


# 2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT



**Strengthening the  
performing arts in  
Wales**

**Creu  
Cymru**



#WE  
MAKE  
EVENTS



# Hello! / Shwmae!

Hello and welcome to our annual report for 2022/23.

Coming out of the recovery from the Pandemic has been another difficult year for our sector with the ongoing challenge of rebuilding audiences, skills and recruitment and sustainability, but the theatres, freelancers and producing companies around Wales continued to present, produce and create outstanding work and support their local communities.

At Creu Cymru we continued to respond to the needs and demands from members. We were thrilled to host our first face to face Conference since 2019 and it was great to see so many of you there.

I'm grateful to members who renewed their membership this year and to those who have newly joined us. As a member-led organisation I'm always open to feedback and thoughts on how we can improve your membership offer so please do get in touch.

Huge thanks as always to the team - Yvonne, Megan and all the freelance staff who we've worked with this year and to our fantastic Board of Trustees.

There are exciting plans in the years to come. I look forward to working with you on these projects and supporting you all to enhance the performing arts sector in Wales.

Louise Miles-Payne  
Director



The year under review has been one of continued challenge to the sector we support in Wales, but with signs of positive improvement as we continue to build a recovery from the well documented external factors since spring 2020.

As a membership organisation we look to respond to the needs and requests made by our membership, and the themes continue to revolve around skills, training, well-being, and a need for peer to peer contact and networking opportunities.

The second year of our new membership model has seen a small growth in members, a positive sign, especially considering the ever mounting financial challenges for venues, producers and individuals alike. We do continue to find it difficult to gather the necessary data from the membership to help make the right case for support with The Arts Council of Wales and Welsh Government. This is, in the most part, due to many member organisations being under resourced and/or not having the data readily available to share, and we are aware that we need to find ways of improving this into the future.

The team continue to deliver at a high level, and myself and fellow trustees are pleased with the level of information made available to us both at full board meetings, and via our two subcommittees.

The delivery of the HYNT scheme on behalf of the Arts Council of Wales remains a key area of our work, and we've been pleased to receive the evaluation work undertaken by Milestone Tweed highlighting the impact on Deaf and disabled people attending arts events in Wales since the scheme was launched, and the positive impact on venues who welcome HYNT card holders. As the UK wide plans continue to gather pace, we aim to ensure Creu Cymru can offer the learning and expertise gained over almost 10 years of delivering the Welsh specific scheme.

With at least one venue member now dealing with RACC within the fabric of their building, and more having to survey and test for its use, there is a new complication for our sector to navigate on top of everything the last three years has brought. We'll only be able to navigate such things as a collective, and we are proud that Creu Cymru continues to be that collective voice for the live performance industry in Wales.

