



Youth  
Theatre  
Arts  
Scotland



Annual Report  
2018 - 2019



**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 2018-2019 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 2018-2019 in its work developing access, delivering national and international youth theatre projects and providing industry training and professional development.

## Objectives and Activities

### Mission

Transforming lives through youth theatre by supporting, connecting and inspiring young people in Scotland and the adults who work with them.

### Vision

Scotland is a world leader in the development and delivery of youth theatre.

### Values

- **Helping Others**  
We are dedicated to supporting, enabling and championing the work and impact of Scotland's youth theatre sector; young people, professionals and volunteers alike.
- **Community**  
We are passionate about building a confident, diverse and inspiring sector.
- **Collaboration**  
We work with, and connect, a broad network of partners, groups and individuals who all share our motivation to develop talent and nurture achievement.
- **Excellence**  
We celebrate and encourage ambition, experimentation and progression, striving for quality in all that we do for and with our sector.

### Strategic Aims

- To strengthen Scotland's youth theatre arts infrastructure.
- To provide a variety of national youth theatre opportunities which inspire young people in Scotland.
- To improve access, progression and ambition in the field of youth theatre arts in Scotland.
- To develop leadership in Scotland's youth theatre sector.



## Achievements and Performance

**Youth Theatre Arts Scotland** (YTAS) continues to play a broad and influential role on behalf of Scotland's youth theatre sector, punching well above its weight compared to the micro-business scale of the organisation. The company and its activities both maintain a strong reputation for quality, professionalism and trust within and beyond the sector.

In April 2018, YTAS began delivery of its new 2018-21 Business Plan and RFO funding from **Creative Scotland**. Creative Scotland's decision to offer YTAS standstill funding for this period added some additional pressure but we had planned ahead for this; with a shift to biennial national events, reductions to core and project expenditure and prioritising a longer-term approach to fundraising.

The shift of YTAS's major national festivals and training events to biennial has been positive, both in terms of sector response as well as developing the sustainability and resilience of the events and organisation longer-term.

During 2018-2019 YTAS improved youth theatre access and participation, through the company's information, support and guidance, as well as maintaining our 'outreach' activity in SIMD regions and targeted local authorities. The impact of these developments alongside established activities, like the **National Festival of Youth Theatre** and our **Membership Scheme**, has been an important strategic development for the organisation and sector as a whole.

YTAS continued to be recognised as a 'thought-leader' for the sector through planning our fourth **Chrysalis** festival as well as hosting national events for professionals, including; **Interchange 2019** and **Managers' Forums**. YTAS also demonstrated strategic leadership through its increased international partnership work on behalf of the sector.

The following pages outline YTAS's activities and achievements during 2018-2019; developing access, delivering national and international youth theatre projects and providing industry training and professional development.





## Developing Access

### Regional Development

YTAS carried out the final year of its regional development activity in 2018-2019, funded by the Robertson Trust since 2016. Since 2016, the funding has enabled YTAS to directly support local groups in 14 targeted local authorities; Angus, Argyll and Bute, Clackmannanshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Inverclyde, Midlothian, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Scottish Borders, South Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire, Western Isles, West Lothian and West Dunbartonshire.

- YTAS has worked with over **110** organisations, youth theatre and community groups. **56** of these youth groups had limited or no access to YTAS's work prior to the project.
- YTAS directly engaged **1,600** young people in new bespoke workshops, opportunities and events across all the regions. These activities were developed in partnership with regional organisations; in response to local needs, opportunities and challenges.
- YTAS directly engaged **500** youth theatre practitioners and leaders in new bespoke training, networking and support activities.

By planning and delivering these opportunities, YTAS and the partner organisations increased the strategic development of youth theatre in each region. By taking part in the opportunities, local leaders and practitioners increased their skills, confidence and became less isolated when delivering their local activity. As well as the direct engagement of young theatre-makers outlined above, the work benefitted a further **9,000** young people indirectly.

