

Company no. 02733294
Charity no. 1026543

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)
Report and Audited Financial Statements
31 July 2024

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 July 2024

Company number 02733294

Charity number 1026543

Registered office and operational address Room 257
Senate House
Malet Street
London
WC1E 7HU

Trustees Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

C Banks
D Cutress
C Eagleton Appointed 20 March 2024
E Fay
J Harvell Vice-Chair
M Khokhar Chair
K Lingstadt
A O'Neill Resigned 20 March 2024
C Price
T Stanley
J Taylor-Roe Treasurer
J Upton

Chief executive officer and company secretary D Prosser

Staff W Nixon, Deputy Executive Director
C Kamposiori, Executive Programme Officer
M Cheung, Executive Assistant

Bankers National Westminster Bank plc Barclays Bank plc
8 Park Row 79-84 High Street
Leeds Birmingham
LS1 1QS B4 7TF

Solicitors Veale Wasbrough Vizards
Second Floor
3 Brindley Place
Birmingham
B1 2JB

Auditors Godfrey Wilson Limited
Chartered accountants and statutory auditors
5th Floor Mariner House
62 Prince Street
Bristol
BS1 4QD

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Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 31 July 2024

The Trustees of Research Libraries UK (RLUK) present their annual report together with the financial statements for 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024.

Since the company qualifies as 'small' under section 383, the strategic report required of medium and large companies under The Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Director's Report) Regulations 2013 is not required.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 form part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (effective from January 2019).

Structure, Governance and Management

a. Constitution

RLUK is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association of 21 July 1992, revised 15 January 2016. Charity number: 1026543. Company number: 2733294.

b. Our purpose

Our main objective is to work with our members and with our partners, nationally and internationally, to shape and to realise the vision of the modern research library. Our principal aim is that the UK should have the best research library support in the world.

c. Membership

RLUK is a membership consortium consisting of the following 39 major research institutions:

University of Aberdeen
University of Birmingham
University of Bristol
British Library
University of Cambridge
Cardiff University
Durham University
University of East Anglia
Edinburgh University
University of Exeter
University of Glasgow
Imperial College London
King's College London
Lancaster University
University of Leeds
University of Leicester
University of Liverpool
University of London
London School of Economics and Political Science
University of Manchester
National Library of Scotland
National Library of Wales
Newcastle University
University of Nottingham
Queen Mary University of London
Queen's University Belfast
Royal Holloway, University of London
SOAS University of London

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University College London
University of Oxford
University of Reading
University of Sheffield
University of Southampton
University of Sussex
University of St Andrews
Trinity College Dublin
University of Warwick
Wellcome Trust
University of York

d. Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

Members have the right to nominate a RLUK Member Representative, usually the directors of their institutions' library services. All Member Representatives have full voting rights.

The Board of Trustees (known as the Board of Directors) consists of up to 12 members and is elected from among the RLUK Member Representatives. The Vice-Chair is included within this number and is also elected by the members. Following a two-year period as Vice-Chair (or on the resignation of the Chair) the Vice-Chair takes the position of Chair for a period of two years. This ensures that the direction and activities of the consortium are guided by highly experienced members of the profession who share an understanding of the purpose and needs of the consortium and its members.

The period of office for Trustees is three years, with the possibility of re-election for a second consecutive three-year period. Once a Trustee stands down from the Board an interval of three years must pass before they may reapply to serve on the Board again. Appointment is by an electronic vote ahead of the Annual General Meeting.

The Board meets at least three times a year. One meeting, normally held in May, has a clear focus on longer-term strategy where the strategic plan is reviewed and evolving environmental factors are assessed.

There is a Members' Meeting, usually held in November, and a large-scale, international conference in March, which also incorporates the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Trustees may chair or otherwise participate in the activities of one or more of RLUK's Working Groups, depending on their area of interest and expertise. They may also represent RLUK's interests with other organisations as members of committees and other groups, and through membership of relevant Project Boards, reporting to the RLUK Board where appropriate on matters relevant to RLUK.

e. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

On election, new Trustees receive information about the legal and governance requirements placed on them as Trustees and on RLUK itself. On appointment, new Trustees also meet with the Chair and Executive Director, who outline what is expected of an RLUK Trustee. The Executive attend training courses in charity law and review charity sector literature, in order to be able to refresh the Board's understanding and knowledge of regulatory, legal and environmental trends. We are also advised of relevant changes to statutory governance and financial regulations by our auditors.

f. Organisational structure

Governance of RLUK is carried out by the Board of Trustees (known as Directors) with the support of a central Executive of four members of staff, who are responsible for day-to-day administration. Financial services are provided by Dains LLP on a contract basis.

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g. Risks

A risk register outlining potential risks to the charity is maintained by the Executive and is reviewed regularly throughout the year by the Board. Risks include environmental, business, financial and operational factors. Where issues are identified, appropriate means to address them are introduced.

Objectives and Activities

a. Public benefit

The Trustees have taken due regard of the Charity Commission's directives on public benefit, and are satisfied that the work RLUK is undertaking is fulfilling its aims in terms of public good. The public good aspects of RLUK's work are emphasised below in the section on activities. According to the general public benefit aims set out by the Charity Commission, RLUK is active in the areas of the advancement of education and the advancement of the arts, culture, heritage and science.

b. Principal objective and aims

The objectives of RLUK are to maintain, improve and promote library resources and services for research.

We work with our members and with our partners, nationally and internationally, to shape and to realise the vision of the modern research library. We invest in and develop strategic projects, reports and innovations that result in greater engagement with, and services for, the research community we serve. RLUK also has a role as an influencing and advocacy body.

Our priorities for activities are determined through strategic plans. The current RLUK strategy for 2022-25 was launched at a virtual Members Meeting held in January 2022 and was developed following a period of engagement with the RLUK membership and other stakeholders. The strategy seeks to drive change, enable dialogue, and promote collaboration across the research, information, and cultural sectors.

