

## Annual Report

→ 2014-2015



**“The more connected we become as a network of practitioners, the more exciting the work we create will become.” – YTAS member**



## The Project Year 2014-2015

### THE ORGANISATION

Youth Theatre Arts Scotland (YTAS) celebrated its 10th birthday during a busy summer in 2014. The National Festival of Youth Theatre held a 10th anniversary event in Fife that included a performance of 'Home' by the RE:LOCATION International Young Co.

During the summer YTAS's new CEO Kenny McGlashan also joined the organisation to develop plans for the next five years. YTAS launched its new website in October 2014 with improved features and opportunities for members. With a busy new team and projects underway YTAS moved office to Summerhall, Edinburgh at the start of 2015.

In August Scottish actor Sam Heughan marked his first year as YTAS Patron by hosting a special visit behind the scenes of the US cable network drama 'Outlander' for YTAS members. The YTAS board thanks Sam and his many fans for their continued support of our work.

YTAS completed its 2-year funding from Creative Scotland in 2014-15 for its '*Projects Forming a Programme of Work*'. YTAS has since been awarded continued core funding from Creative Scotland between 2015-2018 as one of their new Regularly Funded Organisations. YTAS looks forward to delivering on its new Business Plan and continuing to work with Creative Scotland over the next three years.





**“Where would we be without this community of professionals supporting one another and bringing about continued change and inspiration?” – YTAS member**



## SCOTLAND'S YOUTH THEATRE SECTOR

Since 2004 the youth theatre sector in Scotland has grown from a small, informal community into a confident, well-connected and far reaching network of practice. YTAS has worked hard to unify and empower the sector through the projects and services it delivers. This has supported considerable growth in the scale, diversity and impact for youth theatre arts in Scotland. Ten years on YTAS continues to lead and support a thriving and diverse sector:

- 23,000 young people are engaged every week
- 125 members operate throughout all 32 local authorities (made up of 60 youth theatres, 55 freelancers and 11 associated organisations)

Through YTAS's annual Sector Review we also know that Scotland's youth theatre participants embody the sector's attention to access and diversity:

- 30% of participants coming from areas of multiple deprivation
- 15% are identified as either deaf, hard of hearing, visually, physically impaired or have additional learning requirements
- The majority of our youth theatres provide weekly activities for £0-£5/week and also offer financial support

The Sector Review also highlighted how the network continues to grow in scale, complexity and impact:

- Many youth theatres are finding it increasingly challenging to meet the demand from young people to join.
- More youth theatre members are going on to study in the creative industries.
- More youth theatres are having their work reviewed in local and national press.
- Most youth theatres are seeing an increase in audience numbers.
- More youth theatres are providing professional development opportunities.

The annual Youth Theatre Sector Symposium was held on Fri 7th Nov 2014 in partnership with Edinburgh Festival Theatre and was attended by 107 delegates. The theme for the day was '*National and International Collaboration*' and included presentations by Morna McGeoch on 'RE:LOCATION' and Tom Hobbins on the National Theatre of Scotland / Scottish Youth Theatre 'Tin Forest' project.

YTAS gave a presentation on the Erasmus+ international funding opportunity available to the sector. The event included 'Shout out' presentations from National Youth Arts Hub representatives as well as YTAS's national sector update. Applications were also launched for the new Chrysalis festival and the Young Arts Leaders programme, both piloting in 2015.





**“This festival changes lives and sows the seeds for social transformation that has ripples long after the weekend itself.”** – Youth theatre group leader 2014



## THE PROJECTS

### NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF YOUTH THEATRE 2014

The National Festival of Youth Theatre (NFYT) was a huge success in 2014 exceeding both participation and income targets. The press and publicity of the event was also significantly increased from previous years. This was a notable achievement considering how many competing opportunities there was in summer 2014 alongside the Commonwealth Games.

