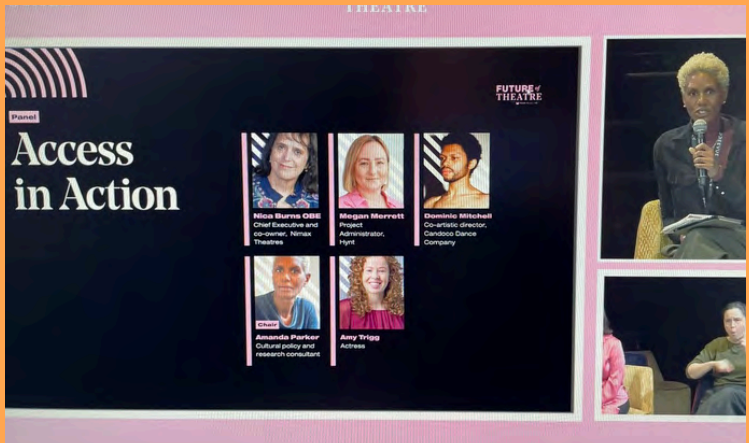
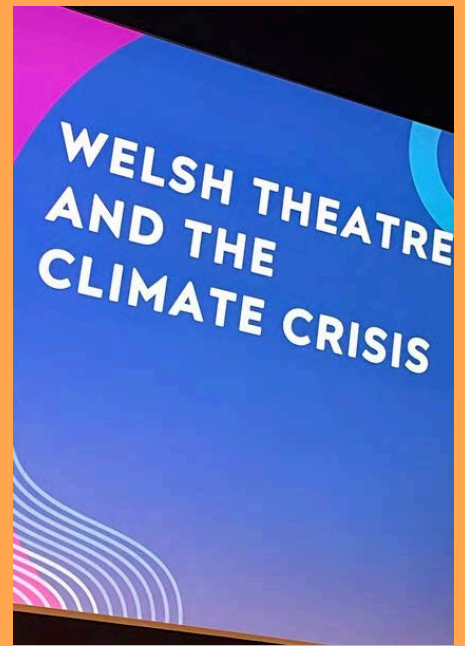


2023-24 ANNUAL REPORT

**Strengthening the
performing arts in
Wales**

**Creu
Cymru**





Hello! / Shwmae!

Hello and welcome to our annual report for 2023/24.

Our sector faced some huge challenges during the year including ACW Investment Reviews, budget cuts and the cost of living crisis. Theatres, freelancers and producing companies around Wales continued to present, produce and create outstanding work and support their local communities.

We supported members and the wider sector with training, bursaries, networking opportunities, advocacy and research.

We were thrilled to see the outcome of the *hyntimpact* report, clearly showing the benefit of this ground breaking scheme for both participants and members.

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



Chairs Report

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. We have been encouraged by the appetite for people to travel to events across Wales, with the 2023 conference held in Treorchy at the Park and Dare Theatre welcoming our highest attendance to a 'non-Cardiff' based event.

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.

The arts sector in Wales was undertaking the significant work required for the Arts Council of Wales Investment Review. Having not taken place since 2015/16, it was always a key target for the re-modelled Creu Cymru to re-enter the national portfolio, and our delivery since appointing Lousie as Director has certainly put us in a strong position. This is crucial to our choices as we head into the future, and the autumn and winter of 2023/24 will likely be a time to consider our next stage of plans, but to also look at what impact the Investment Review has on our membership and the arts sector in Wales. We expect change, and will aim to support our membership as best we can through that change.

And of course, as is always the case when reviewing a year as part of audited accounts- things move on quickly. 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