The major themes of the strategy are:

- **The role of the research library:** RLUK will work with its members to support and advocate for the diverse roles of the research library as places of experimentation, their role as partners and pioneers in the research process, and as catalysts for change within society and scholarship;
- **Digital shift:** RLUK will proactively support its members to seize the collective opportunities and face the shared challenges that new and emerging technologies and methodologies bring. It will do so with an emphasis on openness, inclusivity, and sustainability;
- **Open Scholarship:** RLUK will support its members in moving towards an 'open by default' setting through working for open access to research outputs, the development of Open Educational Resources, and advocating for openness and transparency across the entire research cycle;
- **Culture and heritage:** RLUK will work with members to maximise the scholarly and societal impact of their collections, support their innovative curation and presentation, promote the role that collections and the staff who care for them have as catalysts for cross-community and disciplinary discourse, and highlight their joint role in addressing key societal challenges; and
- **Collective Collections:** By coming together, RLUK members and the wider community can introduce efficiencies into the processes underpinning support for research and look to set up collaborative collection management. RLUK will identify potential areas for collaborative actions, with a focus on those that can best be progressed by collectives at the scale of RLUK.

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And three cross-cutting themes, which represent key challenges to RLUK, its members, and wider society, and require us to be bold in our vision and disruptive and transformative in our activities:

- **Equality, diversity and inclusion:** RLUK members are committed to creating and maintaining inclusive organisations, structures, and spaces which celebrate diversity, welcome difference, and embed positive change. RLUK will work with its members, stakeholders, and partners to take actions across our community that challenge structural inequalities and biases in collections, services, and access;
- **Rights, copyright and licensing:** Urgent change is required within the UK's copyright and licensing frameworks. Whilst preserving the protections of rights holders, RLUK will work with its members, stakeholders, and partners to call for a reformed and functioning copyright and licensing regime for the UK that is appropriate to the complexities of current and emerging forms of scholarship; and
- **Infrastructure:** Research libraries both contain and act as research and innovation infrastructure. They are places of experimentation for cross- and multi-disciplinary scholarship and collaboration, home to a diverse range of specialist skills and expertise, and hold diverse collections and technical facilities which form the bedrock of research. They are major pieces of cultural infrastructure, providing spaces, content, and skills for creative practice and innovation. In addition, there is a layer of infrastructure that sits above individual libraries and enhances the efficiency of all member institutions.

Progress against strategic themes is monitored at meetings of the RLUK Board. Activities are implemented through a combination of working, task and finish groups, with membership from the Board, Executive, the broader membership, and, where appropriate, the wider community.

In addition to those activities outlined below under *Achievements and Performance*, our significant activities include:

- Continuing the Digital Shift Forum as a high-profile series of cross-sector seminars exploring the opportunities and challenges of the digital shift in research library collections, services, and audience engagements;
- Continuing the Inclusive Collection, Inclusive Libraries series as a high profile programme that aims to foster conversation around decolonisation and inclusive practice in collecting, describing, presenting, and engaging with content in research library collections;
- Research and evidence to support our members in decision making and awareness of current and future priorities in the sector; and
- Advocacy and representation on behalf of our members in sectoral projects, policy forums, consultations and events.

Achievements and Performance

Review of activities

RLUK continues to review its communications, and provide regular, monthly updates to members, through regular e-newsletter updates, and through news updates to the private members area. The following strategic activities, initiatives, services and projects linked to our strategic plan have been undertaken in the past year:

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The role of the research library

Joint work with AHRC

Following the publication of the joint AHRC and RLUK report on *The role of academic and research libraries as active participants and leaders in the production of scholarly research* in July 2021, AHRC and RLUK have partnered on a number of activities to deliver on the recommendations within the report, which fall under a joint Research Engagement Programme (REP).

The RLUK-AHRC Professional Practice Fellowship Scheme (PPFS) was announced in July 2021. The scheme is designed to develop and promote research capacity, capability, and confidence amongst colleagues working with research and academic libraries. This includes colleagues working within a broad range of disciplines, professions, and institutions, including archives, special collections, museums, and galleries that are housed within, or closely associated with, an academic or research library.

The first round of fellows concluded their projects by late 2023. On 15 May 2024 RLUK held an event at the Wellcome Trust in London to celebrate The Role of Libraries in Research and other outcomes and impact of the first PPFS Fellows. It was also an opportunity to discuss the future of RLUK's work to champion the role of libraries as partners and leaders of research excellence.

Following a highly-competitive application process, the second round of PPFS awarded nine Professional Practice Fellows who began their research in September 2023. The fellows will investigate topics central to the role of academic libraries as partners and leaders of pioneering, cross-disciplinary, research.

The REP also includes the *Research Catalyst Cohort Programme* (RCCP), a one-year skills and knowledge development programme to provide a comprehensive overview of the academic funding landscape and support participants develop their skills, confidence, and capabilities to submit highly competitive academic funding applications. Following a competitive tender process overseen by RLUK, ARMA were re-appointed to deliver the second round of the RCC programme.

The programme consists of a tailored cohort training programme, open events, case studies, and resources to support colleagues working across the academic library community to develop their research confidence, skills and capabilities.

The second round of the RCCP was opened for applications in June 2023. RLUK and AHRC were delighted to announce in September 2023 that 15 successful applicants from across the academic and research library communities were accepted. The programme had its launch meeting on 28 September in London. The day-long session, in partnership with ARMA, provided an overview of the UK's funding landscape, and an opportunity for the new members to meet, network and reflect on their own funding priorities and goals.

RLUK was invited by ARMA to join the final meeting of the 2023-24 Research Catalyst Cohort on 25 June to reflect on the Cohort's progress and congratulate them on their success. The session also included talks from AHRC and AHRC-RLUK Professional Practice Fellows who shared their experiences. Both RLUK and ARMA will continue to keep in touch with the Cohort and to support them on their research journeys.

Governance of the AHRC-RLUK Research Catalyst continued through a steering group co-chaired by two RLUK Board Members (Kate Price, Queen Mary) and Diane Job (Birmingham) which met during the year.

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RL Position Description Bank

Since October 2021, RLUK members have been able to contribute towards and search the ARL Position Description Bank (PD Bank), a database of over 10,000 position descriptions from North American research libraries. RLUK is the first consortium outside that region to join this resource.

In September 2022, the service was renamed the Research Libraries Position Description Bank (RL PD Bank) and RLUK joined its steering committee, alongside Association of Research Libraries (ARL), Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL), Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL), and the George A. Smathers Libraries of University of Florida. The new configuration reinforces the broad value of the RL PD Bank to the international research library community and establishes an equitable governance structure.

RLUK in partnership with the University of Florida ran a virtual session on 12 September 2023 to provide an update on the PD Bank, and to highlight its features, showcase case studies and to look at RLUK's future PD Bank activity. This was followed by an RL Position Description Bank administrator workshop on 29 November to provide hands-on training to help administrators and institutional leads feel confident working within RL PD bank.

