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SEJA

(previously ACE Projects)

1182685

Trustees Annual Report & Accounts

For the Year Ending 31 December 2025

Where local leadership meets global possibility.

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Legal and Administrative Information

Board of Trustees

Mimma Viglezio (Chair)	Appointed: 05/10/2022
Julian Wootton	Appointed: 05/10/2022
Claudio Rocha	Appointed: 05/10/2022
Brita Fernandez Schmidt	Resigned: 05/07/2024

Executives

G M B Crawley	Co-Founder (Appointed: 01/01/2020)
D P Brown	Co-Founder (Appointed: 01/01/2020)

Charity Secretary

J A Barrett	Appointed: 01/04/2020

Accountants

Ross Marquis
Busybookkeeping
23 Chiltern Drive, Surbiton, Surrey, KT5 8LP
+44 (0) 203 289 4875

Independent Examination

Jo Shenton
J Leon & Company
32 Hampstead High Street, London, NW3 1JQ
+44 (0) 20 7435 7800

Charity Offices

Ground Floor
90 Bartholomew Road
Kentish Town, London, NW5 2AS

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Charity Registration Number

1182685

Bankers

Barclays Bank UK PLC

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Co-Founder Letter - George Crawley

Dear Friends of SEJA,

Last year I wrote that the Digital Impact Hub was the next step in our journey. This year we took it.

2025 was the year we stopped describing the idea and started testing it. We took a professional development programme that had worked in four Brazilian cities over six years, we digitised it, and we put it in front of twelve grassroots leaders in six countries: Brazil, the UK, Uganda, Croatia, Sudan and Ukraine. Different languages. Different politics. Wildly different levels of risk. Sadeia was running her programme in the middle of a conflict. Si was running his in a school hall in Luton. If the model was going to break anywhere, it was going to break there.

It did not break. Every leader on the pilot told us the content spoke to problems they were actually facing. Eighty-nine per cent said it was relevant to their culture, not imported over the top of it. Ninety-four per cent said they would recommend it to another leader in their community. That is the finding I care most about, because grassroots leaders do not recommend things lightly. Their credibility is the only currency they have.

In October we put the first version of the platform in front of people. It was closed, it was built fast and cheap, and it was never meant to look finished. Thirteen leaders got accounts. Over two months they built profiles, posted fifty-one updates about their work and talked to each other. Nobody made them do that. Leaders in six countries, some of them on terrible connections, chose to keep an unfinished website up to date. That tells me they want this.

I want to be straight about the other half of it, because it matters more than a good headline. We did not test the donor side properly. The people who signed up as supporters were friends, family and people already in our orbit. Whether a stranger will find a leader on this platform and choose to back them is the question we have not answered, and I am not going to dress a closed test up as though we have. That is the job for 2026.

What I do know is that after seven years of bridging that gap by hand - two of us, planes and WhatsApp - we now have something real to work with rather than a slide deck.

It was also a year of honest decisions. We continued to step back from direct delivery in Brazil, carefully and in partnership, so that local leaders keep the ownership rather than lose the work. That transition is not finished and it is not comfortable, but it is right. Our job is not to run projects in communities we do not live in. Our job is to make sure the people who do are properly backed.

Thank you to the trustees, who asked hard questions all year and did not let us get away with a good story in place of good evidence. Thank you to Watson Foundation, Rexona, J Leon, Big Yellow, teamArchie, Beyond Sport and Goals House, and to every individual donor who backed something that did not exist yet.

And thank you to the twelve leaders who let us test an unfinished thing on their real work. They took the risk. Everything in this report belongs to them.

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We are just getting started.

With thanks,

Signed by:



George Crawley
Co-Founder & CEO

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Governance Statements

Public Benefit

In accordance with Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011, the Trustees confirm they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

SEJA's activities provide clear public benefit, and each falls within a specific object of the charity:

- **Object 1(a).** Enabling disadvantaged children and young people to access safe, positive and creative recreational spaces designed to improve their conditions of life.
- **Object 1(b).** Supporting changemakers to grow projects that develop young people's skills and capabilities so they can participate in society as mature and responsible individuals.
- **Object 1(c).** Advancing the education of children and young people through the arts, dance, media and language provision delivered by the projects the charity supports.
- **Object 1(d).** Preserving and protecting the health and mental well-being of children and young people facing emotional and behavioural challenges, through cultural, sporting and creative programmes.
- **Object 1(e).** Advancing education by providing professional development, training and support to those who work with children and young people, so that the benefit is sustained beyond any single grant or programme.

The Trustees consider that the charity's work in 2025 fell principally under Object 1(e), with the benefit to children and young people delivered through the leaders and organisations the charity trains and funds.

The Trustees are satisfied that the benefit delivered in 2025 was available to the public, or a sufficient section of it, and that no private benefit arose beyond that which was incidental and necessary to achieving the charitable purposes.

