

THE NERVE CENTRE LTD
(A company limited by guarantee)

Directors Report for the year ended 31 March 2023

The directors present their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Directors and their interests

The directors of the charity for the purposes of charity law and who served during the year were as follows:

Andrew McAfee	Michael Hamlyn
John Mc Gowan	Shauna Kelpie
Tess Mc Maginess	Edward Friel

Principal activity

The principal activity of the company in the year under review was that of running a multimedia arts centre.

Structure, governance and management

Governing Document

The Nerve Centre is a company limited by guarantee and established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed by its Articles of Association. It is a registered charity with the Charity Commission.

Recruitment and Appointment of the Board of Directors

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Board. At the Annual General Meeting one third of directors retire in rotation and being eligible offer themselves for re-election.

Risk Management

The directors have a risk management strategy which consists of establishing a system of identifying risks and mitigating such risks. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors

We, the directors of the company who held office at the date of approval of these Financial Statements, as set out above, each confirm so far as we are aware, that:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware; and
- we have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken as directors in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Financial Review

Budgetary controls and constant reviews of all expenditure continue to be implemented this period and have not hindered business of The Nerve Centre in achieving their primary purpose. Controls taken at the management level will continue to the coming financial year with continuous monitoring throughout.

The financial accounts show a surplus of £273,248 with reserves of £3,569,396.

Principal Funding Sources

The principal funding sources over the relevant financial year have been NI Screen, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, British Film Institute, Derry City & Strabane District Council, SEUPB, South West College, Heritage Lottery Fund, Festival 2022 and Paul Hamlyn Foundation. The company maintains a strong relationship with its funders and have secured funding with them for the foreseeable future.

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Chairperson's Foreword

This year has been an unprecedented year for creative programming at the Nerve Centre with our Unboxed project with Oliver Jeffers, Our Place in Space, dominating the year.

This large scale sculpture trail launched in Derry in April 22 breaking a world record for the largest number of astronauts in the one place, before moving to Belfast in June, Cambridge in August, Liverpool in October before returning home to Cultra in February 2023.

At each location the trail included a full education programme including online resources for schools, an interactive app and animation programme of events, festivals and workshops.

Our Place in Space was one of the best performing of the Unboxed Festival projects with audiences in excess of 1 million and at the time of writing our Augmented Reality App and Minecraft World has been downloaded over 3 million times across 150 countries.

We also engaged over 1 million at the 4 locations, 156,000 attended events and 28,000 students took part in educational aspects of the project. This large scale project was additional to our regularly funded activity supported by our core funders.

Our largest funder, Northern Ireland Screen, continued to provide their annual support for our film festival, creative learning centres, academies, film clubs and exhibition programming.

Nerve Belfast moved into the new location at W5 in Belfast with Nerve Belfast delivering a variety of STEM training programmes during August and September including sessions in coding and Minecraft.

At the end of the year Nerve Belfast hosted a free full-day series of events on Tuesday 21 February 2023 to officially launch their new training facility within W5 LIFE with a symposium on film education.

The centre-piece of the symposium was the public launch of the Shortcut website and learning programme which makes freely available 20 European short films exploring sensitive and challenging social issues which are impacting negatively on the physical and mental health of young people.

Our delivery would not have been possible without the support of all our core funders such as Derry City and Strabane District Council (who support core building costs and the Annual Foyle Film Festival), Belfast City Council and Community Relations Council.

Meanwhile back in Derry, Foyle Film Festival celebrated its 35th year and a decade-long partnership with Brunswick Moviebowl. Audiences were great for the festival with over 25 sold out events of the 80 screenings and events which took place at the festival.

Festival favourites Cinematic Breakfasts and Dementia Friendly Screens returned with some all-time classics - and this year we welcomed our first collaboration with Foyle Foodbank - offering a series of Foodbank Screens supporting the local community, the public are encouraged to donate much-needed items to the foodbank instead of the usual ticket fee.