Digital Shift

RLUK's Digital Shift Working Group (DSWG) met throughout the year to discuss the ongoing delivery of the digital shift manifesto's delivery plan, and to begin planning for a third series of the Digital Shift Forum (which commenced in October 2023).

In June 2023, the group launched an RLUK wide survey to establish the level of Digital Shift Maturity across members. The goal of this survey is to establish the level of Digital Shift Maturity in RLUK Libraries across three dimensions:

- Shift to digital;
- Shift within digital; and
- Equitable shift

The survey closed in September 2023 and initial results were shared at the November 2023 Members Meeting and with RLUK networks throughout the year. The responses have helped RLUK to set an overall collective baseline for RLUK libraries and also to inform the Digital Shift Forum programme.

The Digital Scholarship Network (DSN) met throughout the year and hosted a number of events, including a joint event with the Special Collections Network on Digital Preservation in November 2024, and an introductory hands-on workshop on IIF for members in March.

The third series of the Digital Shift Forum began in October 2023 with a panel session on Digital Inclusion. A range of talks were run across three themes: Sustainability, Digital GLAM and New Frontiers in Digital (which included talks on AI).

Open Scholarship

RLUK continued its monthly virtual town halls, which are a constructive forum for members to discuss ongoing publisher negotiations and issues around future models for open access content, and to establish collective priorities and concerns.

The Open Access Publisher Process Group (OAPP) met during the year to discuss issues around publisher workflows.

RLUK is represented on a number of national and international committees and working groups moving open scholarship forward, including the UUK/Jisc Content Negotiation Strategy Group and the Jisc Content Expert Group.

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RLUK continued as a member of the Open Research Competencies Coalition (ORCC) and contributed to the publication of three primers on open research.

RLUK joined the Open Book Futures Consortium in March 2023, a project to develop and support organisations, tools and practices that enable both academics and the wider public to make more and better use of books published on an Open Access basis. In addition, RLUK worked with Liverpool University Library in partnership with Liverpool University Press, Liverpool's Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and UKRI to convene the first *Opening the Monograph symposium*, at which David Prosser spoke.

RLUK submitted a response to the REF2029 Open Access consultation in June 2024. The response was drawn from member feedback collected during virtual Town Halls, via email consultation, as well as Board level discussions.

Culture and heritage

The RLUK Decolonisation Group, consisting of members of the RLUK Special Collections and Heritage Network (SCHN) and the Collections Strategy Network (CSN), continued to run a programme of events to explore what decolonisation means in practice and investigate current practices in collecting, describing, presenting, and engaging with content in research library collections. The group aims to facilitate dialogue, shape strategic direction, and develop a shared understanding across the sector of what decolonisation means, what the criteria are for decolonising collections and what the role of different groups is in the process.

The group met during the year to discuss the development of a decolonisation curricular for library professionals with different levels of expertise in the area, and to organise a workshop at the RLUK24 conference on 'Developing Confidence in Decolonisation' that aimed to gather feedback that will contribute towards building an RLUK training resource on collections-based decolonisation.

The group curates the Inclusive Collections, Inclusive Libraries Seminar series. Two seasons of events were held during the year, including the following talks:

- Merrilee Proffitt and Jay Holloway (OCLC) reflecting on the project 'Reimagine Descriptive Workflows';
- Sohail Jannesari (Brighton and Sussex Medical School) and Ricardo Twumasi, Claire Camp, & Ruth Murphy, King's College London (King's College London) on Stealing the Master's Tools: A Skunkworks for Anti-Racist and Democratic Open Access Publishing;
- Ross Wilkinson and Ivy Hewett (Durham University), Sarah Todd (Aberdeen) and David Wright (Southampton) on Making collections accessible and diverse: current approaches to audience engagement;
- Ellen Oredsson (The National Archives) on Making archives engaging for visually impaired audiences;
- Daniel Payne (LSE) on Traces of South Asia: Working with Hidden Collections;
- Arantza Barrutia (Sheffield) for It's All a Show: Fairground Showmen, Identity and Mental Health; and
- Kirsty Hassard and James Wylie (V&A Dundee) on Scottish Design Galleries at V&A Dundee.

RLUK recommenced its Funders Network meetings, bringing together the major funders across the cultural sectors, with meetings in 2023-24 to discuss infrastructure, impact, and metrics and funding opportunities related to this.

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Collective Collections

The main method by which RLUK addresses issues around Collective Collections is through the work of the Collections Strategy Network (CSN). The CSN has identified six main priority areas and set up sub-groups to progress action. These areas are: Print storage, Plan B (focussed on alternatives to journal Big Deals), Plan M (focussed on metadata), Reading and Publishing deals to promote Open access, Etextbooks, and Decolonising and Diversification.

The Print Storage group make recommendations to the RLUK Board on a series of actions to make progress, which were endorsed by the Board. Work around Plan M has centred on relationships with OCLC and plans to enhance Library Hub and create a right environment for metadata that encourages open sharing.

RLUK Space Programme

The RLUK Space Programme is a forum for RLUK members to engage in open dialogue and share their knowledge and experience around spatial redesign and capital builds. An event was held in May 2024 to showcase how libraries respond to the challenge of designing or re-developing spaces to provide the infrastructure that supports scholarship and learning, brings communities together, and facilitates encounters with cultural heritage collections. Case studies were delivered by the National Library of Ireland and the University of St Andrews.

Cross Cutting Themes

Three themes run through RLUK's strategy. They represent key challenges to RLUK, its members, and wider society, and require us to be bold in our vision and disruptive and transformative in our activities. These themes act as both a provocation and an opportunity, to think and work differently, build new partnerships, and help to address some of the key institutional and societal challenges we face.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

The RLUK Decolonisation Group oversaw the second Inclusive Collections, Inclusive Libraries event series and launched an RLUK-wide survey to explore the current practices and needs of RLUK research libraries when making collections more inclusive, with a focus on decolonisation practices and understanding the training needs and skills for professionals working in this area.

RLUK was also pleased to be a friend of the 2024 IDEAL Conference in July 2024, which focused on Sustainable Resistance and Restoration in Global Communities. The conference sought to bring together members of the library and archive community to explore the knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes needed to effectively navigate the complexities and opportunities specific to diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and justice.

