

Annual Report

→ 2016-2017



"The work YTAS does is so crucial and there's no doubt in my mind that as a sector we would be far less connected, ambitious and resilient without YTAS and its dedicated team." - YTAS Member



Youth Theatre Arts Scotland (YTAS) continued to lead and support a dynamic youth theatre sector throughout 2016-17. The company and its projects both showed healthy signs of growth and development in response to the contemporary needs of Scotland's young theatre makers and the professionals who work with them.

The continued success of YTAS's four annual national events, alongside increased sector development and partnership projects, demonstrated the company's commitment to Scotland's youth theatre community.

OUR MISSION

Transforming lives through youth theatre by developing inspiring participatory opportunities for young people, and connecting, supporting and training the professionals who work with them.

OUR VISION

That youth theatre in Scotland is the creative crucible where young people choose to come together and prepare for a positive future.



OUR VALUES

- **Intelligence and Support** - The young people and professionals we support are a connected and reflective community. We advocate for their collective knowledge to assure the greatest impact in the work we do together.
- **Access and Participation** - We are passionate about sharing the work of our organisation and our community. We strive to find new and exciting ways to let people in and deepen their engagement.
- **Collaboration for Development** - We support a multi-age, multi-arts network from across Scotland; made up of young people and professionals engaging in multiple levels of provision and development together. Our motivation and talents grow from working together and sharing our achievements.
- **Excellence and Experimentation** - We celebrate and encourage ambition, innovation and progression, taking responsibility for improving pathways through our sector and striving for quality in all that we do.

OUR OBJECTIVES AND OUTPUTS

- Through **Information and Advocacy** we will support Scotland's youth theatre arts sector by providing membership support, networking and information opportunities, targeted impact and capacity building services and a variety of research, resources and digital platforms.
- Through **Youth Theatre Arts Projects and Services** we will deliver and develop our national partnership projects and establish new youth engagement and audience development initiatives for the sector.
- Through **Training and Professional Development** we will support regional development, establish national progression and quality frameworks and evolve our national training projects.
- We will target **Developmental Sustainability** for the organisation and network by growing and improving our income streams and fundraising potential, assuring we have efficient resources and processes to achieve impact, and addressing the sector's local, cultural, financial and ecological responsibilities.



THE YTAS TEAM

During 2016-17 the core staff team included:

- Kenny McGlashan – CEO (full time)
- Helen Bain – General Manager (part time)
- Clara Bloomfield – Creative Learning Manager (part time)
- James Coutts – Communications & Marketing Manager (part time)
- Abigail Harte – Projects Co-ordinator/Manager (part time)
- Vikki Doig – Sector Engagement Officer (part time)
- Andy Catlin - Communications & Marketing Coordinator (part time)
- Olivia Ainsworth - Projects Administrator (part time)

As well as the core staff posts listed above, YTAS offered a number of other contracts throughout 2016-17 to support the delivery and development of its events and services.

These contracts included YTAS Bookkeeper since 2013, Karen Caillaud (of Keeping Account), Production Manager for NFYT and Chrysalis, Paul Rodger, Chrysalis Producer, Fiona McCurdy and NFYT Volunteer Coordinator, Amy Watt.

During 2016-17 the company supported a series of placements and internships with the core team. Anastasia Cavina as YTAS Projects Assistant on placement from Queen Margaret University's MA in Arts, Festival and Cultural Management. Anastasia carried out a Feasibility Study into YTAS training developments for the company. Clare McVay was a Volunteer Marketing Intern who supported YTAS through copywriting, content development and design work connected to NFYT 2016. Then in March 2017, teaching and arts student, Emily Tobin, came from Ontario, Canada to observe Interchange and assist the team with other events and activities around the country.

YTAS Patron, actor Sam Heughan, continued to be an important advocate for YTAS's work - assisting with promotions around our Chrysalis festival as well as galvanizing fan groups to support the organisation and the benefits it brings to young theatre makers across Scotland. YTAS's Board of Directors would like to say a special thanks to Sam and his fans for their incredibly generous support.

