



FOOD IS  
NOT A  
WEAPON  
OF WAR

NO TO

RESISTANCE

IS  
JUSTICE

FREE  
PALESTINE



Out of the Blueprint  
2024 report

# Background

Out of the Blue is a cultural development social enterprise based in Leith.

For the past 30 years we have raised income by providing studio space and hosting classes, using the surplus to run creative projects with our local community.

In 2015 we set up Out of the Blueprint, a risograph print studio offering an affordable and eco-friendly print service with a particular focus on supporting under 25s.



Out of the Blueprint  
has three overlapping  
layers of activity:

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## Print service

Offering sustainable RISO and GOCCO printing for commercial clients, primarily local arts and third-sector organisations, generating funds to support our social mission.



## Training

Providing experience of a professional studio environment for young people aged 14–19 who face barriers to employment, creating a supportive and nurturing space for those who need it most.



## Creative

Designing, developing and delivering a creative programme of exhibitions, artist residencies, commissions and workshops, with a focus on opportunities specifically for young people under 25.



The background features four large, solid blue circles positioned at the corners: top-left, top-right, bottom-left, and bottom-right. The text 'PRINT SERVICE' is centered horizontally and vertically between the top and bottom circles.

**PRINT SERVICE**

# RISO print service

From our studio at the Drill Hall in Leith, we print commercial jobs using our RISO machines, and offer a range of finishing options such as collating, stapling, folding and trimming. We also take on some design jobs in-house, using our specialist knowledge to help people get the most out of the riso print process.

This is the core of our social enterprise, generating funds to support our social purpose.



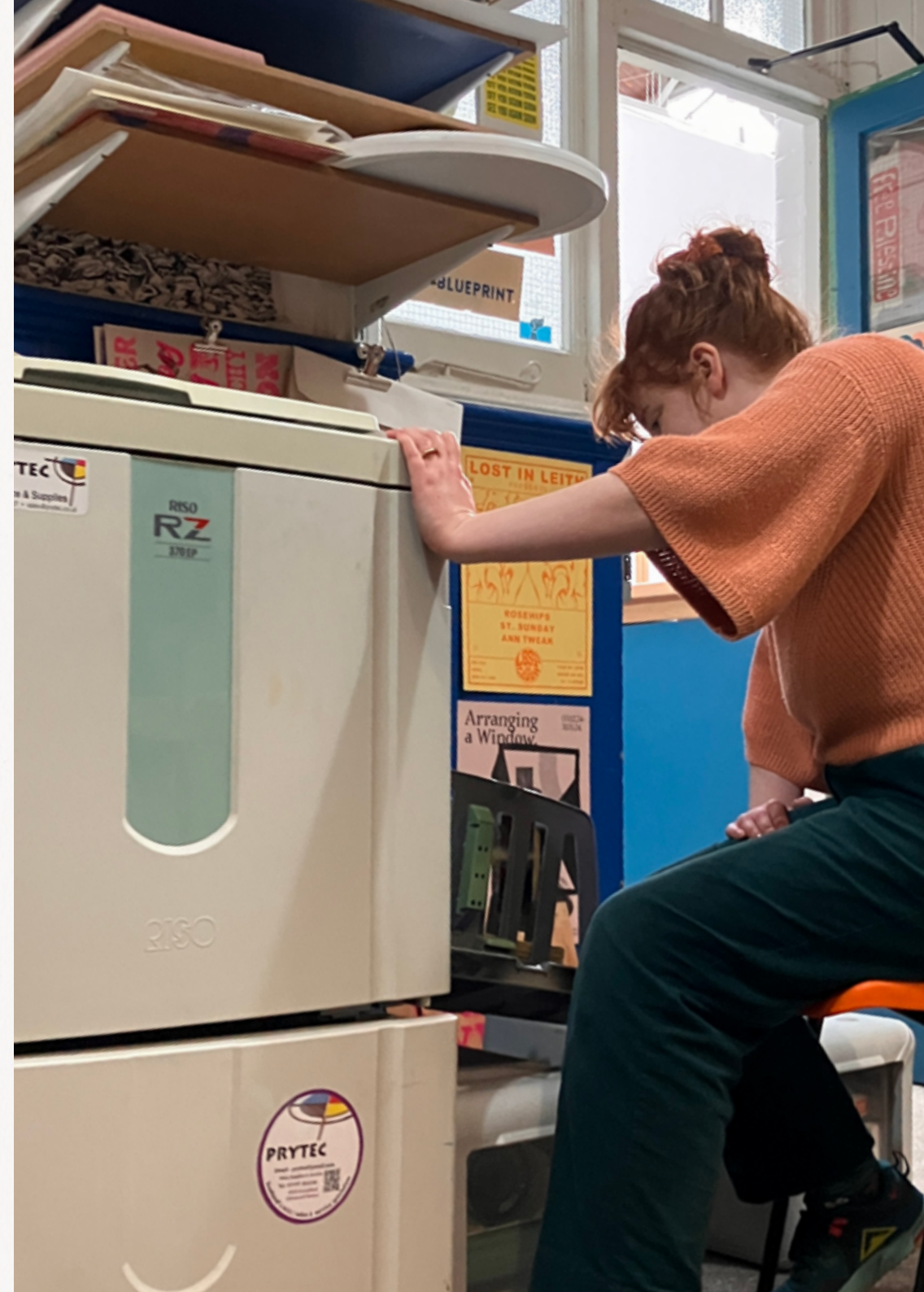
# What is **RISO?**

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RISO is an 80s Japanese printing process that prints one colour at a time, allowing for layered inks and unique effects.