RLUK convened work around Emerging Leaders, a sector wide project that will explore the development of a transformative and sustainable Emerging Leaders' programme for colleagues from ethnically diverse communities. Project partners are RLUK, Libraries Connected, CILIP, SCONUL, WHELP, and SCUR, with funding also provided by Arts Council England.

Rights, copyright and licensing

RLUK is a member of the Libraries and Archives Copyright Alliance (LACA) and has continued its engagement as a member of the European Alliance of Research Excellence (EARE).

RLUK delivered a presentation at the Open and Engaged 2023: Community over Commercialisation, event held at the British Library in October 2023 on Rights Retention Statements (RRS) with a talk on 'The Not So Quiet Rights Retention Revolution'.

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RLUK joined Jisc's Institutional Rights Retention Policies (IRRP) Task & Finish Group in January 2024, which aims to 'guide the implementation of the first stage of a project aiming to support, and accelerate, the implementation of IRRPs within our HE member institutions'. In 2024, Jisc ran two webinars to support rights retention policy implementation, with presentations from RLUK members.

RLUK led a panel session on Institutional Rights Retention Policies (IRRP) at the 19th Open Repositories conference in Gothenburg, Sweden from 3-6 June. The panel was entitled Rights retention and repositories: accelerating global progress. The speakers included Dominic Tate (Edinburgh), George Macgregor (Glasgow), Sally Rumsey (cOAlition S) and Kathleen Shearer (COAR). The speakers shared a range of perspectives which ranged from a broader global perspective on IRRPs, an institutional experience and technical provocations.

Infrastructure

RLUK is a named supporter of the Technician Commitment, to support and recognise the technical and specialist expertise contained across the research library community and higher education and research sectors. Research libraries, archives, and information institutions hold great technical skills and expertise, which form an essential infrastructure for the production of new knowledge through research, innovation, and experimentation. These range from research data managers to archivists, from software developers to conservators, from photographers to open access publishing professionals.

RLUK signed the Green Libraries Manifesto in June 2023 joining an increasing number of organisations within the UK and beyond in setting our common values across the sector. RLUK is committed to helping our members address issues around the environmental impact of physical spaces and digital collections and also to look at our own activity as a member organisation and seek ways to reduce our own environmental impact.

In 2024, RLUK was invited to sit on the Board of the Green Libraries Initiative and David Prosser attended his first meeting on 23 April 2024. One of the key areas of discussion was initial planning for Green Libraries Week, which will take place in October 2024.

RLUK and SCONUL worked with the British Library to research current trends in resource-sharing and Inter-Library Loan in UK HEIs to inform future strategy and collaboration around resource-sharing and access to content. The research took the form of an online survey which was completed by Inter-Library Loan practitioners.

RLUK's Digital Shift Working group led a joint Digital Shift Forum event with Open Repositories repository infrastructure with talks from Professor Hussein Suleman (University of Cape Town) and Stefano Cossu (Harvard University).

Partner Relationships

AHRC

RLUK continued its very productive partnership with AHRC during the year with start of the second round of the Professional Practice Fellowship Scheme Fellows and the second Research Catalyst Cohort (RCC) programme, part of the Research Engagement Programme (REP).

The National Archives

In July, RLUK signed a collaboration agreement (2024-27) with The National Archives (TNA), which continues our joint work under our previous Memorandum of Understanding and underlines our shared commitment to cross-sector collaboration, driving innovation and workforce development in our sectors, and exploring new ways to engage audiences with our collections and services.

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RLUK has continued to work closely with TNA on the TNA-RLUK Professional Fellowship Scheme, which facilitates shared learning between TNA and individual RLUK members with the purpose of overcoming some of the collective challenges facing research and cultural organisations. Professional fellowships last for a year and are structured around short-term visits to TNA, for RLUK fellows, and RLUK member institutions, for TNA fellows, underpinned by a longer period of peer-to-peer mentoring and knowledge sharing.

RLUK and TNA announced the launch of the fifth (2024-25) round of the Professional Fellowship scheme for staff working in the TNA or an RLUK member institution. After a very competitive application round and given the excellent quality of proposals, the scheme's Board decided to award five Professional Fellowships for 2024-2025.

The fellows commenced work on their projects in February 2024. Their Fellowships will investigate pressing issues around the accessibility and preservation of library and archival collections; the importance of articulating the cultural value of collections; the wellbeing of staff when engaging with challenging records; the needs of neurodivergent employees in the library and archival working environment; as well as the role of Research Software Engineers (RSEs) in fostering collaboration and co-learning.

Outputs were also published as part of the successful completion of the RLUK-TNA Professional Fellowship projects conducted in 2023-2024, including A Toolkit for Archivists and Librarians Supporting Research and Teaching in Digital Humanities by Karen Sayers, an Archivist at the University of Leeds, and a Toolkit for Introducing Accessibility for Visually Impaired Audiences at Archives by Ellen Oredsson, Digital Projects Officer (Education & Outreach) at TNA.

RLUK was invited to join a focus group on 12 June organised by TNA and ARA to discuss the perceived barriers to gaining management and leadership skills in the recordkeeping sector (archivists, conservators, records managers, and others working in related roles).

The Hidden REF

RLUK is a supporter of the Hidden REF. The Hidden REF is challenging preconceptions about which roles are important in research. RLUK also supported The Hidden REF's proposal to the Research England Development Fund. RLUK shares the Hidden REF's belief that we will advance research if we recognise the contribution of everyone involved in the conduct of research. RLUK participated in the "Festival of the Hidden REF" in Bristol on 21 September 2023.

UKRN Stakeholder Engagement Group:

RLUK became a member of the UK Reproducibility Network Group and joined online meetings with other stakeholders including publishers, researchers and funders. This included discussions around how we could collectively enable better research practices and rewards.

Jisc

RLUK has continued to work closely with Jisc, being represented on the the UUK/Jisc Content Negotiation Strategy Group and the Jisc Content Expert Group, Learning Content Expert Group, OA Stakeholders Group, Library Strategy Advisory Group, Digitisation for Digital Scholarship project working group, and Digital Archival Collections working group.

IARLA

We continued to work with international partners under the framework of the International Alliance of Research Library Associations (IARLA). IARLA met throughout the year to discuss measuring and capturing the impact of research, Open Scholarship and the impact of Artificial Intelligence.

David Prosser contributed to a panel of IARLA Executive Directors at the ARL Spring 2024 Members' Meeting in Boston. The panel focused on issues around collaborative working.