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In February we relaunched our regular cinema screenings at the Nerve Centre committing to every Wednesday and Thursday night. Audiences have been great and the programming has been excellent as a result of the new DCP projector which allows us to get the most recent releases.

In March, we delivered both the Reel Lives Film Festival and Schools Film Week with additional support from Northern Ireland Screen.

Our music activity including gigs, music courses and music facilities also began to return to normal with courses, gigs and CaDi programmes.

We continued to provide many live performances in our venue showcasing local performers and international acts as well. In a major coup Nerve Centre booked Bell X1 for a show at the Derry Jazz Festival in May 2022. The show was the smallest venue on the tour and sold out within minutes.

Arts Council NI provided core funding for music activity and capital funding to enable us to cater for our music programme including live events and music Hothouses provide equipment to be able to do this and adapt our spaces.

Our delivery would not have been possible without the support of all our core funders such as Derry City and Strabane District Council (who support core building costs and the Annual Foyle Film Festival), Belfast City Council and Community Relations Council.

Nerve Centre was able to continue to provide career opportunities for young people in the screen and creative industries including the BFI Film Academy, BFI Venue Education Fund, Music Hothouse, Bandcamp and CADI programmes.

The Reimagine, Remake Project also had another productive year. The project's vision is that through the energy and imagination of young people, combined with digital creativity, it will create a new dynamic in the exploration and interpretation of collections held by museums, and create sustainable models for long-term youth engagement.

In June 2022 Young People on the Reimagine Remake Replay project launched their augmented reality exhibition at the Ulster Museum. Created over a four week period, local 16 - 25 year olds were challenged to learn new skills such as illustration and animation to produce an entirely new view on our shared heritage. In this exciting exhibition, visitors could uncover illustrations, animations and voice overs that give a fresh coat of digital paint to Mid Antrim Museum's iconic object wall. It is with sadness that the Reimagine Remake Replay project came to an end in November 2022.

Lastly, our 10 year grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation continued to provide the core support for the organisation providing a stability and programme resource for the organisation to develop new ways of thinking and seed fund projects at a very early stage.

John McGowan
Chairperson

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Activity Report 2022/23

Northern Ireland Screen continue to be the largest funder of the Nerve Centre supporting creative learning centres in Derry and Belfast, exhibition programme including Foyle Film Festival and Film Clubs.

Their funding makes a strategic intervention in the film sector ecosystem crossing between industry, education and exhibition.

The Nerve Centre delivers our education, training and participation programmes both at the Nerve Centre and also via our network of Creative Learning Centres in Derry and Belfast.

During the period with NI Screen funding Nerve Centre continued the highly successful Acadmies in Animation, Production Design and Gaming providing career opportunities for 16 - 19 year olds in the screen

Nerve Belfast moved into the new location at W5 in Belfast with Nerve Belfast delivering a variety of STEM training programmes during August and September including sessions in coding and Minecraft.

At the end of the year Nerve Belfast hosted a free full-day series of events on Tuesday 21 February 2023 to officially launch their new training facility within W5 LIFE with a symposium on film education.

Foyle Film Festival celebrated its 35th year and a decade-long partnership with Brunswick Moviebowl. Audiences were great for the festival with over 25 sold out events. Foyle Film Festival is one of only a handful of international film festivals with Oscar affiliation and BAFTA recognition. The festival, which is a flagship project of the Nerve Centre, offers filmmakers, animators and artists a unique platform to screen their films, network with industry professionals and gain access to the international market.

In February we relaunched our regular cinema screenings at the Nerve Centre committing to every Wednesday and Thursday night.

In March, we delivered both the Reel Lives Film Festival and Schools Film Week with additional support from Northern Ireland Screen.

Nerve Centre has also built a reputation as an organisation that provides opportunities for new bands and artists in Northern Ireland. We continued to provide many live performances in our venue showcasing local performers and international acts as well. In a major coup Nerve Centre booked Bell X1 for a show at the Derry Jazz Festival in May 2022. The show was the smallest venue on the tour and sold out within minutes.