RISO prints on paper and light card, making it ideal for posters, flyers, programmes, comics, and zines. It's fast, affordable, sustainable, and has a distinctive aesthetic.

RISO is the most sustainable commercial print process, using 90% less energy than a photocopier. Our ink is made from rice bran oil, a byproduct of the food industry, and we print exclusively on recycled paper, reusing and recycling as much as possible.



We completed **329** RISO print jobs in 2024, earning a total of **£42,000**

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Our RISO customers included:

## Charities & organisations

- Postcards for **Edinburgh Tool Library**
- Leaflets for **Porty Community Energy**
- Local newspaper for **Montgomery St. Park**
- Books for **Leith Writing**
- Posters for **Take One Action**

## Artists & self-publishers

- Comic books for **Tom Humberstone** (pictured)
- Magazines for **Take Up Space**
- Art prints for **Rosanna Reade**
- Zines for **Jules Scheele**
- Publications for **Onion Press**

## Local businesses

- Posters for **Sneaky Pete's**
- Bookmarks for **Argonaut Bookshop**
- Menus for **The Free Company**
- Postage labels for **Canongate Books**
- Record sleeves for **Athens of the North**



# GOCCO print service

We run our gocco print service from Abbeymount Studios, operating a sustainable garment-printing service where we print on T-shirts, Tote Bags and more.

In 2023 we also launched our goccomatic programme which supports people to print their own garments.

This activity generates funds to support our social purpose.





# What is GOCCO?

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GOCCO is a Japanese screen-making process that can be used to hand-print on fabric, cardboard and other surfaces.

Once the screen is made, it can be reused many times – our record is 10,000 cardboard boxes for a local food charity.

GOCCO is significantly more sustainable than traditional screen printing, using less energy, less water, and no harmful chemicals.

We use only water-based ink and 100% organic cotton that is free from allergenic, carcinogenic and toxic chemical residues.



We completed **34** GOCCO print jobs in 2024, earning a total of **£12,000**

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Our GOCCO customers included:

## Events

- Merch for **Edinburgh Spanish Film Festival**
- Tote Bags for **The Night Market**
- T-shirts for **Sea Rising festival**

## Local businesses

- Merch for dance company **Shaper Caper**
- Deluxe canvas bags for **Typewronger**
- Tote bags for **Bad Boy Barbers**
- Merch for local band **Dread Persephone**
- Tote Bags for **Good Vibes** (pictured)

As GOCCO is still a relatively niche printing process, much of our business depends on repeat orders from loyal customers. We hope to expand its reach and grow this aspect of our social enterprise further.



The background is white with several large, colorful geometric shapes. In the top-left corner, there is a solid purple circle. In the top-right corner, there is a red circular arc. In the bottom-left corner, there is a light blue circular arc. In the bottom-right corner, there is a solid teal circle. The word "PROJECTS" is centered in the middle of the page in a bold, pink, sans-serif font.