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Times Higher Education (THE)

RLUK became an event partner of the Times Higher Education's (THE) Campus Live UK&IE event held in Liverpool on 6-7 December 2023. The event brought together higher education leaders – both academic and administrative – along with industry partners and policy experts to discuss, debate and plan how to achieve institutional success.

RLUK was also an event partner of THE's Digital Universities UK 2024, hosted in partnership with the University of Exeter on 16-18 April 2024. The event brought together higher education, industry and policy leaders working at the intersection of academic innovation and technology to reimagine universities in the digital age. Executive Director, David Prosser, spoke on a panel on the use of library collections as research tools.

RLUK Networks

Associate Directors' Network (ADN)

The RLUK Associate Directors Network is a professional network for RLUK members in a Deputy Librarian or Associate Director role. It aims to provide a forum for discussion and sharing of experience, the opportunity to participate in the business of RLUK and to aid succession planning. Current co-convenors of the network are Phil Cheeseman (Lancaster) and Ruth Murphy (King's College London), Fiona Courage (Sussex) stepped down as co-convenor.

The ADN met regularly during a series of monthly informal catch-up sessions, which provide valuable touchpoints for meeting new members and providing broader network support.

The RLUK Board at its May meeting approved updated changes to the Terms of Reference for the Associate Directors Network (ADN) around both its membership (increased to two representatives per member) and its Professional Focus (currently workplace development).

Collections Strategy Network (CSN)

The RLUK Collections Strategy Network (CSN) is a professional-peer network for colleagues who are responsible for collection strategy within an RLUK member library. It acts as a forum for discussion, knowledge sharing, peer development, and harnesses RLUK members' collective experience and expertise. Co-convenors for the CSN during this period by Suzy Cheeke (Bristol) and Jane Saunders (Leeds).

The network met both in person and virtually during the year to discuss moves towards a UK Distributed Print Book Collection, OA Monographs, publisher negotiations, modelling, ILL, AI and rights retention.

The network also hosted a monthly Read & Publish Coffee Morning with participation from the OSN and OAPP.

The CSN-led engagement with OCLC, including a proposed RLUK-wide metadata deal at rates lower than those imposed by OCLC and reached an acceptable RLUK-wide metadata deal, with significantly lower rates of increase than those originally proposed by OCLC.

The CSN also ran an event on AI with a presentation from Peter Findlay, Jisc on 'AI, collections, discovery and workflows' and the opportunity for CSN members to explore AI initiatives.

Digital Scholarship Network (DSN)

The RLUK Digital Scholarship Network (DSN) is a professional peer network for RLUK members involved in the development and delivery of Digital Scholarship services within member libraries, by Gavin Boyce (Sheffield) and Lesley Gray (Cambridge). Lesley Gray, Deputy Director Digital Initiatives & Strategy at Cambridge University Libraries became co-convenor of the DSN from the 1st of December 2023 after Lorraine Beard (Manchester) had stepped down.

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The DSN continued to meet regularly with a mix of in person and online, informal virtual cafe sessions. These provide an opportunity for meeting new members and providing broader network support.

The DSN held three in person events which focused on Digital Preservation in Glasgow, Discovery and Access in Cambridge and Institutional Licencing and Rights in Leeds. The DSN also convened a Responsible AI Strategy Town Hall with Dr Andrew Cox (Sheffield) who introduced a strategic model which could underpin the development of an AI toolkit for senior library leaders to create a responsible AI strategy. DSN members have also shared and updated their platforms and digital scholarship benchmarking inventories.

New Directors' Network (NDN)

The New Directors Network (NDN) continues to provide an informal forum for mutual support for recently appointed Library Directors at RLUK member institutions. As well as a heavily-used group mailing list, the NDN met virtually throughout the year.

Special Collections and Heritage Network (SCHN)

The RLUK Special Collections and Heritage Network (SCHN) is a professional peer network for RLUK colleagues leading cultural heritage activities within member libraries. Co-convenors during this period were Gary Brannan (York) and Simon Dixon (Leicester).

The SCHN met regularly during the year and discussed equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) principles, sustainability, and creative approaches to engagement. A response was also developed, with the RLUK Executive, to the revised Towards a National Collection (TaNC) Outline Draft Policy Recommendations.

The network developed an EDI Statement of Commitment to act as a statement of intent for RLUK members to ensure that the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion are considered across all aspects of the library's work around collections. This statement helped to shape a position paper outlining the values that should underpin the work of special collections and heritage professionals in RLUK institutions with the aim of contributing towards institutional and sector-wide EDI goals.

Open Strategy Network (OSN)

The RLUK Open Strategy Network (OSN) was launched in 2022 as a professional peer network for RLUK members leading Scholarly Communication, Open Science, Open Research, Open Scholarship and related activities within member libraries. The network is co-convened by Kirsty Wallis (UCL) and Ruth Mallalieu (Oxford).

During the year the OSN formed sub-groups to address the issues of support for green OA and repositories infrastructure which emerged as key themes to develop further.

Digital Shift Working Group (DSWG)

In order to take forward the creation and delivery of the digital shift manifesto, RLUK convened a working group of colleagues drawn from its member networks with an interest in the digital shift. The working group is representative of the various interests of RLUK members and is drawn from across the membership and oversee and leads a programme of activity to realise its vision. The two co-convenors for the DSWG during this period were Claire Knowles (Leeds) and Tom Shaw (King's College London).

The Digital Shift Working Group (DSWG) met throughout the year to discuss the ongoing delivery of the digital shift manifesto's delivery plan and to plan for a third series of the Digital Shift Forum (from October 2023).

Open Access Publisher Processes Group

The OAPP continued to meet throughout the year with individual publishers to advise on ways in which publishing workflows could be improved.

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 31 July 2024

RLUK Convenors Network

The convenors of RLUK's member networks came together regularly during the year with the RLUK Board to discuss the ongoing work of the networks and to continue to explore collaborative opportunities between them. The meetings included short updates from each network and members of the RLUK Executive regarding ongoing and planned work.

RLUK Board Retreats

In November, the Board took the opportunity to look closely at the ways in which RLUK works, the relationships between the networks and their support of RLUK's strategy, external groups and bodies RLUK works with, and the peer organisations with whom RLUK collaborates. The work of the RLUK networks was especially commended. The Board also took a deep dive into the area of collective collections with a view to building on and progressing work solutions for print monograph and post-transformative deals models for journal content.

