

## Annual Report 2017-2018



Youth Theatre Arts Scotland (YTAS) is the national support and development organisation for Scotland's youth theatre sector. We provide direct services to young people, youth groups and their leaders through a combination of youth theatre projects, training and professional development, and information and advocacy.

Throughout 2017-18 YTAS continued to lead and support a dynamic youth theatre sector. 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 annual national events, alongside increased sector development and partnership projects, demonstrates the company's commitment and performance.

The following pages outline YTAS's activities and achievements during 2017-18 in its work developing access, delivering national and international youth theatre projects and providing industry training and professional development.

### 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.





## DEVELOPING ACCESS

### REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

YTAS carried out the second year of its regional development activity in 2017-18, funded by the Robertson Trust. YTAS's Sector Engagement Officer, Vikki Doig, helped develop youth theatre activity in 12 targeted regions: Angus, Argyll and Bute, Clackmannanshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Inverclyde, Midlothian, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Scottish Borders, South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire and Western Isles.



Throughout the year YTAS worked directly with 66 youth theatre and community groups, 651 young people and 266 practitioners and YT leaders. We established and developed 25 regional partnerships and increased engagement in YTAS's events and services from groups and young people who had never accessed our work before or had limited engagement.



### CASHBACK PROJECT IN SIMD REGIONS - 'NEW TERRITORY'



YTAS carried out the first year of its Cashback funded 'New Territory' project targeted at priority Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation postcodes. The project aims to establish a new partnership approach to developing access, progression and sustainability in the youth theatre sector. Between 2017 - 2019 the lead partners; Ignite, Toonspeak and YTAS, will deliver new weekly drama sessions, summer projects, Young Leaders training and residentials across Glasgow, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire and West Lothian, as well as sharing learning, training and resources between the partners and across the wider youth theatre sector.

By the end of Year 1 New Territory has engaged 284 young people, 59% of which were 'new to these types of activities' and 76% have 'sustained their participation'. 20% of the participants reported 62 equality group characteristics; including; BME, Disabled, LGBTI, young people with mental health issues, Looked After Children and Young Carers. 68% of participants have reported their 'confidence increasing', 66% have reported their 'skills increasing' and 74% have already 'gone on to do new things after their initial Cashback involvement'.





## YOUTH THEATRE PROJECTS & EVENTS

### NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF YOUTH THEATRE 2017



*NFYT is a place where you are encouraged to open, grow, feel and learn. Amazing festival all round, definitely want to come back. - NFYT Volunteer*



NFYT moved for the first time in over 6 years thanks to support from our new event partners Ayr Gaiety and South Ayrshire Council. The festival was held in Ayr between 7-10th July with performances at the newly refurbished Gaiety Theatre, workshops in venues across the town centre and the festival campsite at nearby Rozelle Park. 12 groups and 199 youth theatre participants and leaders attended the weekend from:

- Centrestage Music Theatre (East Ayrshire)
- Cumbernauld Youth Theatre (North Lanarkshire)
- East Lothian Youth Theatre (East Lothian)
- Falkirk Youth Theatre (Falkirk)
- Firefly Arts (West Lothian)
- Gaiety Young Company (South Ayrshire)
- SOPA Youth Theatre Company (Malta)
- The Regal Youth Company (West Lothian)
- Ryan Youth Theatre (Dumfries and Galloway)
- APA Intermediate Youth Theatre (Aberdeen)
- Rowland's Drama Group (Scottish Borders)
- Tron Youth Theatre (Glasgow)

As well as the normal weekend programme, YTAS offered a new one-day opportunity for groups to see shows take part in workshops. YTAS delivered outreach activity across Ayrshire in the lead up to NFYT and showcased Laargs Youth Theatre, East Ayrshire Youth Theatre and Ayrshire Film Company at the Friday 'Made in Ayrshire' opening of the festival. YTAS intends to develop the one-day NFYT opportunity and outreach work again alongside NFYT 2019 in Ayr, to ensure access and regional engagement for the event.

