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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

FOR

CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

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CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

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CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2026. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Introduction

CAST (Centre for the Acceleration of Social Technology) is an award-winning UK charity working to accelerate the agency, presence and influence of social impact organisations in the technologies that affect us all.

Since 2015, we have been supporting social impact organisations to make the fullest use of digital technology (with an increasing focus on AI) - and working with funders, partners, digital specialists, government and other stakeholders to create a networked environment of support. Over the reporting period, we've reached more than 80,000 individuals.

Our mission is to ensure that every UK social impact organisation has the skills, confidence and opportunity to critically engage with digital and AI. In practice, this means ensuring that organisations are not passive recipients of developments in digital and AI - but active, confident and influential participants in shaping how it develops and who it serves.

We work directly with social impact organisations, helping them to become more responsive to their audiences' changing needs, behaviours and expectations, more test-driven, and more confident in embedding digital and AI into their organisational strategy, culture and services.

We also work closely with funders, advisory bodies, advocacy collectives, sector leaders and digital specialists to advocate for the sector, platform civil society's voices - and improve the quality and range of available digital and AI tools, training, funding and advice.

We continually connect organisations across the social sector and the wider support infrastructure. We share what we are learning, and build on the work of others through reuse. This reduces the costs of change, whilst enabling pace and scale.

We support social sector organisations to build their digital and AI capacity, so they will be better equipped to thrive in the face of rapid social, economic and technological change.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

How CAST contributes to the public benefit

CAST's vision is for an empowered, vocal and influential civil society, resilient and responsive to the changing needs, behaviours and expectations of their communities, confidently using digital and AI tools to maximise reach, efficiency and impact.

Digital and AI are continuing to reshape the ways in which charities reach communities and deliver services. At CAST, we want to ensure the social sector doesn't simply adapt to these changes, but takes an active role in shaping them. We work with charities and social impact organisations to help them critically engage with and embed digital and AI across their services, strategy and governance - and to explore new technologies as they emerge. We also work closely with funders and sector leaders to create an environment which supports charities to explore the full potential of existing and emerging technologies.

As laid out in our Theory of Change, we support charities to develop their agency (developing skills, relationships and practices); presence (creating charity and sector owned technologies) and influence (supporting leaders to have greater voice within and beyond the sector) in the technologies that affect us all.

The way in which we deliver support can be described by three parts: we incubate sector- and community-led interventions to develop and scale social impact through digital; we design and deliver training, peer support and programmes that build organisations' and individuals' abilities to use digital, data and design, and we host and support experiments in emerging technologies, particularly AI, enabling shared learning and faster progress in the responsible use of digital for positive social impact. At the heart of all three parts is CAST as a connector - between charities, funders, leaders and digital experts.

Our connection with multiple touchpoints across the sector means that we are at the forefront of understanding emerging trends and needs - and flexing our approaches accordingly, in order to offer the most valuable and timely support to the sector and the communities it serves. As such, a major part of our focus over the past 12 months has been working with thousands of social impact organisations, funders and sector leaders to identify the key challenges and opportunities with regard to AI, and design multiple strands of support and connection, engineered to meet the most pressing needs and priorities.

Ultimately, CAST's work strengthens social impact organisations' digital agency, presence and influence so they become more responsive and resilient within themselves - and better equipped to achieve their missions and deliver lasting public benefit.

In accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 and the associated Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, the trustees confirm that they have complied with their duties to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit as published by the Charity Commission, in exercising their powers and duties in the year under review.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Review of performance and achievements

Over the reporting period (1st April 2025 - 31st March 2026), we have reached more than 80,000 people from almost 5,000 organisations via our various programmes, tools, channels, resources and peer groups. We've helped thousands of charity practitioners to critically engage with digital and AI - and have worked with hundreds of funders, partners, digital specialists and other key stakeholders to create an environment of support for the sector.

In response to sector needs, we have increasingly focused on providing support, connection and advocacy with regard to AI specifically, whilst still maintaining a wider digital support offer. Below, we will lay out key achievements across all fronts over the reporting period.

AI: Identifying needs, developing support & strengthening connections

AI continues to form the basis for the majority of emerging needs, opportunities and concerns, across not only the social sector but also the supporting infrastructure.

We've seen this evidenced not just on a qualitative basis, through conversations with social sector organisations, funders and other stakeholders - but also via the quantitative data that comes in through our various communications channels: for example, the three most-accessed pages of our website during the reporting period were all AI-related.

By way of response, we have focused much of our time over the past year into supporting charities, social impact organisations, funders and other stakeholders to respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by AI, in order to bring about positive social change.

Naturally, since AI is now a thread that weaves throughout much of our work as standard, it will be referenced in other areas of this report - but in this section, we'll take a look at some of the key standalone AI support interventions offered by CAST over the reporting period.

AI research:
In order to stay at the forefront of changing sector needs, behaviours and priorities with regard to AI, we conduct both periodic and ongoing research. Since 2024, we've run an annual AI survey, and used the results - in conjunction with other research - to design support tailored to social sector organisations, as well as to influence the response from grantmakers. Our 2026 survey received 170 unique responses, which we synthesised to draw out key themes, needs and priorities. We shared the key findings - as well as associated support offerings - in a comprehensive survey blog in April 2026.

In addition to this annual snapshot, we also gather ongoing data via two tools developed by our Head of Technical AI Experiments: a Survey of Surveys dashboard and an Insight Engine.

The Survey of Surveys is a collaborative dashboard prototype, aggregating findings from five key sector reports. The dashboard synthesises complex data on AI adoption, sentiment, and readiness across UK charities, which serves as a baseline to help us identify resource gaps across the sector, particularly around training and risk management.

The Charity Sector AI Insight Engine is a collaborative platform designed to build a shared, data-informed understanding of artificial intelligence within the charity sector. Grounded in ethical principles, the engine applies Natural Language Processing tools to qualitative data sources, such as workshop notes, survey responses, and one-on-one consultations. By transforming qualitative feedback into structured, connected insights, the platform helps us anticipate training needs and design targeted interventions to help address the digital divide.

Moving forward, we plan to integrate the Insight Engine with the Survey of Surveys dashboard, and explore public-facing dissemination options, to provide a more holistic and unified view of AI adoption and sentiment across the charity sector.

All of this research helps us to understand where the gaps lie in terms of unmet needs and emerging priorities; we design support interventions to meet these, including the below:

AI self-serve course: We consistently hear that one of the biggest barriers to using AI is simply not knowing where to begin. To help charity practitioners build confidence and start experimenting responsibly, we launched a self-serve AI course in January 2025. In May 2026, we updated and extended the course: the new eight-week version includes new information on safety, risk and ethics, advice on prompting, and examples of real use cases.

Since launch, the AI self-serve course sign-up page has attracted more than 8,000 unique users, with almost 3,000 people starting the course. The course has returned an average open rate of 60% across the seven emails - with even the final email returning an open rate of 51%. Feedback has been very positive: 92% of survey respondents have described the course content as 'engaging and relevant' - and respondents returned an average result of 9 out of 10 when asked how likely they were to continue applying what they'd learned.

> *"I've just completed this course and I loved the format - a manageable email each week with reading and exercises helped me to fit around my day-to-day role without having to carve out a full day of learning. Really great content too. Thank you!"* - **AI self-serve course participant**

We've built on all survey feedback to create a follow-on AI course, designed for people who are advancing with AI, and want to support colleagues to do the same. Since launch, almost 200 people have started the course, with survey respondents returning an average result of 8 out of 10 in terms of continuing to apply what they'd learned. We're currently in the process of developing a similar course for senior leaders, expected to launch in August 2026.

Library of AI experiments: In speaking with charities and funders, we consistently hear calls for examples of the ways in which organisations are experimenting with AI. This was reflected in our 2026 AI survey, where more than 80% of respondents expressed a keen interest in gaining access to charities' AI case studies. In response, and as part of our wider partnership with Deloitte (see below), we created an MVP AI Experiment Library, designed to help charities and funders share their learnings. We tapped into our extensive network, supporting charities and funders to share their experiments as a short written summary.

We created a simple template so that participants could share the nature and purpose of the experiment - along with any key learnings. We conducted user testing to test an MVP of the service, and made improvements before publishing the library, with 34 experiments shared by more than 20 charities and funders. The library has proven very popular: the webpage attracted almost 5,000 unique users during the reporting period, and a selection of the experiments has been included in Make Sense Of It's new 2026 AI Playbook for charities.

Deloitte AI partnership: Between May and July 2025, CAST partnered with Deloitte to deliver an intensive AI learning programme for the charity sector. The series comprised three workshops, three drop-in Q&A clinics, two peer learning sessions, two funder briefings and the development of the Library of AI Experiments (see above) - all designed to help charities move from curiosity to practical AI capability.

The programme targeted smaller charities at risk of being left behind in the AI transition: over 80% of workshop participants were from small-to-medium organisations. Crucially, it reached decision-makers: four in ten participants were CEOs, directors or trustees.

Across live sessions and digital resources, the initiative reached over 2,200 individuals from 830 organisations, with participants reporting significant gains in confidence and understanding of the ways in which AI could advance their organisation's mission. Survey respondents rated the sessions as an average of 4.57 out of 5 - with 94% stating that they would recommend them to a peer.

> *"The team at CAST were really knowledgeable. I've got key takeaways to think about over the summer in terms of how AI might impact us, particularly around fundraising but also on a more strategic level."* - **Deloitte workshop participant**

Deloitte has also contributed significantly to the development of CAST's Worthwhile Chat tool, as detailed below.

Worthwhile AI: Over recent years, much of our work at CAST has been informed and guided by a framework of thought that we've termed 'Worthwhile AI'. The term helps ensure that our use of AI enhances our mission, serves our communities and aligns with our values, whilst also helping us work towards shaping AI that is genuinely worthwhile for all.

The 'Worthwhile AI' concept is an intentionally fluid one, but at the end of last year, we started sharing it externally - via a Q&A with CAST's Director Dan Sutch - partly to get a sense of how it resonated with the sector - and partly to set the scene for the launch of our Worthwhile Chat tool. We have built up the Worthwhile AI website over recent months, adding features such as an Events page. The website - which also hosts Worthwhile Chat (see below) launched on 20th January 2026: between then and the end of the reporting period (31st March), it registered 1,230 unique users and more than 2,500 page views.

Worthwhile Chat is a pioneering, sector-led AI tool, which we are building in collaboration with The Developer Society.The tool is designed to provide charity practitioners with a trusted space in which to explore AI safely and confidently, grounded in the realities of nonprofit work. Worthwhile Chat has been designed with sector values at its core: strong safeguards around data privacy, alongside a focus on peer learning and inspiration.

Over the past year, led by our Head of Design for AI alongside the CAST team, Worthwhile Chat has been developed from proof of concept through to Alpha Testing. With support from Deloitte, we are now preparing for a Beta Release, opening up the product to the 200 nonprofit staff that responded to calls for testers via our CAST and Digital Leads Network newsletters, plus our social media channels. In addition, 250 people have signed up to be alerted when the Worthwhile Chat tool officially launches.

With support from Deloitte, we've identified a series of common charity-specific AI-assisted tasks, and designed 'use case' prompts and guidelines that deliver high-quality, peer-informed outputs. During the reporting period, we began working on 16 such use cases: these are workable across Worthwhile Chat and any other generative AI tool; they launched to the sector in July 2026.

We're actively exploring governance of Worthwhile Chat and ways to cover development and running costs through subscription models, credit-based access, and sponsored licences. Building on our partnership with OKTA for Good, we're also building on Worthwhile AI to explore how we can best support teams to work well together, with and alongside AI tools.

Additional AI activity:
We have continued to update the 'living library' of frameworks, guides, case studies, courses, toolkits and other resources available in our online AI hub; added AI tools into our Digital Toolkit, and continued to share our AI Canvas and AI Spheres visual via our comms channels as well as at sector events. We've delivered AI-focused sessions at a range of sector events (including the Digital and Technology Conference, Digital Leaders AI Week, the Charity Digital AI Summit and the AI Impact Clarity Summit), as well as hosting several AI 'Lunch and Learn' sessions for funders and charities - reaching over 2,000 people across all events throughout the reporting period. In March, we were delighted to learn that CAST's Director Dan Sutch had been recognised by Computing as being one of the 25 most inspirational figures shaping AI today.

> *"Thanks for the excellent AI presentation last week. We thought that the panel session was one of the best that we have seen - with lots of challenging ideas."* - **Attendee at a CAST AI presentation**

At CAST, we take a holistic approach to AI, exploring the 'macro' picture alongside the 'micro', and exploring as a team via our internal AI Together learning initiative. We reflect - and encourage charities and funders to do the same - on what shifts in individuals' and communities' behaviours and expectations might mean for organisations' missions, and how changes in the socio-techno economic context will affect power dynamics and working conditions. We are committed to shaping conversations and designing support structures that ensure everyone has equal access to AI, and the power to use it for social good.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Peer connection: Creating communities and advocating for the sector

As the digital and AI landscape continues to move at pace, so the importance of connection and communication across the sector becomes ever more vital - and so a growing part of our work now involves bringing together individuals and communities for the purposes of support, inspiration and advocacy. We now convene three major groups, all of which are free to join - and all of which have exhibited significant growth over the past year:

AI for Grantmakers group: We set up the AI for Grantmakers group in late 2023, to provide a space for UK funders of all sizes to come together and explore approaches to AI. The group - which has now grown to comprise more than 500 people from 375 Trusts and Foundations across the UK - meets online every six weeks to hear spotlight talks from key sector leaders, and discuss the challenges and opportunities presented by AI.

The group consistently receives positive feedback from members: in the most recent all-group survey, respondents returned an average result of 8 (out of 10) in response to being asked how valuable the experience of being part of the group had been for them so far. In November 2025, we marked the two-year anniversary of the group by publishing a three-perspective blog, with contributions from Dan Sutch of CAST, Alex Parker of IVAR and Brian Yim Lim from Barts Charity, who is an active participant within the group.

> *"(I've gained) unrivalled thought-leadership, a sense of belonging, and the reassurance that we're all in this together. Our adoption and meaningful experimentation with AI has been successful because of the careful and practical suggestions that have come from CAST peers."* - **AI for Grantmakers peer group member**

Charity AI Task Force: Launched in February 2025, the task force is co-chaired by Dan Sutch (CAST) and Zoe Amar (Zoe Amar Digital). The collective - which now comprises more than 50 member organisations -exists to champion the responsible, inclusive and collaborative use of AI across the social sector. In May 2025, the task force issued a response to the government's AI Opportunities Action Plan, leading to regular contact with the Head of AI Adoption, Governance and Skills at the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology - maintained until DSIT's closure in July 2026. This helped to ensure that the charity perspective was included in conversations and decisions around AI.