Liam Evans-Ford  
Chair



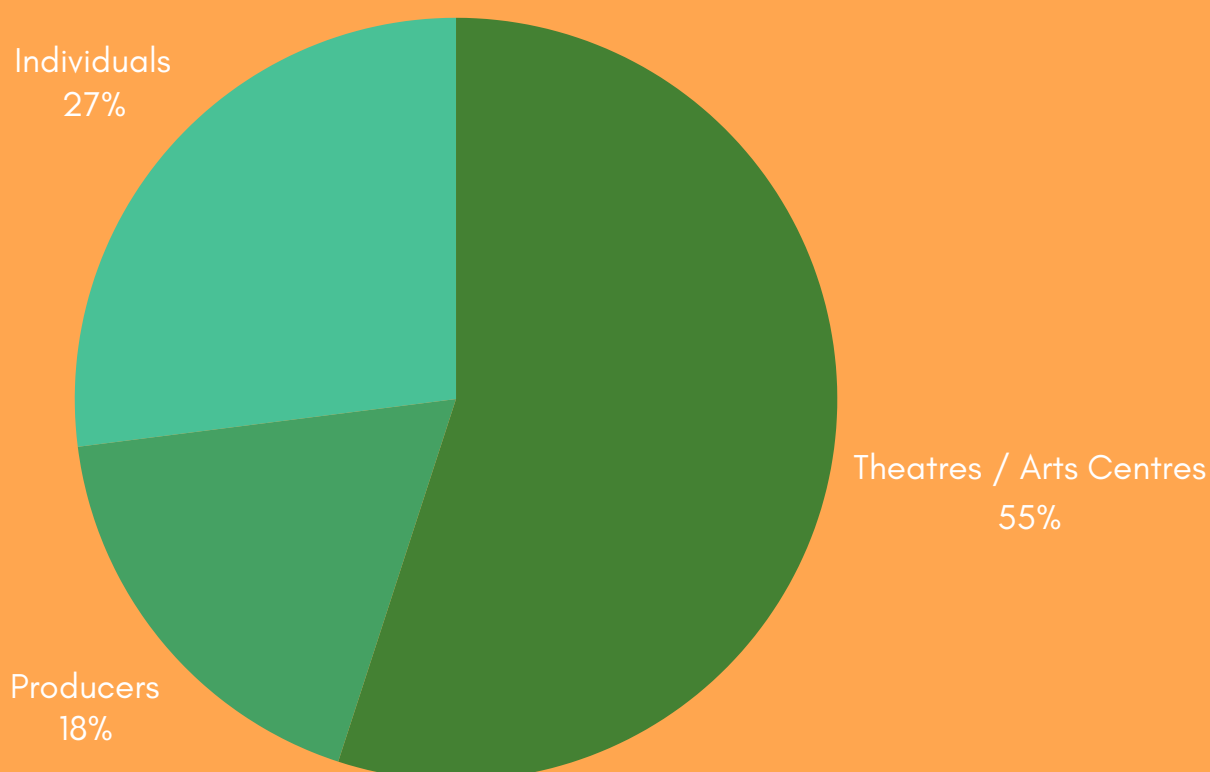
# Who are we?

Creu Cymru champions the performing arts in Wales. It is constituted as a membership body. Our members represent virtually all of the nation's professionally run theatres and arts centres, and producing companies, at a diverse range of scales.

Our membership forms a collaborative network; with a strengthened and unified voice that we project and advocate on behalf of to public governing bodies, ensuring vital industry representation and influencing positive change.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS

- Equalities, diversity and inclusion
- Advocacy, research, and impact
- Workforce development and wellbeing
- Showcasing, celebration and innovation
- Environment and sustainability
- Engaged and supportive Membership



On behalf of the Arts Council of Wales Creu Cymru also manages “hynt”, ACW’s national card access scheme supporting the development of accessibility and inclusive arts practice for audiences across Wales.

In delivering this work we collaborate with a wide range of commercial and public partners in Wales, elsewhere in the UK and internationally.



Membership map

**Our Vision** / To be a vibrant and leading network of performing arts professionals from across Wales. This network will further develop and promote the value and recognition of the importance of the arts to communities by connecting people, championing ideas, the growth of leadership and by developing a diverse and engaged membership.

## **Our Purpose**

**Collaborative Networks** – We connect performance makers and presenters to create joint understanding and shared beneficial outcomes that support the presentation and movement of performing arts activity. We will work hard to develop and nurture productive networks.

**Leadership** – We identify key sectoral issues and set the agenda to address those issues, both independently and through collaborative action with strategic partners. Through research, showcasing and celebration, we promote the value, and advocate for the needs of people and organisations in the performing arts industry.

**Enhancing the Sector** – We deliver a wide range of training and professional development opportunities and work to create a skilled, diverse and productive workforce for now and for the future. We provide information to help individuals and organisations in our membership develop best practice in presenting, enhancing of the workforce and promoting the sector as a viable career option.

# ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

## **Director (F/T)**

The Director has overall responsibility for the organisation, operations, leading on advocacy and representing the membership and sector across a range of forums. The Director also works on the development of new projects and services to support Creu Cymru's overall objectives and needs of the membership.

## **Administrator (F/T)**

The Administrator supports the Director with administrative duties including arranging meetings, diary management, Board meetings and minutes and website updates. She also help with the coordination of training events, annual conference, and AGM. The role also includes assisting the Director in finance and fundraising.