# PROJECTS

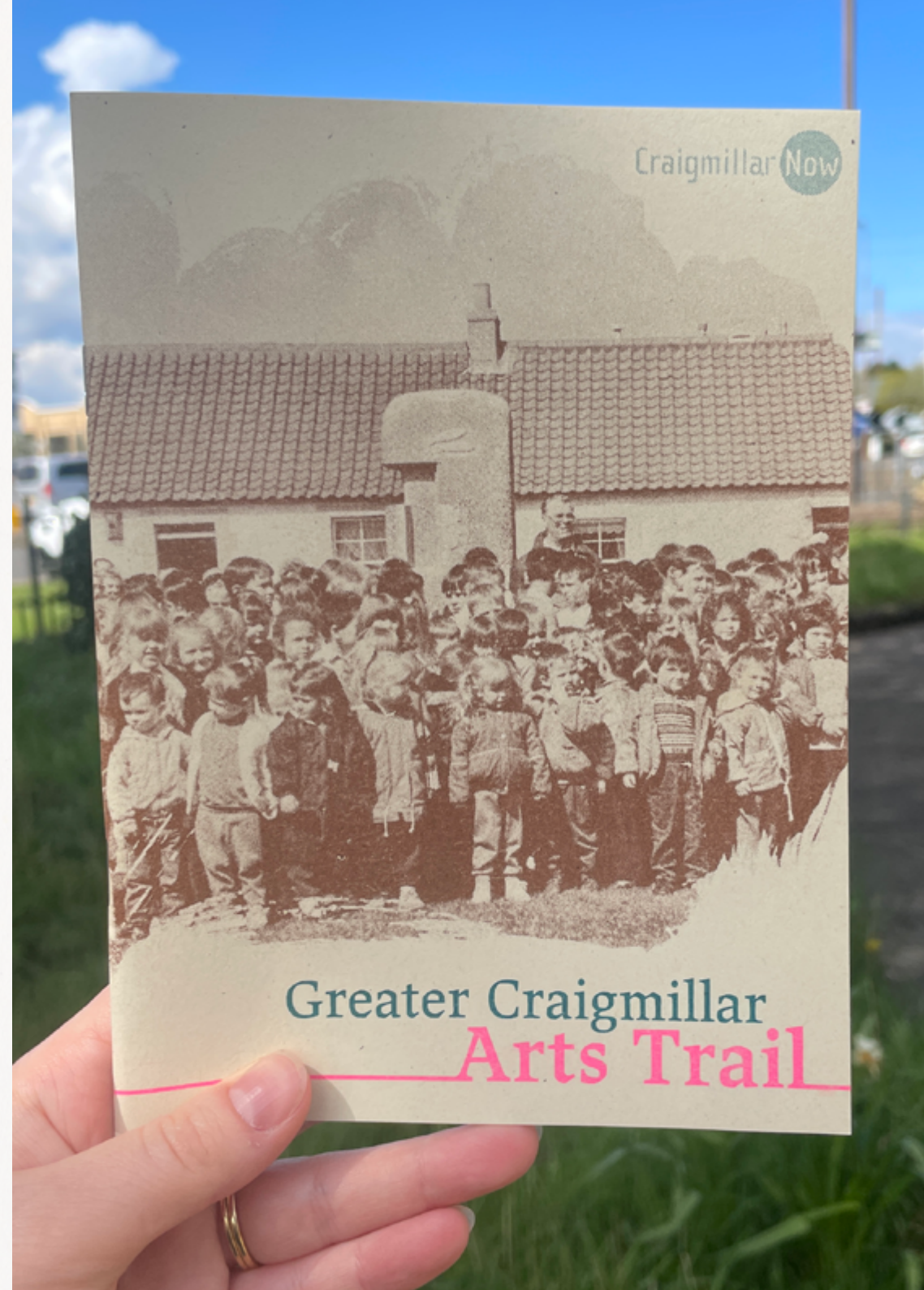
# Craigmillar Now Arts Trail

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Our largest design and print project of 2024 was the Greater Craigmillar Arts Trail.

Craigmillar Now approached us through the Creative Community Hubs network with the idea of creating a map to uncover the hidden history of public art in Craigmillar. We worked with them to develop an Arts Trail guide features stories, photographs, and oral histories that explore the legacy of community festivals, public sculpture and creative activity in this often-overlooked area of Edinburgh.

A total of 3500 booklets were distributed to every home in the Craigmillar community.



# Film Festival Posters

## North Edinburgh Arts

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We partnered with North Edinburgh Arts to design a series of eye-catching posters promoting their Community Film Festival. As part of the project, we ran a design and print workshop for the group, with the support of our artist-in-residence, Maddie Lennon, a self-taught poster designer. Maddie helped the participants explore the creative possibilities of the riso printer, encouraging them to experiment with its unique mix-and-match capabilities.

The resulting collection of posters were wheat-pasted onto the hoardings outside the NEA building.



# Coalie Park Mural

## Kate George

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Drill Hall tenant Kate George reached out to collaborate with us on the Coalie Park Project, where we worked together to create a vibrant community mural alongside the Water of Leith. We facilitated a print workshop where participants used simple cut-out shapes, layering them with the riso to create a collaborative piece of artwork.

These printed shapes then formed the foundation for the mural's design, which was brought to life by members of the Leith community.



# Printed banners

## Max Machen

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To celebrate 30 years of Out of the Blue, we worked with Abbeymount-based illustrator Max Machen to design & print two large canvas banners.

The artworks, titled '*a collection comes together*', were screenprinted using Max's signature hand-cut stencils. Unveiled in May 2024, they now hang in the Drill Hall to mark this milestone for years to come.



The image features a white background with four yellow circular elements: a large ring in the top-left, a solid circle in the top-right, a solid circle in the bottom-left, and a ring in the bottom-right. The word "TRAINING" is centered in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font.