Over the reporting period, task force members have helped to draft a set of principles, which have now been communicated to the group; identified a roadmap to achieving the objectives of the collective, and run numerous sub-groups exploring AI across the sector. Feedback from task force members is consistently positive: in an April 2026 survey, respondents returned an average score of 8 (out of 10) when asked to rate the value of membership.

Digital Leads Network: Established in 2022, the Digital Leads Network (DLN) brings together people who are leading, shaping or supporting digital work in charities, social enterprises and community organisations across the UK. The network offers quarterly meetups on specific digital topics, AI Learning Hours led by members of the network - and an optional AI Peer Group, which meets to explore opportunities, risks and real use cases.

The DLN had its most active 12 months to date between March 2025 and April 2026. The network grew to comprise more than 500 members from almost 400 UK charities and nonprofit organisations - more than doubling the previous year's membership intake. A full programme of online meetups, peer groups and informal networking delivered over 300 participations, with members consistently rating sessions 4.3 to 5 out of 5.

AI remained the defining theme of the period. Six AI Peer Group sessions brought together over 170 members to share experiments, navigate uncertainty and build confidence collectively. In early 2026, the DLN piloted a new format - AI Learning Hours - offering two session types (Show & Tell and Peer Discussion), all led by members of the network. The pilot confirmed that there was a strong appetite for practical peer learning, and surfaced clear direction for the programme going forward: five AI Learning Hours were held during the reporting period, with an average feedback score of 4.4 out of 5.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Member feedback throughout the period was overwhelmingly positive. Participants consistently highlighted the value of hearing from peers, accessing real examples, and having protected space to think through challenges together - the very things the DLN was specifically designed to provide.

Throughout the reporting period, we've showcased various aspects of the DLN across our comms channels -including an annual round-up of DLN activity and a member spotlight interview. The dedicated DLN newsletter also continued to play an important role in keeping members connected, sharing resources, highlighting upcoming sessions and signposting member experiments. 27 emails were sent to the group during the reporting period, with an average open rate of 57% and a click rate of 24% - well above the sector average.

> *"I found the network meetup really inspiring. It's so interesting hearing how other non-profits are adapting to the ever-changing digital landscape to offer a better service for their communities. I always come away feeling excited about the future and full of great ideas!"* **-Digital Leads Network member**

Alongside the more structured Digital Leads Network, we have continued to run our Coffee Connections service, matching peers within the social sector every two months for an informal chat about digital. Across the reporting period, matches took place in June, October and November of 2025 and February of 2026. During the most recent round of matches, 325 people were matched - this is an increase of 16%year-on-year.

> *"Just had a fab Coffee Connections chat with my match this month. Do sign up for this if you want to meet new digital folk and hear about how they are using digital. It's free and fun. Thanks CAST!"* - **Coffee Connections participant**

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Cross-sector collaboration: connecting charities and funders

As well as creating discrete communities of charities, funders and advocates, we're constantly striving to create lines of connection between and across these different parts of the sector, in order to increase visibility of needs, priorities, expectations and activities - and join up support efforts. As a team, we are naturally moving across conversations with charities, funders and other stakeholders, and sharing (non-confidential) insights where relevant and useful - but we also have a number of more structured initiatives:

The AI Exchange: In March 2025, we joined forces with The Institute For Voluntary Action Research (IVAR), in an effort to help charities and funders engage with AI in ways that are responsible, equitable and rooted in trust. Via The AI Exchange collaboration, we've reached more than 1,300 charities and funders, through a mix of workshops, webinars, events and peer groups. We've co-led a series of bridging workshops, bringing charities and funders into the same space to examine AI and grantmaking in depth.

> *"Great that you are providing this platform for discussion and learning to help third sector staff explore and deepen their understanding of this rapidly developing and contentious group of tools. Thank you."* - **AI Exchange workshop participant**

In September 2025, the AI Exchange came together with the Technology Association of Grantmakers (TAG) in an event designed to reimagine the form-based grantmaking application process in the age of AI. Participants came up with five alternative prototypes - and we are in the process of organising a follow-up event for September 2026, to check in on progress. We have been making our progress available to the sector via a quarterly Digest.

We have also continued to maintain and promote the GrantAdvisor UK platform, designed to encourage open dialogue between UK social impact organisations and grantmakers, by collecting authentic, real-time reviews and comments on grantseekers' experiences of working with funders.

The GrantAdvisor UK platform now contains 620 anonymous reviews from grantseekers, with 42 funders registered on the service. This year we continued to support funders signed up to the service to grow and interpret their reviews. We also worked with IVAR to undertake a research project to explore what we can learn from the reviews in relation to their Open and Trusting commitments.

During the reporting period, the GrantAdvisor platform attracted over 3,000 unique visitors, with almost 10,000 page views. We also grew our GrantAdvisor UK following on Bluesky to encompass more than 500 followers.

Fund Gloucestershire: We worked with Fund Gloucestershire to develop a means for the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector in Gloucestershire to access the funding it needs. The project aimed to maximise resources for delivery and reduce the time and costs involved in applying for funds. For funders, the project aimed to ensure that more of the funds they give could be spent by successful applicants directly on activities and services - as well as freeing up time and resources to focus on setting purpose, outcomes and criteria for funding, and building relationships with applicants.

We delivered a research phase late last year, speaking to partners, funders and charities to understand their needs. We've been working with the Developer Society to develop and test an end-to-end MVP service that allows charities in the region to access funding opportunities more easily - and we've been experimenting with AI in the due diligence and assessment process.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Digital skills: Designing support and convening networks

We continue to maintain a range of evergreen digital skills resources, including the Digital Toolkit - a collection of 32 free tools and resources, designed to support organisations moving through the process of researching, defining and developing a digital product, platform or service. Over the reporting period, we added more AI resources, and promoted the toolkit as part of our AI courses, as well as via our various communications channels. As a result, the toolkit has attracted 4,318 unique users during the reporting period, with 7,880 overall page views: increases of 176% and 107% respectively, compared to last year.

We have also continued to promote our two self-serve digital courses: Learn User Research and Learn Design Thinking. Collectively, the sign-up pages have attracted more than 500 unique visitors during the reporting period, with 100 people signing up. And during the earlier part of the reporting period, we continued to add content to our Shared Digital Guides platform; this has now been paused whilst we work on the Library of AI Experiments and Worthwhile Chat use cases. During the reporting period, the Shared Digital Guides site attracted almost 5,000 unique visitors, with a combined total of 9,200 page views.

Throughout the reporting period, we also continued to receive funding from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to convene a network of support for the sector, comprising eight complementary initiatives - five led by other organisations (namely Agencies for Good, Digital Candle, Digital Trustees, Dovetail and The Curve) and three by CAST: Design Hops, the Digital Leads Network and a reuse infrastructure strand.

Overall, the eight funded initiatives have reached more than 12,200 people collectively over the past year - supported by a comms effort from CAST and Third Sector Lab. Six of the eight initiatives were covered in the CAST newsletter over the reporting period, resulting in 2,500 click-throughs, whilst the relevant LinkedIn posts attracted more than 6,000 impressions - and the dedicated webpage had 500 page views. A dedicated LinkedIn page, set up and maintained by Third Sector Lab, received a total of 112,000 impressions.

With regards to CAST's specific strands, we began promoting the 2026 Design Hop (our seven-week online training programme teaching innovative digital techniques) in March 2026 and the sessions began in April 2026, with 20 participants in attendance. When recruiting, we prioritised attendees from organisations led by people with lived experience, specifically holding a third of places to organisations meeting this criterion. Feedback was very positive: 100% of post-course survey respondents stated that they felt more confident talking about digital and using a design process within their organisation.

> *"I think it was excellent! I am glad we have a post course check-in. And glad of the opportunities to stay connected as I think that will help with the sustainability of this in my org."* - **Design Hops participant**

In terms of the reuse initiative, we worked to develop open IP and reuse approaches across our peer networks, including deep dives with five funders to integrate Open IP clauses into their grant making. We showcased reusable examples through our peer networks and digital spaces - and our set of best practice guidance for grantmakers remains open for reuse. In late 2025, we also established a new partnership with the Tech for Good Alliance: with support from Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales Financial Resilience Fund, we're supporting charities to find and use digital tools that meet their needs.

Although the official funding period for the Esmée initiative has come to a close, the network members remain connected: all initiatives remain live, and we hope to work together on future opportunities to support the sector.

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Investing in the Power of Civil Society: We're working with The National Lottery Community Fund, Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales and a host of other partners on this Grant Holder Support Programme pilot. Together, we are testing a new model of tailored support for charities and community interest companies, to help them build resilience, adapt to change and thrive. Beyond this, we are reimagining how funders and partners can join forces in new ways to ensure civil society organisations can navigate an increasingly complex landscape. Over the course of the year we have worked with Lloyds Bank Foundation and the partnership to both secure funding for this pilot from The National Lottery Community Fund and design an approach to providing capacity building support for around 640 organisations as well as embed partnership working. The programme operates for 12 months from April 2026 - April 2027. As part of this, we are exploring and testing the potential role of AI to help connect charities with the best placed support to build on their strengths and to develop their capacity.

Consultancy: Providing support and advice to charities and funders

In addition to providing programmes, resources, services, peer groups and platforms, we also work on a one-to-one basis with organisations, providing a range of bespoke consultancy services which include modular support on AI, project management, ways of working, MEL (monitoring, evaluation and learning), user-centred research and design, co-production, service delivery - and more. During the reporting period, we worked with the organisations as below:

The National Lottery Community Fund: In a project that began in October 2025, we are supporting the design and delivery of an internal Digital Accelerator within The National Lottery Community Fund to reinvent the way in which organisations apply for and receive funding, with the objective of making it easier and more accessible, particularly for grass-roots organisations. We are working with them to discover, design, test and deliver a new digitally-enabled approach to grantmaking, bringing together a cross-functional team?from across the Fund, working with CAST, IVAR and The Developer Society. Ultimately we are trying to dramatically reduce the time and effort it takes for grassroots organisations to secure the funding needed to support their communities.

We've seconded six staff from funding portfolios across the Fund to be our Accelerator subject matter experts - ensuring representation of funding practices across the nations. We're also joined by service design, digital and tech experts from across the Fund to ensure best practice and integration beyond the accelerator timeline. We're carrying out user interviews and testing with funding staff with expertise in grantmaking, EDI, compliance, risk, data and other important areas. We've summed up the progress to date in a Q&A blog.

The Clothworkers' Foundation: Our 12-month contract to manage digital infrastructure applications to The Clothworkers' Foundation's Open Grants Programmes was extended for six months, and is due to finish in the summer of 2026. Over the past year, the CAST team has assessed applications for grants of between£5,000 and £50,000, making around £700,000 worth of grants to almost 70 organisations across the UK. This work provides the building blocks of digital maturity across the sector, especially as differing levels of AI adoption threaten to widen digital inequalities.

A blog published in January outlined some of the learnings and developments from the programme, including supporting Clothworkers' Foundation to introduce an Impact Framework that allows assessors to prioritise between eligible applications on lived experience and projects that enable significant organisational change.

One of the main learnings from the past year has been that the huge demand for funding in this area is much greater than one funder can possibly meet. In response, Clothworkers' Foundation and CAST are in the process of consulting with interested funders to consider ways to collaborate.

Deloitte UK: Between June and October of last year, we led an independent research review of Deloitte's Laptop Donation Programme - one of the UK's longest-running corporate device donation schemes. The review included interviews with beneficiaries and key stakeholders, alongside desktop research into comparable schemes. The research found strong foundations, while identifying clear opportunities to deepen impact through wrap-around support (connectivity; digital skills; accessibility), improved impact capture, and a new strategic disability-focused pilot. The review resulted in an action plan with three strands: a proposed 'Tech for Disability' pilot with the Digital Services Consortium, business-as-usual refinements to the donation package, and a stronger impact and storytelling approach.

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Lucy Faithfull Foundation: In an ongoing project which began in 2023, we are helping the Foundation to deliver their groundbreaking Intercept project. Throughout the reporting period, we continued to support the Foundation to deliver the project and embed an innovation approach across the organisation. More information about Lucy Faithfull's work can be found in the Foundation's interim report. This support will continue throughout 2026.

National Lottery Heritage Fund: From October 2025 until March 2026, we worked with the Heritage Lottery to develop a three-year AI action plan. We led the work from discovery through to the final plan, developing it collaboratively with staff across the organisation. The plan covers the key areas of governance, capability and adoption - and takes a phased, evidence-led approach that reflects the Heritage Fund's public accountability obligations and the pace of change in the field.

The Digital Services Consortium (DSC): In a two-year project, which began in February 2025, we are working as an Evaluation and Learning partner to the DSC - an alliance of 12 leading UK charities supporting disabled and seriously ill children and young people and their families. We have worked to embed shared principles, establish robust learning loops and impact measurement, and support collaboration across the programme as they developed their digital and hybrid services. We're co-designing the programme's evaluation framework as well as offering support to develop the digital leads in the partnership.

At the heart of this is the community of practice, facilitated by CAST. Members meet quarterly to share honest accounts of what is and isn't working, and come away with ideas they can apply directly. Many describe feeling understood by peers facing the same challenges in a way they don't within their everyday working lives. It is also where much of the year's most important learning has taken shape: a year in, members are growing into more confident digital leaders and the consortium has developed a richer, shared understanding of digital exclusion through its collective learning and experience.

> *"I think that the community of practice sessions have been the 'glue' of the consortium at an operational level. My team have learnt so much. I think that it's important to capture this as part of the value of us all working together whether we have a project or not."*
> **- Digital Services Consortium participant**

Trades Union Congress (TUC): As part of the TUC's 'Leading Change' programme, we worked once again with the TUC Digital Lab to design and deliver a transformative digital change leadership module.

Prudence Trust: We are providing light touch support over three years as Prudence Trust supports two organisations using digital tools to support young people's mental health. This is a new area of work for Prudence Trust and our support aims to help both the charities they're funding and the Prudence Trust team.

Communications: Showcasing CAST's identity and purpose
Over the past year, we have further strengthened our efforts to amplify the visibility and awareness of CAST: the organisation itself; the services we offer, and the networks and connections we are creating - so that our support can reach as many individuals and organisations as possible. In 2025, we were shortlisted for Charity of the Year in the Charity Times Awards.

Our Medium platform acts as a hub to capture learnings, reflections and advice from all those within the CAST community. During the reporting period, 29 articles were published, collectively attracting more than 16,000 views: this is a 72% increase in views, compared to the last reporting period.