There were 12 performances during the weekend, a skills workshop programme for young people facilitated by international partners and a workshop programme for group leaders. NFYT 2014 was delivered in partnership with ONFife and the Falkland Centre for Stewardship. The principal event sponsor was Shell and the event received funding from Creative Scotland, Fife Strategic Events, EIS, the Souter Charitable Trust, the Sylvia Waddilove Foundation and the Mary Leishman Foundation.

Prior to the festival seven Fife schools and community groups took part in the Shell 'ENGAGE' outreach project by hosting 'taster' youth theatre workshops. Young people from these groups went on to form the 2014 ENGAGE Young Company to create the performance that opened the festival. Fife Council also hosted a Civic Reception on the Sunday to celebrate the 10th anniversary of NFYT as well as the culmination of the RE:LOCATION 2014 international project.

The feedback from NFYT 2014 participants was consistently strong with 85% saying it made them *'feel more confident'* and *'want to see more theatre'* and 71% saying it *'inspired them to take new ideas back to their youth theatre'*.

Group Leaders' feedback also reflected well on the event with 100% saying that NFYT plays an important role in *'promoting access and diversity in youth theatre'* and *'investing in the creative development of young people'* and 81% saying they were *'likely'* to return in 2015.





**“RE:LOCATION was one of the most creative things I've ever done. I'm so glad I got to meet so many wonderful people from other countries.”** – Youth participant 2014



## RE:LOCATION 2014

RE:LOCATION is an international youth theatre exchange project that provides a platform for showcasing young talent and ideas and celebrates the creative and social powers of youth theatre arts.

In July 2014 RE:LOCATION was produced by Youth Theatre Arts Scotland. The project was supported with funding from the European Union, the National Theatre of Scotland, Fife Council and Creative Scotland. In-kind venue support was kindly provided by Fife Cultural Trust. Scotland proudly welcomed 28 young participants aged 15-18 and their group leaders from the following partner youth theatres; Mitchell School of Drama from Scotland, Rogaland Teater from Norway, Filuren from Denmark, Le Grand Bleu from France, Junge Akteure from Germany, and Kildare Youth Theatre from Ireland.

Aligned with YTAS's mission, aims and objectives RE:LOCATION 2014 enabled the young participants to; work with professional European theatre artists to devise and perform a new piece of ensemble theatre, to take part in an international creative exchange to learn, perform and make friends with other young people from across Europe, and to share a passion for youth theatre.

The project also allowed the professional artists involved to; represent their country's youth theatre sector within an international collaboration, to share and develop their artistic practice with international colleagues, to establish new international partnerships, and to increase their knowledge and understanding of best practice in youth exchange.



**“Interchange is a unique training opportunity for facilitators, theatre-makers and youth leaders. There is nothing else like it available in Scotland.”**  
– Interchange delegate 2015



## INTERCHANGE 2015

Interchange took place at the Howden Park Centre, Livingston on 21-22 March 2015. 65 delegates attended the professional skills development conference, including 10 bursary places. The event was supported by Awards for All, Creative Scotland, West Lothian Council and Firefly Arts.

Feedback on the professional development event highlighted its continued importance for sector professionals with 93% of delegates said *'they would attend Interchange again'*, and *'would recommend it to a colleague'* and 95% said the *'continuation of the annual event was important to Scotland's youth theatre sector'*, with 65% classing the event as *'vital'*.





## CHRYSALIS

The new Chrysalis festival is produced by Youth Theatre Arts Scotland and will take place from 6-7 November 2015 in partnership with the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh. It will also feature as part of the Roundhouse London's 2015 'Call to Create' showcase. Four selected shows by young theatre-makers will each be performed twice over the two day festival. 2015 is the pilot year of this pioneering new event for Scotland's cultural sector, with further growth and development planned over subsequent years.

Chrysalis will be; the first and only platform of its kind in Scotland, a new public performance opportunity for Scotland's youth theatre sector that is staged in a high-profile, professional venue and curated by a consortium of specialists, and a new experience for audiences new to youth theatre arts.