Throughout the project, YTAS continually responded to what we were learning on the ground and applying this to the activities we delivered and partnerships we fostered. This responsive approach to regional development was key to the success of YTAS's activities as well as the increased engagement in our national events and services. As a result, the legacy of the project includes:

- **A third** of YTAS's Membership now comes from the fourteen targeted regions
- The percentage of groups and leaders from the targeted regions attending YTAS's national events and training has **increased**.
- YTAS now has **a range of local, regional and national contacts** working with us to advance local youth theatre provision in the targeted areas.
- YTAS now has **a deeper, practical understanding** of the unique contexts, challenges and opportunities that the youth theatre communities in each region encounters, with bespoke approaches for tackling disadvantage.
- YTAS has **strengthened its role and reputation** with regional groups and funders for supporting direct, local impact, which integrates into our national network.



## 'New Territory' Cashback for Communities project

YTAS delivered the second year of its New Territory partnership project in 2018-2019, alongside **Toonspeak Young People's Theatre** and **Ignite Theatre**. The project is funded by the Scottish Government's CashBack for Communities funding, via Creative Scotland, with activity targeted in key areas of multiple deprivation across Glasgow, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, West Lothian, Stirling and South Ayrshire.

The project incorporates a range of activities, including new and existing weekly drama sessions (Toonspeak), summer projects (Ignite) and Young Arts Leaders training for young people aged 16-24 (YTAS), located in 'new territory' regions for the partners.

By the end of Year Two, **New Territory** has engaged **610** young people, **67%** of which were 'new to these types of activities'. **149** equality group characteristics have been recorded within participants, including; BME, Disabled, Refugees/Asylum Seekers, Looked After Children, Young Carers, young people with mental health issues, and LGBTI. So far, **81%** of participants have reported their 'confidence increasing', **70%** have reported their 'skills increasing' and **79%** have 'gone on to do new things after their initial Cashback involvement'.

Feedback on New Territory activities included...

"Our opinions are valued at Toonspeak... allows me to access many opportunities I otherwise wouldn't have had" (Participant, 15)

"The Young Leaders Programme provides you with an array of skills which can be useful and transferred into any career path" (Nicole, 20)

"My son finds it hard to interact with others but has loved coming to the drama class" (Parent)

"I see a change in all my three children since coming to Ignite, but particularly in Levon who wouldn't even look people in the eye and now he is performing in front of strangers!" (Parent)

"My confidence has dramatically improved since joining Toonspeak and I feel great about it" (Participant, 16)

As well as the impact on targeted participants and regions, YTAS, Toonspeak, and Ignite gained considerable learning from working together. **Toonspeak** continued to develop their use of the UpShot participant monitoring and evaluation tool, and firmly established themselves in their new community of Barmulloch. **Ignite** improved the longer-term sustainability of its organisation, including multi-year support of its activities, progression for its senior participants, and support to develop organisational infrastructure. **YTAS** improved its knowledge of supporting groups and young theatre makers in the most deprived areas, leading to improvements to its existing activities, events and resources. **YTAS, Toonspeak, and Ignite** also shared insights and guidance between the partners and with the broader youth theatre, youth and arts sectors through YTAS's national CPD events, such as the National Convention of Youth Drama, online Resources and Toolkits.



## National Youth Theatre Projects and Events

### Chrysalis 2018

The fourth **Chrysalis** festival was held in November 2018, as part of **Traverse Theatre's** autumn season. As well as the four main shows and **Emergence** platform, there was a series of workshops, panel discussions and social events throughout the weekend.

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

- *There is a Globe Stuck in my Throat* by **Junges Ensemble Marabu** (Bonn, Germany)
- *Shaking the Habitual* by **Platform Young Company** (Glasgow)
- *Noise* by **Camden Youth Theatre** (London)
- *147Hz Can't Pass* by **Activising for Change** (Edinburgh)

The Emergence 'scratch' platform also hosted:

- *Fragment A* by **Little Red Ensemble**, and their Director Stephanie Arsooka
- *Young Blood* by the **Royal Conservatoire of Scotland** and **Gaiety Young Company**, and their Director Robbie Gordon
- *Mirror* by the **Macrobert Young Company**, and their Director Daniel Livingston

The event was another great success, and we were particularly pleased by an increase in festival sales and income, even despite a significant ticket price reduction implemented for the 2018 festival. The team were successful in securing funding from **Arts and Business Scotland's** Culture and Business Fund Scotland, linked to a sponsored free bus project with **Rabbie's Tours**, as well as a donation from **Skyscanner**.