Post event feedback from participants and leaders at NFYT captured the success and impact of the event:

- 100% of Leaders and Young People rated the number, variety and quality of performances and workshops at NFYT as Good or Very Good.
- 95% of Young People said being part of NFYT 'made them feel more confident', 'make new friends' and 'think more creatively'. They also said it had 'encouraged them to see more theatre and take new ideas back to their local youth group'.
- *"It was great to feel part of an artistic community in Scotland, and it is the first time that we have had the opportunity to do anything like this. I loved the conversations that arose with my group following each workshop and performance - it was great to hear their views and their ideas on the performances but also on the themes which arose in each performance."* – Group Leader

Another significant success alongside NFYT was the Kickstarter campaign YTAS carried out to raise funds for a shortfall on the project. The Board would like to thank all those who contributed and Patron Sam Heughan for his support.





## CHRYSALIS 2017



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

– The Guardian



The third Chrysalis festival was held at Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh from 17th - 19th November 2017. We were delighted with the event; ticket sales and media coverage were both sustained and the festival atmosphere and reputation continues to grow. Chrysalis staged 10 performances by 7 companies involving 50 young artists and technicians for an audience of over 1,100. The festival also included 12 workshops, talks and events for young people, arts professionals and the public to explore the ideas and practice behind the festival.

The 4 productions selected for the festival by the Chrysalis Consortium were:

- 'There is a Light: Brightlight' by Contact Young Company (Manchester)
- 'Dark Mechanics' by Firefly Arts (West Lothian)
- 'Queer Fish' by Reading Rep (Reading)
- 'How to Save the World... ish' by Beacon Young Company (Inverclyde)

The Emergence 'scratch' platform also hosted:

- 'Remote Control' by Ryan Youth Theatre / Performance Collective Stranraer, and their Director Drew Taylor
- 'Hard Times' by Citizens Young Company, and their Director Lauren Mitchell
- 'Mr Blue Sky' by Jo Sharp (Saltire Young Director Award) working with Lyceum Youth Theatre





The reach of Chrysalis in 2017 was broader than expected across Edinburgh, Scotland and the UK and welcomed a diverse mix of ages to the Traverse, including a significantly younger audience than most theatres can attract. We also noted an increase in the level of interest, awareness and engagement in Chrysalis this year from the professional arts sector. Building on this will be key to securing the festival's core long-term aims.

Post event feedback from the audience and press captured the success and impact of the event:

- Quality of the work: 81% of the audience said the performances deserved a 4 or 5-star rating
- Learning and challenge: 86% of the audience said they 'felt challenged and provoked' by the work and 88% said the 'performances made them think differently about things'
- *"Theatre and performance have become such an important tool when highlighting serious issues affecting us today. Chrysalis is a brilliant example of such messages being brought to the forefront. Hopefully this is a trend that will continue to grow". – Audience Member*
- *"It is clear that there is a demand for the type of ambitious and provocative youth-led performance that Chrysalis seeks to nurture. By bringing the young theatre-makers into the professional setting of one of Scotland's most respected theatres, the festival is already making a strong statement about the type of high quality work it wants to showcase." - The List, 2017*

Unfortunately, YTAS did not achieve its fundraising target for Chrysalis in 2017 and the company had to use core reserves to cover the shortfall. YTAS plans to address the ongoing challenge of Chrysalis' fundraising in future years by reducing event expenditure and assigning core funds from YTAS's annual budget as strategic investment in the project. YTAS also plans to shift the festival to biennial after 2018, similar to YTAS's other national events.





## INTERNATIONAL

### CREATIVE COMMONS – STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

YTAS and Youth Theatre Ireland (YTI) carried out the second year of their international partnership and resource development project. 'Creative Commons' enabled YTAS and YTI to share best practice and strategically build innovative resources in Young Critics practice and Young Leaders mentorship and skills development. The project is funded through the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme and is due for completion by summer 2018.

Activities carried during 2017-18 included:

- Joint delivery of a Young Critics Youth Exchange in Dublin, April 2017.
- Delivery of a new Young Critics residential at the Edinburgh Fringe, August 2017.
- Developing and publishing a Youth Arts Mentoring Toolkit, July 2017.
- Developing and launching an online 'Young Critics Toolkit', March 2018.
- Developing and launching an online 'Leaders Resource Suite', March 2018.
- Hosting training events for the dissemination of the resources, March 2018.
- Hosting Transnational Project Meetings with YTI for planning and exchange, throughout the year.