COMPANY DEVELOPMENTS

In recognition of its commitment to key areas of employment YTAS received a Good Practice Award from Investors in Young People and was accredited as a Living Wage employer by The Living Wage Foundation and Poverty Alliance. Following this, YTAS hosted a visit from the Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs where we discussed YTAS's commitment to the Living Wage, developments from our Investors in Young People Award, as well as our new regional development activity and international plans.



At the start of the year YTAS invited the Information Commissioner's Office to carry out an Advisory Visit to help develop the company's data protection processes. YTAS updated its staff policies and procedures into a comprehensive Company Handbook and established a company Pension Scheme, in accordance with the auto-enrolment timetable set out by legislation. YTAS published a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for the company and the sector as well as refreshing its Membership Scheme information, in response to the 2016 Membership Review. YTAS received its second positive Annual Review in 2016 for its 3-year Regular Funding from Creative Scotland and undertook their new Peer Review process for YTAS Symposium and Chrysalis projects, both of which received strong positive feedback.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT



During 2016, the Robertson Trust awarded YTAS 3-year funding to deliver a new programme of regional development activity. The funds allowed YTAS to recruit a new Sector Engagement Officer to reach out, connect and develop youth theatre activity in specific Scottish local authorities.

The targeted regions for 2016-17 were Angus, Argyll and Bute, Clackmannanshire, Dumfries and Galloway, North Ayrshire and North Lanarkshire. YTAS appointed Vikki Doig as their new Sector Engagement Officer to lead on the delivery of the project's outcomes and activities. 2016-17 activities included new opportunities for youth groups, young people, practitioners and partners.

YTAS worked with practitioners and young people from 34 youth theatre and community groups and with 373 young people at events in regions including Dunoon, Argyll and Bute and Ayrshire.

Indirectly over 1,180 young people were involved with our development work, thanks to the information and skills training we provided to practitioners.

YTAS delivered formal and informal training, networking and support in all target regions which benefitted 95 practitioners and youth theatre leaders, including presentations at the Scottish Rural Parliament, and hosting three practitioner's gatherings in Ayrshire and North Lanarkshire for skill sharing.



YTAS designed training and workshops to address the needs and interests of groups in target regions, including theatre workshops in Oban, Aviemore, Dumfries, Ayrshire and North Lanarkshire.

During the year YTAS worked closely with partners including Dundee Rep to help establish their new regional Next Up Festival; and with Argyll Youth Arts Hub to provide new opportunities to develop skills.

YTAS brokered relationships between a number of organisations and freelancers to help increase opportunities available to young people, including The Clacks Youth Work department and MacRobert Arts Centre, which resulted in new programmes for young people; and the National Theatre of Scotland, which created an opportunity for groups to take part in NTS SHIFT.

Beyond the direct activities for youth groups, young people, practitioners and partners, YTAS provided regular advice and guidance for regional councils and stakeholders on different models of youth theatre provision and delivery. At the end of the Year YTAS compiled its insights into 6 regional Action Plans which will be made available to stakeholders who participated in Year 1 of the project to take forward. Through delivery of the regional development programme YTAS increased engagement and attendance at its core events from the target regions, by attracting new participants who had not attended before, including; Interchange: +11 participants; Symposium: +9 participants.

In addition to the Regional Development activities listed above that undertook, YTAS also established a new Resource Suite on its website with information addressing many of the challenges identified by groups from the targeted regions. These were updated by the Sector Engagement Officer based on identified need in target regions and signposted to groups and practitioners. The Resource Suite currently has over 60 available resources which includes information and guidance on sourcing and applying for funding, selecting scripts, health and safety pertaining to staging a production, marketing and social media support and evaluation methods. The Resource Suite will continue to be curated throughout Year 2 of the Regional Development project.