We're committed to openly sharing stories and perspectives directly from the small but mighty core team involved in programme delivery, as well as from those in supporting roles. During the reporting period, seven members of the 11-strong CAST team wrote and submitted Medium articles, with topics including AI experimentation, Digital Leads Network news, AI survey results, Clothworkers' Foundation learnings, perspectives on 'worthwhile' AI, reflections from our AI Together internal learning programme, and insights into the ways that charities and funders are using AI.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

As well as providing content designed to inform and inspire the sector, we highlighted aspects of CAST as an organisation, with details of our all-staff meetup, a series of 'Top Ten' articles to highlight our tenth anniversary, and two Q&A pieces introducing the new members of the team. Going forward, we are looking into commissioning blogs from some of the sector leaders and specialists we work with, in order to share perspectives, insights and resources from around the wider network.

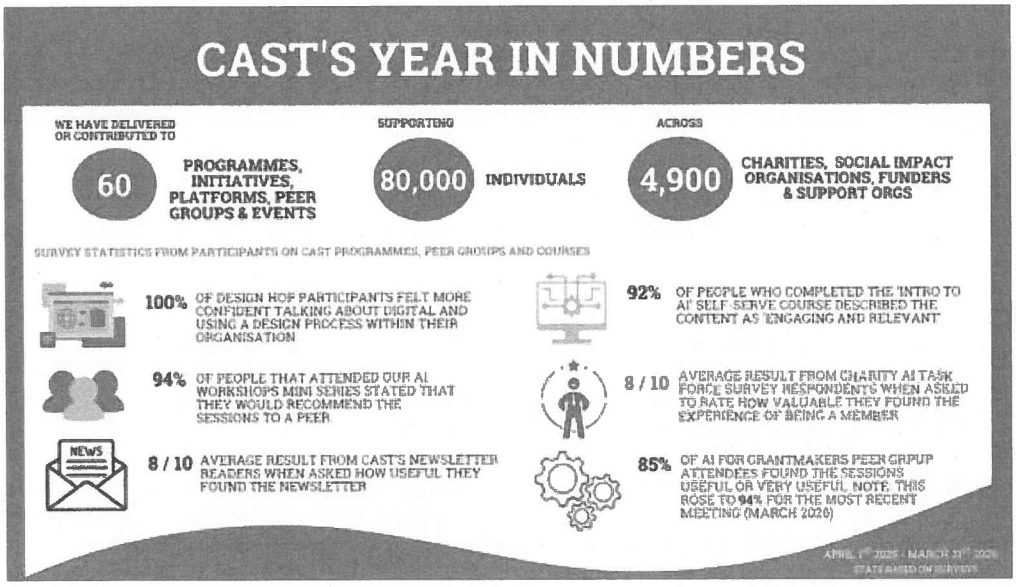
Over the reporting period, we have regularly updated our website with the latest projects, programmes, resources, events and opportunities - as well as with updated impact figures and organisational developments. Engagement figures for the reporting period are significantly higher than previously: 32,000 unique users, compared to 19,600 last year.

We have also continued to send out our regular newsletter: this is sent to our audience of 6,000 individuals each month (with a break for the August and December holidays), and returns high open and click rates: over the reporting period, the newsletter averaged an open rate of 42% and a click rate of 10% - both significantly higher than sector standard. Feedback is consistently positive: respondents to our most recent survey returned an average score of 8 when asked how useful they found the newsletter, on a scale of 0 to 10.

> *"The newsletter is really good - the mix of content is always really good. It also has a nice tone to it and is clearly laid out."* - **CAST newsletter reader**

We also continue to share regular posts across social media: we post regularly on our LinkedIn and Bluesky channels: during the reporting period, we shared hundreds of original posts across both channels, resulting in thousands of clicks through to the content across our various communications platforms.

Throughout the reporting period, we reached more than 58,600 people via our communications channels alone: a significant increase on last year's 40,000. The infographic below provides a snapshot of our impact over the reporting period; see the impact page of our website for more information.



Throughout this report, we've provided a snapshot of the many positive comments we have received over the past 12 months. You can see more in our full testimonials reel. If you'd like to get in touch to tell us about your experience with CAST, we'd love to hear from you: please email hello@wearecast.org.uk.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

Income

Total income of £1.2m is 17% above income for 2024/25.

Income comprised £276k of grant funding from the Fidelity Foundation, £105k of grant funding from the Lloyds Bank Foundation, £105k of grant income from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, service income of £575k, and a number of smaller grants and donations.

Expenditure

The charity's primary expenditure continues to be incurred on supporting charities and social enterprises to improve their services with digital technology. Expenditure on digital capacity development was £900k during the year.

Of this expenditure, £130k was paid out as direct grants, and £50k was spent on sub-contracted digital support provided by external partners.

In addition to the digital capacity development costs we incurred £122k on support costs and £14k on fund-raising.

A further £198k was invested in capital expenditure during the year, in the development of Worthwhile Chat, an exciting new project for CAST. This expenditure comprised direct grants of £90k, and staff time, with a small share of support costs.

Reserves policy

The Charity has a risk-based reserves policy.

This entails assessing the ideal reserve level through review of a number of key elements.

These elements at present (excluding restricted funds) are :-

- Any funds received as time-limited, unrestricted income, which have not yet been spent
- A basic working capital buffer, equivalent to one month's operating costs - this is not to cover loss of income, but simply a timing buffer
- Potential loss of income cover - this will reflect the income pipeline at the point of annual budget finalisation, on a risk basis - with no cover needed for 100% certain income, then 10% cover needed for income included in the budget with a 90% likelihood, etc.
- Potential unforeseen cost income - this element will be hardest to estimate, but will be assessed on a risk basis for known risk areas - for example, a risk of additional costs relating to the possible Catalyst transition, or the excess of insurance policies.

These are cumulative, i.e. added to give a total reserves requirement, within a margin of +/- 20%.

Applying this policy indicates a reserves target for the year end of £218,000.

Year end free reserves (total reserves less fixed assets) were within this range, at £219k, of which £111k was held as unrestricted funds. The trustees therefore regard CAST's year end reserves position as acceptable, whilst recognising the need to develop increased unrestricted reserves in future periods.

Total reserves also include further restricted fund balances relating to the Worthwhile Chat asset - these additional reserves are not part of CAST's free reserves.

FUTURE OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

The unprecedented pace of adoption of generative AI - and the opportunities and impacts that brings - demands that we continue to increase our focus on supporting mission-driven organisations to respond to these changes, and to get to a position where the communities they serve can be central to the decisions and uses around AI. We will continue to support charity practitioners, mission driven organisations and focus on sector-strengthening approaches that ensure that civil society has a stronger influence.

To do this, CAST will continue to focus on accelerating the agency, presence and influence of social impact organisations in the technologies that affect us all. Developing the agency ensures charity practitioners can critically engage with digital and AI tools, appropriately using them to create greater impact in their work. We'll continue to invest in training; capacity building; leadership development and sharing examples of emerging practices. We'll continue to focus on strengthening the number and depth of relationships between charity digital leads - especially through the Digital Leads Network and the AI for Grantmakers peer group. We'll also continue to sense and respond to new behaviours and needs around AI, for example, exploring how high value-creating teams can best work with and alongside AI.

Developing the presence of social impact organisations in technology aims to ensure the values of civil society are embedded within digital tools. We'll continue to support social impact organisations to develop digital services and products; we'll continue to incubate technologies and initiatives that help to create the digital infrastructure for civil society, and we'll continue to focus on growing the use and reuse of open, sector and community owned technologies. We will focus our efforts on creating and supporting sector- and community-owned technologies - those technologies built, designed with, and owned by the sector and those impacted by their use. This includes further development of safe tools for charity practitioners to build their confidence and experience, as well as the development of sector-owned tools that can be reused across the sector.

Ensuring social impact organisations have greater influence and reach remains a key part of our strategy, and demands even greater focus in the year ahead. We will continue to support initiatives that strive to platform sector leaders and connect them with those in positions of power and authority. As part of this, we will continue our work co-chairing the Charity AI Task Force and advocating for the responsible, inclusive and collaborative use of AI across the social sector.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006. The charity's trustees are also directors and members of the company.

Governance

CAST has appointed trustees that bring a strong understanding of the potential of technology to address social challenges. The trustees who served during the period were as follows: Lara Burns, Ha Cole, Kate Collins, Gaia Ines Fassò (Chair), Nic Granger OBE and Pema Radha.

Current trustees (as of August 2026) are as follows: Lara Burns, Ha Cole, Gaia Ines Fassò (Chair) and Nic Granger OBE. To aid the effective governance of the charity, we also operate a Finance and Audit committee (chaired by Nic Granger OBE) with delegated authority as set out in an agreed Scheme of Delegation.

With huge thanks and gratitude, two of our trustees, Kate Collins and Pema Radha, stepped down during this period. Both of these trustees have played a huge role in supporting and extending the impact of CAST, for which we are all incredibly grateful.

In May 2026, we undertook a recruitment exercise to recruit a number of new trustees to help us lead the sector in AI capacity building and policy influence. We specified that we were particularly keen to hear from people working in small or medium-sized charities, social sector infrastructure organisations and people with policy and government networking experience - as well as those people currently underrepresented within our organisation and the wider sector, including people from minoritised communities, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people, younger people, and people from working-class or other underrepresented backgrounds. We shared the opportunity across our communications channels, as well as via sector jobs sites, and received around 20 strong applications from across the sector. Interviews took place in July 2026, with successful candidates (Aaron Barbour, Yunze Wang and Julie Leonard) set to join their first Board meeting in September 2026.

The Board has adopted the Charity Governance Code and ensures compliance through regular review.

Risk Management

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

The Board of Trustees systematically reviews the risks faced by the charity, reviewing the detailed risk register on a quarterly basis. A strong risk management process is in place whereby delivery, strategic, and organisational risks are identified, recorded, and, where appropriate, escalated to the management team and trustees. Risks are also discussed weekly at Platform Team meetings and reflected in evolving organisational priorities.

The key risks to the Charity are:

- **Strengthening financial resilience and securing long-term funding.** CAST continues to maintain a strong reputation with funders and a growing pipeline of opportunities, particularly in areas such as AI and digital capability. As our work often leads sector innovation, we recognise that funding can follow in cycles, with peaks of investment often arriving after CAST has already stepped into new spaces. While the timing of funding decisions can be unpredictable, we are actively managing this through strong oversight of cashflow, a flexible reserves policy, and by deepening relationships with both existing and new funders. We are focused on building multi-year, core funding partnerships and aligning business development more closely with our strategic areas of impact.

- **Navigating ethical complexity and pace of AI development.** The speed of change in generative AI presents both opportunities and risks. CAST needs to maintain a balanced position, building the sector's capacity for 'worthwhile AI' while recognising the potential harms. We believe that helping charities develop a critical and practical understanding of AI will support the sector to have a stronger voice in championing the needs of our communities. Developing that understanding means creating opportunities for organisations to engage with AI, experience it in practice, and explore both its potential and its challenges. We have strengthened our leadership in this area through new AI-focused hires, the continued development of the Charity AI Task Force, and strong engagement with funders and sector organisations. We remain committed to a thoughtful and collaborative approach to shaping the sector's role and voice in AI innovation.
- **Strategic influence and relevance**. Delivering on the third pillar of CAST's strategy, sector-wide and beyond-sector influencing, requires us to strengthen our external engagement and connect our influencing work more closely with our internal expertise. We are building this capability through partnerships, networked influencing through the Charity AI Task Force, collaboration with sector-leading organisations, and greater participation in sector events and forums. Continuing to centre the voices of charities and communities in the national digital conversation rem ains a critical part of how we mitigate this risk.

Closing remarks

Across the reporting period, CAST has continued to strengthen the social sector's ability to engage critically and confidently with digital and AI. By combining practical support, peer learning, research, partnerships and advocacy, we are helping organisations not only respond to technological change, but play an active role in shaping it.

CAST's work is carried out by our core team of 11 people, guided by the Board and united by a clear set of values, co-designed by the whole team. However, as a networked organisation, we are continually collaborating with others in order to drive positive change across the sector - and as such, we'd like to thank all of the charities, funders, partners, digital specialists, peer group members, sector leaders and other individuals and organisations that have engaged with CAST over the past 11 years. Together, we are working to shape a future where civil society leads the way in using digital and AI responsibly, inclusively and for social good.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number
09544506 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number
1161998

Registered office
Broul Cottage Bath Road
Nailsworth
Stroud
Gloucestershire
GL6 0QL

Trustees

Emma Thomas	(resigned 30 April 2025)
Kathryn Collins	(resigned 31 December 2025)
Gaia-Ines Fasso	(appointed 25 November 2020)
Pema Radha	(resigned 31 December 2025)
Lara Burns	(appointed 25 November 2020)
Ha Thi Thu Cole	(appointed 24 September 2024
Nicola Granger OBE	(appointed 24 September 2024)

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Auditors
Gibson Whitter Limited
Statutory Auditors
Larch House
Parklands Business Park
Denmead
Hampshire
PO7 6XP

Bankers
Unity Trust Bank
London
WC1B 3LN

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also the directors of Centre for the Acceleration of Social Technology for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law).

Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 09/10/26 and signed on its behalf by:

.....
Ms Fasso - Trustee

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Centre for the Acceleration of Social Technology (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2026 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement 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 (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2026 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 Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company 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 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 charitable company'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 trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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.