The Board met again in Birmingham in May to consider how RLUK will formulate its next strategy. Daniel Wake, Head of Research Policy at UUK, provided an overview of the landscape in which RLUK members operate. He emphasised the growth in importance of the *Place Agenda* for universities.

RLUK Members' Meeting

The 2023 RLUK Members' Meeting was hosted by the University of Sussex on 9-10 November 2023. The New Directors Network held a pre-meeting where issues of Estates and library building were discussed. The Meeting opened on the afternoon of 9 November with a session on AI and its implications for research libraries. The second day focused on values-driven leadership and the importance of kindness as a value. This included a presentation by Prof Robin Banerjee on kindness and leadership.

RLUK24 Conference

The RLUK24 Conference, *New Frontiers: The expanding scope of the modern research library* was held virtually in March 2024. Keynote talks were delivered by Torsten Reimer (University of Chicago) and Kate Robson Brown (University College Dublin) as well as Natasha McCarthy (Royal Academy of Engineering) & Renée Cummings (University of Virginia). Alison Mudditt (PLOS) closed the conference.

Panel sessions explored: new models for supporting research, partnerships and inclusion, developing equitable knowledge infrastructures, AI and innovation in the library.

In partnership with IARLA we held a roundtable on 'Exploring the role of Libraries in Supporting Sustainable Development Goals'. There were also a range of workshops including a review of transitional agreements in the UK & considerations for the library, librarians as prompt engineers and emerging skillsets for library users, and building confidence in decolonisation workshop

RLUK offered networking grants which helped to support watch parties held at the universities of Essex, Birmingham, and Bristol. This helped to expand the reach and impact of the conference.

Financial review

a. Principal risks and uncertainties

The Executive and Board carry out reviews during the year of the risks to which the charity is exposed. These include environmental, business, financial and operational factors. Where issues are identified appropriate means to address them are introduced. The mechanisms for managing risks are through the maintenance of a risk register that is regularly reviewed by the Board.

b. Financial review

The net income for the financial year amounted to £44,826 deficit (2023: £138,491 surplus). RLUK's income is obtained from membership subscriptions, member services and bank interest, together with any strategic investment funding received from partner organisations engaging in collaborative projects, studies and other work.

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 31 July 2024

Member organisations and partners may also provide indirect support via contribution of staff time via secondments and membership of working groups.

Income received has been used to support strategic activities, initiatives, services and projects as detailed under achievements and performance.

c. Reserves policy

As a charitable company RLUK has both maintained a prudent level of reserves and an enhanced level of funding to support strategic initiatives for the benefit of research support and to achieve its objectives in the future. RLUK has a three-year financial planning cycle to provide a longer-term framework for the management of both its general and strategic finances.

The current reserves policy was set by the Board at its meeting of 10 February 2023. It was agreed that the total assets of RLUK (across all accounts and investments) should not fall below £300,000. This figure comprises two components, strategic spend and funds to cover a change in circumstances. The strategic spend component provides £50,000 for unexpected expenditure for projects related to the strategic plan, unplanned projects of importance to the membership, or unforeseen circumstances such as additional operating costs. The remainder of the reserve funds would cover a change in circumstances, providing funds to continue operating for a period of time, or to allow for the highly unlikely event of a wind-down and to meet the staff and service costs associated with this.

It was further agreed that the Executive be empowered to make future investments, provided this reserve policy is not breached.

Total free reserves held by the charity, defined as unrestricted net current assets, at 31 July 2024 were £476,806 (2023: £481,232).

d. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

e. Material investments policy

As an incorporated charity, RLUK is empowered to set aside, disburse and invest monies at its disposal according to the provisions of its constitution. The main clauses covering the operation of this are Memorandum of Association clauses 3(g):

“To raise funds, whether by the levying of subscriptions, by means of donations, by private or public appeals or otherwise, and to seek any form of assistance, sponsorship or grant from public or private sources;”

3(r):

“Subject to such conditions (if any) and such consents (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law and subject also as hereinafter provided to invest and deal with the moneys of RLUK not immediately required for its purposes in or upon such investments or securities and in such manner as may from time to time be determined;”

and 3(w):

“To set aside income as a reserve against future expenditure but only in accordance with a written policy about reserves.”

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 31 July 2024

f. Future developments

RLUK intends to push ahead with its activities around the new strategy, *The Library Transforming*, published in January 2022.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with 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).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- 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 which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The trustees 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.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

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

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditors

Godfrey Wilson Limited were reappointed as auditors to the charitable company during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 27 February 2025 and signed on their behalf by

Jillian L Taylor-Roe

Jill Taylor-Roe – Treasurer

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of RLUK (Research Libraries UK) (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 July 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and the related 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 charity's affairs as at 31 July 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, 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 Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

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 charity 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 the provisions available for small entities, in the circumstances set out in note 8 to the financial statements, 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 trustees' 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 trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. 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.

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

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.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of the trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out in the trustees' report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) 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.

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Our 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 procedures we carried out and the extent to which they are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, are detailed below:

(1) We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, and assessed the risk of non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Throughout the audit, we remained alert to possible indications of non-compliance.

(2) We reviewed the charity's policies and procedures in relation to:

- Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations, and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risk of fraud, and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
- Designing and implementing internal controls to mitigate the risk of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud.

(3) We inspected the minutes of trustee meetings.

(4) We enquired about any non-routine communication with regulators and reviewed any reports made to them.

(5) We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and assessed their compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

(6) We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected transactions or balances that may indicate a risk of material fraud or error.