## **Project Administrator (F/T)**

The Project Administrator leads on the delivery and development of hynt, maintaining relationships with hynt venues and associates, project partners, and stakeholders, while supporting hynt cardholders and Deaf, disabled, and neurodiverse audiences. They coordinate training and an annual symposium with a focus on access. They also support other Creu Cymru projects.

# 2022/23 ACHIEVEMENTS

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## MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Following on from the working groups created during the Pandemic we revised our meetings looking at regularity, topics and whether it would take place online or in person.

### Meeting Descriptions

#### **Role specific meetings** (twice a year, online)

To share best practice, latest developments in the sector.

Technical / Operations

Marketing and Comms

#### **AGM** (once a year, online)

Annual General Meeting to report on progress of organisation and vote on matters such as trustees.

#### **Producers meeting** (twice a year, online)

To discuss producer specific issues that may have arisen from other networking meetings or through general discussions.

#### **Venue meeting** (twice a year, online)

To discuss venue specific issues that may have arisen from other networking meetings or through general discussions. To share potential work to be programmed, toured or seen.



**Regional Networking Meetings** (one meeting per region, starting online and moving to face to face)

To build on the work of the North Wales Consortium by opening out to the other regions.

North Wales

West / Mid Wales

South Wales

To work with regional members on joint initiatives and sharings.

## **OTHER MEETINGS**

### **Investment Review Open Circle**

Open to all (members and non-members) who are thinking about or planning to go through the ACW Investment Review process. Join us and share your thoughts / concerns / opinions.

### **Investment Review Members Consultation**

As we entered our own Investment Review period, we held three consultation sessions for members to come and talk to us about what our priorities should be over the next 3 years and how we can best support them.

### **Member Advisory Panel**

We have created a Member Advisory Panel made up of a range of members, taking into account geography, scale, type of membership and diversity. The Advisory Panel help shape and guide our future activities.

### **Cultural Conversations**

Following on from the Culture Cafes we held two Cultural Conversations Chaired by Inc Arts. We invited members to an open conversation with each other to discuss the progress of their Cultural Contracts and other work they are doing in this area. What changes they have made / plan to make / struggling to make / areas they need support.

## **EDINBURGH**

We hosted a get together in Edinburgh during the Fringe Festival with performers and companies performing at the Festival.

# CONFERENCE

Creu Cymru Annual Conference Sponsored by Dawn Bowden MS

Sponsored by YesPlan, University of South Wales and the Audience Agency

11th May 10.30am-3.30pm

The Pierhead, Cardiff

## 'Tyfu'

The Next Steps for the Performing Arts in Wales.

The Creu Cymru Conference aims to bring together professionals working across the performing arts in Wales. The Conference is an opportunity to network, connect and learn.

This year's Conference aims to be filled with energising conversations about opportunity and new models of success and inclusion; what it means to adjust from crisis and recovery to thrive mode - personally and professionally, from individuals to organisations, to the sector as a whole.

Speakers included: Sita Thomas (Artistic Director of Fio), Mathew Russell (Executive Director of the Queen's Theatre), Dawn Bowden (MS, Deputy Minister for Arts and Sports), Jasmine Okai (Producer, Fio), Connor Allen (Actor, writer and Children's Laureate of Wales), Christian Paterson (Grand Ambition), James Doyle-Roberts (Citrus Arts / Hopkinstown Hall) and Lisbeth McLean and Geinor Styles (Canolfan Soar / Theatr na nÓg / Consortiwm Cymraeg) and was attended by over 80 people.

## FEEDBACK

Nia Thomson, NTW: *"Really great to have the opportunity to meet other industry professionals and to have allocated tables for suggested topics for discussion".*

Sara Clutton, Hafren: *"Being able to network with colleagues that I haven't seen in person for over 2 years. Listening to others experiences, solutions and bouncing around ideas for the future".*

Ally Gibson, Newbridge Memo: *"Can't wait for the next!"*

Jo John, St David's Hall: *"Being able to attend a face to face event was great. The panel session was interesting. The speaker from Fio was very engaging and inspiring".*

# TRAINING

We have provided training for members and non-members including Allyship in the Workplace, Know your Bias, Unconscious Bias, Carbon Literacy, Intro to LGBTQ+ Inclusion and a Failspace workshop.