YOUTH THEATRE PROJECTS & EVENTS

NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF YOUTH THEATRE 2016



"NFYT was a fantastic experience from start to finish - a brilliant opportunity for young people to share their work with their peers whilst gaining an understanding and appreciation of the vast range of youth theatre performance which is taking place in Scotland." - NFYT 2016 Leader



The National Festival of Youth Theatre (NFYT) was held in Rothes Halls and Falkland Centre for Stewardship in Fife in July 2016. 10 groups and 120 young people and their leaders attended from:

- APA Youth Theatre (Aberdeen)
- Collision (Fife)
- Comar Young Company / Argyll Youth Arts (Argyll and Bute)
- Lab Station / Platform (Glasgow)
- Mallaig Youth Theatre / Eden Court Creative (Highlands)
- Moray Youth Theatre / Eden Court Creative (Moray)
- Rowlands Drama Club (Scottish Borders)
- Talent Academy Balwearie / Fife Youth Arts (Fife)
- Ryan Youth Theatre (Dumfries and Galloway)
- Volcano Youth Company (Wales)

Bookings for NFYT in 2016 were the lowest for many years. YT groups consulted highlighted a variety of reasons for this but the availability of the bi-annual National Theatre of Scotland Exchange event and increased National Theatre Connections and Youth Arts Hubs activity across Scotland possibly made the YTAGS annual event less vital on this occasion. The team resolved to monitor how the event performs with NFYT's move to Ayr in 2017 and reductions to these other projects.

Alongside Shell's sponsorship of NFYT winding up in 2015, YTAGS had to cut back on the scale of the event and expenditure. Nonetheless we were still able to deliver the core event as planned and feedback was as strong as ever, with some positive comments highlighting that the reduced scale led to deeper engagement between groups and activities. Particular highlights included the quality and diversity of the productions and inclusion of the new activities; Theatre Sports, post-show discussions and 5-minute Theatre 'scratch' workshops.

YTAGS gratefully acknowledges support from Creative Scotland, Fife Cultural Trust, Fife Council, The Russell Trust and Kingdom Shopping Centre for their support in delivering NFYT 2016.

2017 is the first time the event has moved in seven years. NFYT 2017 will be held at Gaiety Theatre and Rozelle Park in Ayr, with support from the Gaiety and South Ayrshire Council. By the end of 2016 bookings for NFYT 2017 had reached capacity, which was reassuring for the long-term sustainability of the event.



CHRYSALIS 2016



"Some of the country's most innovative youth theatres will be at the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh for the Chrysalis festival"

– The Guardian, 2016



The second Chrysalis festival was held again at Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh in November 2016. The festival extended to 3 days and included a programme of new 'scratch' works as well as a workshop programme for the companies and youth and professional audiences. The additional day, space and activities around the festival created a richer buzz and atmosphere across the event.

The 4 selected productions included 'Sheep' by Tron Young Company (Glasgow), 'Club' by Teatru Manoel (Malta), 'Phenomena: A Beginner's Guide To Love & Physics' by Sounds Like Chaos (London) and 'The Island' by the Platform Young Company (Easterhouse).

The Emergence 'scratch' groups selected were Macrobert Young Company (Stirling), Strange Town (Edinburgh) and Nick Barton-Wines (Saltire Young Director Award winner) who worked with Beacon Youth Theatre (Inverclyde).

The number of people attending Chrysalis in 2016 was similar to the previous year however audience ratings rose considerably in 2016 for the quality, variety and ambition of the Chrysalis programme. This reflected YTAS's own sense that the programme was better balanced this year.

89% of audience survey respondents said they would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to attend the festival again and 100% of respondents agreed that "Chrysalis positively enhances public perception of creative work by young people", "inspires and raises aspirations of young people involved in theatre and performance" and "creates pathways for young people beginning their journey as artists and theatre makers".

YTAS gratefully acknowledges support from Creative Scotland, Traverse Theatre, Foyle Foundation and Turtleton Trust for their support in delivering Chrysalis 2016.



INTERNATIONAL: TEENEXTERS

For a second year in a row, YTAS supported a group of 6 Scottish young critics to attend the international exchange programme in Lille, in November 2016. The young critics were selected from YTAS member youth theatre groups to experience the ground breaking NEXT festival alongside our international partners from Norway, Spain, Ireland, Belgium and France.