We were also pleased by the increased reach of Chrysalis's audience across Scotland and a trend towards a younger audience age range, compared to 2017. We believe the Rabbie's bus sponsorship was key to achieving both these developments.





Below are some highlights from Chrysalis 2018 audience feedback:

- 92% rated the **experience and atmosphere** as positive
- 76% of the audience rated the **quality of the work** as '4 or 5 stars'
- 84% of the audience said they found aspects of the performance very **moving**
- 75% of the audience said they felt **challenged and provoked** by the work



## Young Critics 2018

YTAS hosted seven Young Critics at a training weekend in July and a week in August, viewing and reviewing shows at the **Edinburgh Festival Fringe**. Participants selected came from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeenshire, Inverclyde and the Highlands.

The project was a great success and a positive development from last year's programme. Moving the August residential into the first week of the Fringe made a significant difference to how the programme was supported by companies and venues keen to promote their shows. The week ended with the Young Critics and professional critic Gareth Vile hosting a discussion at Fringe Central about the programme and the future of criticism in theatre. YTAS is already in discussion with the Fringe about running similar projects together in 2019 and 2020.



## Training and Professional Development

### Interchange 2019

YTAS's national skills and training weekend, *Interchange* was held at Perth Theatre in March 2019. The event was attended by 60 delegates, including representation from 21 of Scotland's 32 local authorities.

Feedback from the weekend was overwhelmingly positive, with 97% of respondents rating the content of sessions and expertise of the facilitators as either Excellent or Good. 97% also said they would attend *Interchange* again in the future.

The weekend training included:

- A lab residency with Australian-based director and theatre-maker **Dr Dave Kelman** on *Epic Dreamings: Classic Stories Made Intimate and Contemporary*. Delegates focussed on reimagining classic texts through the eyes of young people to explore larger national or international topics. The lab also included the opportunity to directly apply new techniques with participants from **Perth Youth Theatre**.
- Two masterclasses entitled *A Fundraiser and a Storyteller Walk into a Bar* jointly delivered by the **Village Storytelling Centre** and **Truffle Pig** funding consultants; and *Interactive Theatre: Rethinking the Role of the Audience* with **Mischief La-Bas**.
- Four half-day workshops, which were:
  - *It's All Mental* with **Emma Jayne Park**
  - *Spoken Word Poetry: Bringing out the inner activist* with **Jenny Lindsay**
  - *Voice Play* with **Bex Mather**
  - *Using Drama to Engage Young People with Autism* with **Lauren Oakes**

As well as the specialist training sessions, YTAS offered **one-to-one surgeries** for delegates to gain direct support and advice for developing their local youth theatre practice. Social events on Friday and Saturday provided space for delegates to network, and exchange ideas and practice with their professional peers. Saturday evening included a **scratch youth theatre show** by Perth Youth Theatre with a facilitated discussion.

### Managers' Forum

YTAS continued to host specialist Forums in 2018-2019 for experienced Youth Theatre Managers to push their own practice and work with other professionals on sector-wide opportunities. The Forums take place every six months.

The June Managers Forum welcomed guest facilitator Ben Twist from **Creative Carbon Scotland** who presented on the topic of *Leading Change*. His insights from many years'



experience in theatre, youth theatre and management were well received by the Managers who shared their own individual challenges and priorities managing change. During the meeting the group also reviewed a draft proposal for a national youth audience development project together.

The November Managers' Forum focussed on *Speaking the Same Language: How Youth Theatres Can Benefit from Delivering Non-Arts Funded Projects* with presentations from **Toonspeak** and **Dundee Rep Engage**. The Forum also reviewed the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, new Outcome for Culture, and YTAS's response to the draft Culture Strategy. This led onto a group discussion about working together to increase the sector's role and impact across non-arts priorities. The meeting was chaired for the first time by a member, Gemma Nicol from Dundee Rep.

## Directors' Training

YTAS developed its plans for Youth Theatre Director Training during 2018-2019, as well as delivering a number of sessions throughout the year. We are keen to develop a year-round training programme and submitted funding applications to take this forward in 2019.