**TRAINING**



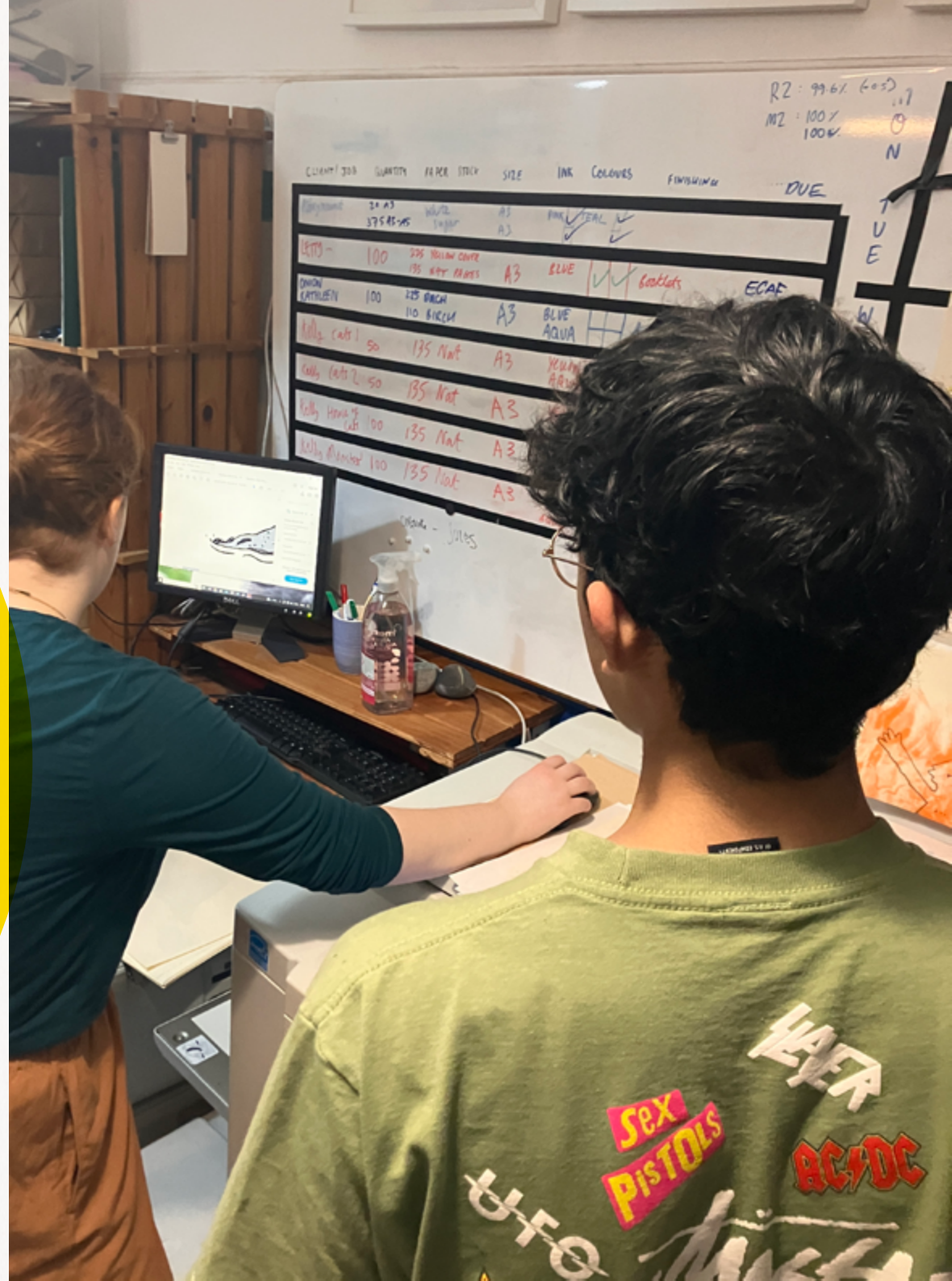
In 2024 we had 6 trainees in the Blueprint studio for a total of 162 hours

Through our traineeships, we aim to:

**Broaden young people's experiences and possibilities**

**Build confidence in themselves and in working with others**

**Help them recognise their own capabilities**



# Traineeships

## Referrals

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- **JET programme**  
2 trainees were referred through the Job, Education and Training (JET) programme, a work-based vocational scheme for pupils in high school. They join us for a full day a week from September to April, working towards a national qualification in employability alongside their Nat 4 and 5 exams.
- **Volunteering Matters**  
2 trainees were referred to us through Volunteering Matters, a national charity focussed on reducing inequalities, combating isolation, and building more inclusive communities through volunteering.
- **Widening Participation**  
2 trainees were referred to us after attending a youth workshop we hosted in conjunction with Edinburgh University's Widening Participation to tertiary education.



# Traineeships Continued

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As well as our active traineeships, we maintain ongoing relationships with many of our former trainees, who still drop in to visit us for catch-ups and creative collaborations

- **Claire** was a trainee in 2017 and is now employed as our studio assistant.
- **Lily** is now studying at Glasgow School of Art, and is keeping us updated with all their riso-inspired work – including making handmade paper from recycled prints.
- **Norman** works with us on an ongoing annual design commission, pops in to show his latest projects from studying animation at Edinburgh College, and has produced lots of his own prints and T-shirts to sell.

**We have now supported  
a total of 48 trainees**





**CREATIVE**

# Young People's Creative Programme

Our tiered creative programme offers multiple entry points and varying levels of engagement, allowing us to provide targeted support to different groups. This approach helps us to meet people where they are and guide them to the next stage of their creative journey.

Here's what that looked like in 2024:



# Edinburgh Comic Art Fair

Annual celebration of independent comic arts with market, artist talks and panels.

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Edinburgh Comic Art Fair brings together the independent comic-making community and provides opportunities for young artists alongside more established creators. ECAF started as a collaboration with BHP Comics, and has since become a key part of our creative programme.

When BHP comics closed in 2024, we had the opportunity to take on ECAF ourselves. We partnered with two comic makers Eve Greenwood and Brian Tyrrell to help us schedule a full programme of artist talks and discussion panels alongside a full market hall of over 40 exhibitors. Nearly 500 people visited over the one-day event.

The poster was designed and printed in-house by our very own comic artist HAM.



# Print Workshops

## First introduction to riso and gocco printing

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In 2024 we delivered tailored workshops in partnership with youth groups, charities and agencies including:

- The Junction
- Scottish Refugee Festival
- Barnardo's
- North Edinburgh Arts
- Edinburgh University - Widening Participation
- Articulate Cultural Trust
- Multi-Cultural Family Base

**21 workshops**  
**144 participants**  
**84 hours of activity**



# Gocomatic

Access to space and equipment for artists to produce their own printed merchandise

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In 2023 we launched 'Gocomatic', a project providing access to affordable and sustainable DIY garment printing at Abbeymount studios.