Chrysalis aims to make a difference by:

- Addressing the demand for a new performance platform for high-quality work by young theatre-makers.
- Positively enhancing the public perception of creative work by young people.
- Attracting new public audiences to youth theatre arts.
- Stimulating critical discussion around artistic excellence and quality in performance by young theatre-makers.
- Raising the aspirations of young theatre-makers by enabling them to perform to public audiences in a high-profile theatre venue with professional production support.

The Federation of Scottish Theatre has supported YTAS to host emerging producer Viviane Hullin to assist in planning the event. Viviane will focus on partnership management, logistics and the project's national / international reach.

## YOUNG ARTS LEADERS

YTAS secured funding to deliver a new 'Young Arts Leaders' programme from the Scottish Government's 'Cashback for Creativity' fund administered by Creative Scotland. The project establishes a new pathway for Scotland's young theatre-makers to realise and harness their potential as art leaders and producers within their own communities.

The programme identifies young people, areas and developments with particular need and will highlight the potential that youth theatre has in supporting young people to overcome barriers to participation and progression. By engaging with their community and sharing their work, the Young Arts Leaders will become agents for change by inspiring ideas, aspiration and advocacy across Scotland's youth theatre network.

Activity on the 12 month programme started in February 2015 with seven Young Arts Leaders aged between 16-23 from Fife, North Ayrshire, Glasgow, Perth and Kinross, North Lanarkshire, Inverclyde and the Scottish Borders. The Young Arts Leaders will be mentored by leading Scottish artists and theatre professionals and will attend intensive Leadership Skills weekends.

On completion of the 12 month course, participants will also gain a Gold Arts Award with units in 'personal arts development' and 'arts projects leadership'.