In the meantime, YTAS programmed a number of workshops and panel discussions led by the Chrysalis directors and festival programmers alongside the festival in November. We also held a stand-alone Directors' masterclass in December with Australian-based theatre-makers, Claire Glenn and Anthony Kelly from **Carclew Expressway Arts** in Adelaide. Claire and Anthony are specialists in making theatre for and with young people with a focus on Immersive Theatre.





## International Partnerships

### Creative Commons, TeeNEXTers and BUZZ Network

YTAS and Youth Theatre Ireland (YTI) completed project activity and reporting for our joint 'Creative Commons' project in 2018, funded through the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme. This included launching of our new **Leaders Resources** portal and **Young Critics Resource** at the National Convention of Youth Drama in March, and a final transnational meeting in Edinburgh in July to evaluate the partnership, project and compile the final report.

For the fourth year in a row, YTAS also supported a group of six Scottish young critics to attend an exchange programme in Lille, France, in November. The exchange was hosted by our long-term partners **Le Grand Bleu** and funded through the European Commission's **Erasmus+** programme. Scotland's group was made up of participants from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Dumfries and Galloway and the Borders. The project enabled participants to experience innovative, avant-garde shows at the cross-border **NEXT** festival in France and Belgium and to work with international partners from France, Belgium and Ireland to enhance their ability to express opinions about the work.

This year, the Scottish group enjoyed the additional opportunity of collaborating with other European participants and leaders to devise their own works which were included in the **NEXT** Festival programme. Freelancer Jo Sharp accompanied them as the Group Leader and Director and was joined by Vikki Doig. Kenny also joined TeeNexters in Lille and presented at a Youth Theatre practice symposium, which was held alongside the festival.

Throughout 2018-2019, YTAS also worked **Rogaland Teater** (Norway), **Youth Theatre Ireland** (Ireland), **BRONKS** (Belgium) and **Theater Bremen** (Germany) to develop and submit an application to the European Union's Creative Europe programme in December. The partners are due to hear back on their application in June 2019.

The focus of the Buzz Network project is '*sharing the diverse strengths of the European Youth Theatre sectors through transnational mobility of Youth Theatre Artists and Cultural Leaders*'. Activities between 2020-2022 will include:

- **Mapping Research** of Youth Theatre practice across European countries and regions.
- **Creative Labs for Artists** which explore the challenges and innovations in contemporary Youth Theatre.
- **Leadership Labs for Organisations** and Cultural Leaders which explore the challenges and innovations in contemporary Youth Theatre.
- Developing a new **Buzz Network website** which collates European Youth Theatre contacts, practice, research and funding opportunities for further exchange.

Connected to YTAS's ongoing international development work, CEO Kenny McGlashan was invited as part of a Scottish delegation to visit the **European Commission** in September.



## Strengthening Scotland's youth theatre arts infrastructure

Alongside delivery of its youth, training and access activities in 2018-2019, YTAS's new Business Plan initiated further consideration of the company's unique role and impact. In particular, the responsibility and opportunity YTAS had in acting as the 'central hub of information, support and guidance' for Scotland's youth theatre sector as well as its 'spokesperson, advocate and leader'. To support this, YTAS worked with [Evaluation Support Scotland](#) to develop a clearer Logic Model for the organisation during 2018-2019, which we hope will improve our understanding of YTAS's 'intermediary' role as well as the impact of our evaluation, advocacy and fundraising long-term.

As a result of this work, we have identified some of the key outputs linked to YTAS's development role could be more impactful in strengthening Scotland's youth theatre arts infrastructure; such as our membership scheme, website, online resources, sector comms and advocacy. However, YTAS currently lacks the core and overhead funds needed to advance these elements.

We also identified the importance of these developments for the years ahead, as local authority funding cuts start to make irreversible impact on the backbone of our sector. Recent impacts on unique and well-established youth theatres across Scotland caused significant concern and increased the need for YTAS to act as an effective advocate and hub of information, support and guidance.

Below is an outline of some of the areas YTAS has started to review during 2018-2019 and we hope to progress further in the years to come, when additional core funding can be secured.

- **Membership Scheme**

Membership continues to hold strong at over [100 subscribers](#). Nonetheless YTAS continues to review the ongoing maintenance and development of the scheme going forward. As well as making improvements to Membership administration, the team have identified a number of opportunities to develop the Membership's shared values and impact, as well as increasing its role and reach.