We wanted to reduce the financial barrier to production by teaching artists how to use our facilities for themselves. We have since inducted 129 members, with 10% aged under 25,

Our gocomatic programme has two stages:

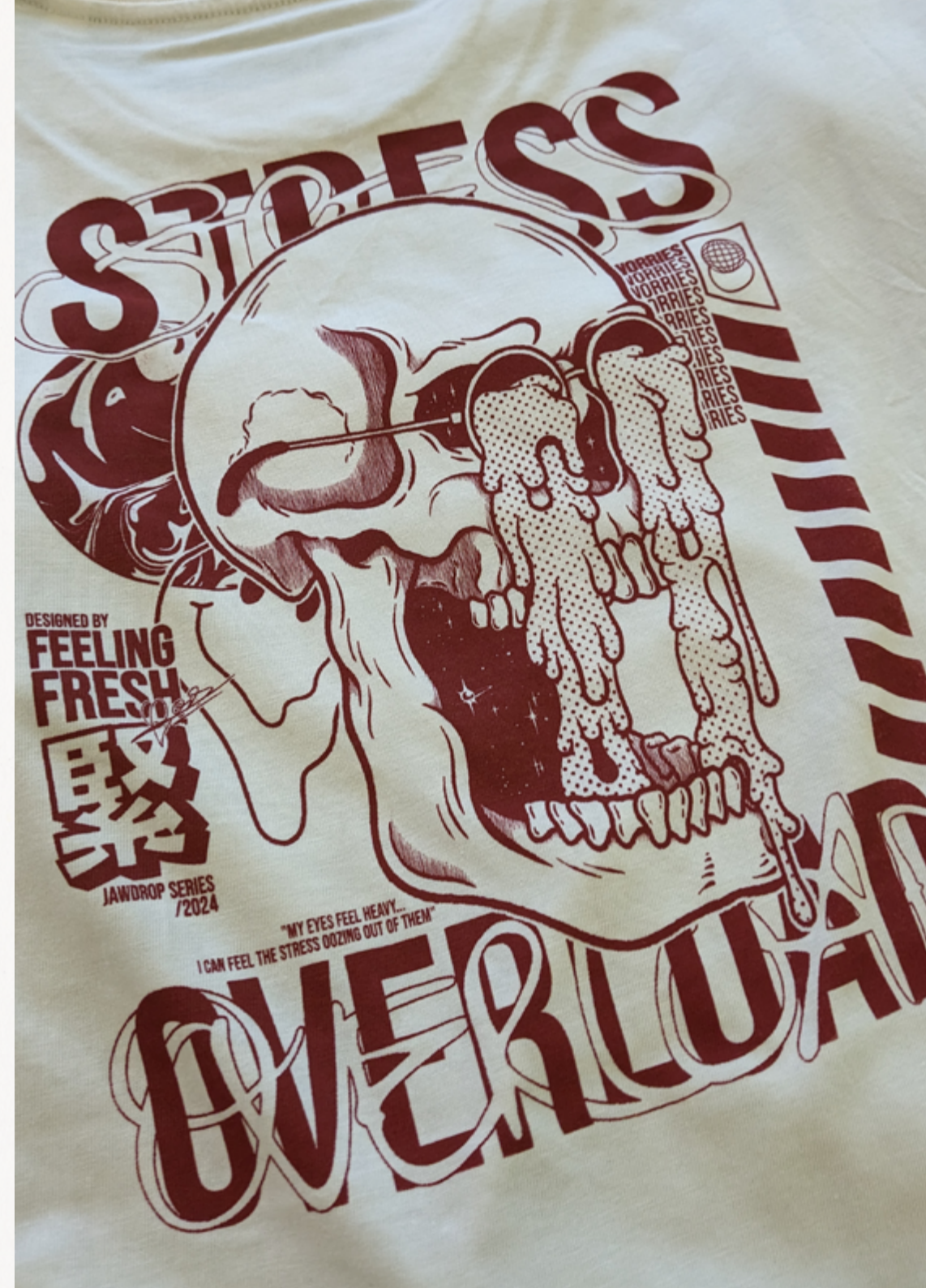
## 1. Inductions

Participants are introduced to the print room and shown how to print using Gocco screens.

## 2. DIY print sessions

Members book pay-as-you-go sessions to print their own designs on T-shirts, tote bags and more.

**26 new members inducted**  
**65 DIY print sessions**  
**273 hours of activity**





# Young Artists subsidies

50% off riso print costs for young artists to reduce the financial barrier to self-publishing

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In 2024, we supported 32 young artists by subsidising 50% of their RISO print costs.

These subsidies are designed to help young artists to produce their own prints, comics, zines, and posters, that they might not be able to afford otherwise. It also allows them to commit to larger print runs, increasing their potential for profit and expanding the audience reach of their creative projects.

Young artists who benefited from the subsidy in 2024 include:

**Kamal Malhotra** published a 3rd edition of collaborative project G\*NDERSHIT zine (pictured)

**Daisy Whittle** made Bag For Life, a comic about grief.

Tattoo artist **Vin Wolff** designed a 2025 calendar

**32 young artists**  
**76 discounted jobs**  
**£2591 waived costs**



# Friday Comic Club

Monthly meet-up for young people to draw and print their own comics

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During the school summer holidays we ran a 4-day course of afternoon comics workshops in partnership with Salvesen Mindroom.