10 Scottish Young Critics took part in the April Exchange from YTAS Members in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Argyll & Bute, Ayrshire, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Renfrewshire. Throughout the week they took part in practical discussions, workshops and theatre visits to gain a greater understanding of the art of theatre criticism. When they returned home, Scotland's Young Critics continued to use their skills at local theatres as well as at an additional residential YTAS hosted during Edinburgh Fringe in August 2018. The Fringe Society and Lyra Theatre in Craigmillar are thanked for their support; providing ticket bursaries, venues and low-cost accommodation.

During the remainder of the year YTAS and YTI developed and published the Creative Commons 'Youth Arts Mentoring Toolkit', online 'Young Critics Toolkit' and online 'Leaders Resource Suite'. These were significant developments for YTAS and YTI's best practice and resources for Young Critics and Young Leaders. They provide comprehensive best practice guides and new avenues of digital support and information for the sector. Resource development was supported by specialists including; youth arts mentoring Consultant Helen Le Brocq, Birds of Paradise Theatre Company's disability and inclusion Youth Arts Consultants, Web Designers Infinite Eye, and Filmmaker Chris Nelms. Many Scottish and Irish youth theatres and practitioners were also involved in filming new media for the sites.





## TEENEXTERS – YOUNG CRITICS EXCHANGE

For the third year in a row, YTAS supported a group of 6 Scottish young critics to attend another exchange programme in November in Lille, France. This exchange was hosted by long-term partners Le Grand Bleu and was funded through the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme. The TeeNEXTers project enabled the group to experience innovative, avant-garde shows at the cross-border NEXT festival in France and Belgium and to work with international partners from France, Norway, Ireland and Belgium to enhance their ability to express opinions about the work.

Scotland's TeeNEXTers group came from YTAS Members; Dundee Rep, Eden Court, PACE, Toonspeak, Tron Theatre and Scottish Youth Theatre. Professional critic Gareth Vile and Kenny McGlashan also attended to support the group, deliver specialist workshops and connect the project to longer-term Young Critics and European partnership activity.

## TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### NATIONAL CONVENTION OF YOUTH DRAMA



*A head full of ideas and a refreshed energy for our sector. It's always an inspiring and reassuring day spending time at a YTAS event.*

– Attender



The National Convention of Youth Drama was a new two-day event held in March 2018 at the Macrobert Arts Centre in Stirling which celebrated the breadth and depth of youth drama and theatre arts practice across Scotland. Attendees came from across the UK and internationally to share ideas, hear about a diverse range of projects, contribute to discussions and participate in workshops and masterclasses.





Throughout Friday, Convention delegates attended a variety of themed presentations and workshops including:

- 'Embedding Creative Learning', with Dundee Rep, EIF and Kibble.
- 'Pathways and Positive Destinations', with Staged for Life, Modo and Centrestage.
- 'Health and Wellbeing', with NHS Forth Valley, Scotrail and ConFAB/Youth Poetry Slam.
- 'Youth-Led Boards and Projects', with Toonspeak, YTAS and KIN.
- 'Supporting Not Leading - a Different Role for a Practitioner', with Reading Rep and Little Red Theatre.
- 'New Ways to Respond to Performance and the World Around You', with YTAS and The Artifact.
- 'Using Drama and Theatre to Promote Intercultural Understanding', with Theatre Sans 'Accents, Ignite Theatre and BE United.
- 'Nothing Ever Happens Here – Sustainable Engagement for Young People in Rural Areas', with The Touring Network and Rural Youth Project.
- 'The Great Debate - The Visiting Artist: Accomplice or Provocateur?', with Paul Gorman from Hidden Giants, Kirsten McCrossan from The Drama Box, Dr Will Barlow from University of Aberdeen, Lou Brodie Perth Programmer for Women of the World and Jack Stancliffe, Arts Education Worker.

Throughout Friday and Saturday, delegates could delve deeper into practice by taking part in Workshops and Masterclasses including:

- 'Making Art About Sensitive Subjects', with Celia Knapp from The Roundhouse
- 'Dramaturgy Toolbox', with Hanna Slattne
- 'Visual Language', with Raamesh Meyyappan
- 'Creative Incubator', with YTAS
- 'When Theatre and Youth Work Collide' with The Street
- 'Creating with Community: Making A Mess' with Macrobert Creative Learning
- 'The Golden Thread', with KIN

110 delegates attended the National Convention from multiple sectors and professions. 95% of delegates said they had 'noticed a real buzz at the event', 'felt challenged and provoked' and were 'inspired to keep talking' about the topics and issues raised.