- **Website, Social Media and Sector Comms**

During 2018-2019, YTAS developed its first [Marketing and Comms Plan](#) and dashboard of KPIs. This new approach seeks to establish a more focused, streamlined and strategic approach to YTAS's digital outputs in the future.

- **Providing Online Resources**

YTAS's new Resources portal was updated thanks to support from our completed Erasmus+ project. The portal includes curated toolkits of resources, richer media and design, a special Young Leaders' gateway, and interactive elements such as [Book an Advice Session](#) or [Submit a Resource](#). We are keen to utilise and build on this Portal in



the years to come, as an open-access, developmental resource for youth theatre leaders and groups across the country.

- **Strategic Partnerships (Youth Work, Environmental and EDI)**

YTAS became an approved 'National Voluntary Youth Organisation' **Youthlink** Member in 2018. YTAS is the only youth arts-focused organisation which is part of this important national youth work network. We are also working with **Youth Scotland** to explore the mutual benefit of connecting our training and support activities in the future.

As well as completing carbon emissions reporting and carbon management planning in 2018, YTAS held several meetings and development sessions with our strategic environmental partner **Creative Carbon Scotland**. This included YTAS joining their national steering group and Culture Strategy consultation. CCS has also provided bespoke training and consultation with YTAS to develop its role as a 'climate aware and climate active' organisation.

During the year YTAS also worked with **Birds of Paradise**; promoting and investing in its disability and access Youth Arts Consultants as a practical output arising from the *Barriers to Access* report. YTAS's other EDI partnership is with **Toonspeak Young People's Theatre**, **Ignite Theatre** and other priority SIMD and diversity youth theatre venues continues long-term, through our Cashback for Creativity project, *New Territory*.





## Structure, Governance and Management

Youth Theatre Arts Scotland (YTAS) is a Company Limited by Guarantee, registered with HMRC and a Scottish charity, registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). The company is governed by a Board of Directors in accordance with our Articles of Association. YTAS's Articles are published on our website alongside the Director's biographies. The Directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year were:

- Sally Borley
- Rachael Brown
- Zoe Cuthbert
- Gillian Donohoe
- Deborah MacArthur
- Alan McMillan
- Craig Steele
- Hazel Wotherspoon

The Board provides entrepreneurial and strategic leadership in pursuit of the organisation's objectives as well as prudent and effective control, including assessment and management of risk. The Board maintains a range of experience to balance membership within and out with Scotland's cultural sector, ensuring a strong set of skills and experience is brought to bear at a strategic level. The Board meets quarterly with an additional annual strategic planning day alongside the staff team. Board members are expected to attend all the scheduled meetings. The Board training policy ensures all Directors are aware of their responsibilities and equipped to fulfil their duties as trustees.

The Board has appointed the CEO for the day-to-day running of the organisation and overall leadership and management of Youth Theatre Arts Scotland, including finances, staff, funding, programme delivery and advocacy.

### Staff Team

During 2018-2019 the core staff team included:

- |                   |                                       |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Kenny McGlashan | Chief Executive                       |
| • Helen Bain      | General Manager                       |
| • Katie Stuart    | General Manager (maternity cover)     |
| • Vikki Doig      | Learning & Engagement Manager         |
| • James Coutts    | Communications & Marketing Manager    |
| • Catherine Makin | Projects Coordinator                  |
| • Andy Catlin     | Marketing Coordinator                 |
| • Sophie Howell   | Young Leaders' Mentor and Coordinator |