**On Demand Training** (supported by the Foyle Foundation).

The aim of the project is to create on demand training videos that members can watch in their own time, either as a team or individually, whatever suits working patterns and learning.

The videos will act as an introductory training to longer more in-depth live training in the future.

Topics include:

- 'Intro to Customer Service' with Tansy Rogerson, Armadillo Events
- 'A warm welcome to audiences with additional needs' with Hijinx
- 'Anti Racist Terminology' with Everyday Racism
- 'Intro to self-care' with Beam Training
- 'Overcoming Worrying' with Beam Training
- 'Boosting Creativity' with Beam Training

## BURSARIES

AMA Digital Marketing Day - Stella Patrick (freelance), Sarah Gilbert (Theatr Iolo) and Giorgia Brooking (Riverfront).

*"I am really grateful to Creu Cymru for arranging this course, particularly now when we are considering the mental health of our colleagues more than ever before. This course doesn't claim to make you an expert in mental health but it does give you real practical skills and understanding to be able to handle a situation where someone might need your support".*

Ceriann Williams, Freelance

*"I have attended two Creu Cymru courses and have thoroughly enjoyed each of them and left the session with motivation and creative ideas to implement moving forward. It was also great to see so many other venues in Wales attend and put a face to a name".*

Nathan Scott-Howe, New Theatre

# ADVOCACY

## WELSH GOVERNMENT

- Consulted on the new Culture Strategy for Wales and co-ordinated a session for members
- Louise presented at the Senedd Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee.
- Continued to provide guidance on Covid restrictions to members.

## EXTERNAL CONFERENCES

Louise attended the Theatres Trust Conference at the Lyric, Hammersmith.

Louise and Megan attended the launch of the National Events Strategy for Wales at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

Megan was also a panel speaker at the afternoon session talking about hynt

Louise sat on a panel with Andrew Ogun (Agent for Change at Arts Council of Wales) and Dr Edward Oloidi from the University of South Wales organised by Hijinx, Disability Arts Cymru and Learning Disability Wales as part of their project 'Inclusion and Accessibility in the Arts'.

Hynt joined Audience Access Alliance, a cross-sector group of 13 UK wide organisations / networks and two supporting Sector Champions.

## UK WIDE SECTOR ISSUES / PROJECTS

We have attended round table meetings with DCMS, the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Theatre and our Director, Louise, sits on the UK Theatre Board ensuring the voice of the sector in Wales is represented. As part of her Board role, she sits on the UK Theatre Awards Steering Group, Touring Conference Steering Group and the Board Working Group that covers policy, data and research.

- Louise attended The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Theatre focusing on international touring.
- Louise is a partner on the Theatres Trust 'Theatre Database' project.
- Louise presented evidence at the Welsh Affairs Committee's inquiry into Wales as a global tourist destination.

## WCVA Walter Dickie Leadership Bursary

Louise was awarded the Walter Dickie Leadership Bursary from the WCVA. She plans to use it to carry out some learning visits to similar performing arts focussed organisations across different parts of the UK and Ireland, bringing that learning back to Wales in order to improve the offer for members in the future. Read more about it here:

<https://wcva.cymru/developing-leaders-in-wales/>

# HYNT

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On behalf of the Arts Council of Wales, Creu Cymru also manages “Hynt”, ACW’s national card access scheme supporting the development of accessibility and inclusive arts practice for audiences across Wales. Hynt is an Arts Council of Wales initiative, managed by Creu Cymru in partnership with Diverse Cymru.

With over 27,000 hynt cardholders at the end of March 2023 since it was launched in 2015, applications have reached pre Covid levels. As of the end of March 2023, over 40 theatres and arts centres were member venues of hynt with new Associate members, Cardiff Castle Christmas Festival, Little Wander, Margam Country Park and ICC/Wales joining as full members.