Trustee Recruitment, Appointment and Induction

Trustees are appointed in accordance with the CIO constitution. Candidates are identified through an open search and through trustee and partner networks, to ensure a broad mix of skills and lived experience. New trustees receive an induction pack covering the constitution, recent minutes, financial reports, safeguarding policies and the Charity Commission's guidance on trustee duties (CC3). Ongoing training is provided as needed.

The Board has operated with three trustees throughout 2025 following the resignation of Brita Fernandez Schmidt in July 2024. The Trustees have kept board size and skills mix under review and intend to recruit additional trustees during 2026, with particular attention to digital, data protection and international grant-making experience as the charity's activities change.

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Related Parties and Conflicts of Interest

The Trustees maintain a register of interests and follow a conflicts of interest policy. Interests are declared at each meeting and trustees withdraw from decisions where a conflict arises.

No trustee received any remuneration for their role as trustee in 2025, and no trustee expenses were reimbursed in the year.

In November 2025 the co-founders registered a private company in the United Kingdom as a possible future vehicle for the charity's digital platform. The company did not trade during 2025, held no charity assets, received no funds from the charity, and had no operating relationship with it. At the time it was registered the intention was exploratory and the matter was not formally reported to the Board.

The Trustees record for completeness that neither co-founder holds trustee office, and that no agreement, transfer of assets, licence or transaction took place between the charity and the company during the year. There were therefore no related party transactions requiring disclosure in 2025. Work on this question, and on the governance that will surround any future relationship, began after the year end and is described under Events Since the Year End.

Safeguarding Statement

The charity has a safeguarding policy and code of conduct applicable to staff, volunteers and delivery partners. All incidents and concerns are reported to the designated safeguarding lead and, where appropriate, to the relevant authorities. Safeguarding training is provided proportionate to role, and due diligence is undertaken on partners.

In 2025 the Trustees gave particular attention to safeguarding in a digital environment. Extending the charity's work onto an online platform introduces risks that on-the-ground delivery does not: the sharing of images and stories of children, direct contact between donors and leaders, and the handling of personal data across jurisdictions. Controls put in place during the year included a closed and invitation-only pilot environment, verification of every leader admitted to the platform, consent requirements for any content featuring children, and moderation of the public impact feed.

There were no serious safeguarding incidents reportable to the Charity Commission in 2025.

Fundraising Statement

SEJA does not engage in high-volume public fundraising and is not a member of the Fundraising Regulator. Fundraising is conducted in-house and with trusted partners in accordance with the Code of Fundraising Practice. The charity received no complaints regarding fundraising in 2025. Donor data is handled in line with our privacy policy and applicable data protection legislation. No professional fundraisers or commercial participators were engaged during the year.

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Leader Policy

SEJA provides funding and in-kind support to grassroots leaders in furtherance of its charitable purposes. All partnerships follow a documented assessment process, with due diligence proportionate to funding size and risk. Support is monitored through reporting, site visits where feasible, and ongoing mentorship. Funds are distributed monthly to mitigate risk.

During 2025 this policy was applied to leaders outside the charity's established Brazilian and UK networks for the first time, including in Sudan and Ukraine. The Trustees required, and the executive applied, enhanced verification for leaders operating in conflict-affected settings, alongside proportionate limits on the value of support provided ahead of a full delivery record.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees aim to maintain free reserves equivalent to three to four months of core operating costs, to ensure continuity in the event of income shortfalls or unexpected expenditure.

Core operating costs in 2025 were approximately £125,000, which puts the target range at roughly £31,000 to £42,000.

Free reserves at 31 December 2025 were £3,007, being unrestricted cash funds at that date. This is below the target range.

The Trustees are aware of this. The charity carries a small core team, no borrowings and no material fixed commitments, and manages the position by adjusting expenditure to income rather than by holding a large cash buffer. Rebuilding reserves towards the target range is an objective for 2026.

The Trustees also note that £38,500 of grant income was received in January 2026 and a further £19,000 in major donations between January and April 2026, which has strengthened the cash position since the year end.

Going Concern Statement

The Trustees consider the charity to be a going concern for at least twelve months from the date of approval of these accounts.

The charity has a small core team, no borrowings and no material contractual commitments, and expenditure is adjusted to match income as it is received.

Since the year end the charity has received £38,500 of grant income in January 2026 and a further £19,000 in major donations between January and April 2026. Taken with the low fixed cost base, the Trustees are satisfied that the charity can continue to operate for the foreseeable future.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and the charity's constitution. The Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view

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of the state of the charity's affairs and of its income and expenditure for the year. The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, safeguarding the assets of the charity, and taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2025.

This report has been prepared in line with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) and Charity Commission guidance (CC16), and is intended to provide a clear and transparent account of SEJA's activities, governance and impact.