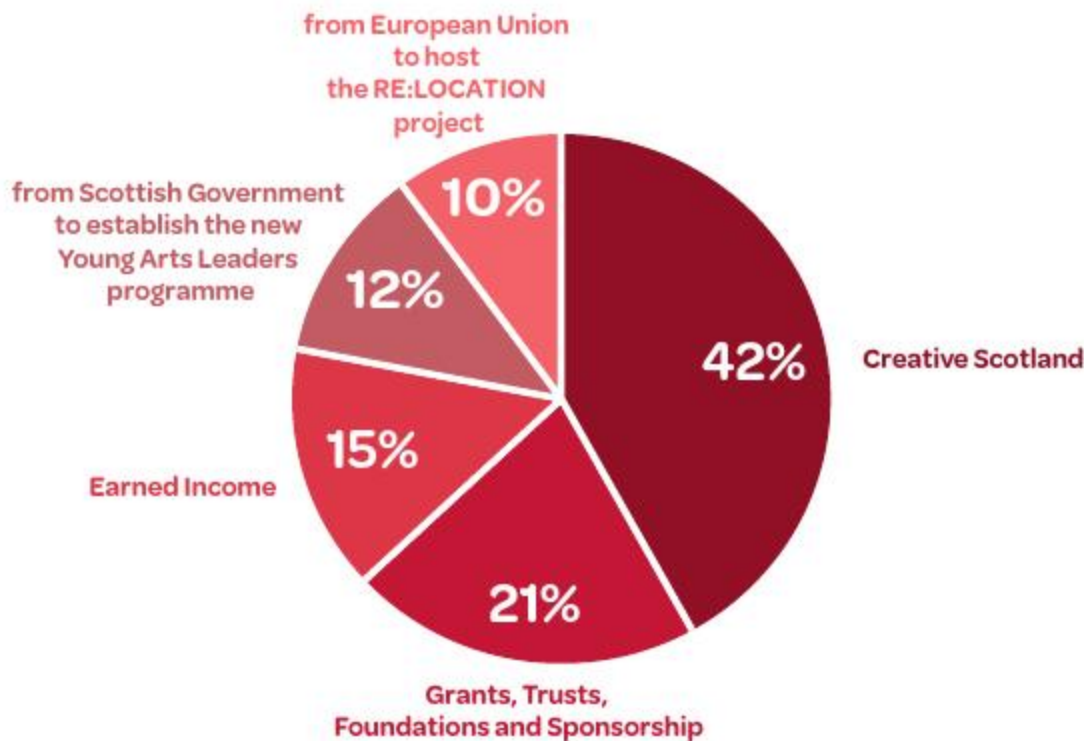




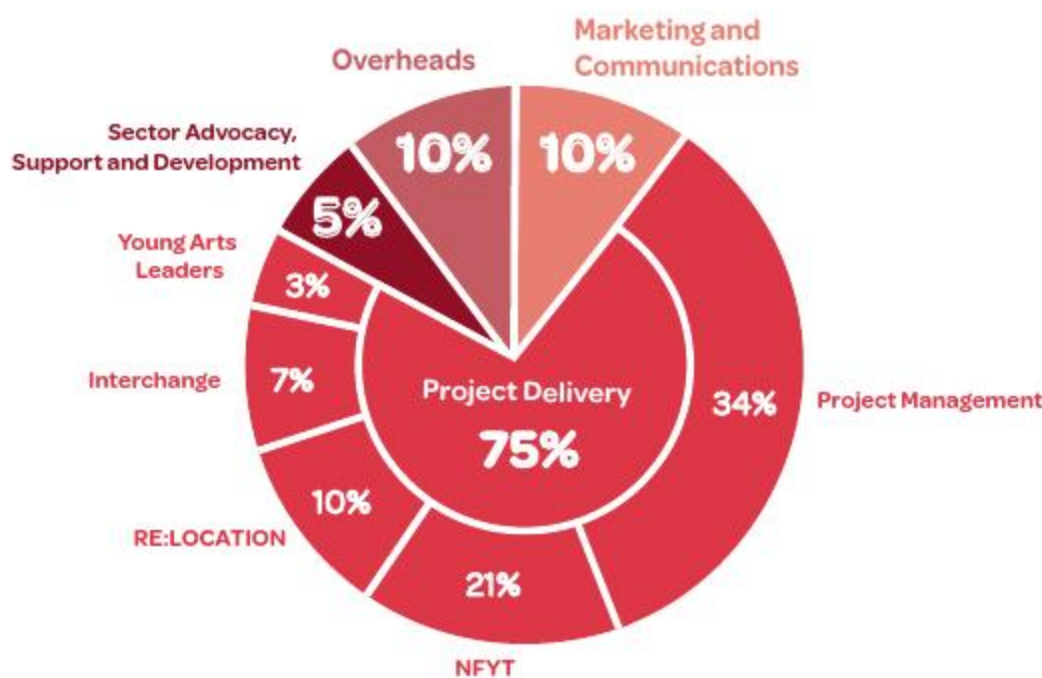
## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Youth Theatre Arts Scotland's record of financial management over the past 10 years has been excellent with considerable impact achieved with modest resources. We have set and delivered balanced budgets, attracted external funding from a range of sources and gradually developed reserves in line with our board's Reserves Policy.

In 2014/15 Youth Theatre Arts Scotland generated £250,000 income.



In 2014/15 we expended £223,000.



£25,000 is restricted to delivery of the Young Arts Leaders programme in 2015-16

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### Acknowledgements



Youth Theatre Arts Scotland additionally acknowledges the following partners and funders for their support over the project year 2014 – 2015:

**Shell UK Ltd, Kingdom Shopping Centre, Rogaland Teater (Norway), Festival City Theatres Trust, West Lothian Council, Cashback for Creativity, Call to Create 2015, The Educational Institute of Scotland, Fife Strategic Events Investment Programme, The Mary Leishman Foundation, The Souter Charitable Trust, The Sylvia Waddilove Foundation, British Council: Youth in Action.**