Scotland's TeeNEXTers group comprised of 6 young women from all around the country; Comar Young Company (Argyll), Aberdeen Performing Arts Youth Theatre (Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire), Dundee Rep Youth Theatre (Dundee and Angus) and Borders Youth Theatre (Scottish Borders). Practitioner Lou Brodie and professional critic Gareth Vile both attended the festival on YTAS's behalf to support the group and help connect the project to the broader strand of Young Critics work YTAS is expanding throughout 2017.





INTERNATIONAL: CREATIVE COMMONS



At the start of the year YTAS and its sister organisation in the Republic of Ireland, the National Association for Youth Drama (NAYD), received funding from the European Union's Erasmus programme. 'Creative Commons' will run from April 2016 to June 2018 to allow the partners to share best practice and strategically build innovative resources in Young Critics practice and Young Leader mentorship and skill development. At the start of 2017 NAYD rebranded as Youth Theatre Ireland (YTI) benefitting from the experience of YTAS's marketing and communications.

'Creative Commons' project activities include Transnational Project Meetings for planning and exchange; developing a new Youth Arts Mentoring Toolkit, Online Leaders Resource Suite and a Young Critics Online Resource Suite; the joint delivery of a Young Critics Youth Exchange in Dublin in 2017 and resource dissemination / training events to share and promote the new resources in 2018.

During 2016-17 YTAS undertook three of the Transnational Meetings in June, October and December and planned for the Youth Exchange.

10 Scottish Young Critics have been selected to go to Ireland in April 2017 to take part in the new partnership training between YTAS and YTI. The Young Critics came from YTAS Members across the country including Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Argyll & Bute, Ayrshire, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Renfrewshire. Throughout the week they will take part in practical discussions, workshops and theatre visits to gain a greater understanding of the art of theatre criticism.

YTAS Young Critics Coordinator, Amy Watt, and professional critic, Gareth Vile, have collaborated as facilitators with YTI's staff. The group will also be supported by Eoin Mckenzie and Rachael-Jane Morrison as the groups Welfare Officers. Upon their return to Scotland's Young Critics will test out their skills at their local theatres. The 'Young Critics Resource' will also include documentation and guides derived from the week in Dublin as alongside guides from the professional critics.

As well as the Young Critics Youth Exchange YTAS also progressed the Youth Arts Mentoring Toolkit during 2016-17 with Vikki Doig and Clara Bloomfield taking on additional contracts to write and coordinate the development of the resource with expert support from mentoring specialist Helen le Brocq.



TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SECTOR AND YOUTH SYMPOSIUM

The annual YTAS Sector Symposium was held at the Methodist Church in Edinburgh in November 2016, prior to the Chrysalis festival launch. The 'Homegrown' theme encapsulated numerous projects and agendas of interest to the sector including; young growing people's voice in performance work with writers and the opportunities and challenges of 'growing your own' young artists / leaders through regional projects.

The event demonstrated the vibrancy and commitment of the sector, as well as YTAS's role in leading and supporting development. 92 delegates attended with 90% of saying they would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to attend again. 100% of delegates agreed that "YTAS Sector Symposium plays an important role supporting a connected and reflective community" and 96% agreed the event "Increased motivation and talent through working together and sharing achievements" and "Shared the work of our community by letting people in and deepening their engagement".

INTERCHANGE



Interchange was held at Eden Court, Inverness in March 2017 and attended by 57 delegates. Despite the lower number of bookings than in previous years the team concluded that the revised event model and the partnership with Eden Court both made Interchange a particular success this year.

The refreshed model for Interchange took into account feedback from the sector and recent findings from YTAS's Feasibility Study. The programme better reflected the evolving needs and interests of practitioners who work across a

multitude of contexts and settings. YTAS introduced more in-depth masterclasses and workshops which provided collaborative learning environments and gave participants the time and opportunity to directly apply what they were learning. There was an increased focus on exchange of practice by delegates within the skills sessions as well as across the whole Interchange event.