(7) We assessed the risk of fraud through management override of controls and carried out procedures to address this risk. Our procedures included:

- Testing the appropriateness of journal entries;
- Assessing judgements and accounting estimates for potential bias;
- Reviewing related party transactions; and
- Testing transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

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. Irregularities that arise due to fraud can be even harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

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. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members 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 members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

William Guy Blake

Date: 27 February 2025

**William Guy Blake ACA
(Senior Statutory Auditor)**

For and on behalf of:

GODFREY WILSON LIMITED

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors
5th Floor Mariner House
62 Prince Street
Bristol
BS1 4QD

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)**Statement of financial activities** *(incorporating an income and expenditure account)***For the year ended 31 July 2024**

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Income from:					
Donations	3	-	384,306	384,306	365,976
Charitable activities	4	-	11,372	11,372	398,150
Investments		-	19,188	19,188	6,244
Total income		<u>-</u>	<u>414,866</u>	<u>414,866</u>	<u>770,370</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities		<u>28,179</u>	<u>431,513</u>	<u>459,692</u>	<u>631,879</u>
Total expenditure	5	<u>28,179</u>	<u>431,513</u>	<u>459,692</u>	<u>631,879</u>
Net income / (expenditure)		(28,179)	(16,647)	(44,826)	138,491
Transfers between funds		<u>(5,000)</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds	8	(33,179)	(11,647)	(44,826)	138,491
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>188,290</u>	<u>492,227</u>	<u>680,517</u>	<u>542,026</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u>155,111</u>	<u>480,580</u>	<u>635,691</u>	<u>680,517</u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 16 to the accounts.

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Balance sheet

As at 31 July 2024

	Note	£	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	11		3,774	5,995
Current assets				
Debtors	12	46,374		56,941
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>650,882</u>		<u>891,261</u>
		697,256		948,202
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	13	<u>(65,339)</u>		<u>(273,680)</u>
Net current assets			<u>631,917</u>	<u>674,522</u>
Net assets	15		<u>635,691</u>	<u>680,517</u>
Funds	16			
Restricted funds			155,111	188,290
Unrestricted funds				
Designated funds			-	5,000
General funds			<u>480,580</u>	<u>487,227</u>
Total charity funds			<u>635,691</u>	<u>680,517</u>

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the trustees on 27 February 2025 and signed on their behalf by

Jillian L Taylor-Roe

Jill Taylor-Roe - Treasurer

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)**Statement of cash flows****For the year ended 31 July 2024**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash used in operating activities:		
Net movement in funds	(44,826)	138,491
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	2,221	2,012
Loss on disposal	-	63
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	(19,188)	(6,244)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	10,567	(21,428)
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	(208,341)	222,706
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	(259,567)	335,600
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	-	(3,465)
Dividends, interest and rent from investments	19,188	6,244
Net cash provided by investing activities	19,188	2,779
(Decrease) / increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year	(240,379)	338,379
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	891,261	552,882
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	650,882	891,261

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

1. Accounting policies

a) General information and basis of preparation

RLUK (Research Libraries UK) is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales. The registered office address is Room 257, Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

RLUK (Research Libraries UK) 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).

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Contract income is deferred to the period in which services are delivered.

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Member subscriptions are recognised over the period to which the income relates. Sponsorship or ticket income received in advance of conferences is deferred until the conference takes place.

d) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

e) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

1. Accounting policies (continued)

f) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

f) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT (continued)

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

g) Grants payable

Grants which have been authorised and paid are included as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities. Grants which have been authorised but not yet paid are accrued in the balance sheet and are included within creditors falling due within one year or after one year (as appropriate).

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. There has been no staff time spent on raising funds in either the current or prior year. Support and governance costs are therefore allocated in full to charitable activities.

i) Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Equipment and furniture	25% straight line
-------------------------	-------------------

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £2,000.

j) 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.

k) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes 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.

l) Creditors

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.

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

1. Accounting policies (continued)

m) Financial instruments

The charitable company only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

n) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

There are no significant sources of estimation uncertainty in these financial statements.

2. Prior period comparatives: statement of financial activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Income from:			
Donations	-	365,976	365,976
Charitable activities	384,000	14,150	398,150
Investments	-	6,244	6,244
Total income	384,000	386,370	770,370
Expenditure on:			
Charitable activities	249,801	382,078	631,879
Total expenditure	249,801	382,078	631,879
Net income and net movement in funds	134,199	4,292	138,491

3. Income from donations

	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Subscriptions	384,306	365,976

All income from subscriptions in the current and prior year was unrestricted.

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

4. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Conferences	-	11,372	11,372
Total income from charitable activities	-	11,372	11,372

Prior period comparative:

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
AHRC Scoping Study	5,000	-	5,000
Conferences	-	14,150	14,150
Grants	379,000	-	379,000
Total income from charitable activities	384,000	14,150	398,150

5. Total expenditure

	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2024 Total £
Audit and accountancy	-	19,660	19,660
Conference costs	24,646	-	24,646
Grants payable (note 6)	500	-	500
Member network costs	3,505	-	3,505
Office costs	-	20,106	20,106
Other governance costs	-	14,909	14,909
Outreach/subscriptions	443	-	443
Professional fees	-	3,218	3,218
Staff costs (note 9)	238,694	78,850	317,544
Strategic development costs	38,290	-	38,290
Travel and subsistence	16,871	-	16,871
Sub-total	322,949	136,743	459,692
Allocation of support and governance costs	136,743	(136,743)	-
Total expenditure	459,692	-	459,692

Total governance costs were £21,759 (2023: £11,684).

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

5. Total expenditure (continued)

Prior period comparative:

	Charitable activities £	Support and governance £	2023 Total £
Audit and accountancy	-	19,634	19,634
Conference costs	42,649	-	42,649
Grants payable (note 6)	218,790	-	218,790
Member network costs	3,696	-	3,696
Office costs	-	17,801	17,801
Other governance costs	-	6,184	6,184
Outreach/subscriptions	455	-	455
Professional fees	-	2,285	2,285
Staff costs (note 9)	209,276	70,225	279,501
Strategic development costs	34,085	-	34,085
Travel and subsistence	6,799	-	6,799
Sub-total	515,750	116,129	631,879
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>116,129</u>	<u>(116,129)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u>631,879</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>631,879</u>

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

6. Grants payable

During the year, 1 (2023: 13) grant was awarded to 1 (2023:11) organisation to fund professional practice fellowships.

	2024	2023
	£	£
Grants payable to institutions:		
<u>Professional Practice Fellowship Scheme</u>		
Cardiff University	-	382
Durham University (2023: 2 grants)	-	26,112
Leeds Beckett University	-	600
National Library of Scotland (2023: 2 grants)	-	42,812
National Museums Scotland	-	24,480
University of Bristol	-	24,268
University of Cambridge	-	24,942
University of Hertfordshire	-	24,718
University of Lincoln	-	673
University of Northampton	-	24,880
University of Sheffield	-	24,923
University of Sussex	500	-
	500	218,790

In the prior year support costs of £4,353 (2024: £nil) were allocated to grant-making activities.