Opinions 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 Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

Matters on which we are required to report by exception
In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where 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 take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees
As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, 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 charitable company'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 charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

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 a Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

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 charitable company and sector, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to breaches of employment law, data protection and anti-bribery and corruption legislation, 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 financial statements such as the Charities acts, Companies Act 2006 and UK tax legislation. We evaluated management's incentives and 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 to overstate profit and management bias in accounting estimates. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Discussions with management and Trustee Directors, including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- Identifying and testing journal entries, in particular any journal entries posted with unusual account combinations;
- As required by ISA 240, incorporating an element of unpredictability into our audit testing.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

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 Report of the Independent Auditors.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company'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 charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' 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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Gavin Whitter FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Gibson Whitter Limited
Statutory Auditors
Larch House
Parklands Business Park
Denmead
Hampshire
PO7 6XP

Date: 13/10/16

CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.26 Total funds £	31.3.25 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	1,180	-	1,180	1,232
Charitable activities	3				
Digital capacity development		521,087	699,544	1,220,631	1,040,527
Total		522,267	699,544	1,221,811	1,041,759
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	4	13,519	-	13,519	13,068
Charitable activities	5				
Digital capacity development		445,862	449,577	895,439	1,106,195
Total		459,381	449,577	908,958	1,119,263
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		62,886	249,967	312,853	(77,504)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		48,055	59,988	108,043	185,547
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		110,941	309,955	420,896	108,043

The notes form part of these financial statements

CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2026

	Notes	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Intangible assets	13	198,477	-
Tangible assets	14	3,281	3,016
		201,758	3,016
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	15	130,628	230,675
Cash at bank		213,629	39,853
		344,257	270,528
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	16	(125,119)	(165,501)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		219,138	105,027
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		420,896	108,043
NET ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)		420,896	108,043
FUNDS	18		
Unrestricted funds		110,941	48,055
Restricted funds		309,955	59,988
TOTAL FUNDS		420,896	108,043

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on .....09/10/'26..... and were signed on its behalf by:

.....
Ms Fasso - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

	Notes	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	374,231	(346,618)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		374,231	(346,618)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		(198,477)	-
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,978)	(1,300)
Net cash used in investing activities		(200,455)	(1,300)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		173,776	(347,918)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		39,853	387,771
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		213,629	39,853

The notes form part of these financial statements

CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	312,853	(77,504)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	1,713	1,280
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	-	1,131
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	100,047	(123,782)
Decrease in creditors	(40,382)	(147,743)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operations	374,231	(346,618)

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1.4.25 £	Cash flow £	At 31.3.26 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank	39,853	173,776	213,629
	39,853	173,776	213,629
Total	39,853	173,776	213,629

The notes form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements
The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Going concern
The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that financial risks are manageable, through appropriate monitoring of new income streams, and readiness to respond promptly in the event of adverse variances. The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves, for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty
In the application of the Charitable Company's accounting policies, the trustee directors may be required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on the 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 currently no critical estimates or judgements requiring disclosure in addition to the accounting policies described.

Income
Voluntary income including donations, gifts and legacies and grants that provide core funding or are of a general nature are recognised where there is entitlement, the receipt is probable and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Income received under contract or where entitlement to grant funding is subject to specific performance conditions. Such income is only deferred when:

- the donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting periods; or
- the donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional entitlement.

Income from activities to generate funds, such as services provided, and investment income are recognised on a receivable basis.

Volunteers and donated services
The value of services provided by volunteers is not incorporated into these financial statements.

Where goods or services are provided to the charity as a donation that would normally be purchased from suppliers, this contribution is included in the financial statements at an estimate based on the value of the contribution to the charity.

Expenditure
Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Contractual arrangements are recognised as goods or services are supplied.

- Expenditure on raising funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.

continued...

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Expenditure
- Charitable activities include expenditure to support the wider and more effective use of technology to drive social change. Charitable activities include both the direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.
- Support costs include central functions and governance costs and have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Irrecoverable VAT
All resources expended are classified under activity headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of resources expended for which it was incurred.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Development costs
Intangible fixed assets represents the costs relating to the development of the AI software know as Worthwhile Chat. This will be written off over the useful life of the asset.

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Plant and machinery - 33% on cost

Individual assets costing £500 or more are capitalised.

Taxation
The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting
Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments
Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits
The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

continued...

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Donations	1,180	1,232

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Activity	31.3.26	31.3.25
		£	£
Grants	Digital capacity development	769,744	465,469
Service income	Digital capacity development	450,887	575,058
		1,220,631	1,040,527

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Refugee Action	-	31,294
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	22,500
Esmee Fairbairn	105,000	105,000
City Bridge Trust	-	10,000
IVAR	15,000	-
Lloyds Foundation	104,773	-
Fidelity	276,000	-
Tides Foundtion	55,771	57,299
The Disrupt Foundation	-	208,076
Digital Skills Consortium	35,200	8,800
Trust for London	20,000	22,500
Fund Gloucestershire	88,000	-
Deliotte	70,000	-
	769,744	465,469

4. RAISING FUNDS

Raising donations and legacies

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Staff costs	13,519	13,068

continued...

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct costs (see note 6)	Grant funding of activities (see note 7)	Support costs (see note 8)	Total
	£	£	£	£
Digital capacity development	643,294	129,802	122,343	895,439

6. DIRECT COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Staff costs	564,666	513,738
Subcontractors	50,116	289,090
Travel and subsistence	8,805	8,618
Other direct costs	19,707	34,284
	643,294	845,730

7. GRANTS PAYABLE

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Digital capacity development	129,802	157,117

The total grants paid to institutions during the year was as follows:

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
The Developer Society	150,000	132,000
Capitalised grant payable (Worthwhile Chat)	(90,000)	-
Deloitte Digital Connect	-	(3,445)
Platypus	10,575	7,050
Third Sector Lab	30,227	21,512
Scottish Tech Army	29,000	-
	129,802	157,117

The Developer Society
Onward grants comprised £60,000 for Fund Gloucestershire and £90,000 for Worthwhile Chat. The latter was capitalised as part of the Worthwhile Chat intangible asset.

Esmee Fairbairn Project
Onward grants to Platypus Digital and Third Sector Lab were part of the Esmee Fairbairn project.

Scottish Tech Army
Onwards grants were for Reuse for Financial Resilience.

continued...

8. SUPPORT COSTS

	Management	Governance costs	Total
	£	£	£
Digital capacity development	114,088	8,255	122,343

Support costs, included in the above, are as follows:

Management

	31.3.26 Digital capacity development	31.3.25 Total activities
	£	£
Wages	63,916	53,240
Social security	8,317	12,378
Pensions	3,327	4,169
Rent	3,950	4,088
Postage and stationery	807	574
Sundries	1,888	519
Equipment repairs and renewals	494	242
Software and licence expenses	2,188	2,607
Administration services	20,974	13,060
Bank charges	1,275	1,286
Training	72	300
Bookkeeping and payroll fees	1,965	1,452
Recruitment costs	3,202	-
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	1,713	1,280
Loss on sale of tangible fixed assets	-	1,131
	114,088	96,326

Governance costs

	31.3.26 Digital capacity development	31.3.25 Total activities
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	7,470	6,960
Trustee meetings and expenses	751	28
Legal fees	34	34
	8,255	7,022

continued...

9. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	7,470	6,960
Depreciation - owned assets	1,713	1,280
Other operating leases	3,950	4,088
Deficit on disposal of fixed assets	-	1,131

10. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

During the year no trustees received remuneration from the charitable company (31.3.25: £nil).

Trustees' expenses

During the year no trustee (31.3.25: one trustee) were reimbursed expenses by the charity for travel totalling £nil (31.3.25: £121).

11. STAFF COSTS

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Wages and salaries	625,831	513,873
Social Security costs	64,206	55,604
Other pension costs	31,960	27,116
Capitalised staff costs (Worthwhile Chat)	(68,252)	-
	653,745	596,593

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31.3.26	31.3.25
Charitable staff	10	8
Support staff	1	1
	11	9

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	31.3.26	31.3.25
£60,001 - £70,000	-	1
£70,001 - £80,000	1	-
£90,001 - £100,000	1	1
	2	2

continued...

12. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	1,232	-	1,232
Charitable activities			
Digital capacity development	625,152	415,375	1,040,527
Total	626,384	415,375	1,041,759
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	13,068	-	13,068
Charitable activities			
Digital capacity development	738,670	367,525	1,106,195
Total	751,738	367,525	1,119,263
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(125,354)	47,850	(77,504)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	173,409	12,138	185,547
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	48,055	59,988	108,043

13. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Development costs £
COST	
Additions	198,477
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2026	198,477
At 31 March 2025	-

Capitalised costs relate to Worthwhile Chat, a sector-focused AI tool designed to provide charity practitioners with a trusted space in which to explore AI safely and confidently, grounded in the realities of nonprofit work. The costs of developing Worthwhile Chat are being capitalised up to the point at which the tool is available for use. From that point onwards, the asset will be amortised over a period of two years, and any ongoing costs will be treated as revenue expenditure.

continued...

14. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Plant and machinery £
COST	
At 1 April 2025	8,321
Additions	1,978
At 31 March 2026	10,299
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 April 2025	5,305
Charge for year	1,713
At 31 March 2026	7,018
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2026	3,281
At 31 March 2025	3,016

15. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
Trade debtors	14,334	183,868
Other debtors	116,294	46,807
	130,628	230,675

16. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
Trade creditors	7,164	22,430
Social security and other taxes	751	-
VAT	27,688	52,362
Other creditors	89,516	90,709
	125,119	165,501

Deferred income

Deferred income comprises grant received for future financial periods.

	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
Balance brought forward	27,500	-
Amount release to incoming resources	(27,500)	-
Amount deferred in the year	-	27,500
Balance carried forward	-	27,500

continued...

17. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.26 Total funds £	31.3.25 Total funds £
Fixed assets	3,281	198,477	201,758	3,016
Current assets	193,655	150,602	344,257	270,528
Current liabilities	(85,995)	(39,124)	(125,119)	(165,501)
	110,941	309,955	420,896	108,043

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.25 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.26 £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	48,055	62,886	110,941
Restricted funds			
Fidelity	-	206,940	206,940
Okta	-	6,793	6,793
AI Knowledge Hub	11,448	(11,448)	-
Esmee Fairbairn	48,540	(37,148)	11,392
Fund Gloucestershire	-	2,450	2,450
AI Capacity Building/ Investing in the Power	-	9,647	9,647
Re-Use for Financial Resilience	-	9,351	9,351
Deloitte- Worthwhile Chat	-	63,382	63,382
	59,988	249,967	309,955
TOTAL FUNDS	108,043	312,853	420,896

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	522,267	(459,381)	62,886
Restricted funds			
Fidelity	276,000	(69,060)	206,940
Okta	55,771	(48,978)	6,793
AI Knowledge Hub	-	(11,448)	(11,448)
Esmee Fairbairn	105,000	(142,148)	(37,148)
Fund Gloucestershire	88,000	(85,550)	2,450
AI Capacity Building/ Investing in the Power	46,773	(37,126)	9,647
Re-Use for Financial Resilience	58,000	(48,649)	9,351
Deloitte- Worthwhile Chat	70,000	(6,618)	63,382
	699,544	(449,577)	249,967
TOTAL FUNDS	1,221,811	(908,958)	312,853

continued...

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.24 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.25 £
Unrestricted funds	173,409	(125,354)	48,055
Restricted funds			
Power to Change	12,138	(12,138)	-
AI Knowledge Hub	-	11,448	11,448
Esmee Fairbairn	-	48,540	48,540
	12,138	47,850	59,988
TOTAL FUNDS	185,547	(77,504)	108,043

Comparative net movement in funds included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds	626,384	(751,738)	(125,354)
Restricted funds			
The Disrupt Foundation	208,076	(208,076)	-
Power to Change	-	(12,138)	(12,138)
Okta	57,299	(57,299)	-
AI Knowledge Hub	45,000	(33,552)	11,448
Esmee Fairbairn	105,000	(56,460)	48,540
	415,375	(367,525)	47,850
TOTAL FUNDS	1,041,759	(1,119,263)	(77,504)

Disrupt Foundation
This grant is to develop a scalable and reusable digital product (or set of digital products) that can support civic society organisations to overcome shared challenges in providing better access, support and services to migrants and those seeking asylum.

Power to Change
Our Community Explore programme supported 20 community businesses over six months to delve into Community Tech using a user-centred, test-driven design approach. This work was part of the Power to Change Discovery Fund.

AI Knowledge Hub
Working with Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Trust for London to create and test an 'AI archivist' that has access to internal documents (such as board papers, discussions, minutes and decisions made) to be used to bring past-information into current meetings. The aim of this work is to understand how AI might usefully support institutional memory. A further part of this project is to look for alignment between the two organisations, to identify additional opportunities for knowledge sharing across the sector.

Esmee Fairbairn

continued...

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Working to sustain and further develop the key digital infrastructure of support helping charities make best use of digital, data and design. Funding from Esmee Fairbairn supports the continuation of services developed as part of Catalyst, and aims to increase the number of charities benefiting from this support.

Okta
Under their Okta for Good Fund, Okta is a long-term supporter of CAST, aiming to continue to build the sector's capacity around digital, data and AI. With Okta's support we are building spaces, resources and tools that enable charities to collectively develop their confidence and skills in AI.

Fidelity Foundation
Grant funding towards two new roles, Head of Design for AI, and Head of AI Technology, and a contribution to developing AI tools for use by UK charities in year one of the grant. The purpose of the work is to build the organisational capacity of CAST to research, design, develop and test AI technologies with and for the VCSE sector.

AI Capacity Building / Investing in the Power
Investing in the Power of Civil Society (IIPCS) is a National Lottery Community Fund programme that is piloting a new approach to grant holder support, providing tailored organisational development to charities through a consortium led by Lloyds Bank Foundation. Organisations will be referred through a shared diagnostic process to specialist partners based on their development needs. CAST is leading the Technology and AI support offer, helping organisations make better use of digital, data and design by connecting them with our existing programmes, resources and expertise while capturing learning that will shape both the pilot and any future national roll-out.

Fund Gloucestershire
The purpose of the grant is to bring about a vision where communities in Gloucestershire should have greater access to, and more power and say over, grant funding, by increasing the equity, accessibility, transparency and quantity of funding available across the county. The outputs of this grant will be Open IP tools that benefit communities across the UK, starting with a platform to support community organisations across Gloucestershire to access grant funding, and for funders working in Gloucestershire to more easily and equitably support community organisations. The open source technologies will be created by CAST and The Developer Society.

Reuse for Financial Resilience
In partnership with the Tech for Good Alliance, grant funding to explore and demonstrate how financial resilience charities can make better use of open source digital tools. The funding is to research and bring together open source tools that are available for reuse; to work with financial resilience organisations to identify opportunities and needs; and to work with the volunteer network of Tech for Good Alliance to support those charities to reuse these tools, or to create tools that are then made available for reuse.

Deloitte
Funding from Deloitte with the aim of bridging the AI/digital divide and accelerating safe, responsible AI adoption, across the charity sector. The project provides sponsored access for small charities to Worthwhile Chat, and peer-informed, step-by-step charity use-case features (embedded in Worthwhile Chat) that support charities' successful use and adoption.

continued...

19. EMPLOYEE BENEFIT OBLIGATIONS

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension costs charge represents contributions payable by the charitable company to this scheme and amounted to £31,960 (31.3.25: £27,116). There were £6,478 of outstanding contributions at 31 March 2026 (31.3.25: £5,176).

20. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2026 (31.3.25: none).

21. ULTIMATE CONTROLLING PARTY

The charitable company is under the control of its members. No one member has control of the charitable company.

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 09544506 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1161998

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

FOR

CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

Gibson Whitter Limited
Statutory Auditors
Larch House
Parklands Business Park
Denmead
Hampshire
PO7 6XP

CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

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CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2026. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Introduction

CAST (Centre for the Acceleration of Social Technology) is an award-winning UK charity working to accelerate the agency, presence and influence of social impact organisations in the technologies that affect us all.