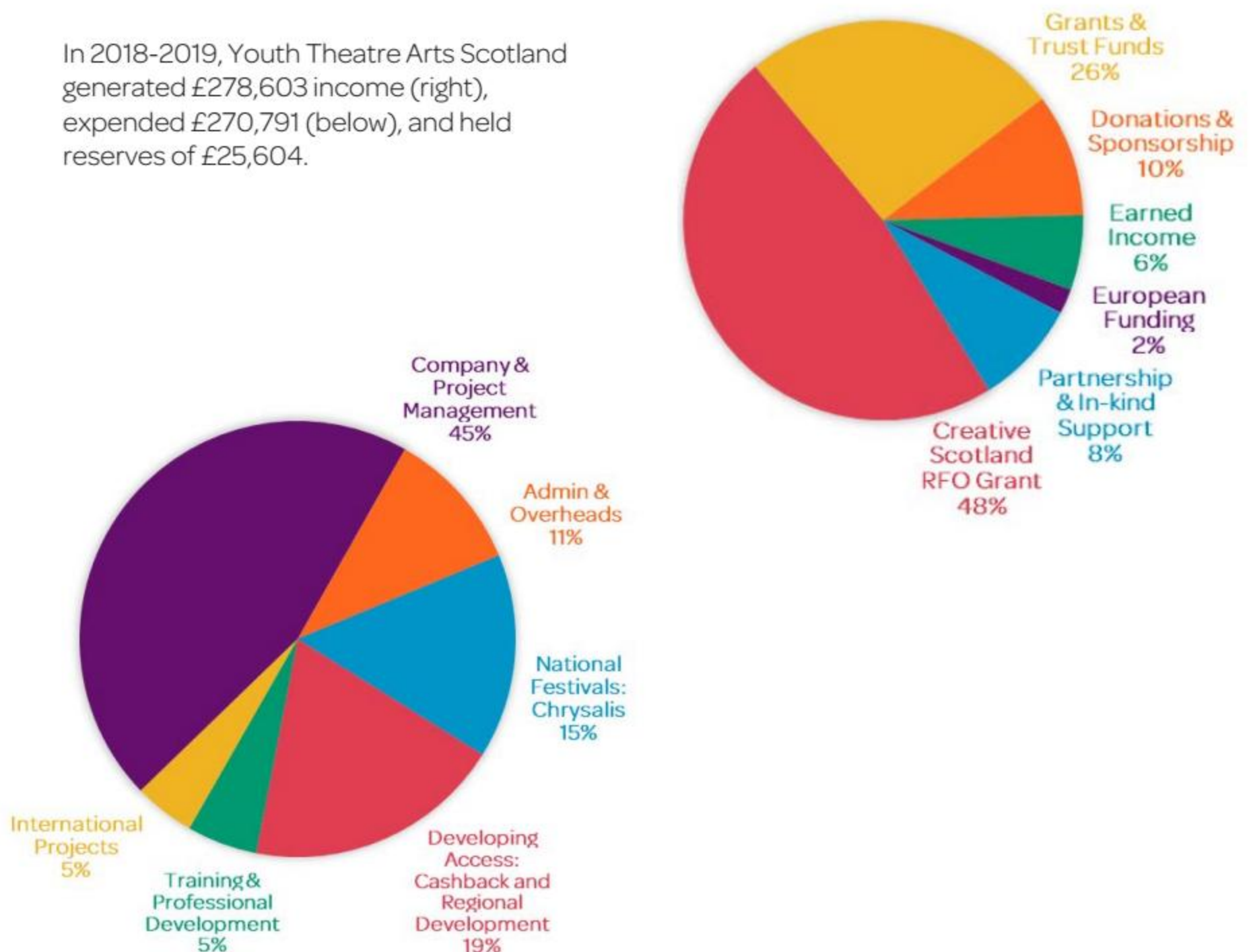
As well as the core staff posts listed above, YTAS provided a number of other contracts throughout the year to support the delivery and development of its events and services. As well as numerous freelance project contracts, longer-term roles included YTAS's Bookkeeper since 2013, Karen Caillaud (of Keeping Account); Production and Logistics Manager for Chrysalis and NFYT, Paul Rodger; TeeNEXTers Group Leader and Director, Jo Sharp, Young Critics Specialist, Gareth Vile, and Young Critics Welfare Officer, Eoin McKenzie. The company also welcomed Ellie Gelser as an Arcadia student placement from Richmond University in Indiana, USA.

## Patron

YTAS's Patron, actor **Sam Heughan**, continued to be an important advocate for the company'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 continued support.

## Finance and Fundraising

In 2018-2019, Youth Theatre Arts Scotland generated £278,603 income (right), expended £270,791 (below), and held reserves of £25,604.







## Youth Theatre Arts Scotland

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YTAS is a registered Scottish charity, No. SC035765

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