Salvesen Mindroom's core work is supporting young people who have a neurodivergent condition (such as Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Tourettes or DCD). The Summer scheme in particular was funded by the Scottish Government to provide transition support for young people who are care experienced (or on the edges of care) who are within a few years of leaving high school.

From Sept-Dec 2024 we followed on from this work with Friday Comic Club, a monthly meet-up for ages 12-17 to draw and print their own comics. We initially trialled this for 4 sessions, and have committed to continuing and developing this work into 2025.

**18 hours of engagement**  
**9 regular participants**  
**22 comics printed**



# Artist Residencies

Paid opportunity giving artists the space, time and resources to develop their work

Over the course of each residency, we guide artists from the germination of an idea to their first solo exhibition. We encourage artists to focus on process rather than outcomes, helping them to explore and play without worrying about a final product.

Each artist-in-residence has 24/7 access to their own dedicated studio space and full access to the print studio. They receive a fee of £3000 based on 24 days at Scottish Artist Union 'new graduate' rates.

Residents' artwork is displayed for 6 weeks in our purpose-built exhibition space, opposite our studio at the front of the Drill Hall.

After each artist has completed their residency, we continue to look for opportunities to commission them further and make links for them to work with others.

**Our 2024 resident artists were  
Matilda Bull, Jack Stamp,  
Lauren Cory & Maddie Lennon.**



# Artist in residence

## Matilda Bull

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Fuelled by fury at the genocide in Palestine, Matilda used her residency to produce protest posters and artwork calling for action and solidarity.

Through the sale of her prints and posters, Matilda raised over £2000 which she donated to Medical Aid for Palestinians. She also held a pop-up stall at a Palestine fundraiser in August as part of the Edinburgh Art Festival.



# Artist in residence

## Jack Stamp

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Using a unique blend of drawn and modelled artwork, Jack Stamp playfully moulded the legend of the Plasticine Cowboy – smooth, firm and odourless.

Jack spent his residency creating a comic book with his bare hands. His exhibition revealed the behind-the-scenes process of sculpting each comic panel, bringing the story of the Plasticine Cowboy to life.



MALLEABLE...

# Artist in residence

## Lauren Cory

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Lauren's pastel landscapes and delicate pixel patterns blend the cosy, nostalgic comfort of home with the sense of something bigger on the horizon.

For her exhibition *Homestead*, Lauren created a range of riso prints and a canvas tote bag. The work she created on her residency was featured in *It's Nice That* and included as a centrefold in *The Skinny*.



# Artist in residence

## Maddie Lennon

A self-taught designer and facilitator, Maddie Lennon's work is deeply influenced by DIY and open-source cultures.

Throughout her residency, Maddie used publication and poster design to explore themes of play. Her exhibition *TIC TAC TOE* is accompanied by two experimental publications that invite viewers to engage more actively with the world around them.



# Hospital exhibitions

## Tonic Arts

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We continued our collaboration with NHS Lothian's Tonic Arts Programme to create a joint exhibition of artwork by two of our former resident artists, Joanna Blémont and Lauren Cory. The exhibition, titled *Musings*, brings together works from Joanna's and Lauren's solo exhibitions, alongside previously unseen pieces exploring landscapes shaped by dreams and distant memories.

*Musings* is now displayed along the corridors of the Royal Hospital for Children & Young People.