Charity Overview

- **Name:** SEJA (previously ACE Projects)
- **Registration Number:** 1182685
- **Legal Status:** Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), Foundation model, registered 28 March 2019
- **Financial Year:** 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025

Structure, Governance and Management

SEJA is governed by its CIO Constitution. Trustees serve three-year terms, renewable by vote. The Board meets periodically, supported by the executive team and by external advisers on legal and financial matters.

The Board met formally three times during 2025, on 4 March, 11 June and 27 October, and conducted further business by correspondence between meetings. Business transacted during the year included approval of the revised second-half budget of £122,000 in June, approval of the 2024 Annual Report and Accounts in October, and review of the digital strategy at each meeting.

Trustees bring expertise from philanthropy, law, communications, academia and grassroots organising, ensuring balanced oversight. The Trustees are conscious that the Board has operated with three members since July 2024 and have made trustee recruitment a governance priority for 2026, alongside a review of trustee terms of office.

Risk Management

The Trustees considered the charity's principal risks at each Board meeting during 2025 and agreed mitigations with the executive. The Trustees acknowledge that the charity does not yet maintain a formal written risk register, and have asked the executive to prepare one for review during 2026. The principal risks identified and managed during the year were:

- **Income concentration.** A small number of funders account for a significant proportion of income. Mitigated by broadening the funder base during the year and by developing a model that can eventually generate sustainable income rather than relying on repeated grant cycles.

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- **Digital and data risk.** Building and operating an online platform introduced new obligations around data protection, security and content moderation. Mitigated through a closed, invitation-only environment, verification of all participants and consent controls.
- **Safeguarding in new territories.** Working with leaders in conflict-affected settings required enhanced due diligence and proportionate limits on support. See the Safeguarding Statement above.
- **Transition risk in Brazil.** Stepping back from direct delivery carries a risk of harm to beneficiaries if handled badly. Mitigated by phasing the transition, by keeping local leadership in place, and by continuing to fund partners through the change rather than withdrawing abruptly.
- **Structural and reputational risk.** The possibility of a separate commercial vehicle to sustain the platform carries clear conflict of interest and public trust risks. During 2025 the position was exploratory and no action was taken beyond registering a company that did not trade. See Structure and Sustainability below.
- **Key person dependency.** The charity remains reliant on a small executive team. Mitigated by documentation of the methodology during the digitisation process, which reduces the extent to which knowledge sits only with individuals.

Charitable Objectives

SEJA's mission is to support children and young people living below the poverty line, particularly those in communities facing violence, inequality or exclusion. Our objects are:

1. To advance in life and relieve the needs of children and young people aged between 3 and 18 living below the poverty line in the developing world through:
    a. The provision of recreational and leisure time activities provided in the interests of social welfare, designed to improve their conditions of life;
    b. Providing support and activities which develop their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as mature and responsible individuals;
    c. Advancing their education, in particular but not exclusively by the provision of native and English language classes, geography classes and the study of art, dance, photography and media;
    d. Preserving and protecting the health and mental well-being of such children and young people experiencing emotional, behavioural and other challenges and complex needs, by providing art-as-therapy programmes and family therapy sessions that, amongst other things, promote engagement with learning and inclusion in schools and communities, for the public benefit;
    e. The advancement of education for the public benefit by providing training and support for those who work with children and young people experiencing challenges in their lives.

The Trustees consider that the activities described in this report fall within these objects, and in particular within the advancement of education by providing training and support to those who

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work with children and young people. The Trustees have also noted that the charity's activities have moved decisively towards enabling and equipping local leaders rather than delivering programmes directly, and that the current objects, drafted in 2019, describe a narrower geography and a narrower model than the charity now operates. Work to address this is described under Events Since the Year End.

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Impact Overview for 2025

2025 was a year of building, testing and proving. Where 2024 was spent designing the Digital Impact Hub, 2025 was spent finding out whether it worked.

The charity set out to answer two questions. First: does a leadership development model refined in Brazil hold up in completely different countries and cultures, while staying practical and immediately useful? Second: do donors genuinely want a different way to engage with the projects they support?

The Trustees report at the outset that the year answered the first question well and the second only partially. The evidence on the leader side is strong. The evidence on the donor side rests on what donors told the charity in surveys rather than on what they did, and that distinction is maintained throughout this report.

To answer them we ran a pilot in three phases: digitising and testing the methodology, testing storytelling and donor appetite, and building a working platform to connect the two. This section reports what each phase delivered.

This work was made possible by the Watson Foundation, whose support funded the testing of SEJA's global model. The Trustees record their particular gratitude: the Foundation backed a question rather than a proven programme, at the point when the charity most needed the freedom to find out whether the model travelled.

