



# Trustees' Annual Report for the period

<b>From</b>	Period start date			<b>To</b>	Period end date		
	01	April	2023		31	March	Year 2024



**Charity name** Creative Exchange Artists Studios

**Other names charity is known by**

**Registered charity number (if any)** NIC101590

**Charity's principal address**  
 Unit B4 Portview Trade Centre,  
 310 Newtownards Road, Belfast,  
 Northern Ireland  
**Postcode** BT4 1HE

## Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Caragh O'Donnell-Delaney	Chair		
2	Zara Lyness	Secretary		
3	Chris Armstrong			
4	Patricia Kingston			
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**Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)**

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

**Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)**

Type of adviser	Name	Address

**Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)**

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**Description of the charity's trusts**

Type of governing document  
(eg. trust deed, constitution)

Memorandum

How the charity is constituted  
(eg. trust, association, company)

Company limited by guarantee registered as a charity

Trustee selection methods  
(eg. appointed by, elected by)

Appointed and voted in by the existing board of directors (Trustees) subject to criteria

**Additional governance issues (Optional information)**

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

The roles of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer are evaluated annually in the AGM and voted in by Board members and studio artists

As part of the board growth all Board members have taken part in Governance and good practice training.

Our Studio manager who is employed on a freelance basis works in conjunction with the Chairman, Treasurer, other directors, funders, accountant, and artist representatives to oversee the daily running of the organisation.

Creative Exchange is part of a wider network of artists' organisations in Belfast & Northern Ireland; these include Visual Artists Ireland, the Belfast Visual Artist Workers Forum and Belfast Open Studios.

Creative Exchange has many local partners such as Eastside Arts who have supported many of our events and exhibitions.

Our governance and good practice continue to change and improve as the company develops. We continue to enhance our internal communication strategy, which enables a flow of communication. Potential risks or issues are dealt with at monthly board meetings

**Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document**

To promote the production of art in Northern Ireland through the establishment of affordable artist studio space for visual artists.  
To foster and advance participation in the arts in Belfast by the provision of a centre for artists to meet, work and have the opportunity to exhibit their work to the public.  
To advance education in the arts by providing supportive opportunities for professional development for artists and to also encourage appreciation of the arts in the local community of east Belfast through the provision of outreach events.

**Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)**

**Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit**

Provide essential workspace for visual artists.  
To work with a common effort to foster, promote and advance the education of visual art in all its aspects, and to encourage appreciation of and participation in the arts through cross-cultural community-based arts activities.  
These benefits are demonstrated through the provision of facilities and the organisation of exhibitions and events that increase public awareness of contemporary art. The trustees provide strategic guidance to raise awareness of the benefits of visual art engagement.  
The charity's beneficiaries are its artist studio members; these include painters, illustrators, photographers, printmakers, digital media artists and ceramicists.  
The benefits to the beneficiaries are the provision of affordable studio space in terms appropriate to their means.  
There is no private benefit as trustees (directors) are not studio members and therefore do not benefit from the use of the artist studios.  
Additional support is provided to the studio member beneficiaries through opportunities to partake in exhibitions, public talks, and community engaged projects in the locality throughout the year.  
The benefits that flow from these activities are the opportunities for artists to develop their professional artistic practice, gain publicity about their work and reach new audiences. The members of the public (especially in east Belfast) who attend these free events are also beneficiaries of the charity.

**Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)**

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You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

#### **Additional details of objectives and activities**

Creative exchange currently provides studio space to 11 artists. The organisation works to develop engagement and increase accessibility to the visual arts. It creates a platform for the advancement of artistic diversity and representation in Northern Ireland and beyond.

#### **Volunteer contribution**

Apart from the contribution of the part time studio manager (who works 15 hours per week partially funded by ACNI) , Creative Exchange is run on a voluntary basis, all trustees are unpaid and give their time voluntarily.

Trustees voluntarily assist and support the administrator and artists on any public facing Creative Exchange events throughout the year.

**Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year**

**Main Achievements**

Provision of artists workspace (ongoing)

Ensuring the workspace provided is fit for purpose and affordable for visual artists working in Belfast

Many of our studio members participate in exhibitions throughout Northern Ireland and internationally. This included such galleries as Engine Room Gallery, The Mac, and the Black Box Belfast, and as far as Los Angeles, London, France and Tokyo.

Members Exhibition

Member's exhibitions were unable to be run as normal covid restrictions were in place for a large part of the year.

Participation in Belfast Open Studios

Postponed due to Covid pandemic

Local Engagement Projects

Artists participated with local artist studios Vault, and peer reviews with QSS and Platform.

Artists also showcased works in Canvas Gallery, Ards Art Centre. Many of our studio members teach and facilitate workshops around the city e.g., Crescent Arts Centre, schools, University of Ulster

**Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves**

All studio members deposits are securely held in a separate reserves account  
Contingency reserves are built into the yearly financial forecast to cover any unforeseen expenses or maintenance issues. These are minimal, approx £300. We are working to increase the reserves available to the organisation to deal with unforeseen circumstances

**Details of any funds materially in deficit**

**Further financial review details (Optional information)**

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

Creative Exchange's main source of income is from monthly studio fees received from the artists.  
 To date we receive yearly core funding from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's Annual Funding Programme. In 2022/23 financial year we received funding from Belfast City Council to increase the number of hours worked by the Studio Manager, in 2023/24 we amended this to create an audience development pilot role alongside the Studio Manager.  
 Any additional funding is related to specific artistic projects, and this changes year to year.  
 Expenditure is carefully managed in relation to income. The main sources of expenditure are the rent of our premises and the upkeep and maintenance of the premises to provide the best possible working conditions for artists.

**Section F Other optional information**

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)



*Chris Armstrong*

Full name(s)

Caragh O'Donnell-Delaney

Chris Armstrong

Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)

Chair

Trustee

Date

20/12/24