- The Lab was a whole weekend residency with playwright Nicola McCartney to learn how to create narrative based work with young people and practice directly applying the techniques with Eden Court Creative's young company.
- A full day Masterclass was held on the Saturday and Sunday focussing on a specific 'context' for making work. Delegates explored various approaches for creating dynamic, original and inclusive theatre with young people who have additional learning requirements. The sessions were hosted by Director / Facilitator Caitlin Skinner with Eden Court's experienced Dance and Drama Accessible Arts Workers, Hayley Savage and Ruby Worth.
- Half-day Artform Workshops passed on tangible tips and tools to add to delegate's skill sets. The sessions were:
 - 'Reimagining Stage Design' by Rachel O'Neill
 - 'Drama in Primary Schools' by Kirsten McCrossan
 - 'Integrating Digital Media and Performance' by David Hunter and Mike Webster (Eden Court Drama Worker and Digital Worker and Filmmaker)
 - 'Actor Training' by Ali De Souza.
- The YTAS team also offered 1:1 surgery sessions to provide support, advice as well as signposting contacts and resources for developing local youth theatre practice and practitioners.
- Friday and Saturday social events provided space to network, exchange ideas and practice with professional peers. Saturday evening included a youth theatre show and facilitated discussion entitled 'It's all about Context' which explored some of the challenges and opportunities of working in a rural setting.

Feedback from delegates highlighted the success of the new event model with 100% of survey respondents rating the 'content of the workshops', 'expertise of the facilitators' and 'quality of the workshop activities' as either 'good' or 'excellent' (with all 'excellent' ratings above 70%). 95% of delegates also said the event offered 'value for money training and networking'. 89% of delegates said they 'will attend Interchange again in the future'. 88% of delegates said, 'the continuation of Interchange was vital to the sector'



DIRECTORS FORUM AND MANAGERS FORUM



YTAS established two new forums for Directors and Managers in 2016-17, in response to feedback from its Membership Review and Interchange Feasibility Study. The forums are for experienced Youth Theatre Directors and Managers who want to push their own practice and work with other professionals on sector-wide opportunities. The forums will take place approximately every six months and include a specialist masterclass or case-study, a networking lunch and a facilitated exchange session.

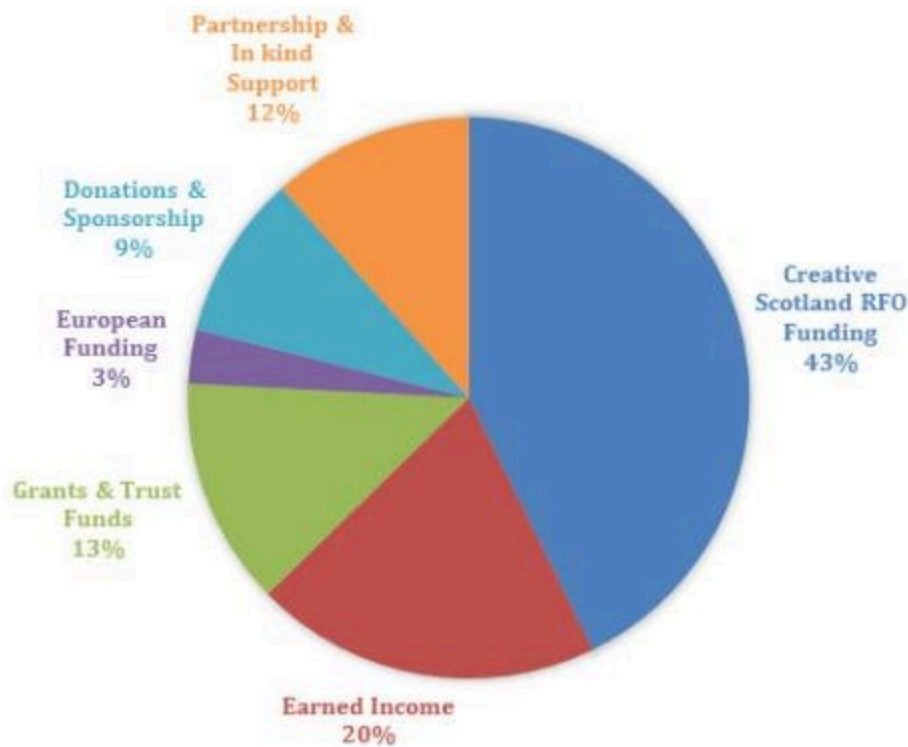
The first 'Directors Forum' took place in August at the Edinburgh Academy focussing on Collision Youth Theatre's 'Gobstopper Effect' approach to

