 April 2022	219	3,099	3,318
Additions	786	3,089	3,875
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2023	<u>1,005</u>	<u>6,188</u>	<u>7,193</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 April 2022	29	2,232	2,261
Charge for the year	68	822	890
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 March 2023	<u>97</u>	<u>3,054</u>	<u>3,151</u>
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
At 31 March 2023	<u>908</u>	<u>3,134</u>	<u>4,042</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>190</u>	<u>867</u>	<u>1,057</u>

8. DEBTORS	Group		Charity	
	2023 £	2022 £	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	20,247	-	247	-
Prepayments	18,260	22,913	17,985	16,723
Accrued income	-	4,453	-	4,453
Other debtors	13,784	31,904	-	-
Due from Writers and Scholars Int'l Ltd	-	-	144,526	6,033
	<u>52,291</u>	<u>59,270</u>	<u>162,758</u>	<u>27,209</u>

9. CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year	Group		Charity	
	2023 £	2022 £	2023 £	2022 £
Bank overdraft	530	209	-	-
Trade creditors	51	-	-	-
Other creditors	-	3,242	-	3,242
Taxation and social security	10,020	7,999	10,020	7,999
Accruals	34,545	29,116	18,387	13,074
Deferred income	106,660	145,738	51,590	52,272
	<u>151,806</u>	<u>186,304</u>	<u>79,997</u>	<u>76,587</u>

WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

DEFERRED INCOME	Group		Charity	
	2023 £	2022 £	2023 £	2022 £
Brought forward	145,738	113,622	52,272	61,713
Released in the year	(145,738)	(113,622)	(52,272)	(61,713)
Deferred in the year	106,660	145,738	51,590	52,272
Carried forward	<u>106,660</u>	<u>145,738</u>	<u>51,590</u>	<u>52,272</u>

Deferred income relates to grant income received in advance for the next accounting period.

10. UNRESTRICTED INCOME FUNDS – GROUP – 2023	WSET £	WSIL £	TOTAL £
Balance brought forward	116,522	49,804	166,326
Net income	129,311	194,715	324,026
Balance carried forward	<u>245,833</u>	<u>244,519</u>	<u>490,352</u>

UNRESTRICTED INCOME FUNDS – GROUP - 2022	WSET £	WSIL £	TOTAL £
Balance brought forward	71,272	(39,451)	31,821
Net income	45,250	89,255	134,505
Balance carried forward	<u>116,522</u>	<u>49,804</u>	<u>166,326</u>

11. RESTRICTED FUNDS - 2023	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Meta	-	265,000	(265,000)	-
Future Russia Fund	-	40,000	(40,000)	-
National Endowment for Democracy	-	346,293	(346,293)	-
Joffe Foundation	-	29,984	(29,984)	-
OSF	-	80,064	(80,064)	-
Oak	-	220,575	(220,575)	-
OSF SLAPPS	-	47,167	(47,167)	-
National Endowment for Democracy	-	69,446	(69,446)	-
<b>Total</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,108,529</u>	<u>(1,108,529)</u>	<u>-</u>

**WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

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**11. RESTRICTED FUNDS (Continued)**

<b>RESTRICTED FUNDS - 2022</b>	<b>Balance at 1 April 2021 £</b>	<b>Income £</b>	<b>Expenditure £</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March 2022 £</b>
Swedish Lottery	-	40,913	(40,913)	-
National Endowment for Democracy	-	419,695	(419,695)	-
OSF Euroasia	-	72,509	(72,509)	-
<b>Total</b>	-	<u>533,117</u>	<u>(533,117)</u>	-

**Nature and purpose of each fund:**

**Meta**

End to End Encryption EU draft legislation analysis and advocacy

**Future Russia Fund**

Providing access to trustworthy news reporting to Russia outside of their rigidly controlled news output.

**National Endowment for Democracy**

Researching means of greater accessibility to digital expression where it is controlled.