2025 at a Glance

- 12 grassroots leaders completed the digitised professional development programme.
- 6 countries and 12 cities: Brazil, the United Kingdom, Uganda, Croatia, Sudan and Ukraine.
- Over 350 grassroots projects mapped globally, from which the pilot cohort was selected.
- Approximately 3,900 people reached each month through the services and outreach of pilot partners.
- 3 global surveys completed with donors, members of the public and grassroots leaders, run in Portuguese for Brazil and in English for the rest of the world.
- 11 episodes of the Not Another Impact Report podcast published.
- First working version of the platform launched in October 2025, with 13 leaders publishing 51 posts and generating 314 interactions over two months of closed testing.
- 50 favela-based leaders and 1,750 young people reached in Brazil through the Rexona Breaking Barriers partnership.
- The charity's six-year report published, including original research on the impact of social projects on favela youth.

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Phase One: Digitising and Testing the Methodology

Before going global, SEJA's professional development programme had already produced strong results in Brazil over six years, working in four cities with more than 150 projects and over 1,000 changemakers. Leaders typically increased their impact by 20 per cent within six months and by an average of 120 per cent over three years. The question was never whether the programme worked. The question was whether it travelled.

From over 350 projects mapped globally, twelve were selected for the pilot, chosen for diversity in geography, language, size, impact area and organisational maturity. The programme ran for four months, from July to October 2025, with leaders working in education, culture and the arts, sport and violence prevention, human rights, and environmental and community development.

Participants progressed through a five-pillar model curated from the existing programme:

- **Personal Development.** Identity, confidence, purpose.
- **Technical Development.** Finance, planning, governance, fundraising.
- **Relational Development.** Peer networks, collaboration, shared learning.
- **Territorial Transformation.** Microprojects applied locally.
- **Institutional Recognition.** Visibility, credibility, legitimacy.

Each participant received a personalised curriculum, selecting the topics most relevant to their own challenges and goals. The structure was designed so that learning translated into action rather than certificates.

What the pilot found

- 100% said the content addressed the problems they were actually facing.
- 89% found the programme highly relevant to their cultural context.
- 94% would recommend it to another community leader.
- 100% found the tools immediately applicable to their work.
- Over 80% gained new management competencies, and now plan budgets, goals and impact with greater clarity.
- 80% reported feeling more confident and emotionally prepared to lead, with stronger conflict management and motivation.

The Trustees consider the cultural relevance figure to be the most significant result of the year. It indicates that grassroots leaders in very different settings face similar structural obstacles, and that a programme built in Brazilian favelas can be genuinely useful in Luton, Kampala or Zagreb without being imposed.

Beyond the twelve leaders directly involved, the programme reached an estimated 3,900 people each month through the services and outreach of the pilot partners.

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Phase Two: Testing Storytelling and Donor Appetite

A core hypothesis of the digital model was that honest storytelling could rebuild trust and engagement in giving. This was tested through three surveys of donors, members of the public and local leaders, through the launch of a podcast, and through early experiments inside the platform. Surveys were run in Portuguese for Brazil and in English for the rest of the world.

The principal donor and public survey drew 71 responses. Its message was consistent:

- 83% want real-time progress from the projects they support.
- 74% want to choose specifically who they support.
- 61% hesitate to give because they do not know where their money goes.
- Only 41% find giving truly rewarding.

A shorter follow-up survey on subscription giving drew 16 responses and pointed the same way, with every respondent saying it mattered to them to know who benefits from their donation.

Alongside these, the charity collected lesson-by-lesson feedback throughout the professional development programme, producing 64 individual lesson evaluations across the two languages. That feedback is the basis for the pilot results reported above.

These findings shaped a model built around transparency, participation and lived experience rather than institutional reporting.

Not Another Impact Report

The charity launched the Not Another Impact Report podcast in 2025 to humanise the impact sector. Not through statistics or charity clichés, but through the accounts of leaders living the realities most people only read about. Eleven episodes were published during the year, hosted by George Crawley and Dylan Brown.

The podcast became a platform for honesty, humour and hope, and a place where changemakers could speak in their own voice. It also served a practical purpose: it gave donors a way to understand that social change is not delivered to communities, it is built by them.

Phase Three: Building and Testing the Platform

In October 2025 the charity launched a closed, browser-based test environment - the first digital home for SEJA leaders. It was built quickly and inexpensively using low-code tooling, on the deliberate principle that the charity should establish whether leaders would use a marketplace of this kind before committing significant money to building one properly.

Thirteen leaders were given accounts. They built profiles, published updates on their work and interacted with one another. Over roughly two months they produced 51 posts and generated 314 recorded interactions in total.

The Trustees consider the result on the leader side genuinely encouraging. Grassroots leaders are busy, frequently working with poor connectivity, and under no obligation to keep an

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unfinished platform updated. That they chose to do so, across six countries, indicates that the proposition is understood and wanted by the people it is built for.

What the platform did not establish

The Trustees consider it equally important to record what the test did not show.