Since 2015, we have been supporting social impact organisations to make the fullest use of digital technology (with an increasing focus on AI) - and working with funders, partners, digital specialists, government and other stakeholders to create a networked environment of support. Over the reporting period, we've reached more than 80,000 individuals.

Our mission is to ensure that every UK social impact organisation has the skills, confidence and opportunity to critically engage with digital and AI. In practice, this means ensuring that organisations are not passive recipients of developments in digital and AI - but active, confident and influential participants in shaping how it develops and who it serves.

We work directly with social impact organisations, helping them to become more responsive to their audiences' changing needs, behaviours and expectations, more test-driven, and more confident in embedding digital and AI into their organisational strategy, culture and services.

We also work closely with funders, advisory bodies, advocacy collectives, sector leaders and digital specialists to advocate for the sector, platform civil society's voices - and improve the quality and range of available digital and AI tools, training, funding and advice.

We continually connect organisations across the social sector and the wider support infrastructure. We share what we are learning, and build on the work of others through reuse. This reduces the costs of change, whilst enabling pace and scale.

We support social sector organisations to build their digital and AI capacity, so they will be better equipped to thrive in the face of rapid social, economic and technological change.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

How CAST contributes to the public benefit

CAST's vision is for an empowered, vocal and influential civil society, resilient and responsive to the changing needs, behaviours and expectations of their communities, confidently using digital and AI tools to maximise reach, efficiency and impact.

Digital and AI are continuing to reshape the ways in which charities reach communities and deliver services. At CAST, we want to ensure the social sector doesn't simply adapt to these changes, but takes an active role in shaping them. We work with charities and social impact organisations to help them critically engage with and embed digital and AI across their services, strategy and governance - and to explore new technologies as they emerge. We also work closely with funders and sector leaders to create an environment which supports charities to explore the full potential of existing and emerging technologies.

As laid out in our Theory of Change, we support charities to develop their agency (developing skills, relationships and practices); presence (creating charity and sector owned technologies) and influence (supporting leaders to have greater voice within and beyond the sector) in the technologies that affect us all.

The way in which we deliver support can be described by three parts: we incubate sector- and community-led interventions to develop and scale social impact through digital; we design and deliver training, peer support and programmes that build organisations' and individuals' abilities to use digital, data and design, and we host and support experiments in emerging technologies, particularly AI, enabling shared learning and faster progress in the responsible use of digital for positive social impact. At the heart of all three parts is CAST as a connector - between charities, funders, leaders and digital experts.

Our connection with multiple touchpoints across the sector means that we are at the forefront of understanding emerging trends and needs - and flexing our approaches accordingly, in order to offer the most valuable and timely support to the sector and the communities it serves. As such, a major part of our focus over the past 12 months has been working with thousands of social impact organisations, funders and sector leaders to identify the key challenges and opportunities with regard to AI, and design multiple strands of support and connection, engineered to meet the most pressing needs and priorities.

Ultimately, CAST's work strengthens social impact organisations' digital agency, presence and influence so they become more responsive and resilient within themselves - and better equipped to achieve their missions and deliver lasting public benefit.

In accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 and the associated Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, the trustees confirm that they have complied with their duties to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit as published by the Charity Commission, in exercising their powers and duties in the year under review.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Review of performance and achievements

Over the reporting period (1st April 2025 - 31st March 2026), we have reached more than 80,000 people from almost 5,000 organisations via our various programmes, tools, channels, resources and peer groups. We've helped thousands of charity practitioners to critically engage with digital and AI - and have worked with hundreds of funders, partners, digital specialists and other key stakeholders to create an environment of support for the sector.

In response to sector needs, we have increasingly focused on providing support, connection and advocacy with regard to AI specifically, whilst still maintaining a wider digital support offer. Below, we will lay out key achievements across all fronts over the reporting period.

AI: Identifying needs, developing support & strengthening connections

AI continues to form the basis for the majority of emerging needs, opportunities and concerns, across not only the social sector but also the supporting infrastructure.

We've seen this evidenced not just on a qualitative basis, through conversations with social sector organisations, funders and other stakeholders - but also via the quantitative data that comes in through our various communications channels: for example, the three most-accessed pages of our website during the reporting period were all AI-related.

By way of response, we have focused much of our time over the past year into supporting charities, social impact organisations, funders and other stakeholders to respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by AI, in order to bring about positive social change.

Naturally, since AI is now a thread that weaves throughout much of our work as standard, it will be referenced in other areas of this report - but in this section, we'll take a look at some of the key standalone AI support interventions offered by CAST over the reporting period.

AI research:
In order to stay at the forefront of changing sector needs, behaviours and priorities with regard to AI, we conduct both periodic and ongoing research. Since 2024, we've run an annual AI survey, and used the results - in conjunction with other research - to design support tailored to social sector organisations, as well as to influence the response from grantmakers. Our 2026 survey received 170 unique responses, which we synthesised to draw out key themes, needs and priorities. We shared the key findings - as well as associated support offerings - in a comprehensive survey blog in April 2026.

In addition to this annual snapshot, we also gather ongoing data via two tools developed by our Head of Technical AI Experiments: a Survey of Surveys dashboard and an Insight Engine.

The Survey of Surveys is a collaborative dashboard prototype, aggregating findings from five key sector reports. The dashboard synthesises complex data on AI adoption, sentiment, and readiness across UK charities, which serves as a baseline to help us identify resource gaps across the sector, particularly around training and risk management.

The Charity Sector AI Insight Engine is a collaborative platform designed to build a shared, data-informed understanding of artificial intelligence within the charity sector. Grounded in ethical principles, the engine applies Natural Language Processing tools to qualitative data sources, such as workshop notes, survey responses, and one-on-one consultations. By transforming qualitative feedback into structured, connected insights, the platform helps us anticipate training needs and design targeted interventions to help address the digital divide.

Moving forward, we plan to integrate the Insight Engine with the Survey of Surveys dashboard, and explore public-facing dissemination options, to provide a more holistic and unified view of AI adoption and sentiment across the charity sector.

All of this research helps us to understand where the gaps lie in terms of unmet needs and emerging priorities; we design support interventions to meet these, including the below:

AI self-serve course: We consistently hear that one of the biggest barriers to using AI is simply not knowing where to begin. To help charity practitioners build confidence and start experimenting responsibly, we launched a self-serve AI course in January 2025. In May 2026, we updated and extended the course: the new eight-week version includes new information on safety, risk and ethics, advice on prompting, and examples of real use cases.

Since launch, the AI self-serve course sign-up page has attracted more than 8,000 unique users, with almost 3,000 people starting the course. The course has returned an average open rate of 60% across the seven emails - with even the final email returning an open rate of 51%. Feedback has been very positive: 92% of survey respondents have described the course content as 'engaging and relevant' - and respondents returned an average result of 9 out of 10 when asked how likely they were to continue applying what they'd learned.

> *"I've just completed this course and I loved the format - a manageable email each week with reading and exercises helped me to fit around my day-to-day role without having to carve out a full day of learning. Really great content too. Thank you!"* - **AI self-serve course participant**

We've built on all survey feedback to create a follow-on AI course, designed for people who are advancing with AI, and want to support colleagues to do the same. Since launch, almost 200 people have started the course, with survey respondents returning an average result of 8 out of 10 in terms of continuing to apply what they'd learned. We're currently in the process of developing a similar course for senior leaders, expected to launch in August 2026.

Library of AI experiments: In speaking with charities and funders, we consistently hear calls for examples of the ways in which organisations are experimenting with AI. This was reflected in our 2026 AI survey, where more than 80% of respondents expressed a keen interest in gaining access to charities' AI case studies. In response, and as part of our wider partnership with Deloitte (see below), we created an MVP AI Experiment Library, designed to help charities and funders share their learnings. We tapped into our extensive network, supporting charities and funders to share their experiments as a short written summary.

We created a simple template so that participants could share the nature and purpose of the experiment - along with any key learnings. We conducted user testing to test an MVP of the service, and made improvements before publishing the library, with 34 experiments shared by more than 20 charities and funders. The library has proven very popular: the webpage attracted almost 5,000 unique users during the reporting period, and a selection of the experiments has been included in Make Sense Of It's new 2026 AI Playbook for charities.

Deloitte AI partnership: Between May and July 2025, CAST partnered with Deloitte to deliver an intensive AI learning programme for the charity sector. The series comprised three workshops, three drop-in Q&A clinics, two peer learning sessions, two funder briefings and the development of the Library of AI Experiments (see above) - all designed to help charities move from curiosity to practical AI capability.

The programme targeted smaller charities at risk of being left behind in the AI transition: over 80% of workshop participants were from small-to-medium organisations. Crucially, it reached decision-makers: four in ten participants were CEOs, directors or trustees.

Across live sessions and digital resources, the initiative reached over 2,200 individuals from 830 organisations, with participants reporting significant gains in confidence and understanding of the ways in which AI could advance their organisation's mission. Survey respondents rated the sessions as an average of 4.57 out of 5 - with 94% stating that they would recommend them to a peer.

> *"The team at CAST were really knowledgeable. I've got key takeaways to think about over the summer in terms of how AI might impact us, particularly around fundraising but also on a more strategic level."* - **Deloitte workshop participant**

Deloitte has also contributed significantly to the development of CAST's Worthwhile Chat tool, as detailed below.

Worthwhile AI: Over recent years, much of our work at CAST has been informed and guided by a framework of thought that we've termed 'Worthwhile AI'. The term helps ensure that our use of AI enhances our mission, serves our communities and aligns with our values, whilst also helping us work towards shaping AI that is genuinely worthwhile for all.

The 'Worthwhile AI' concept is an intentionally fluid one, but at the end of last year, we started sharing it externally - via a Q&A with CAST's Director Dan Sutch - partly to get a sense of how it resonated with the sector - and partly to set the scene for the launch of our Worthwhile Chat tool. We have built up the Worthwhile AI website over recent months, adding features such as an Events page. The website - which also hosts Worthwhile Chat (see below) launched on 20th January 2026: between then and the end of the reporting period (31st March), it registered 1,230 unique users and more than 2,500 page views.

Worthwhile Chat is a pioneering, sector-led AI tool, which we are building in collaboration with The Developer Society.The tool is designed to provide charity practitioners with a trusted space in which to explore AI safely and confidently, grounded in the realities of nonprofit work. Worthwhile Chat has been designed with sector values at its core: strong safeguards around data privacy, alongside a focus on peer learning and inspiration.

Over the past year, led by our Head of Design for AI alongside the CAST team, Worthwhile Chat has been developed from proof of concept through to Alpha Testing. With support from Deloitte, we are now preparing for a Beta Release, opening up the product to the 200 nonprofit staff that responded to calls for testers via our CAST and Digital Leads Network newsletters, plus our social media channels. In addition, 250 people have signed up to be alerted when the Worthwhile Chat tool officially launches.

With support from Deloitte, we've identified a series of common charity-specific AI-assisted tasks, and designed 'use case' prompts and guidelines that deliver high-quality, peer-informed outputs. During the reporting period, we began working on 16 such use cases: these are workable across Worthwhile Chat and any other generative AI tool; they launched to the sector in July 2026.

We're actively exploring governance of Worthwhile Chat and ways to cover development and running costs through subscription models, credit-based access, and sponsored licences. Building on our partnership with OKTA for Good, we're also building on Worthwhile AI to explore how we can best support teams to work well together, with and alongside AI tools.

Additional AI activity:
We have continued to update the 'living library' of frameworks, guides, case studies, courses, toolkits and other resources available in our online AI hub; added AI tools into our Digital Toolkit, and continued to share our AI Canvas and AI Spheres visual via our comms channels as well as at sector events. We've delivered AI-focused sessions at a range of sector events (including the Digital and Technology Conference, Digital Leaders AI Week, the Charity Digital AI Summit and the AI Impact Clarity Summit), as well as hosting several AI 'Lunch and Learn' sessions for funders and charities - reaching over 2,000 people across all events throughout the reporting period. In March, we were delighted to learn that CAST's Director Dan Sutch had been recognised by Computing as being one of the 25 most inspirational figures shaping AI today.

> *"Thanks for the excellent AI presentation last week. We thought that the panel session was one of the best that we have seen - with lots of challenging ideas."* - **Attendee at a CAST AI presentation**

At CAST, we take a holistic approach to AI, exploring the 'macro' picture alongside the 'micro', and exploring as a team via our internal AI Together learning initiative. We reflect - and encourage charities and funders to do the same - on what shifts in individuals' and communities' behaviours and expectations might mean for organisations' missions, and how changes in the socio-techno economic context will affect power dynamics and working conditions. We are committed to shaping conversations and designing support structures that ensure everyone has equal access to AI, and the power to use it for social good.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Peer connection: Creating communities and advocating for the sector

As the digital and AI landscape continues to move at pace, so the importance of connection and communication across the sector becomes ever more vital - and so a growing part of our work now involves bringing together individuals and communities for the purposes of support, inspiration and advocacy. We now convene three major groups, all of which are free to join - and all of which have exhibited significant growth over the past year:

AI for Grantmakers group: We set up the AI for Grantmakers group in late 2023, to provide a space for UK funders of all sizes to come together and explore approaches to AI. The group - which has now grown to comprise more than 500 people from 375 Trusts and Foundations across the UK - meets online every six weeks to hear spotlight talks from key sector leaders, and discuss the challenges and opportunities presented by AI.

The group consistently receives positive feedback from members: in the most recent all-group survey, respondents returned an average result of 8 (out of 10) in response to being asked how valuable the experience of being part of the group had been for them so far. In November 2025, we marked the two-year anniversary of the group by publishing a three-perspective blog, with contributions from Dan Sutch of CAST, Alex Parker of IVAR and Brian Yim Lim from Barts Charity, who is an active participant within the group.

> *"(I've gained) unrivalled thought-leadership, a sense of belonging, and the reassurance that we're all in this together. Our adoption and meaningful experimentation with AI has been successful because of the careful and practical suggestions that have come from CAST peers."* - **AI for Grantmakers peer group member**

Charity AI Task Force: Launched in February 2025, the task force is co-chaired by Dan Sutch (CAST) and Zoe Amar (Zoe Amar Digital). The collective - which now comprises more than 50 member organisations -exists to champion the responsible, inclusive and collaborative use of AI across the social sector. In May 2025, the task force issued a response to the government's AI Opportunities Action Plan, leading to regular contact with the Head of AI Adoption, Governance and Skills at the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology - maintained until DSIT's closure in July 2026. This helped to ensure that the charity perspective was included in conversations and decisions around AI.