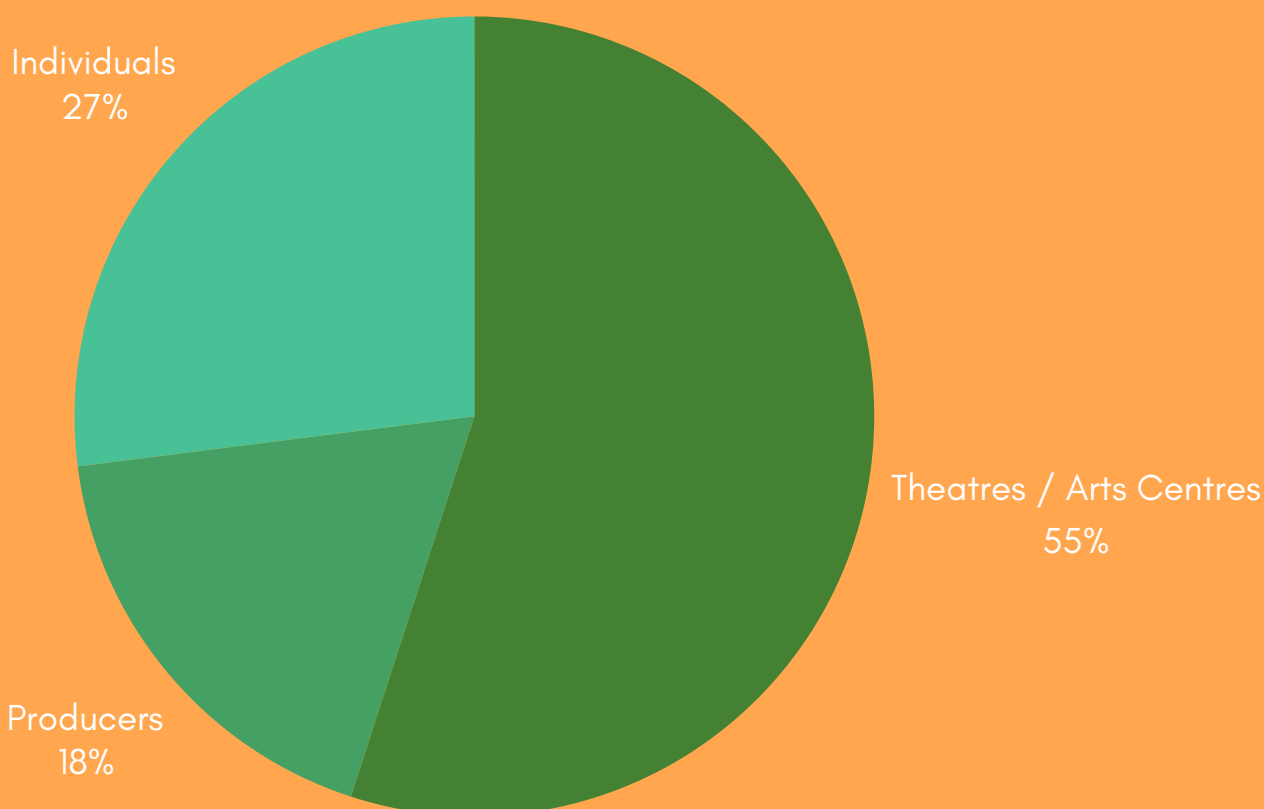
Who are we?

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 helps 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. She coordinate training and an annual symposium with a focus on access. She also support other Creu Cymru projects.

2023/24 ACHIEVEMENTS

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

We run a range of capacity building and networking events and meetings to suit a variety of roles and responsibilities within the membership.

Meeting Descriptions

We run a range of capacity building and networking events and meetings to suit a variety of roles and responsibilities within the membership.

Role Specific (twice a year, online)

Technical / Operations

Marketing and Communications

To support staff in those roles, share knowledge and best practice. This also helped us identify training needs amongst members.

Annual Conference and AGM (once a year, in person)

A networking and thought engaging event to connect members and discuss topics of interest.

Member Area Specific (twice a year, online)

Venue meeting

Producers meeting

This gave us a space to discuss the different needs of members depending on whether they are a producing company or venue.

Hynt Symposium (once a year, in person)

To share best practice for hynt venues members, hearing from experts, members, those with lived experience.

OTHER MEETINGS

We ran a series of ad hoc meetings responding to member needs, themes in the sector and priority areas such as EDI and Sustainability.

Investment Review Open Circle

Open to all (members and non-members) who submitted applications as part of the ACW Investment Review process. The meetings acted as information sharing sessions and support and advice post application outcome.