# Graphic Novel

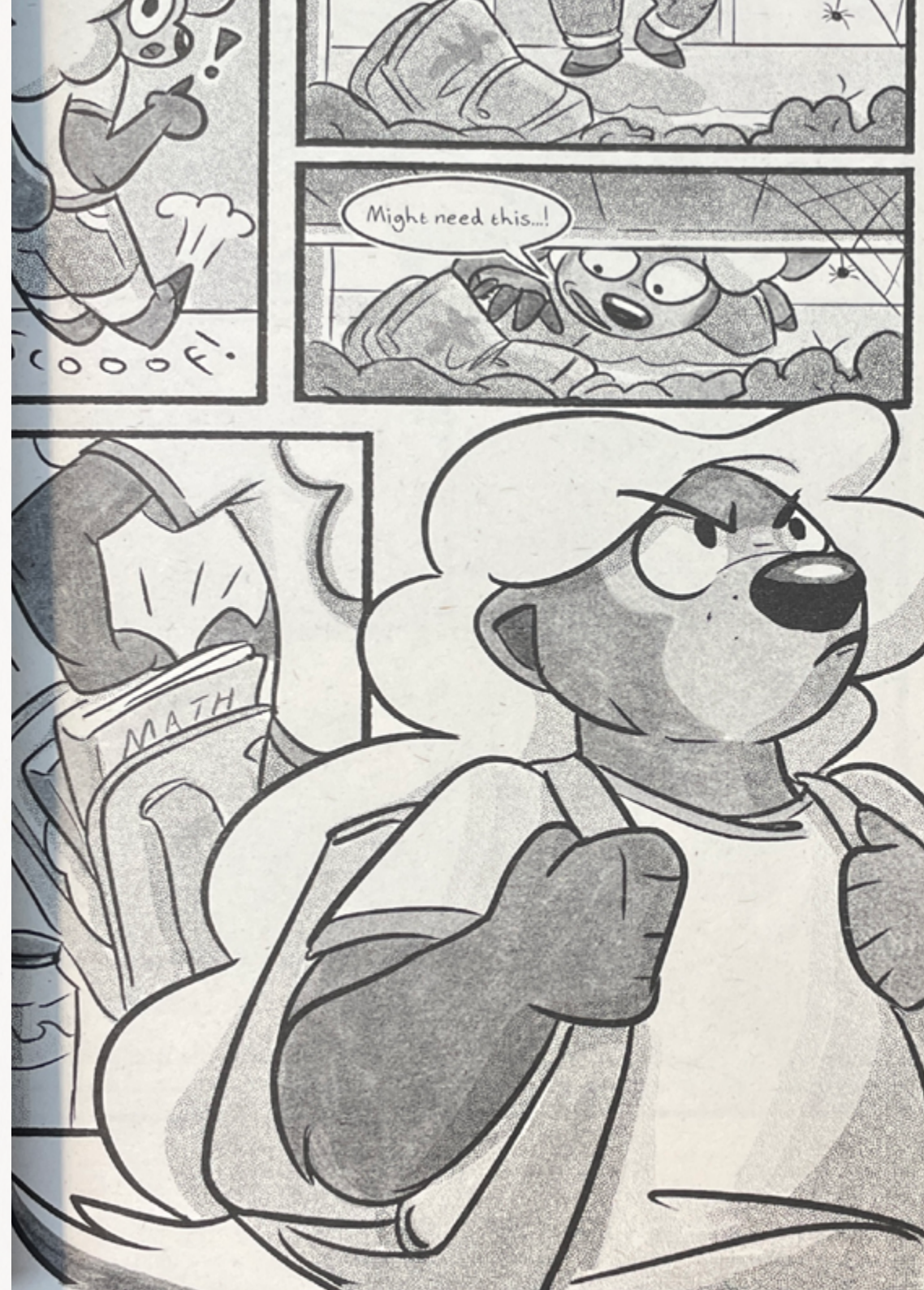
## KALI

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Back in 2018 we commissioned 14-year-old Aoife's debut hand-drawn comic **KALI**, a story about an angry teenage honey badger and her highschool adventures. From the very start we were impressed by her astonishing artwork, compelling characters and sharp storytelling.

Since then, Aoife (also known as **Coocora**) has continued to develop KALI into a 100-page graphic novel – one of our biggest ever projects. The second edition of KALI launched at the Edinburgh Comic Art Fair 2024, where the author held her very first book signing.

Publishing this book has been a great full-circle moment for us that really highlights the importance of long-term engagement.





KALI  
2024



KALI  
2018





Our long-term aim is  
to develop Out of the Blueprint  
as the heart of a vibrant,  
sustainable print-based arts  
community in Leith, supporting  
young people to create, flourish  
and thrive.

We want to support young people to have:

more opportunities to develop and present their creative work to the public

increased skills, experience and self-confidence in themselves and their abilities

more opportunities for meaningful creative employment or self-employment



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Through these goals, we aim to create change not only at the individual level but also across society, fostering a more diverse cultural sector where young people can see themselves and their experiences represented.

in 2025 we will be  
celebrating  
**10 years**  
of Out of the Blueprint

Looking forward to the year ahead:

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- We are delighted that we have received funding from Creative Scotland for our 2025 creative programme
- In summer we will bring back our annual Print Expo and develop a new touring exhibition
- We will collaborate with Edinburgh Napier University to develop our online presentation of artwork
- We plan to develop and refresh our strategy to see us through whatever the future brings

# 2024 finances

## Income: £150,000

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Gocco print service

**£15,500**

Sales (eg. T-shirts, prints, comics)