## **Connect and Flourish: Breaking the Box – Update for 2022/23**

Hynt was a partner on Breaking the Box, the Connect and Flourish project on which Taking Flight Theatre Company were the lead applicant. The venue partners were Theatrau Sir Gar, RCT Theatres, and Pontio.

The Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent Early Career Creatives who were selected as part of this project continued to have placements and mentoring. Project Managed by Deaf theatre maker Mary-Jayne Russell de Clifford.

An industry sharing day as part of the co-production of ROAD by Taking Flight Theatre Company with RCT Theatres took place at the Park and Dare on Thursday 29th September 2022 at which Megan sat on a post-show panel discussion. An industry sharing day on Breaking the Box was scheduled for early 2023 but was postponed until later in the year.

## **Impact Report**

Independently researched and written by Abigail Tweed, of Milestone Tweed, and Mark Richardson, the report was funded by Arts Council England. 1,522 Hynt cardholders responded to an online survey. Hynt venues were also surveyed. A comprehensive range of focus groups, interviews and workshops took place, including hynt cardholders, family members, carers, and more.

The final report, including recommendations, is due to be published in 2023-24.

# HYNT

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## **TRAINING**

Hynt - Disability Equality and Customer Service training

25th January

Online

This training from Attitude is Everything is ideal for customer facing staff in your venue or event organisation.

### **Hynt - Deaf Awareness Training**

7th February

Online

Deaf led training designed for arts venues.

## **Other**

A UK-Wide Scheme is on the horizon, with DCMS having given ACE funding to make a national access scheme a reality. 2024/25 is likely to be the launch of the UK national scheme.

Diverse Cymru continued as Creu Cymru's partner on hynt.

# PARTNERSHIPS

We work with a variety of partners to deliver our services for members:

Federation of Scottish Theatre

Theatre NI

UK Theatre

Arts Council of Wales

Welsh Government

Musicians Union

house

Deryn

Inc Arts

Community Leisure UK

Theatres Trust

Articulture

Diverse Cymru

Event Wales – Arts and

Culture Group

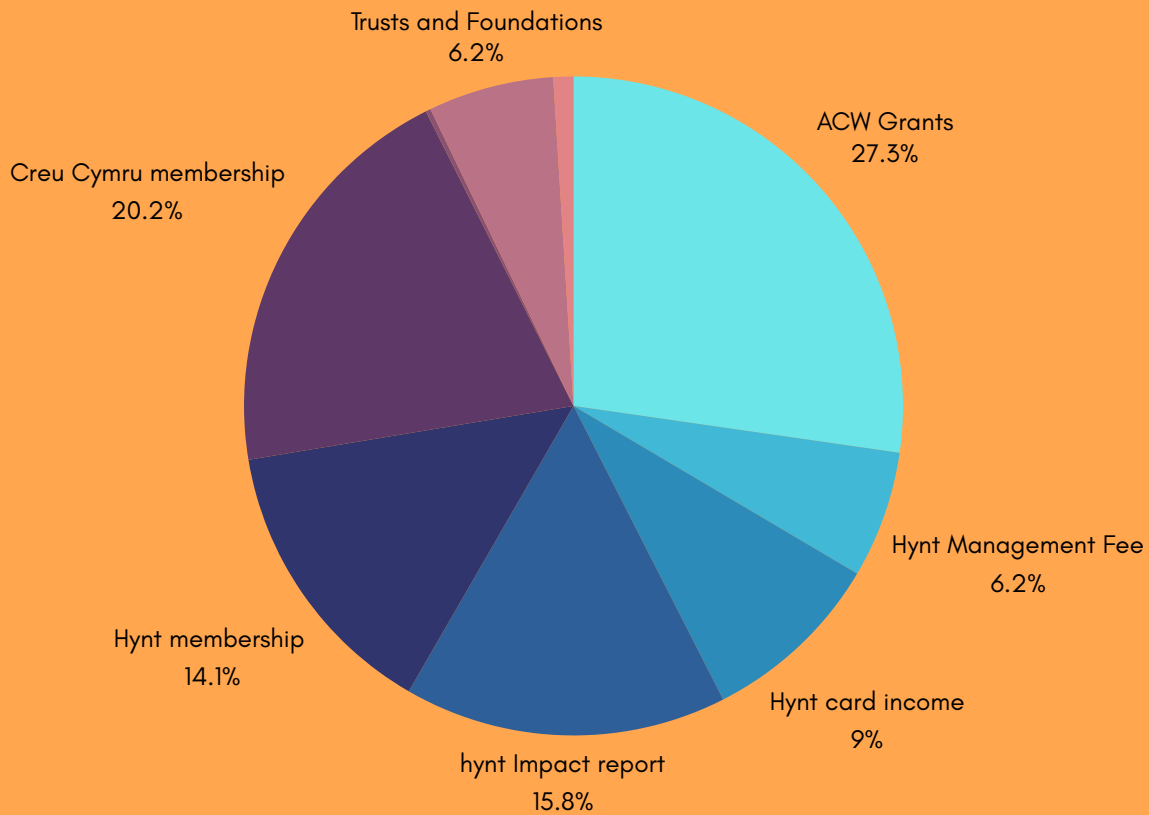
Creative Wales

Cultural Freelancers Wales

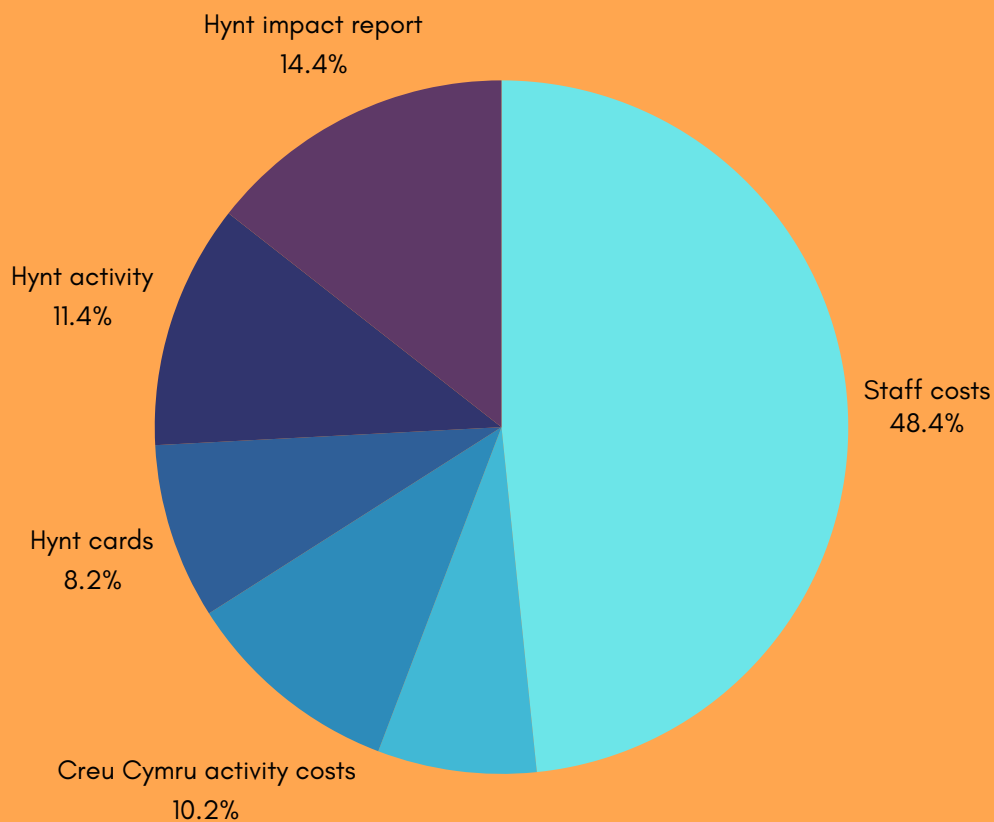
Bectu

# Finance

## INCOME



## EXPENDITURE





# Why be a member?

**In addition to helping transform the Welsh performing arts sector, your membership provides:**

- Access to skills, knowledge and the confidence to improve individual and organisation practice and advocacy.
  - Strong connections in a national network.
- Direct access to programmers and programming opportunities.
- Support from a respected and valued authority, with a robust and digestible performing arts sector knowledge base.
  - The ability to influence the influencers.