The environment was closed and invitation-only, and the supporter side of it was not tested in any meaningful way. Those who registered as supporters were overwhelmingly people already connected to the charity or to the leaders themselves. A small sum was given through the platform during the test period, but it came from that same circle. Nothing in this exercise demonstrates that the platform attracts donors who are not already known to the charity, or that it converts them.

The charity has therefore drawn no conclusions about donor behaviour from the platform test, and the engagement figures above should not be read as evidence of donor demand. The survey work described under Phase Two remains the only evidence the charity holds on what donors say they want, and that is stated preference rather than observed giving behaviour.

Establishing whether donors at arm's length from the founders and from the leaders themselves will use a platform of this kind is the central question for 2026. It is the question the charity most needs answered, and it remains open.

The Six-Year Report

Alongside the pilot, the charity produced and published its six-year report, A Journey of Impact and Transformation: Six Years of SEJA. It was a substantial piece of work and the Trustees consider it one of the most important outputs of the year.

Its purpose was threefold: to set out an honest account of the first six years, including the setbacks as well as the milestones; to gather in one place the evidence that the model works; and to make the case for the shift the charity was about to make.

The report brought together the charity's cumulative record since 2019 - the changemakers funded and developed, the community centres established across Brazil and the UK, the young people reached each year, the funds raised and distributed to local leaders, and the many thousands of hours of mentorship and professional development delivered. Taken together it is the clearest account the charity has published of what the model produces over time.

It also published original research commissioned by the charity, comparing young people in favelas who take part in community-led social projects with those who do not, and with young people living outside the favelas. Across measures of safety, enjoyment of school, self-esteem and belief in their own future, young people involved in social projects reported markedly better outcomes than their peers who were not - and on self-esteem they reported better outcomes than young people in materially more comfortable circumstances. That finding matters because the effectiveness of grassroots social projects has historically been asserted rather than measured. It indicates that a mentor, a role model and a structured support network can count for more in a young person's confidence than the postcode they were born into.

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What the report changed

Two conclusions in the six-year report shaped the decisions taken during 2025.

The first concerned demand. Through Google's Ad Grants programme, the charity had been able to test globally where its model was needed. Enquiries came from South America, Africa, Europe and Asia, from community leaders already solving local problems and looking for support. Where marginalisation exists, so does leadership. That finding is what made the global pilot worth running.

The second concerned the constraint. The report identified plainly that the physicality of SEJA's model - two founders, planes, and time spent in person - was the barrier to scale, not a lack of leaders or a lack of donors. Everything the charity built in 2025 follows from that conclusion.

The Trustees record their thanks to the J Leon Philanthropy Council, and to Paddy Walker and Tania Slowe in particular, without whose support the report would not have been produced.

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Stories from the Field

Si Phili - Wingman Mentors, Luton, United Kingdom

Si is a powerful example of lived-experience leadership in the UK. Through Wingman Mentors he uses hip-hop, creativity and honest conversation to support young people navigating violence, instability and a lack of safe spaces. His sessions offer something rare: a place where young people feel seen, heard and genuinely supported.

As part of the global pilot, Si helped shape how the platform can serve leaders like him. Through the professional development modules he strengthened his organisational structure, clarified his mission and refined the way he communicates his impact.

In his own words: he had been working in his community for years, but before the course he could not clearly explain what the organisation actually did. Now he can - simply, and with confidence. For a small organisation competing for attention and funding, that clarity is not cosmetic. It is the difference between being funded and being overlooked.

Sadeia - Hope & Haven Refugees, Sudan

In a context marked by conflict and displacement, Sadeia leads with exceptional courage. Through Hope & Haven Refugees she creates safe, structured spaces for children and families affected by instability, offering emotional support, food and water, play, and dignity where it is needed most.

Her role in the pilot was crucial to the charity as well as to her own organisation. Her insights led directly to changes in the professional development curriculum for leaders operating in crisis settings, ensuring the content is trauma-informed, accessible and genuinely useful rather than written for stable environments.

Speaking on the podcast, Sadeia described the emotional weight of leading when the world around you is unstable, and said that the work is heavy but becomes possible when it is carried together. That sentence is a fair description of what SEJA is trying to build.

Kygozi - Kigozi Children’s Orphanage, Uganda

For Kygozi and the team at Kigozi Children’s Orphanage, the programme changed how they communicate. They learned to use social media not only to share their work but to invite people into it, and reported new followers and new donations as a direct result during the pilot period.

Kigozi Children’s Orphanage was also among the first organisations to build a profile on the platform and post regularly about their work - exactly the behaviour the charity needed to see from leaders before investing further in the build.

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On-the-Ground Impact in 2025

While 2025 marked a shift towards building the digital model, the charity did not step away from on-the-ground work. The Trustees were clear that the transition away from direct implementation in Brazil had to be meaningful, responsible and rooted in partnership.

The goal is not to abandon local impact but to phase out direct delivery in a way that strengthens local leadership and ownership, while the charity focuses on building systems that support leaders globally. That work continued throughout 2025 and will continue into 2026.