Over the reporting period, task force members have helped to draft a set of principles, which have now been communicated to the group; identified a roadmap to achieving the objectives of the collective, and run numerous sub-groups exploring AI across the sector. Feedback from task force members is consistently positive: in an April 2026 survey, respondents returned an average score of 8 (out of 10) when asked to rate the value of membership.

Digital Leads Network: Established in 2022, the Digital Leads Network (DLN) brings together people who are leading, shaping or supporting digital work in charities, social enterprises and community organisations across the UK. The network offers quarterly meetups on specific digital topics, AI Learning Hours led by members of the network - and an optional AI Peer Group, which meets to explore opportunities, risks and real use cases.

The DLN had its most active 12 months to date between March 2025 and April 2026. The network grew to comprise more than 500 members from almost 400 UK charities and nonprofit organisations - more than doubling the previous year's membership intake. A full programme of online meetups, peer groups and informal networking delivered over 300 participations, with members consistently rating sessions 4.3 to 5 out of 5.

AI remained the defining theme of the period. Six AI Peer Group sessions brought together over 170 members to share experiments, navigate uncertainty and build confidence collectively. In early 2026, the DLN piloted a new format - AI Learning Hours - offering two session types (Show & Tell and Peer Discussion), all led by members of the network. The pilot confirmed that there was a strong appetite for practical peer learning, and surfaced clear direction for the programme going forward: five AI Learning Hours were held during the reporting period, with an average feedback score of 4.4 out of 5.

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Member feedback throughout the period was overwhelmingly positive. Participants consistently highlighted the value of hearing from peers, accessing real examples, and having protected space to think through challenges together - the very things the DLN was specifically designed to provide.

Throughout the reporting period, we've showcased various aspects of the DLN across our comms channels -including an annual round-up of DLN activity and a member spotlight interview. The dedicated DLN newsletter also continued to play an important role in keeping members connected, sharing resources, highlighting upcoming sessions and signposting member experiments. 27 emails were sent to the group during the reporting period, with an average open rate of 57% and a click rate of 24% - well above the sector average.

> *"I found the network meetup really inspiring. It's so interesting hearing how other non-profits are adapting to the ever-changing digital landscape to offer a better service for their communities. I always come away feeling excited about the future and full of great ideas!"* **-Digital Leads Network member**

Alongside the more structured Digital Leads Network, we have continued to run our Coffee Connections service, matching peers within the social sector every two months for an informal chat about digital. Across the reporting period, matches took place in June, October and November of 2025 and February of 2026. During the most recent round of matches, 325 people were matched - this is an increase of 16%year-on-year.

> *"Just had a fab Coffee Connections chat with my match this month. Do sign up for this if you want to meet new digital folk and hear about how they are using digital. It's free and fun. Thanks CAST!"* - **Coffee Connections participant**

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Cross-sector collaboration: connecting charities and funders

As well as creating discrete communities of charities, funders and advocates, we're constantly striving to create lines of connection between and across these different parts of the sector, in order to increase visibility of needs, priorities, expectations and activities - and join up support efforts. As a team, we are naturally moving across conversations with charities, funders and other stakeholders, and sharing (non-confidential) insights where relevant and useful - but we also have a number of more structured initiatives:

The AI Exchange: In March 2025, we joined forces with The Institute For Voluntary Action Research (IVAR), in an effort to help charities and funders engage with AI in ways that are responsible, equitable and rooted in trust. Via The AI Exchange collaboration, we've reached more than 1,300 charities and funders, through a mix of workshops, webinars, events and peer groups. We've co-led a series of bridging workshops, bringing charities and funders into the same space to examine AI and grantmaking in depth.

> *"Great that you are providing this platform for discussion and learning to help third sector staff explore and deepen their understanding of this rapidly developing and contentious group of tools. Thank you."* - **AI Exchange workshop participant**

In September 2025, the AI Exchange came together with the Technology Association of Grantmakers (TAG) in an event designed to reimagine the form-based grantmaking application process in the age of AI. Participants came up with five alternative prototypes - and we are in the process of organising a follow-up event for September 2026, to check in on progress. We have been making our progress available to the sector via a quarterly Digest.

We have also continued to maintain and promote the GrantAdvisor UK platform, designed to encourage open dialogue between UK social impact organisations and grantmakers, by collecting authentic, real-time reviews and comments on grantseekers' experiences of working with funders.

The GrantAdvisor UK platform now contains 620 anonymous reviews from grantseekers, with 42 funders registered on the service. This year we continued to support funders signed up to the service to grow and interpret their reviews. We also worked with IVAR to undertake a research project to explore what we can learn from the reviews in relation to their Open and Trusting commitments.

During the reporting period, the GrantAdvisor platform attracted over 3,000 unique visitors, with almost 10,000 page views. We also grew our GrantAdvisor UK following on Bluesky to encompass more than 500 followers.

Fund Gloucestershire: We worked with Fund Gloucestershire to develop a means for the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector in Gloucestershire to access the funding it needs. The project aimed to maximise resources for delivery and reduce the time and costs involved in applying for funds. For funders, the project aimed to ensure that more of the funds they give could be spent by successful applicants directly on activities and services - as well as freeing up time and resources to focus on setting purpose, outcomes and criteria for funding, and building relationships with applicants.

We delivered a research phase late last year, speaking to partners, funders and charities to understand their needs. We've been working with the Developer Society to develop and test an end-to-end MVP service that allows charities in the region to access funding opportunities more easily - and we've been experimenting with AI in the due diligence and assessment process.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Digital skills: Designing support and convening networks

We continue to maintain a range of evergreen digital skills resources, including the Digital Toolkit - a collection of 32 free tools and resources, designed to support organisations moving through the process of researching, defining and developing a digital product, platform or service. Over the reporting period, we added more AI resources, and promoted the toolkit as part of our AI courses, as well as via our various communications channels. As a result, the toolkit has attracted 4,318 unique users during the reporting period, with 7,880 overall page views: increases of 176% and 107% respectively, compared to last year.

We have also continued to promote our two self-serve digital courses: Learn User Research and Learn Design Thinking. Collectively, the sign-up pages have attracted more than 500 unique visitors during the reporting period, with 100 people signing up. And during the earlier part of the reporting period, we continued to add content to our Shared Digital Guides platform; this has now been paused whilst we work on the Library of AI Experiments and Worthwhile Chat use cases. During the reporting period, the Shared Digital Guides site attracted almost 5,000 unique visitors, with a combined total of 9,200 page views.

Throughout the reporting period, we also continued to receive funding from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to convene a network of support for the sector, comprising eight complementary initiatives - five led by other organisations (namely Agencies for Good, Digital Candle, Digital Trustees, Dovetail and The Curve) and three by CAST: Design Hops, the Digital Leads Network and a reuse infrastructure strand.

Overall, the eight funded initiatives have reached more than 12,200 people collectively over the past year - supported by a comms effort from CAST and Third Sector Lab. Six of the eight initiatives were covered in the CAST newsletter over the reporting period, resulting in 2,500 click-throughs, whilst the relevant LinkedIn posts attracted more than 6,000 impressions - and the dedicated webpage had 500 page views. A dedicated LinkedIn page, set up and maintained by Third Sector Lab, received a total of 112,000 impressions.

With regards to CAST's specific strands, we began promoting the 2026 Design Hop (our seven-week online training programme teaching innovative digital techniques) in March 2026 and the sessions began in April 2026, with 20 participants in attendance. When recruiting, we prioritised attendees from organisations led by people with lived experience, specifically holding a third of places to organisations meeting this criterion. Feedback was very positive: 100% of post-course survey respondents stated that they felt more confident talking about digital and using a design process within their organisation.

> *"I think it was excellent! I am glad we have a post course check-in. And glad of the opportunities to stay connected as I think that will help with the sustainability of this in my org."* - **Design Hops participant**

In terms of the reuse initiative, we worked to develop open IP and reuse approaches across our peer networks, including deep dives with five funders to integrate Open IP clauses into their grant making. We showcased reusable examples through our peer networks and digital spaces - and our set of best practice guidance for grantmakers remains open for reuse. In late 2025, we also established a new partnership with the Tech for Good Alliance: with support from Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales Financial Resilience Fund, we're supporting charities to find and use digital tools that meet their needs.

Although the official funding period for the Esmée initiative has come to a close, the network members remain connected: all initiatives remain live, and we hope to work together on future opportunities to support the sector.

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Investing in the Power of Civil Society: We're working with The National Lottery Community Fund, Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales and a host of other partners on this Grant Holder Support Programme pilot. Together, we are testing a new model of tailored support for charities and community interest companies, to help them build resilience, adapt to change and thrive. Beyond this, we are reimagining how funders and partners can join forces in new ways to ensure civil society organisations can navigate an increasingly complex landscape. Over the course of the year we have worked with Lloyds Bank Foundation and the partnership to both secure funding for this pilot from The National Lottery Community Fund and design an approach to providing capacity building support for around 640 organisations as well as embed partnership working. The programme operates for 12 months from April 2026 - April 2027. As part of this, we are exploring and testing the potential role of AI to help connect charities with the best placed support to build on their strengths and to develop their capacity.

Consultancy: Providing support and advice to charities and funders

In addition to providing programmes, resources, services, peer groups and platforms, we also work on a one-to-one basis with organisations, providing a range of bespoke consultancy services which include modular support on AI, project management, ways of working, MEL (monitoring, evaluation and learning), user-centred research and design, co-production, service delivery - and more. During the reporting period, we worked with the organisations as below:

The National Lottery Community Fund: In a project that began in October 2025, we are supporting the design and delivery of an internal Digital Accelerator within The National Lottery Community Fund to reinvent the way in which organisations apply for and receive funding, with the objective of making it easier and more accessible, particularly for grass-roots organisations. We are working with them to discover, design, test and deliver a new digitally-enabled approach to grantmaking, bringing together a cross-functional team?from across the Fund, working with CAST, IVAR and The Developer Society. Ultimately we are trying to dramatically reduce the time and effort it takes for grassroots organisations to secure the funding needed to support their communities.

We've seconded six staff from funding portfolios across the Fund to be our Accelerator subject matter experts - ensuring representation of funding practices across the nations. We're also joined by service design, digital and tech experts from across the Fund to ensure best practice and integration beyond the accelerator timeline. We're carrying out user interviews and testing with funding staff with expertise in grantmaking, EDI, compliance, risk, data and other important areas. We've summed up the progress to date in a Q&A blog.

The Clothworkers' Foundation: Our 12-month contract to manage digital infrastructure applications to The Clothworkers' Foundation's Open Grants Programmes was extended for six months, and is due to finish in the summer of 2026. Over the past year, the CAST team has assessed applications for grants of between£5,000 and £50,000, making around £700,000 worth of grants to almost 70 organisations across the UK. This work provides the building blocks of digital maturity across the sector, especially as differing levels of AI adoption threaten to widen digital inequalities.

A blog published in January outlined some of the learnings and developments from the programme, including supporting Clothworkers' Foundation to introduce an Impact Framework that allows assessors to prioritise between eligible applications on lived experience and projects that enable significant organisational change.

One of the main learnings from the past year has been that the huge demand for funding in this area is much greater than one funder can possibly meet. In response, Clothworkers' Foundation and CAST are in the process of consulting with interested funders to consider ways to collaborate.

Deloitte UK: Between June and October of last year, we led an independent research review of Deloitte's Laptop Donation Programme - one of the UK's longest-running corporate device donation schemes. The review included interviews with beneficiaries and key stakeholders, alongside desktop research into comparable schemes. The research found strong foundations, while identifying clear opportunities to deepen impact through wrap-around support (connectivity; digital skills; accessibility), improved impact capture, and a new strategic disability-focused pilot. The review resulted in an action plan with three strands: a proposed 'Tech for Disability' pilot with the Digital Services Consortium, business-as-usual refinements to the donation package, and a stronger impact and storytelling approach.

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Lucy Faithfull Foundation: In an ongoing project which began in 2023, we are helping the Foundation to deliver their groundbreaking Intercept project. Throughout the reporting period, we continued to support the Foundation to deliver the project and embed an innovation approach across the organisation. More information about Lucy Faithfull's work can be found in the Foundation's interim report. This support will continue throughout 2026.

National Lottery Heritage Fund: From October 2025 until March 2026, we worked with the Heritage Lottery to develop a three-year AI action plan. We led the work from discovery through to the final plan, developing it collaboratively with staff across the organisation. The plan covers the key areas of governance, capability and adoption - and takes a phased, evidence-led approach that reflects the Heritage Fund's public accountability obligations and the pace of change in the field.

The Digital Services Consortium (DSC): In a two-year project, which began in February 2025, we are working as an Evaluation and Learning partner to the DSC - an alliance of 12 leading UK charities supporting disabled and seriously ill children and young people and their families. We have worked to embed shared principles, establish robust learning loops and impact measurement, and support collaboration across the programme as they developed their digital and hybrid services. We're co-designing the programme's evaluation framework as well as offering support to develop the digital leads in the partnership.

At the heart of this is the community of practice, facilitated by CAST. Members meet quarterly to share honest accounts of what is and isn't working, and come away with ideas they can apply directly. Many describe feeling understood by peers facing the same challenges in a way they don't within their everyday working lives. It is also where much of the year's most important learning has taken shape: a year in, members are growing into more confident digital leaders and the consortium has developed a richer, shared understanding of digital exclusion through its collective learning and experience.

> *"I think that the community of practice sessions have been the 'glue' of the consortium at an operational level. My team have learnt so much. I think that it's important to capture this as part of the value of us all working together whether we have a project or not."*
> **- Digital Services Consortium participant**

Trades Union Congress (TUC): As part of the TUC's 'Leading Change' programme, we worked once again with the TUC Digital Lab to design and deliver a transformative digital change leadership module.

Prudence Trust: We are providing light touch support over three years as Prudence Trust supports two organisations using digital tools to support young people's mental health. This is a new area of work for Prudence Trust and our support aims to help both the charities they're funding and the Prudence Trust team.

Communications: Showcasing CAST's identity and purpose
Over the past year, we have further strengthened our efforts to amplify the visibility and awareness of CAST: the organisation itself; the services we offer, and the networks and connections we are creating - so that our support can reach as many individuals and organisations as possible. In 2025, we were shortlisted for Charity of the Year in the Charity Times Awards.

Our Medium platform acts as a hub to capture learnings, reflections and advice from all those within the CAST community. During the reporting period, 29 articles were published, collectively attracting more than 16,000 views: this is a 72% increase in views, compared to the last reporting period.