**Joffe Foundation**

To promote our work to combat vexatious lawsuits that chill free speech

**OSF & Oak**

Providing access to trustworthy news reporting to Russia and Ukraine outside of their rigidly controlled news output.

**OSF SLAPPS**

To promote our work to combat vexatious lawsuits that chill free speech

**NED BbB**

Monitoring and reporting the soft power influence wielded by state actors in the spheres of academia, arts and culture

## WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST

### NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

#### 12. WRITERS AND SCHOLARS INTERNATIONAL LTD

This is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales, and is a subsidiary of the charity. It outsources the publication of the magazine Index on Censorship, which is the main outlet through which the Trust fulfils its charitable objectives. All activities of the company have been consolidated on a line by line basis in the SOFA.

	2023	2022
	£	£
<b>PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT</b>		
Turnover	517,994	296,380
Cost of sales	(282,600)	(174,768)
	<u>235,394</u>	<u>121,612</u>
<b>Gross profit</b>	235,394	121,612
Overhead expenditure	(40,680)	(32,357)
	<u>194,714</u>	<u>89,255</u>
<b>Operating profit/(loss)</b>	194,714	89,255
Interest receivable	-	-
	<u>194,714</u>	<u>89,255</u>
<b>Profit/(Loss) for the financial year</b>	<u>194,714</u>	<u>89,255</u>
<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>		
<b>Fixed assets</b>	4,040	1,056
	<u>456,812</u>	<u>164,496</u>
<b>Current assets</b>	456,812	164,496
<b>Creditors falling due within one year</b>	(216,336)	(115,750)
	<u>244,516</u>	<u>49,802</u>
<b>Net current (liabilities)/assets</b>	244,516	49,802
	<u>244,516</u>	<u>49,802</u>
<b>Capital and reserves</b>	244,516	49,802

#### Transactions

During the year expenditure of £7,912 (2022: £54,687) was recharged to Writers & Scholars International Limited by Writers & Scholars Educational Trust. At the balance sheet date the amount due from Writers & Scholars International Limited was £144,526 (2022: £6,033).

#### 13. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The David and Elaine Potter Foundation made a grant of £Nil (2022: £36,000) in the year, with £nil (2022: £nil) due to be received at the year end. Elaine Potter is a trustee of the charity. Kate Maltby, a trustee of the charity donated £1,000 to the charity in the year (2022: £3,250). Trevor Phillip, a trustee of the charity donated £3,000 to the charity in the year (2022: £3,030). Kate Maltby, Trevor Philips and Andrew Franklin purchased attendance for the Awards via Writers and Scholars International Limited.

An employee of Writers and Scholars Educational Trust was seconded to 1 Cent Magenta Communications Ltd, a company under common control. During the year £14,753 (2022: £nil) was recharged from Writers & Scholars Education Trust, at the year-end date £Nil (2022: £nil) was outstanding.

No other related parties have occurred in the year or prior year.

WRITERS & SCHOLARS EDUCATIONAL TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

14. COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES – 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2022 £	Restricted Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2022 £
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>				
<b>Donations &amp; legacies</b>	<b>2</b>	384,059	-	384,059
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Publishing fees & royalties	<b>3</b>	114,264	-	114,264
Other income from charitable activities	<b>3</b>	56,599	533,117	589,716
<b>Other trading activities</b>				
Events income	<b>3</b>	48,500	-	48,500
<b>Investments</b>		79	-	79
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<u>603,501</u>	<u>533,117</u>	<u>1,136,618</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>				
<b>Raising funds</b>				
Donations and legacies	<b>4</b>	270,123	-	270,123
Fundraising activities	<b>4</b>	3,962	-	3,962
<b>Charitable activities</b>	<b>4</b>	194,911	533,117	728,028
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<u>468,996</u>	<u>533,117</u>	<u>1,002,113</u>
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b>				
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		134,505	-	134,505
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>				
Total funds brought forward		<u>31,821</u>	-	<u>31,821</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<u><u>166,326</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>166,326</u></u>