SEJA x Rexona

Through Rexona's Breaking Barriers programme, SEJA worked directly with changemakers in two Brazilian cities: Salvador, Bahia, and Belém, Pará, the latter with a strategic focus ahead of COP30.

Through this partnership the charity reached 50 favela-based leaders and 1,750 young people. The work focused on strengthening leadership, youth engagement and community-driven solutions, and reinforced a principle that runs through everything in this report: global systems have to be built on strong local foundations.

SEJA x Goals House

In 2025 SEJA partnered with Goals House, opening doors to some of the most influential global convenings in the social impact and climate space.

UNGA, New York City

The United Nations General Assembly is one of the most important annual gatherings of world leaders, policymakers, NGOs, businesses and civil society. Attending in September was an inspiring and grounding experience. Over the week the team took part in conversations across the programme, roundtables, workshops and side events, covering topics from AI and education to storytelling and community-led impact.

COP30, Belém

COP30 is one of the most significant climate events in the world, bringing together governments, institutions, businesses and civil society to shape the global climate agenda. Through its network and in partnership with Goals House, SEJA worked to ensure that local artists and community voices were present and visible.

Together we supported a local graffiti artist, community activist and leader; the creation of more than ten murals for the Goals House space, setting the tone for the climate conversations held there; and local breakdance groups, helping them access space and present their work within the Goals House programme.

This work reflected a core belief: global conversations must include the people most affected, not only as participants but as creators, storytellers and leaders.

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Founder's Letter - Dylan Brown

Dear Friends,

We spent years in favelas in Brazil developing a professional development program that looked to fill the gaps, to provide the tools for changemakers to truly reach their dreams, whether they wanted to build a program to help every young person in Brazil or 10 young people in their neighbourhood. We wanted to offer those tools.

Over the years, the program performed so well that we started to think about what this could look like at scale. In our travels, we saw that changemakers all around the world are facing the same challenges. They may show up in their communities in unique ways, but the root problem is the same. So we thought: how can we reach more people?

The professional development program had been proven over years of rigorous testing. There was a saturation of information in the world, so why not take it global? We could build a program that translates that content online for people all over the world.

The transition was nerve-racking. Would it actually hold up? Would it make sense in contexts all around the world? How could we translate something so physical into a digital environment? But the potential for impact was too great to turn away from.

And the feedback was incredible. From Sudan to Luton to Uganda, the feedback was resounding - how directly it responded to their needs, to their pain points.

We heard how it felt like a cheat code from leaders in Sudan, and how for leaders who had no formal education and who had spent their formative educational years in prison - that the content was too short and they wanted more. Most importantly, the knock-on effect was tangible: projects growing support, getting funding, and formalising their work.

Moreover, by riding the technological wave, we were able to do everything in-house. Getting funding for a tech programme is hard, but advancements in technology meant we were able to build and prove the product without spending anything beyond our own time.

The next steps are truly exciting. We have shown a need for this type of content, a desire to be part of these communities. And now we look to scale, to make space for engagement, reach more changemakers, and drive more positive change.

Dylan Brown
Co-Founder

Signed by:



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Structure and Sustainability

The Trustees consider it important to set out plainly the strategic question the charity confronted during 2025, because it shapes the year ahead.

SEJA has spent seven years proving a model. The six-year report published during the year identified the constraint precisely, and it is not demand. It has been money, and specifically the shape of it. The infrastructure that grassroots leaders need - verification, professional development, a place to be seen by donors - is precisely the kind of work that most funders will not pay for. Funders want evidence of scale before they will fund infrastructure, and infrastructure is what creates scale. That is a circle the charity has been running around since 2019.

The platform built in 2025 points to a possible way out of it. A platform connecting verified grassroots leaders directly with donors could, in time, generate its own revenue. Revenue of that kind is not charitable income and would not sensibly sit inside a charity structure. In November 2025 the co-founders therefore registered a private company in the United Kingdom as a possible future home for the platform.

The Trustees record the position as at 31 December 2025 plainly. The company was registered in the final month of the year. It did not trade, held no charity assets, received no funds from the charity, and no intellectual property, data or brand of the charity was transferred or licensed to it. Neither co-founder holds trustee office. Nothing was agreed, and no Board process was undertaken during 2025, because at that point the idea was exploratory and no more than that.

The Trustees are also conscious that the proposition itself remains unproven. The charity has shown that grassroots leaders will use a platform of this kind. It has not shown that donors beyond its own network will, and any commercial case depends entirely on the latter.

Substantive work on this question - the governance around it, the conflicts of interest it raises, and the independent legal advice it requires - began after the year end and is described below. Any future arrangement will be documented in binding agreements at fair value, taken with the benefit of independent advice, approved by the non-conflicted trustees alone, and disclosed in the charity’s annual reporting.