Climate Crisis and the Arts

We partnered with National Theatre Wales, The Riverfront and Aberystwyth Arts Centre on 3 sustainability events looking at how the sector is tackling the climate crisis.

Member Advisory Panel

As a member led organisation the opinion and feedback from our members is vital for us to develop and create programme streams and activities. The Member Advisory Panel helped the team with activity and focusses for themes.

Race Council Cymru / Anti Racism in the Arts

We partnered with Race Council Cymru and held 3 meetings looking at Anti Racism in the Arts as part of RCC Reverse Mentoring Programme, funded by Welsh Government.

Martyn's Law / Protect Duty

We ran a session in partnership with South Wales Police and UK Theatre on the new Protect Duty, informing members about the new law and what they need to do in order to prepare for it.

Welsh Language Members Meeting

We introduced a meeting specifically for members looking at improving their work through the Welsh language focusing on touring, programming and staffing.

CONFERENCE

The 2023 Creu Cymru Conference was sponsored by Ticketsolve and the Audience Agency. It took place on the 9th May at the Park and Dare Theatre, Treorchy.

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

This year's Conference was filled with with energising conversations about opportunities focussing on the audiences we serve and the staff we need to fulfil those needs.

Questions posed during the Conference were:

- What do audiences look like now?
- How can we help during the cost of living crisis?
- What does the audience of tomorrow want?
- Do we have the staff and skills to support that?

Speakers included: Geinor Styles (Theatr na nÓg / Consortiwm Cymraeg), Katy Raines (Indigo), Lisa Baxter (The Experience Business), Ceri Williams (Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru), Heather Maitland and Nancy Medina (Bristol Old Vic) and Cassie Raine and Anna Ehnold-Davailov, co-CEOs from PiPA (Parents and Carers in Performing Arts), Guy O'Donnell (RWCMD), Geinor Styles (Theatr na nÓg), David Baxter (Borough Theatre), Steve Dimmick (Awen Cultural Trust) and Chelsey Gillard (Torch Theatre), Mary-Jayne Russell de Clifford (Project Manager at Taking Flight) and Rahim El Habachi (NTW)

Poet Rha Hira Arayal and artist Steffan Dafydd were present throughout the day and gathered their thoughts and to present us with some post Conference creative feedback.

We used a local supplier for catering and to supply a vegetarian buffet only in line with sustainable practices.

There were 83 attending, that's including staff, speakers and panel.

CONFERENCE

FEEDBACK

Aled Lloyd-@AledLloydRees

Fantastic and enlightening discussion from @pipacampaign #CreuCymruConference23 @theatriolo are proud members of PiPA. Such a great campaign that supports staff and freelancers in the performing arts sector @creucymru

Ticketsolve @ticketsolvers

Nick is at Treorchy's Park and Dare Theatre today with @CreuCymru for their Annual Conference meeting with lots of delegates and sitting in on great sessions and panel discussions! #CreuCymruConference23

The Audience Agency @audienceagents

We are delighted to be partner sponsoring @CreuCymru 's annual conference taking place at Park & Dare Theatre today. #CreuCymruConference23 #Conference #Wales #Arts #Culture @RCTtheatres @Chris_Francey

Ticketsolve @ticketsolvers

What a fantastic day at the Creu Cymru Conference in Treorchy! So grateful for the opportunity to connect with so many brilliant delegates and learn from inspiring speakers. Thanks to @CreuCymru for putting on such a wonderful event! #CreuCymruConference23

Katy Raines @katyraines

Here at #CreuCymruConference23 to talk all things Audience (of course). With @CreuCymru

RCT Theatres @RCTtheatres

Welcoming arts sector colleagues to the @CreuCymru annual conference in the Park & Dare Theatre today! #CreuCymruConference23

Parents & Carers in Performing Arts @PiPACampaign

Absolute privilege to be presenting at #CreuCymruConference23 and learning about some of the brilliant initiatives and productions taking place across #Wales. Thank you for @CreuCymru for having us.

TRAINING

Extending Reach, Deepening Engagement

Funded by Arts Council of Wales

Delivered by Lisa Baxter, the Experience Business

A free-to-access strategic development opportunity for arts leaders who want to better, and more meaningfully, engage with the people and communities they serve.