## **What we can offer:**

Networking opportunities

Advice from our staff

Highly subsidised quality training

Curated Visits and Bursaries

Annual Conference

Access to experts

Collaboration and shared learning

Opportunities to promote your work and job vacancies

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## **CONTACT**

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[megan@creucymru.com](mailto:megan@creucymru.com)



@creucymru

# WHAT NEXT?

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We are thrilled to be selected as one of the new Arts Council of Wales regularly funded organisation from 2024.

We have worked hard over the last few years to create a more sustainable organisation, working with more people, and having a larger impact on audiences across Wales.

This round of funding was extremely over-subscribed, and we are grateful to ACW for their investment in our work and organisation. With this funding and stability, we will continue to support our members and the wider community with initiatives to enhance the performing arts in Wales. We will be able to expand our work, supporting more people and help grow the sector.

Huge thanks to our members, staff and Board members (past and present), who have been an integral part of getting us here.

Congratulations to all the other successful applicants, especially those receiving regular funding for the first time.

We would like to acknowledge and extend our support to organisations, many of whom are members of Creu Cymru, who haven't been successful as part of this round. They all do brilliant work and make up an important part of the performing arts sector in Wales. We will do all we can to support and help them at this time.

We have lots of exciting plans for the year ahead and we look forward to sharing these with you.

We will be revising our meeting structures, ensuring that we are continuing to improve our services for members. The Conference will move to a 2 day event, allowing more time to learn, listen and connect with each other. Projects will focus on the needs of the sector including skills, EDI, sustainability, and networking.

# Diolch! Thanks!



University of  
South Wales  
Prifysgol  
De Cymru



## Board of Trustees

**Liam Evans-Ford (Chair)**

Executive Director, Theatr Clwyd

**Jodie Ann Nicholson**

Freelance

**Louise Amery** (resigned Sept 2023)

Deputy Director, Aberystwyth Arts Centre

**Gillian Mitchell**

Project Director for the National  
Contemporary Art Gallery Wales

**Angharad Jones Leefe**

Executive Director + Joint Chief Executive,  
Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru

**Sarah Horner**

CEO Hijinx

**David Wilson**

Director, Aberystwyth Arts Centre

**Gundija Zandersona**

Freelance

**Maria Goddard** (Joined June 2023)

Head of Finance at Awen Cultural Trust

# Testimonials

*"The help and support of Creu Cymru through the COVID period has been invaluable with focus groups, grants and site visits".*

**Rhian Dafydd, Business and Marketing Manager, Theatr Felinfach**

*"Creu Cymru puts on some great courses and provides good links which is beneficial to any organisation. Any links to other venues or guidance especially during these times, is much appreciated and their team is fab."*

**Tracey Bishop, Front of House Manager, RWCMD**

*"It's great to be part of Creu Cymru and to be able to network with others within the arts sector in Wales. The training sessions provided are always of high quality and on relevant and contemporary subjects. I highly recommend organisations and individuals involved in arts sector in Wales to join and take advantage of the resources and training available from Creu Cymru as well as its fantastic networking opportunities".*

**Aled Rees, Artistic Administrator / Gweinyddwr Artistig, Theatr Iolo**

*"Being a member of Creu Cymru offers small charity run venues like ours the access to professional advice and training that we would not easily get otherwise".*

**Martyn Redwood, Congress Theatre**

*"The biggest of diolchs to Creu Cymru for presenting this training opportunity. As always, it was an extremely high quality experience and a fantastic opportunity to connect with other arts professionals in Wales".*

**Ellis Wrightbrook, Hijinx**