Events Since the Year End

The following matters arose after 31 December 2025 and are reported for completeness. They did not affect the financial position at the year end.

- The Trustees have begun work on a change of the charity’s principal name and on an alteration of the charity’s objects under the Charities Act 2011, to reflect the charity’s current mission of enabling and equipping local leaders. This is subject to the consent of the Charity Commission.
- The Trustees have instructed external charity law advice on the terms of any future relationship between the charity and a related commercial entity. No such agreements were in place at the date of this report.

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SEJA (UK) Financial Overview (2025)

The accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis, so the figures below record cash actually received and paid during the year rather than amounts accrued.

Total receipts for 2025 were £130,712 (2024: £151,192), made up of corporate donations of £79,500, major donor gifts of £45,250, Gift Aid of £2,203, individual and online donations of £1,344, and other income of £2,416.

Total payments were £124,906 (2024: £164,967), comprising staff costs of £81,219, general administration of £26,059, impact costs in Brazil of £16,942, fundraising costs of £494 and bank fees of £191.

This gives net receipts over payments of £5,806 for the year, against a deficit of £13,775 in 2024. Cash funds rose from £1,306 at the start of the year to £7,113 at 31 December 2025.

The cash funds figure differs slightly from the bank balance of £7,114 at the same date. The charity's December wages and PAYE had not been paid at the year end, and an overpayment had been received on the office rent deposit; these balance sheet items account for the difference between cash at bank and cash available.

Of total receipts, £106,712 was unrestricted and £24,000 restricted. At the year end the charity held unrestricted cash funds of £3,007 and restricted cash funds of £4,106.

At the year end the charity held computer equipment and a website retained for its own use, and had known liabilities of £3,333 in respect of PAYE and staff wages.

How Funds Were Used

Expenditure in 2025 was directed to five areas:

- **Support to local leaders.** Direct financial backing, training and development for grassroots changemakers.
- **Global pilot and professional development.** New curriculum development and testing across six countries.
- **Digital platform build.** Creation of the charity’s first working platform, built in-house by Dylan Brown
- **Cultural and community outreach.** Events and safe spaces across Brazil and the UK.
- **Lean operations.** A small core team.

Principal Funders

The Trustees acknowledge with gratitude the funders and partners who made 2025 possible: Watson Foundation, Rexona and the J Leon Philanthropy Council, Big Yellow Self Storage, teamArchie, Beyond Sport, and Goals House.

The Watson Foundation was the principal funder of the testing of SEJA’s global model. J Leon has remained, as in previous years, a source of consistent belief and partnership.

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Challenges Faced in 2025

2025 was not without difficulty, and the Trustees consider it useful to record the challenges honestly.

Fundraising remained hard. The charity entered the second half of the year with a funding gap of £80,000 against its plan, and closing that gap required significant executive time that would otherwise have gone into delivery. Small charities working on infrastructure rather than direct service delivery continue to find it difficult to attract core funding.

Building a digital product inside a charity is demanding. It required skills the sector does not usually hold, careful attention to safeguarding and data protection, and a tolerance for testing things that might not work. The decision to build in-house saved money but placed real pressure on a small team.

The transition away from direct delivery in Brazil remains delicate. It has to be done slowly enough to protect beneficiaries and local ownership, which means running two models at once for a period, with the cost and complexity that implies.

Finally, the charity spent much of the year holding a genuinely difficult strategic question - how to sustain infrastructure work that funders will not fund - without a settled answer. The Trustees consider it appropriate that this took time rather than being resolved quickly.

Volunteers and Team Contributions

The charity’s impact is fuelled by people. Our staff are largely recruited from the communities we serve, which keeps the work authentic and grounded. Representation matters, and the commitment to employing from within continues to dismantle barriers and to demonstrate the talent inherent in favela and estate communities.

The charity was supported during the year by one volunteer, Jo Shenton of J Leon & Company, who acted as Independent Examiner. Charity law requires that role to be carried out without payment, and the Trustees are grateful for the time and expertise given.

Core Team

- George Crawley - Co-Founder & CEO
- Dylan Brown - Co-Founder
- Melene Vivas - Director of Impact
- Jorge Batista - Field Manager
- Lais Pinho - Field Manager
- Anastasiia Spivak - European Representative

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Looking to the Future (2026)

Seven years in, SEJA has proved that when you invest in local leaders you create lasting change. 2025 proved something further: that the model holds up outside the places it was built, and that donors will engage with it when they can see the person on the other end.

2026 is about moving from a working prototype to something market-ready, and about putting the charity on a footing that does not depend on winning the same grants every year.