devising authentic new work with young people. The first 'Managers Forum' took place in September at Summerhall hosted by YTAS CEO Kenny McGlashan and Marketing & Communications Manager, James Coutts with support from Culture Republic. The forum focussed on marketing and audience development for youth theatre productions, with James sharing research findings along with tips and tricks that guided YTAS's marketing and communications for events including Chrysalis festival.

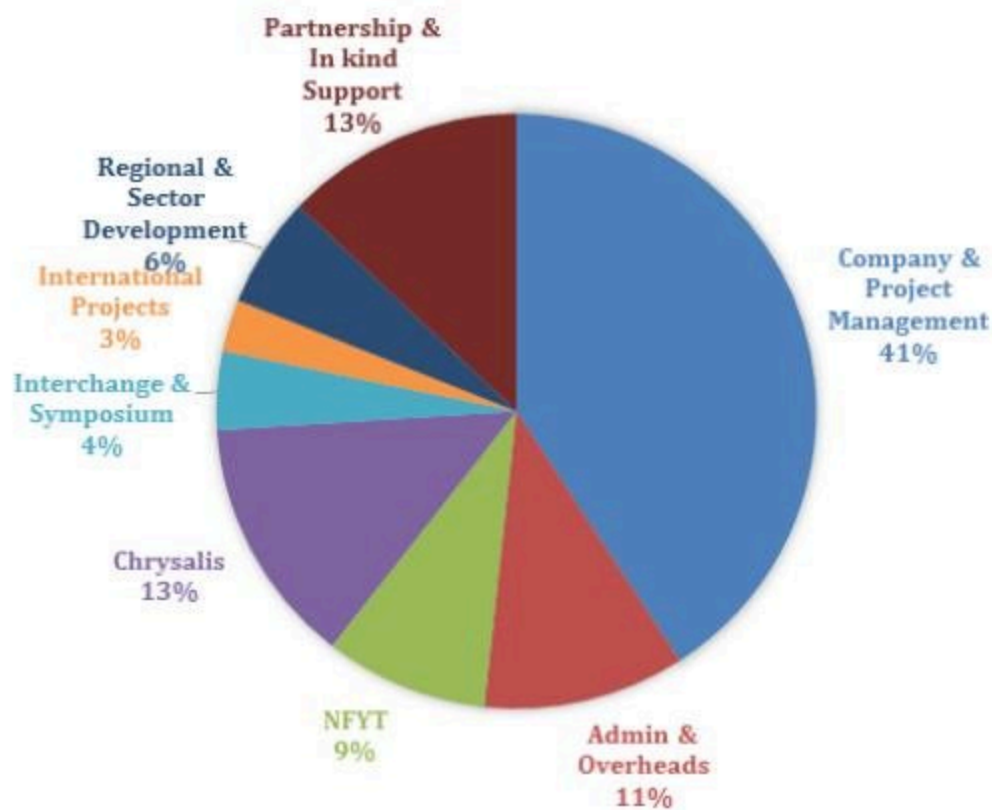


FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

In 2016/17 Youth Theatre Arts Scotland generated **£279,414 income**



In 2016/17 Youth Theatre Arts Scotland expended **£283,496**



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Youth Theatre Arts Scotland is a registered Scottish charity No. SC 035765.

Acknowledgements