**£7,000**

Exhibition hire & consultancy

**£1,000**

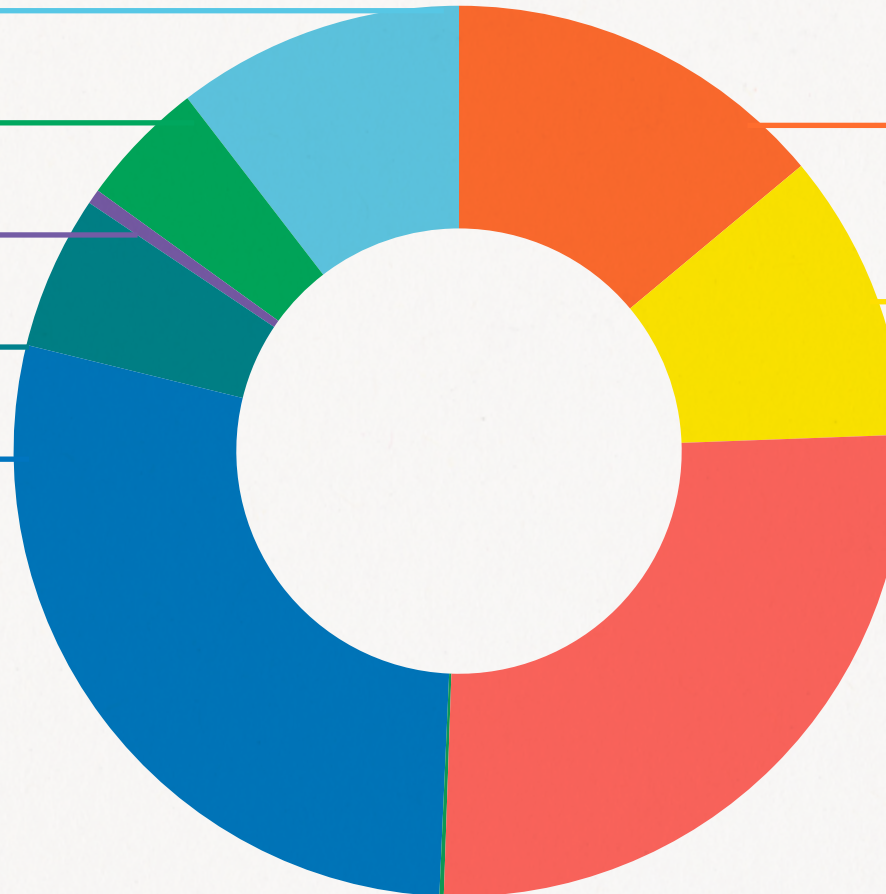
Workshops

**£8,500**

Riso print service

**£42,000**

50% of our income  
is earned through our  
social enterprise activities



Public Funding

**£21,000**

OOTB support

**£16,000**

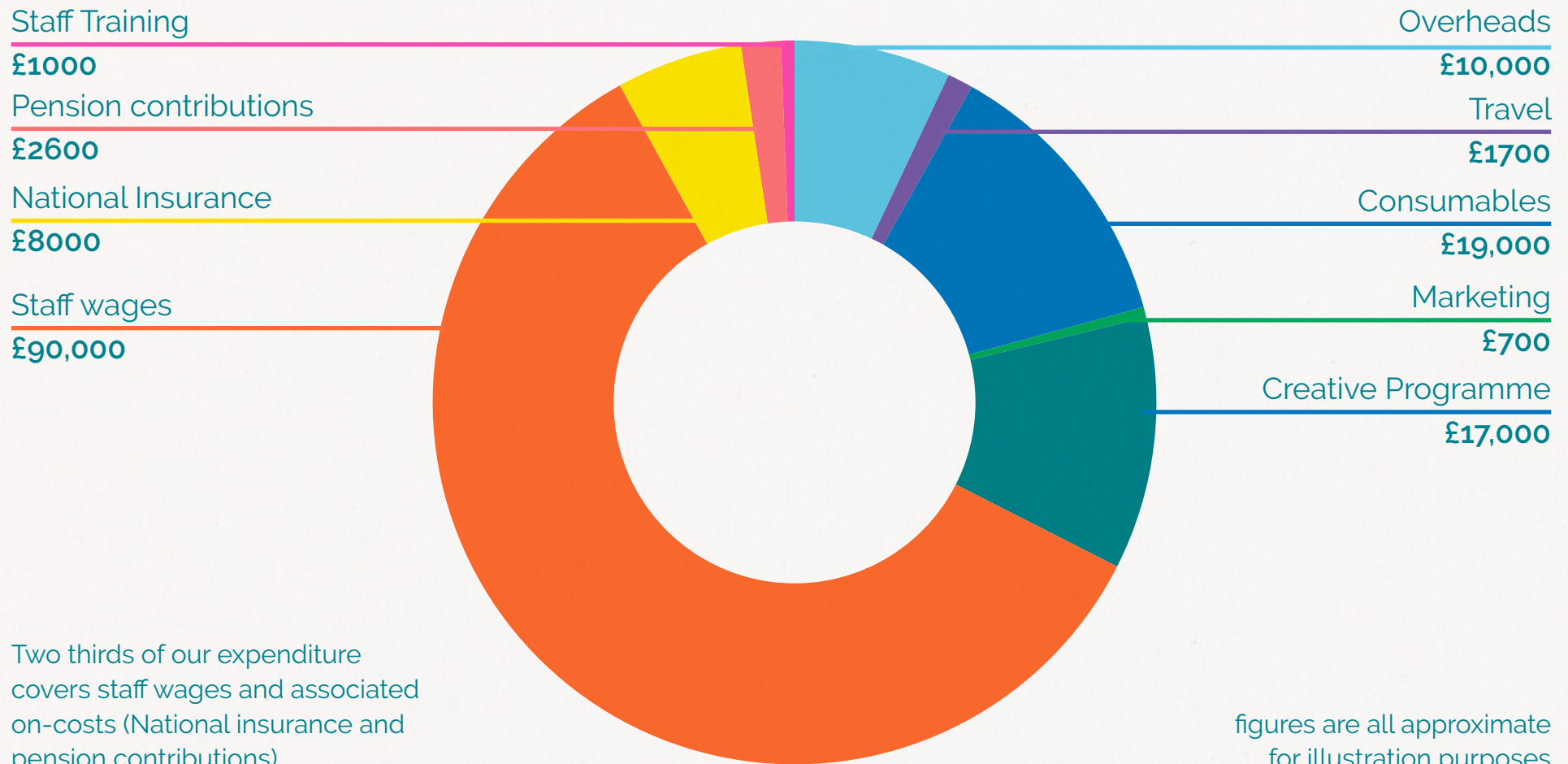
Trufts & foundations

**£39,000**

We raise the other 50% from  
trusts & foundations and public  
funding, with further support from  
our parent organisation Out of the  
Blue Arts & Education Trust

# 2024 finances

## Expenditure: £150,000



# Our team

Johnny



Ryan



Bethany



Claire







For more information, please contact:

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