Strategic Objectives for 2026

- **Deepen testing with current leaders.** Refine usability, the integrity tools, portfolios and the impact feed based on the behaviour observed during closed testing rather than on assumptions.
- **Expand the cohort to 24 leaders.** Add twelve further changemakers from conflict-affected regions, Latin America and Africa, bringing the total actively using the system to twenty-four.
- **Test the donor side properly.** The priority for the year. Move beyond friends-and-family testing to establish whether supporters with no prior connection to the charity or its leaders will use the platform and give through it. Leaders invite their own donors and networks as a first step, with matched funding of up to £1,000 per leader to encourage early adoption, but the Trustees have asked that success be measured on genuinely new supporters rather than on total sign-ups.
- **Complete structured donor research.** Twenty structured interviews to understand what makes giving joyful, what builds trust and which features actually drive engagement, with participants compensated to ensure quality of insight.
- **Publish a global viability report.** A roadmap for the full application, a validation document for partners and a blueprint for scale.
- **Settle the charity's constitutional position.** Complete the alteration of the charity's objects, add an express power to make grants, and register for Gift Aid.
- **Formalise the structure.** Put binding, independently advised agreements in place governing any relationship between the charity and a related commercial entity, approved by the independent trustees.
- **Strengthen the Board.** Recruit additional trustees, with attention to digital, data protection and grant-making experience.

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Chair's Letter - Mimma Viglezio

Dear Friends,

In my letter last year, I wrote about our intention to launch a new Digital Impact Space. I am delighted to report that this ambition has now become a reality, and the platform exists.

We began with a pilot programme and were encouraged by the response, which confirmed that there is a real need for what we are building. Twelve leaders across six countries helped us test, challenge and refine the platform, enabling us to strengthen it and ensure that it responds to the needs of the communities it is designed to serve.

As a Board, we have been equally focused on ensuring that the appropriate safeguards, governance and responsibilities are in place around data collection, accountability and oversight. As Trustees, we have embraced the opportunity to adapt our governance structures to this new model of philanthropy while remaining firmly committed to the principles of responsible administration.

This is a modern approach to philanthropy, not only because it connects local leaders globally with donors around the world, unlocking new and potentially far-reaching opportunities, but also because it offers a path towards long-term financial sustainability. By creating an ongoing source of revenue, rather than relying solely on the continual pursuit of grants, we can build an organisation that has the capacity to grow organically and sustainably.

It has been a year of hard work, learning, testing and adapting, and, ultimately, of making significant progress towards an important mission.

The Board has complete confidence in Dylan and George and in their leadership of this exciting endeavour. We look forward to supporting them as the Digital Impact Space develops and reaches its full potential.

Here's to a new year of giving, innovation and impact.

With kindest regards,

Mimma Viglezio
Chair of Trustees

Signed by:



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Approval of the Trustees' Annual Report

This report was approved by the Trustees on and signed on their behalf by:

Signed by:
Mimma Viglezio
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Mimma Viglezio
Chair of Trustees

Date: 10/30/2026

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CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

SEJA	No (if any)

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	01/01/2025	To	31/12/2025

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Individual Donations	1,344		-	1,344	15,872
Major Donor	39,250	6,000	-	45,250	17,750
Corporate Donations	61,500	18,000	-	79,500	78,375
Grants			-	-	31,000
Gift Aid	2,203		-	2,203	8,175
Other Income	2,416		-	2,416	20
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
***Sub total** (Gross income for AR)*	106,712	24,000	-	130,712	151,192
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	106,712	24,000	-	130,712	151,192
A3 Payments					
Staff Costs	74,967	6,253	-	81,219	38,921
Marketing/Website			-	-	1,500
General Administration	18,617	7,442	-	26,059	1,423
Fundraising Costs	494		-	494	12,350
Impact Costs Brazil	10,742	6,200	-	16,942	108,535
Impact Costs London			-	-	1,390
Bank Fees	191		-	191	832
Interest Paid	-	-	-	-	16
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	105,011	19,895	-	124,906	164,967
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	105,011	19,895	-	124,906	164,967
Net of receipts/(payments)	1,701	4,106	-	5,806	- 13,775
A5 Transfers between funds	-		-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	1,306	-	-	1,306	15,081
Cash funds this year end	3,007	4,106	-	7,113	1,306

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Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

B1 Cash funds

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	SEJA	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	-	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	Agreement Error	OK

B2 Other monetary assets

Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
Computer Equipment	Unrestricted	3,557	-
Website	Unrestricted	1,500	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
PAYE	Restricted	640	
Staff Wages	Restricted	2,694	
Duplicate office deposit receipt	Unrestricted	2,416	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
Signed by: Mimma Viglezio	Mimma Viglezio	10/30/2026

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CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of: Charity Name SEJA

On accounts for the year ended: 31 DECEMBER 2025 **Charity no (if any):** 1182685

Set out on pages: 30 - 31 (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* *Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed: J. Stenton **Date:** 20/10/26

Name: JOANNE STENTON

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any): BA ACA 8459903

Address: J LEON & COMPANY
32 HAMPSTEAD HIGH STREET
LONDON NW3 1JQ

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Section B	Disclosure
	Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).
Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	