YTAS produced a detailed Event Report and a short film which is available on YTAS's website. The Convention is now expected to replace YTAS's Symposium and return every 2 years.





## FORUMS FOR MANAGERS AND DIRECTORS

YTAS continued to host specialist Forums in 2017-18 for experienced Youth Theatre Directors and Managers who wanted to push their own practice and work with other professionals on sector-wide opportunities. The Forums take place every six months and include a specialist masterclass or case-study, facilitated exchanges and networking.

In May, the Directors Forum welcomed guest facilitators Orla O'Loughlin, Artistic Director of the Traverse, and Anna Hodgart from National Theatre of Scotland's Artists Development. November's Forum was replaced by multiple Chrysalis masterclasses led by Directors from selected festival productions. YTAS now plans to review the model for training and networking youth theatre directors, as we seek to develop a longer-term, residential and group work approach which will require additional fundraising.

In May, the Managers Forum welcomed guest facilitators Suzanne Miller and Janis Marshall-Reilly from the Cultural Enterprise Office to establish the unique 'offers' and 'desires' the professional peer group could share. In the afternoon, and at the subsequent Managers Forum in November, the group worked together to develop a consortia project for youth audience development across Scotland. YTAS plans to continue developing the Managers' Forum as a key steering group and development incubator for the organisation and sector.

## THE YTAS TEAM

During 2017-18 the core staff team included:

- Kenny McGlashan – Chief Executive
- Helen Bain – General Manager
- Clara Bloomfield – Creative Learning Manager (Resigned November 2017)
- Vikki Doig – Sector Engagement Officer / Creative Learning Manager
- James Coutts – Communications & Marketing Manager
- Olivia Ainsworth - Projects Administrator (Resigned July 2017)
- Catherine Makin - Projects Coordinator (Appointed June 2017)
- Andy Catlin - Marketing Coordinator
- Sophie Howell - Young Leaders' Mentor and Coordinator (Appointed March 2018)

As well as the core staff posts listed above, YTAS offered a number of other contracts throughout 2017-18 to support the delivery and development of its events and services. As well as numerous freelance contracts, longer-term roles included YTAS's Bookkeeper since 2013, Karen Calliaud (of Keeping Account), Production and Logistics Manager for Chrysalis and NFYT, Paul Rodger, NFYT's Volunteer Coordinator, Lisa Thompson, Young Critics Coordinator, Amy Watt, Young Critics Specialist, Gareth Vile and Young Critics Welfare Officers, Eoin Mckenzie and Rachael-Jane Morrison. The company also welcomed Emily Tobin as an intern from Ontario, Canada to observe Interchange and assist the team with activities around the country.