We're committed to openly sharing stories and perspectives directly from the small but mighty core team involved in programme delivery, as well as from those in supporting roles. During the reporting period, seven members of the 11-strong CAST team wrote and submitted Medium articles, with topics including AI experimentation, Digital Leads Network news, AI survey results, Clothworkers' Foundation learnings, perspectives on 'worthwhile' AI, reflections from our AI Together internal learning programme, and insights into the ways that charities and funders are using AI.

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As well as providing content designed to inform and inspire the sector, we highlighted aspects of CAST as an organisation, with details of our all-staff meetup, a series of 'Top Ten' articles to highlight our tenth anniversary, and two Q&A pieces introducing the new members of the team. Going forward, we are looking into commissioning blogs from some of the sector leaders and specialists we work with, in order to share perspectives, insights and resources from around the wider network.

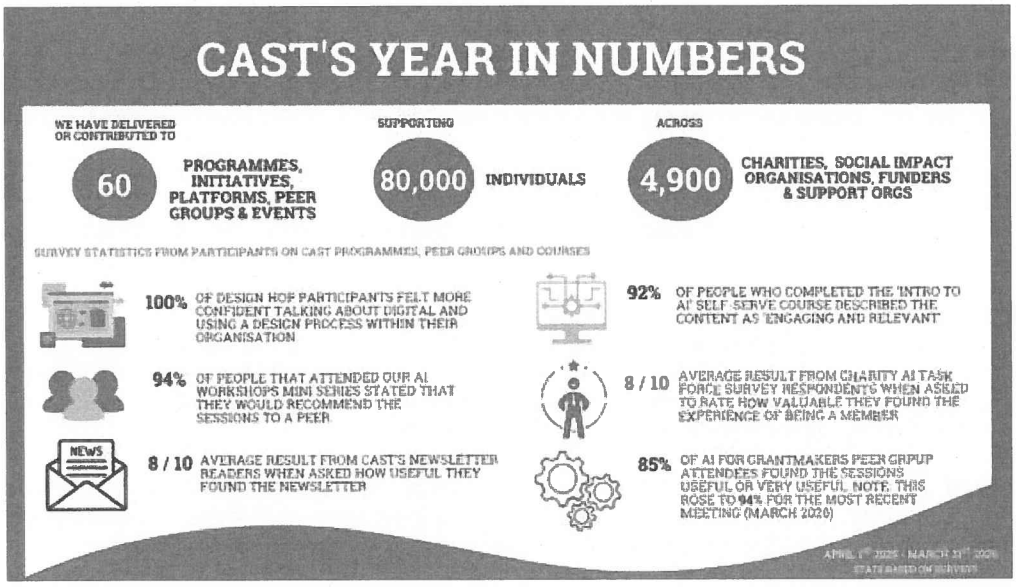
Over the reporting period, we have regularly updated our website with the latest projects, programmes, resources, events and opportunities - as well as with updated impact figures and organisational developments. Engagement figures for the reporting period are significantly higher than previously: 32,000 unique users, compared to 19,600 last year.

We have also continued to send out our regular newsletter: this is sent to our audience of 6,000 individuals each month (with a break for the August and December holidays), and returns high open and click rates: over the reporting period, the newsletter averaged an open rate of 42% and a click rate of 10% - both significantly higher than sector standard. Feedback is consistently positive: respondents to our most recent survey returned an average score of 8 when asked how useful they found the newsletter, on a scale of 0 to 10.

> *"The newsletter is really good - the mix of content is always really good. It also has a nice tone to it and is clearly laid out."* - **CAST newsletter reader**

We also continue to share regular posts across social media: we post regularly on our LinkedIn and Bluesky channels: during the reporting period, we shared hundreds of original posts across both channels, resulting in thousands of clicks through to the content across our various communications platforms.

Throughout the reporting period, we reached more than 58,600 people via our communications channels alone: a significant increase on last year's 40,000. The infographic below provides a snapshot of our impact over the reporting period; see the impact page of our website for more information.



Throughout this report, we've provided a snapshot of the many positive comments we have received over the past 12 months. You can see more in our full testimonials reel. If you'd like to get in touch to tell us about your experience with CAST, we'd love to hear from you: please email hello@wearecast.org.uk.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

Income

Total income of £1.2m is 17% above income for 2024/25.

Income comprised £276k of grant funding from the Fidelity Foundation, £105k of grant funding from the Lloyds Bank Foundation, £105k of grant income from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, service income of £575k, and a number of smaller grants and donations.

Expenditure

The charity's primary expenditure continues to be incurred on supporting charities and social enterprises to improve their services with digital technology. Expenditure on digital capacity development was £900k during the year.

Of this expenditure, £130k was paid out as direct grants, and £50k was spent on sub-contracted digital support provided by external partners.

In addition to the digital capacity development costs we incurred £122k on support costs and £14k on fund-raising.

A further £198k was invested in capital expenditure during the year, in the development of Worthwhile Chat, an exciting new project for CAST. This expenditure comprised direct grants of £90k, and staff time, with a small share of support costs.

Reserves policy

The Charity has a risk-based reserves policy.

This entails assessing the ideal reserve level through review of a number of key elements.

These elements at present (excluding restricted funds) are :-

- Any funds received as time-limited, unrestricted income, which have not yet been spent
- A basic working capital buffer, equivalent to one month's operating costs - this is not to cover loss of income, but simply a timing buffer
- Potential loss of income cover - this will reflect the income pipeline at the point of annual budget finalisation, on a risk basis - with no cover needed for 100% certain income, then 10% cover needed for income included in the budget with a 90% likelihood, etc.
- Potential unforeseen cost income - this element will be hardest to estimate, but will be assessed on a risk basis for known risk areas - for example, a risk of additional costs relating to the possible Catalyst transition, or the excess of insurance policies.

These are cumulative, i.e. added to give a total reserves requirement, within a margin of +/- 20%.

Applying this policy indicates a reserves target for the year end of £218,000.

Year end free reserves (total reserves less fixed assets) were within this range, at £219k, of which £111k was held as unrestricted funds. The trustees therefore regard CAST's year end reserves position as acceptable, whilst recognising the need to develop increased unrestricted reserves in future periods.

Total reserves also include further restricted fund balances relating to the Worthwhile Chat asset - these additional reserves are not part of CAST's free reserves.

FUTURE OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

The unprecedented pace of adoption of generative AI - and the opportunities and impacts that brings - demands that we continue to increase our focus on supporting mission-driven organisations to respond to these changes, and to get to a position where the communities they serve can be central to the decisions and uses around AI. We will continue to support charity practitioners, mission driven organisations and focus on sector-strengthening approaches that ensure that civil society has a stronger influence.

To do this, CAST will continue to focus on accelerating the agency, presence and influence of social impact organisations in the technologies that affect us all. Developing the agency ensures charity practitioners can critically engage with digital and AI tools, appropriately using them to create greater impact in their work. We'll continue to invest in training; capacity building; leadership development and sharing examples of emerging practices. We'll continue to focus on strengthening the number and depth of relationships between charity digital leads - especially through the Digital Leads Network and the AI for Grantmakers peer group. We'll also continue to sense and respond to new behaviours and needs around AI, for example, exploring how high value-creating teams can best work with and alongside AI.

Developing the presence of social impact organisations in technology aims to ensure the values of civil society are embedded within digital tools. We'll continue to support social impact organisations to develop digital services and products; we'll continue to incubate technologies and initiatives that help to create the digital infrastructure for civil society, and we'll continue to focus on growing the use and reuse of open, sector and community owned technologies. We will focus our efforts on creating and supporting sector- and community-owned technologies - those technologies built, designed with, and owned by the sector and those impacted by their use. This includes further development of safe tools for charity practitioners to build their confidence and experience, as well as the development of sector-owned tools that can be reused across the sector.

Ensuring social impact organisations have greater influence and reach remains a key part of our strategy, and demands even greater focus in the year ahead. We will continue to support initiatives that strive to platform sector leaders and connect them with those in positions of power and authority. As part of this, we will continue our work co-chairing the Charity AI Task Force and advocating for the responsible, inclusive and collaborative use of AI across the social sector.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006. The charity's trustees are also directors and members of the company.

Governance

CAST has appointed trustees that bring a strong understanding of the potential of technology to address social challenges. The trustees who served during the period were as follows: Lara Burns, Ha Cole, Kate Collins, Gaia Ines Fassò (Chair), Nic Granger OBE and Pema Radha.

Current trustees (as of August 2026) are as follows: Lara Burns, Ha Cole, Gaia Ines Fassò (Chair) and Nic Granger OBE. To aid the effective governance of the charity, we also operate a Finance and Audit committee (chaired by Nic Granger OBE) with delegated authority as set out in an agreed Scheme of Delegation.

With huge thanks and gratitude, two of our trustees, Kate Collins and Pema Radha, stepped down during this period. Both of these trustees have played a huge role in supporting and extending the impact of CAST, for which we are all incredibly grateful.

In May 2026, we undertook a recruitment exercise to recruit a number of new trustees to help us lead the sector in AI capacity building and policy influence. We specified that we were particularly keen to hear from people working in small or medium-sized charities, social sector infrastructure organisations and people with policy and government networking experience - as well as those people currently underrepresented within our organisation and the wider sector, including people from minoritised communities, disabled people, LGBTQ+ people, younger people, and people from working-class or other underrepresented backgrounds. We shared the opportunity across our communications channels, as well as via sector jobs sites, and received around 20 strong applications from across the sector. Interviews took place in July 2026, with successful candidates (Aaron Barbour, Yunze Wang and Julie Leonard) set to join their first Board meeting in September 2026.

The Board has adopted the Charity Governance Code and ensures compliance through regular review.

Risk Management

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

The Board of Trustees systematically reviews the risks faced by the charity, reviewing the detailed risk register on a quarterly basis. A strong risk management process is in place whereby delivery, strategic, and organisational risks are identified, recorded, and, where appropriate, escalated to the management team and trustees. Risks are also discussed weekly at Platform Team meetings and reflected in evolving organisational priorities.

The key risks to the Charity are:

- **Strengthening financial resilience and securing long-term funding.** CAST continues to maintain a strong reputation with funders and a growing pipeline of opportunities, particularly in areas such as AI and digital capability. As our work often leads sector innovation, we recognise that funding can follow in cycles, with peaks of investment often arriving after CAST has already stepped into new spaces. While the timing of funding decisions can be unpredictable, we are actively managing this through strong oversight of cashflow, a flexible reserves policy, and by deepening relationships with both existing and new funders. We are focused on building multi-year, core funding partnerships and aligning business development more closely with our strategic areas of impact.

- **Navigating ethical complexity and pace of AI development.** The speed of change in generative AI presents both opportunities and risks. CAST needs to maintain a balanced position, building the sector's capacity for 'worthwhile AI' while recognising the potential harms. We believe that helping charities develop a critical and practical understanding of AI will support the sector to have a stronger voice in championing the needs of our communities. Developing that understanding means creating opportunities for organisations to engage with AI, experience it in practice, and explore both its potential and its challenges. We have strengthened our leadership in this area through new AI-focused hires, the continued development of the Charity AI Task Force, and strong engagement with funders and sector organisations. We remain committed to a thoughtful and collaborative approach to shaping the sector's role and voice in AI innovation.
- **Strategic influence and relevance**. Delivering on the third pillar of CAST's strategy, sector-wide and beyond-sector influencing, requires us to strengthen our external engagement and connect our influencing work more closely with our internal expertise. We are building this capability through partnerships, networked influencing through the Charity AI Task Force, collaboration with sector-leading organisations, and greater participation in sector events and forums. Continuing to centre the voices of charities and communities in the national digital conversation rem ains a critical part of how we mitigate this risk.

Closing remarks

Across the reporting period, CAST has continued to strengthen the social sector's ability to engage critically and confidently with digital and AI. By combining practical support, peer learning, research, partnerships and advocacy, we are helping organisations not only respond to technological change, but play an active role in shaping it.

CAST's work is carried out by our core team of 11 people, guided by the Board and united by a clear set of values, co-designed by the whole team. However, as a networked organisation, we are continually collaborating with others in order to drive positive change across the sector - and as such, we'd like to thank all of the charities, funders, partners, digital specialists, peer group members, sector leaders and other individuals and organisations that have engaged with CAST over the past 11 years. Together, we are working to shape a future where civil society leads the way in using digital and AI responsibly, inclusively and for social good.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number
09544506 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number
1161998

Registered office
Broul Cottage Bath Road
Nailsworth
Stroud
Gloucestershire
GL6 0QL

Trustees

Emma Thomas	(resigned 30 April 2025)
Kathryn Collins	(resigned 31 December 2025)
Gaia-Ines Fasso	(appointed 25 November 2020)
Pema Radha	(resigned 31 December 2025)
Lara Burns	(appointed 25 November 2020)
Ha Thi Thu Cole	(appointed 24 September 2024
Nicola Granger OBE	(appointed 24 September 2024)

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Auditors
Gibson Whitter Limited
Statutory Auditors
Larch House
Parklands Business Park
Denmead
Hampshire
PO7 6XP

Bankers
Unity Trust Bank
London
WC1B 3LN

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also the directors of Centre for the Acceleration of Social Technology for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law).

Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 09/10/26 and signed on its behalf by:

.....
Ms Fasso - Trustee

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Centre for the Acceleration of Social Technology (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2026 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement 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 (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2026 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 Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company 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 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 charitable company'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 trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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.

