The LabAid Foundation
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Annual Report 2025/26

In 2024/25 we said that LabAid had had its most successful year since it was started more than thirty years ago by the late Alan Welch, MBE but this year, although we've packed slightly fewer boxes of equipment, we've supplied more schools than ever before. In all we sent science education equipment to 30 schools or colleges in Cameroon, Malawi, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, that is about 9 or 10 boxes (nearly all of the size used to transport bananas to supermarkets) of equipment per school.

As last year, this was largely because of the hard work of our volunteers, whether it was the speed-packing of one volunteer, the Bunsen un-blocking skills of another, the volunteer who serviced an average of one microscope per day in 2025 or the ability of a 6th former to count large numbers microscopes jammed together on shelves. We do rely on equipment donations from schools and colleges, and these seem to have been dropping somewhat in recent months. It's perhaps not surprising that schools are not replacing equipment, given the financial situation in many schools. We were very grateful to one multi-site college which was closing laboratories on one site and which brought 3 van loads of equipment to our premises in Amersham – it challenged our storage and sorting abilities, but most of it has already been sent out.



Students from St. Ambrose College of Education and Adehweman Senior High School in Ghana exploring how to use the equipment sent by LabAid in November 2024.

We continue to be grateful to *The Entertainer* toy shop chain which transports boxes of apparatus from its shops around the country to their warehouse in Amersham, where our volunteers pick it up, although again the amount received via this route has fallen off in recent months. We have also had help from CLEAPSS (through publicity in its *Bulletin* and on its courses) in informing teachers and technicians about the ability of LabAid to accept school science equipment for which they no longer had a use and they also helped with the disposal of hazardous waste. ASE also gave us useful publicity.

As noted last year our ability to send out equipment to more schools at a time when equipment donations seem to be declining has further resulted in a reduction in stock held in our store in Amersham.

There has been growing concern about the increasingly dilapidated state of our store in the Sycamore Hall, a grandiose name for the wooden hut that Amersham Free Church has allowed LabAid to use since 1995. At a meeting between the Church and LabAid Trustees last autumn it was agreed to grasp the nettle and LabAid would vacate the premises by December 2027. This would give us time to try to find new premises and fresh – younger – volunteers. Following advertising via CLEAPSS and ASE there were several expressions of interest, and one in particular, from a semi-retired science teacher in Hounslow. He is now actively looking for suitable premises, with very positive support from the Community Development Officer of the Borough Council. Of course, he may not succeed and LabAid may have to close eventually but we are currently optimistic.

We are continuing to send out equipment to needy schools and colleges in developing countries from the stock we have in storage or that is already in the pipeline to us. However, at some point we will need to transport what is left either to new premises or to a waste facility if we have to close. Either way, we need to minimise the amount involved and are therefore temporarily suspending accepting donations of equipment from UK schools. The signs are looking quite good for a move so we hope this will indeed to be prove to be temporary. Therefore, if you can, please hang on to suitable equipment until we are able to resume.

Dr Peter Borrows (*Chair of the Trustees of the LabAid Foundation*).

LabAid Foundation Financial Report 1July 2025 - 30 June 2026

Starting Balance			£2784.46
Receipts			
	Donations	£660.00	
	Auctions	£1040.24	
	Internet sales	£186.15	
	Car Boot sales	£0.00	
	Scrap metal sales	£87.85	
Total Receipts		£1974.24	
Expenditure			
	Purchase of stock	£2631.98	
	Insurance	£320.87	
	Other	£592.00	
Total Expenditure		£3544.85	
End Balance			£1213.85