7. Grant commitments

	2024	2023
	£	£
Grant commitments brought forward	215,975	-
Grants committed during the period	500	218,790
Grants paid during the period	(216,475)	(2,815)
Grant commitments carried forward	-	215,975

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

8. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Depreciation	2,221	2,012
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	1,787	Nil
Auditors' remuneration:		
▪ Statutory audit (excluding VAT)	<u>6,850</u>	<u>6,500</u>

Trustee reimbursed expenses in the current year relate to travel costs for 7 trustees.

In common with other charities of our size and nature we use our auditors to assist with the preparation of the financial statements.

9. Staff costs and numbers

All staff are employed by the University of London. Staff costs are recharged to RLUK. The total staff costs (including employer national insurance and pension contributions) are as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Staff costs recharged from University of London	<u>317,544</u>	<u>279,501</u>

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees and Chief Executive Officer. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel were £115,181 (2023: £114,243).

The average staff head count was 4 (2023: 4).

10. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment and furniture £
Cost	
At 1 August 2023 and at 31 July 2024	<u>8,881</u>
Depreciation	
At 1 August 2023	2,886
Charge for the year	<u>2,221</u>
At 31 July 2024	<u>5,107</u>
Net book value At 31 July 2024	<u><u>3,774</u></u>
At 31 July 2023	<u><u>5,995</u></u>

12. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	12,406	39,826
Prepayments and accrued income	21,478	3,289
VAT	12,490	13,826
	<u>46,374</u>	<u>56,941</u>

13. Creditors : amounts due within 1 year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	37,360	4,849
Accruals	7,109	32,289
Deferred income (note 14)	20,160	19,708
Other creditors	710	859
Grants payable (note 7)	-	215,975
	<u>65,339</u>	<u>273,680</u>

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

14. Deferred income

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 August 2023	19,708	5,000
Deferred during the year	20,160	19,708
Released during the year	(19,708)	(5,000)
At 31 July 2024	<u>20,160</u>	<u>19,708</u>

Deferred income relates to subscription income invoiced in advance.

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	3,774	3,774
Current assets	155,111	-	542,145	697,256
Current liabilities	-	-	(65,339)	(65,339)
Net assets at 31 July 2024	<u>155,111</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>480,580</u>	<u>635,691</u>
Prior period comparative	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	5,995	5,995
Current assets	404,265	5,000	538,937	948,202
Current liabilities	(215,975)	-	(57,705)	(273,680)
Net assets at 31 July 2023	<u>188,290</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>487,227</u>	<u>680,517</u>

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

16. Movements in funds

	At 1 August 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 July 2024 £
Restricted funds					
AHRC Fellowships	136,072	-	(500)	(127,222)	8,350
AHRC Fellows support	-	-	(7,095)	15,000	7,905
AHRC Building research capacity	-	-	(12,222)	32,222	20,000
AHRC Impact and evaluation	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
AHRC Programme manager	-	-	-	70,000	70,000
EBSCO	40,000	-	-	(5,000)	35,000
Emerging Leaders Fellowships	5,520 2,198	-	(5,520) (2,198)	-	-
National Archives	4,500	-	(644)	-	3,856
Total restricted funds	188,290	-	(28,179)	(5,000)	155,111
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Emerging leaders	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
<i>Total designated funds</i>	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
General funds	487,227	414,866	(426,513)	5,000	480,580
Total unrestricted funds	492,227	414,866	(431,513)	5,000	480,580
Total funds	680,517	414,866	(459,692)	-	635,691

Purposes of restricted funds

AHRC Fellowships

This fund supports the AHRC-RLUK Professional Practice Fellowship Scheme, which is designed to develop and promote research capacity, capability, and confidence amongst colleagues working across the research and academic library community.

AHRC Fellows support

This fund is to enable the organisation of 'Celebrating Research' events that will showcase the research activities of the AHRC-RLUK Fellows and provide a focus for a wider narrative of the impact and outcomes of the programmes.

AHRC Building research capacity

This will fund a third Research Catalyst Cohort Programme which will run in 2025-26.

AHRC Impact and evaluation

This fund is to enable an evaluation and impact assessment of the RLUK-AHRC Programmes in order to provide a holistic view of the impact of the programmes on the Fellows, their institutions, and the wider research library community.

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

16. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

AHRC programme manager

This fund is to support the appointment of a Programme Manager for an RLUK Shared Print project.

EBSCO

This fund represents monies received from EBSCO for the purpose of developing a number of events and projects around the open source FOLIO services platform and conference sponsorship.

Emerging Leaders

This fund represents monies received from Arts Council England, SCONUL, CILIP, SCURL and WHELF for an emerging leaders scoping study.

Professional Fellowships Scheme

This fund represents funds received from The National Archives to facilitate knowledge sharing between RLUK and The National Archives.

The National Archives

This fund represents funds received from The National Archives to undertake a number of joint activities with RLUK.

Purposes of designated funds

Emerging leaders

Funds transferred within the prior year as a contribution to the Emerging Leaders scoping study.

Transfers between funds

Transfer between funds represent the repurposing of restricted funding as agreed with funders.

RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 July 2024

16. Movements in funds (continued)

Prior period comparative	At 1 August 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 July 2023 £
Restricted funds					
AHRC	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
AHRC Fellowships	5,875	350,000	(219,803)	-	136,072
EBSCO	40,000	-	-	-	40,000
Emerging Leaders Fellowships	- 3,716	29,000	(23,480)	-	5,520
National Archives	4,500	-	(1,518)	-	2,982
					4,500
Total restricted funds	<u>54,091</u>	<u>384,000</u>	<u>(249,801)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>188,290</u>
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
DCDC conference	21,739	-	(21,739)	-	-
Emerging leaders	-	-	-	5,000	5,000
<i>Total designated funds</i>	<u>21,739</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(21,739)</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>
General funds	<u>466,196</u>	<u>386,370</u>	<u>(360,339)</u>	<u>(5,000)</u>	<u>487,227</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>487,935</u>	<u>386,370</u>	<u>(382,078)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>492,227</u>
Total funds	<u><u>542,026</u></u>	<u><u>770,370</u></u>	<u><u>(631,879)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>680,517</u></u>

17. Related party transactions

Due to the nature of the charitable company's activities and the composition of the Board it is inevitable that transactions may take place with organisations in which a member of the Board may have an interest. All transactions involving organisations in which a member of the Board may have an interest are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the respective organisations normal procurement procedures.