Arts Council NI provided core funding for music activity and capital funding to enable us to cater for our music programme including live events and music Hothouses provide equipment to be able to do this and adapt our spaces.

Our delivery would not have been possible without the support of all our core funders such as Derry City and Strabane District Council (who support core building costs and the Annual Foyle Film Festival), Belfast City Council and Community Relations Council.

In addition, our 10 year grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation continued to provide the core support for the organisation providing a stability and programme resource for the organisation to develop new ways of thinking and seed fund projects at a very early stage.

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Nerve Centre continued to provide career opportunities for young people in the screen and creative industries including Music Hothouse, Bandcamp and CADI programmes.

We also delivered over 40 full-time places during the year and provide equipment to support online and blended learning. By working in partnership with South West College we were able to offer these full-time places during the year in full time creative media courses.

These courses are the backbone of the Nerve Centre, enabling us to develop the indigenous skills necessary to sustain a local music, multimedia and film/video-making industry.

BFI increased their support of the Nerve Centre by also providing funding from their BFI venue education fund as well as the BFI Film Academy which we have been delivering on an NI wide basis for 10 years.

In July 2022 we delivered the Script Development Lab which provided an excellent chance for young filmmakers to network with industry experts and meet possible future collaborators. Participants were guided by three industry mentors and collaborate on the creation of a brand-new short film screenplay. A screenplay that might help get that all important first professional credit.

Throughout the course participants received exclusive masterclasses from leading TV and film industry professionals. Adam Patterson and Declan Lawn are aboard this year. This writing duo scripted the critically acclaimed BBC drama The Salisbury Poisonings and the Simon Pegg helmed Channel 4 drama The Undeclared War.

The Reimagine, Remake Project also had another productive year and came to a close in November 2022. The project's vision is that through the energy and imagination of young people, combined with digital creativity, it will create a new dynamic in the exploration and interpretation of collections held by museums, and create sustainable models for long- term youth engagement.

In June 2022 Young People on the Reimagine Remake Replay project launched their augmented reality exhibition at the Ulster Museum. Created over a four week period, local 16 - 25 year olds were challenged to learn new skills such as illustration and animation to produce an entirely new view on our shared heritage.

Reimagine, Remake, Replay was funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund's Kick the Dust Programme. The project was led by the Nerve Centre with partners National Museums Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Museums Council and Northern Ireland Screen.

The centrepiece of this year was our Unboxed project with Oliver Jeffers, Our Place in Space.

This large scale sculpture trail launched in Derry in April 22 breaking a world record for the largest number of astronauts in the one place, before moving to Belfast in June, Cambridge in August, Liverpool in October before returning home to Cultra in February 2023.

At each location the trail included a full education programme including online resources for schools, an interactive app and animation programme of events, festivals and workshops.

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Our Place in Space was one of the best performing of the Unboxed Festival projects with audiences in excess of 1 million and at the time of writing our Augmented Reality App and Minecraft World has been downloaded over 3 million times across 150 countries.

We also engaged over 1 million at the 4 locations, 156,000 attended events and 28,000 students took part in educational aspects of the project.

News on all our current workshops and Events can be found at:- <https://www.nervecentre.org>

Directors Responsibilities in Relation to The Financial Statements

The directors are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the directors 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 these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK and Accounting Standards have been followed; subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Board is responsible for maintaining proper accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and 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 Companies Act 2006. The Board is 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 accordance with company law, as the company's directors, we certify that:

So far as we are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware; and as the directors of the company we have taken all steps we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditor's-

McGroarty McCafferty & Company are deemed to be reappointed in accordance with Section 487 (2) of the Companies Act 2006.

This report is prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.


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The financial statements are approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors on 11 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by;



Director

JOHN MC GOWEN



Director

EDWARD FRIEL