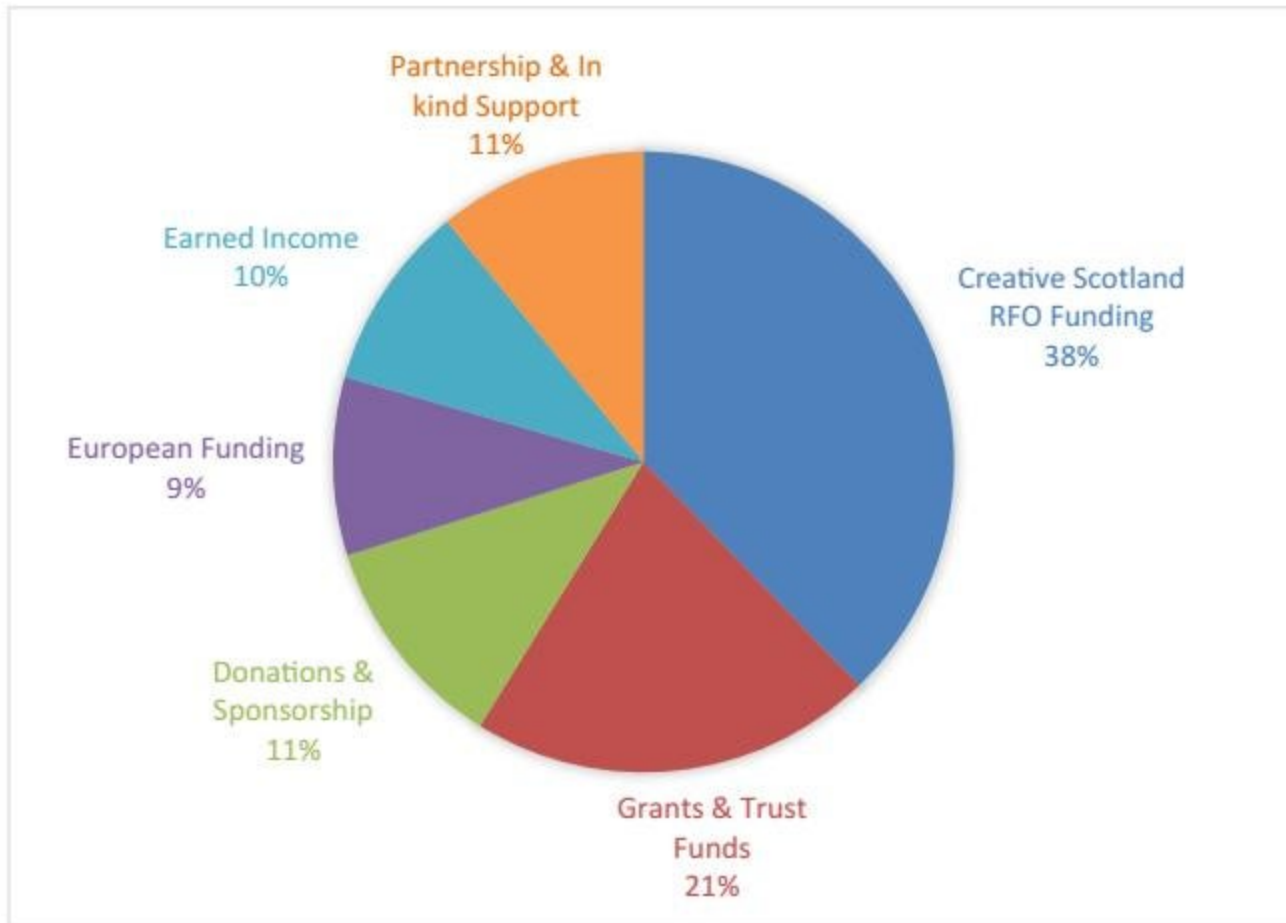
YTAS's Patron, actor Sam Heughan, continued to be an important advocate for YTAS's work, galvanizing fan groups to support the organisation and the benefits it brings to young theatre makers across Scotland. The Board would like to say a special thanks to Sam and his fans for their incredibly generous time and support.