Opinions 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 Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

Matters on which we are required to report by exception
In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where 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 take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees
As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, 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 charitable company'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 charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

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 a Report of the Independent Auditors 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.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

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 charitable company and sector, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to breaches of employment law, data protection and anti-bribery and corruption legislation, 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 financial statements such as the Charities acts, Companies Act 2006 and UK tax legislation. We evaluated management's incentives and 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 to overstate profit and management bias in accounting estimates. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Discussions with management and Trustee Directors, including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- Identifying and testing journal entries, in particular any journal entries posted with unusual account combinations;
- As required by ISA 240, incorporating an element of unpredictability into our audit testing.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

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 Report of the Independent Auditors.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS OF CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company'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 charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' 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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Gavin Whitter FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Gibson Whitter Limited
Statutory Auditors
Larch House
Parklands Business Park
Denmead
Hampshire
PO7 6XP

Date: 13/10/16

CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.26 Total funds £	31.3.25 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	1,180	-	1,180	1,232
Charitable activities	3				
Digital capacity development		521,087	699,544	1,220,631	1,040,527
Total		522,267	699,544	1,221,811	1,041,759
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	4	13,519	-	13,519	13,068
Charitable activities	5				
Digital capacity development		445,862	449,577	895,439	1,106,195
Total		459,381	449,577	908,958	1,119,263
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		62,886	249,967	312,853	(77,504)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		48,055	59,988	108,043	185,547
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		110,941	309,955	420,896	108,043

The notes form part of these financial statements

CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2026

	Notes	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Intangible assets	13	198,477	-
Tangible assets	14	3,281	3,016
		201,758	3,016
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	15	130,628	230,675
Cash at bank		213,629	39,853
		344,257	270,528
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	16	(125,119)	(165,501)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		219,138	105,027
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		420,896	108,043
NET ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)		420,896	108,043
FUNDS	18		
Unrestricted funds		110,941	48,055
Restricted funds		309,955	59,988
TOTAL FUNDS		420,896	108,043

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on .....09/10/'26..... and were signed on its behalf by:

.....
Ms Fasso - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

	Notes	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	374,231	(346,618)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		374,231	(346,618)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of intangible fixed assets		(198,477)	-
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,978)	(1,300)
Net cash used in investing activities		(200,455)	(1,300)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		173,776	(347,918)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		39,853	387,771
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		213,629	39,853

The notes form part of these financial statements

CENTRE FOR THE ACCELERATION OF SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY

NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	312,853	(77,504)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	1,713	1,280
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	-	1,131
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	100,047	(123,782)
Decrease in creditors	(40,382)	(147,743)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operations	374,231	(346,618)

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1.4.25 £	Cash flow £	At 31.3.26 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank	39,853	173,776	213,629
	39,853	173,776	213,629
Total	39,853	173,776	213,629

The notes form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements
The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Going concern
The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that financial risks are manageable, through appropriate monitoring of new income streams, and readiness to respond promptly in the event of adverse variances. The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves, for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty
In the application of the Charitable Company's accounting policies, the trustee directors may be required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on the 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 currently no critical estimates or judgements requiring disclosure in addition to the accounting policies described.

Income
Voluntary income including donations, gifts and legacies and grants that provide core funding or are of a general nature are recognised where there is entitlement, the receipt is probable and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Income received under contract or where entitlement to grant funding is subject to specific performance conditions. Such income is only deferred when:

- the donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting periods; or
- the donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional entitlement.

Income from activities to generate funds, such as services provided, and investment income are recognised on a receivable basis.

Volunteers and donated services
The value of services provided by volunteers is not incorporated into these financial statements.

Where goods or services are provided to the charity as a donation that would normally be purchased from suppliers, this contribution is included in the financial statements at an estimate based on the value of the contribution to the charity.

Expenditure
Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred. Contractual arrangements are recognised as goods or services are supplied.

- Expenditure on raising funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.

continued...

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Expenditure
- Charitable activities include expenditure to support the wider and more effective use of technology to drive social change. Charitable activities include both the direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.
- Support costs include central functions and governance costs and have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Irrecoverable VAT
All resources expended are classified under activity headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of resources expended for which it was incurred.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Development costs
Intangible fixed assets represents the costs relating to the development of the AI software know as Worthwhile Chat. This will be written off over the useful life of the asset.

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Plant and machinery - 33% on cost

Individual assets costing £500 or more are capitalised.

Taxation
The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting
Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments
Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits
The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

continued...

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Donations	1,180	1,232

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Activity	31.3.26	31.3.25
		£	£
Grants	Digital capacity development	769,744	465,469
Service income	Digital capacity development	450,887	575,058
		1,220,631	1,040,527

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Refugee Action	-	31,294
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	22,500
Esmee Fairbairn	105,000	105,000
City Bridge Trust	-	10,000
IVAR	15,000	-
Lloyds Foundation	104,773	-
Fidelity	276,000	-
Tides Foundtion	55,771	57,299
The Disrupt Foundation	-	208,076
Digital Skills Consortium	35,200	8,800
Trust for London	20,000	22,500
Fund Gloucestershire	88,000	-
Deliotte	70,000	-
	769,744	465,469

4. RAISING FUNDS

Raising donations and legacies

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Staff costs	13,519	13,068

continued...

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct costs (see note 6)	Grant funding of activities (see note 7)	Support costs (see note 8)	Total
	£	£	£	£
Digital capacity development	643,294	129,802	122,343	895,439

6. DIRECT COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Staff costs	564,666	513,738
Subcontractors	50,116	289,090
Travel and subsistence	8,805	8,618
Other direct costs	19,707	34,284
	643,294	845,730

7. GRANTS PAYABLE

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Digital capacity development	129,802	157,117

The total grants paid to institutions during the year was as follows:

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
The Developer Society	150,000	132,000
Capitalised grant payable (Worthwhile Chat)	(90,000)	-
Deloitte Digital Connect	-	(3,445)
Platypus	10,575	7,050
Third Sector Lab	30,227	21,512
Scottish Tech Army	29,000	-
	129,802	157,117

The Developer Society
Onward grants comprised £60,000 for Fund Gloucestershire and £90,000 for Worthwhile Chat. The latter was capitalised as part of the Worthwhile Chat intangible asset.

Esmee Fairbairn Project
Onward grants to Platypus Digital and Third Sector Lab were part of the Esmee Fairbairn project.

Scottish Tech Army
Onwards grants were for Reuse for Financial Resilience.

continued...

8. SUPPORT COSTS

	Management	Governance costs	Total
	£	£	£
Digital capacity development	114,088	8,255	122,343

Support costs, included in the above, are as follows:

Management

	31.3.26 Digital capacity development	31.3.25 Total activities
	£	£
Wages	63,916	53,240
Social security	8,317	12,378
Pensions	3,327	4,169
Rent	3,950	4,088
Postage and stationery	807	574
Sundries	1,888	519
Equipment repairs and renewals	494	242
Software and licence expenses	2,188	2,607
Administration services	20,974	13,060
Bank charges	1,275	1,286
Training	72	300
Bookkeeping and payroll fees	1,965	1,452
Recruitment costs	3,202	-
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	1,713	1,280
Loss on sale of tangible fixed assets	-	1,131
	114,088	96,326

Governance costs

	31.3.26 Digital capacity development	31.3.25 Total activities
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	7,470	6,960
Trustee meetings and expenses	751	28
Legal fees	34	34
	8,255	7,022

continued...

9. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration	7,470	6,960
Depreciation - owned assets	1,713	1,280
Other operating leases	3,950	4,088
Deficit on disposal of fixed assets	-	1,131

10. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

During the year no trustees received remuneration from the charitable company (31.3.25: £nil).

Trustees' expenses

During the year no trustee (31.3.25: one trustee) were reimbursed expenses by the charity for travel totalling £nil (31.3.25: £121).

11. STAFF COSTS

	31.3.26	31.3.25
	£	£
Wages and salaries	625,831	513,873
Social Security costs	64,206	55,604
Other pension costs	31,960	27,116
Capitalised staff costs (Worthwhile Chat)	(68,252)	-
	653,745	596,593

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31.3.26	31.3.25
Charitable staff	10	8
Support staff	1	1
	11	9

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	31.3.26	31.3.25
£60,001 - £70,000	-	1
£70,001 - £80,000	1	-
£90,001 - £100,000	1	1
	2	2

continued...

12. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	1,232	-	1,232
Charitable activities			
Digital capacity development	625,152	415,375	1,040,527
Total	626,384	415,375	1,041,759
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	13,068	-	13,068
Charitable activities			
Digital capacity development	738,670	367,525	1,106,195
Total	751,738	367,525	1,119,263
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(125,354)	47,850	(77,504)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	173,409	12,138	185,547
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	48,055	59,988	108,043

13. INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Development costs £
COST	
Additions	198,477
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2026	198,477
At 31 March 2025	-

Capitalised costs relate to Worthwhile Chat, a sector-focused AI tool designed to provide charity practitioners with a trusted space in which to explore AI safely and confidently, grounded in the realities of nonprofit work. The costs of developing Worthwhile Chat are being capitalised up to the point at which the tool is available for use. From that point onwards, the asset will be amortised over a period of two years, and any ongoing costs will be treated as revenue expenditure.

continued...

14. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Plant and machinery £
COST	
At 1 April 2025	8,321
Additions	1,978
At 31 March 2026	10,299
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 April 2025	5,305
Charge for year	1,713
At 31 March 2026	7,018
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2026	3,281
At 31 March 2025	3,016

15. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
Trade debtors	14,334	183,868
Other debtors	116,294	46,807
	130,628	230,675

16. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
Trade creditors	7,164	22,430
Social security and other taxes	751	-
VAT	27,688	52,362
Other creditors	89,516	90,709
	125,119	165,501

Deferred income

Deferred income comprises grant received for future financial periods.

	31.3.26 £	31.3.25 £
Balance brought forward	27,500	-
Amount release to incoming resources	(27,500)	-
Amount deferred in the year	-	27,500
Balance carried forward	-	27,500

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17. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.26 Total funds £	31.3.25 Total funds £
Fixed assets	3,281	198,477	201,758	3,016
Current assets	193,655	150,602	344,257	270,528
Current liabilities	(85,995)	(39,124)	(125,119)	(165,501)
	110,941	309,955	420,896	108,043

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.25 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.26 £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	48,055	62,886	110,941
Restricted funds			
Fidelity	-	206,940	206,940
Okta	-	6,793	6,793
AI Knowledge Hub	11,448	(11,448)	-
Esmee Fairbairn	48,540	(37,148)	11,392
Fund Gloucestershire	-	2,450	2,450
AI Capacity Building/ Investing in the Power	-	9,647	9,647
Re-Use for Financial Resilience	-	9,351	9,351
Deloitte- Worthwhile Chat	-	63,382	63,382
	59,988	249,967	309,955
TOTAL FUNDS	108,043	312,853	420,896

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	522,267	(459,381)	62,886
Restricted funds			
Fidelity	276,000	(69,060)	206,940
Okta	55,771	(48,978)	6,793
AI Knowledge Hub	-	(11,448)	(11,448)
Esmee Fairbairn	105,000	(142,148)	(37,148)
Fund Gloucestershire	88,000	(85,550)	2,450
AI Capacity Building/ Investing in the Power	46,773	(37,126)	9,647
Re-Use for Financial Resilience	58,000	(48,649)	9,351
Deloitte- Worthwhile Chat	70,000	(6,618)	63,382
	699,544	(449,577)	249,967
TOTAL FUNDS	1,221,811	(908,958)	312,853

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18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.24 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.25 £
Unrestricted funds	173,409	(125,354)	48,055
Restricted funds			
Power to Change	12,138	(12,138)	-
AI Knowledge Hub	-	11,448	11,448
Esmee Fairbairn	-	48,540	48,540
	12,138	47,850	59,988
TOTAL FUNDS	185,547	(77,504)	108,043

Comparative net movement in funds included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds	626,384	(751,738)	(125,354)
Restricted funds			
The Disrupt Foundation	208,076	(208,076)	-
Power to Change	-	(12,138)	(12,138)
Okta	57,299	(57,299)	-
AI Knowledge Hub	45,000	(33,552)	11,448
Esmee Fairbairn	105,000	(56,460)	48,540
	415,375	(367,525)	47,850
TOTAL FUNDS	1,041,759	(1,119,263)	(77,504)

Disrupt Foundation
This grant is to develop a scalable and reusable digital product (or set of digital products) that can support civic society organisations to overcome shared challenges in providing better access, support and services to migrants and those seeking asylum.

Power to Change
Our Community Explore programme supported 20 community businesses over six months to delve into Community Tech using a user-centred, test-driven design approach. This work was part of the Power to Change Discovery Fund.

AI Knowledge Hub
Working with Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Trust for London to create and test an 'AI archivist' that has access to internal documents (such as board papers, discussions, minutes and decisions made) to be used to bring past-information into current meetings. The aim of this work is to understand how AI might usefully support institutional memory. A further part of this project is to look for alignment between the two organisations, to identify additional opportunities for knowledge sharing across the sector.

Esmee Fairbairn

continued...

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Working to sustain and further develop the key digital infrastructure of support helping charities make best use of digital, data and design. Funding from Esmee Fairbairn supports the continuation of services developed as part of Catalyst, and aims to increase the number of charities benefiting from this support.

Okta
Under their Okta for Good Fund, Okta is a long-term supporter of CAST, aiming to continue to build the sector's capacity around digital, data and AI. With Okta's support we are building spaces, resources and tools that enable charities to collectively develop their confidence and skills in AI.

Fidelity Foundation
Grant funding towards two new roles, Head of Design for AI, and Head of AI Technology, and a contribution to developing AI tools for use by UK charities in year one of the grant. The purpose of the work is to build the organisational capacity of CAST to research, design, develop and test AI technologies with and for the VCSE sector.

AI Capacity Building / Investing in the Power
Investing in the Power of Civil Society (IIPCS) is a National Lottery Community Fund programme that is piloting a new approach to grant holder support, providing tailored organisational development to charities through a consortium led by Lloyds Bank Foundation. Organisations will be referred through a shared diagnostic process to specialist partners based on their development needs. CAST is leading the Technology and AI support offer, helping organisations make better use of digital, data and design by connecting them with our existing programmes, resources and expertise while capturing learning that will shape both the pilot and any future national roll-out.

Fund Gloucestershire
The purpose of the grant is to bring about a vision where communities in Gloucestershire should have greater access to, and more power and say over, grant funding, by increasing the equity, accessibility, transparency and quantity of funding available across the county. The outputs of this grant will be Open IP tools that benefit communities across the UK, starting with a platform to support community organisations across Gloucestershire to access grant funding, and for funders working in Gloucestershire to more easily and equitably support community organisations. The open source technologies will be created by CAST and The Developer Society.

Reuse for Financial Resilience
In partnership with the Tech for Good Alliance, grant funding to explore and demonstrate how financial resilience charities can make better use of open source digital tools. The funding is to research and bring together open source tools that are available for reuse; to work with financial resilience organisations to identify opportunities and needs; and to work with the volunteer network of Tech for Good Alliance to support those charities to reuse these tools, or to create tools that are then made available for reuse.

Deloitte
Funding from Deloitte with the aim of bridging the AI/digital divide and accelerating safe, responsible AI adoption, across the charity sector. The project provides sponsored access for small charities to Worthwhile Chat, and peer-informed, step-by-step charity use-case features (embedded in Worthwhile Chat) that support charities' successful use and adoption.

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19. EMPLOYEE BENEFIT OBLIGATIONS

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension costs charge represents contributions payable by the charitable company to this scheme and amounted to £31,960 (31.3.25: £27,116). There were £6,478 of outstanding contributions at 31 March 2026 (31.3.25: £5,176).

20. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2026 (31.3.25: none).

21. ULTIMATE CONTROLLING PARTY

The charitable company is under the control of its members. No one member has control of the charitable company.