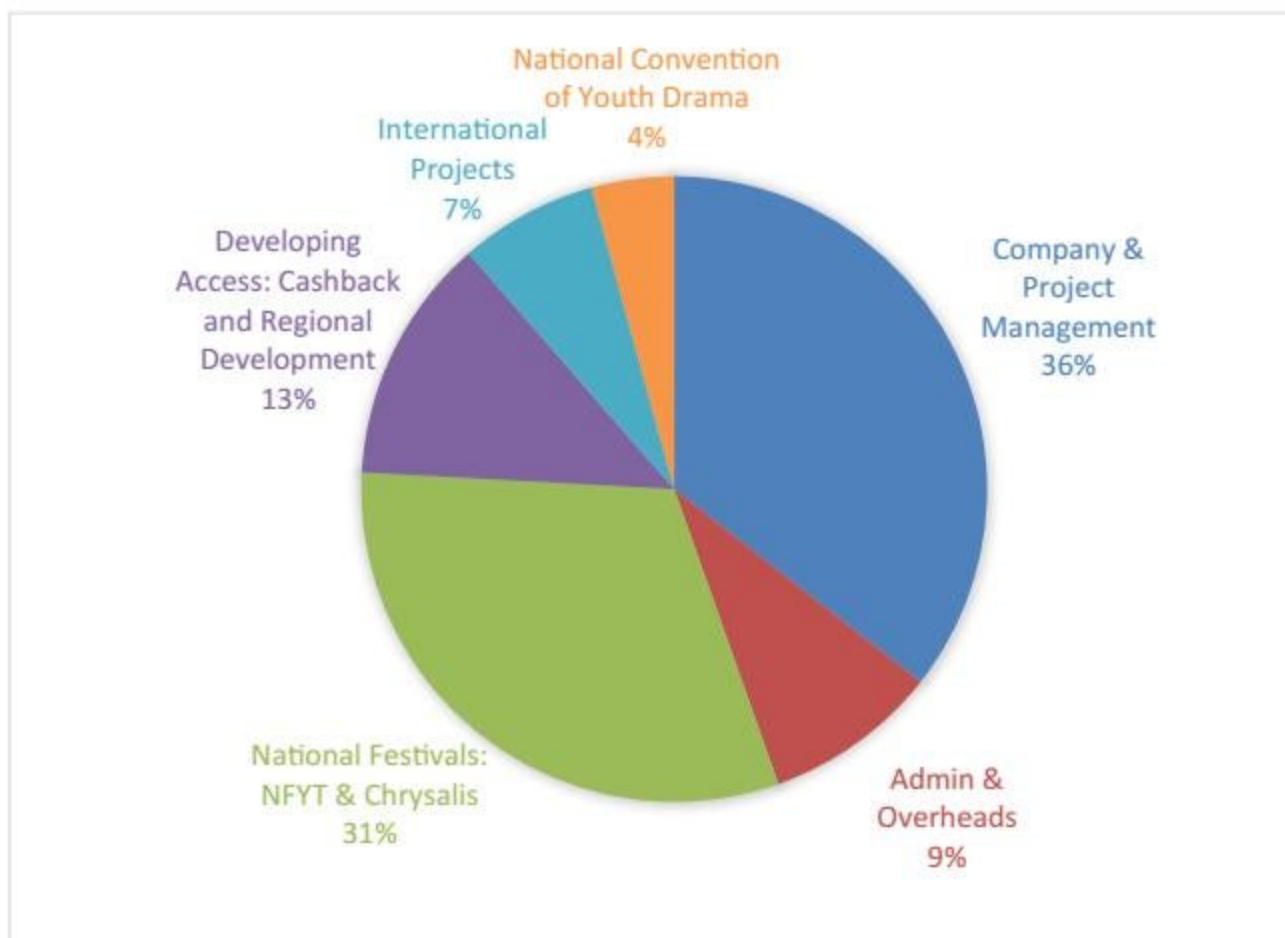


## FINANCE AND FUNDRAISING

In 2017/18 Youth Theatre Arts Scotland generated £330,793 income



In 2017/18 Youth Theatre Arts Scotland expended £346,685, and held reserves of £21,258.







## ADDRESSING FUNDRAISING CHALLENGES

Although the scale, diversity and impact of YTAS's sector development work has grown considerably in recent years, the company still operates with a small core team and only one core funder, Creative Scotland. With less than 40% of YTAS's income funded by Creative Scotland, the company remains reliant on generating additional sources of income to sustain its work. In 2017-18 these sources included: earned income, sponsorship and donations, crowdfunding, European funding, in-kind partnership support and grants from trusts, foundations and local authorities.

The scale of additional fundraising that YTAS requires continued to be a challenge in 2017-18. In recent years YTAS has also found that some funders are less willing to invest in our umbrella, development role or in its national festival events, favouring more local activity instead. In addition, many local authorities, who previously provided financial support for YTAS's events held in their regions, faced their own funding cuts and were no longer in a position to provide cash support for partner events. Both these contexts contributed to a funding shortfall for some of YTAS's events and projects throughout the year.

As an established and well-run charity, YTAS is experienced and adept at risk-management. We therefore took several measures to address funding difficulties in 2017-18, including: cutting back on project expenditure, investing our own reserves and successfully experimenting with crowdfunding. By taking these measures, YTAS was able to minimise the annual overspend and maintain limited reserves by the end of 2017-18.

Looking forward YTAS has adjusted its next 3-year Business Plan, from April 2018, to move annual projects and events to a biennial cycle, reduced core and activity expenditure and fundraising targets to reduce financial risk, and will prioritise a longer-term approach to diversifying core funding.

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

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