Six week Wellbeing Programme

We ran a free online Wellbeing Programme aimed at those working in the arts sector. It ran every week for 6 weeks, every Thursday 10-11am. We covered 'Understanding Wellbeing', 'Becoming Resilient', 'Stress and Anxiety', 'Self-care', 'Boosting Your Confidence' and 'Creating Your Wellbeing Toolkit'. 7 participants took part.

On Demand Training

On Demand training videos (supported by the Foyle Foundation).

The aim of the project was 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 acted as introductory training to longer more in-depth live training in the future.

Topics included:

- '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

OTHER

Allyship in the workplace and Know your bias.

BURSARIES

We provided bursaries to members to attend CPD opportunities including: the AMA Conference, AMA Digital Marketing Day and AMA Inclusivity Day.

ADVOCACY

Our staff, board and members have been interviewed about issues facing the sector and based on campaigns we have created.

We have been featured in the Western Mail, WM Magazine, BBC One Wales News, ITV Wales News, The Stage, Arts Professional, S4C, Golwg, BBC Radio Wales Arts Show and Breakfast Show, Arts Scene in Wales and Get the Chance.

We have represented members at regular meetings with Welsh Government. This resulted in:

- Information passed directly from WG to members.
- Lobbying for further financial support.
- Being consulted on new Event Wales strategy
- We've consulted on the development of the Welsh Government's Culture Strategy and facilitated a session with Creu Cymru members.
- We've also consulted with them on matters relating to the Climate Crisis and Digital Transformation.

We have presented at the AMA Conference and What Next? Cymru.

Louise also presented evidence to Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee as part of its one-day inquiry into the impact of Covid on the arts and the creative industries.

We partnered with Cultural and Creative Skills to host a stand at the Careers Wales Creative Pathways event in Cardiff. The event saw over 3,000 young people attend. We talked to them about the breadth of careers available in the performing arts sector.

Louise also spoke at a careers event organised by USWTD.

ADVOCACY

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 to cover policy, data and research.

Louise attended The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Theatre focusing on international touring. She discussed the impact of Brexit on the ability to tour beyond the UK for Welsh members and the challenges of budget cuts are also having in this area.

Louise is a partner on the 'Theatre Database' project. Led by Theatres Trust, the aim of this project is to create a user-friendly and comprehensive database that is useful to theatre operators, producers, local authority planning and culture departments, heritage researchers, and cultural policy makers.

The Welsh Affairs Committee launched an inquiry into Wales' tourism sector and how the UK government can help promote Wales as a global tourist destination. Louise presented evidence at the Welsh Affairs Committee's inquiry into Wales as a global tourist destination.

CIISA

Louise joined the CIISA (Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority) working group, ensuring that the messages and vital information is shared in Wales.

EXTERNAL CONFERENCES

Louise attended the Theatres Trust Conference at the Lyric, Hammersmith, the Theatres at Risk Launch and the UK Theatre Touring Symposium.

COMMUNICATIONS

We send out a monthly members newsletter and a monthly programming newsletter with potential touring product.

We run a private Facebook group where members can ask questions and share knowledge / problems.

We regularly update our social media accounts on LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter.

HYNT

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 32,000 hynt cardholders at the end of March 2024, applications continue to be around 300-500 per month.

Hynt Symposium

In June 2023, we held the 22-23 Symposium at Carmarthenshire Theatres' Ffwrnes in Llanelli. Speakers: Sara Beer (Ramps Cymru), Tafsila Khan (Taking Flight Theatre), Nick Stevenson (Ticketsolve), Maria O'Meara (Wales Millennium Centre), Paul Hunt (Mencap Cymru), and Kai Jones (Gig Buddies Cymru).

In March 2024, we held the 23-24 Symposium at the Riverfront Arts Centre in Newport.

Content:

- Introduction and updates from MM about Hynt
- Amy Doughty, Artistic Director – Engagement & Training, Ballet Cymru; Tonia, Dance Agent for Change, Ballet Cymru; Louise Lloyd, Access & Inclusion, Ballet Cymru: Relaxed Performances
- Sarah Asante-Gregory, Hijinx: NAWA (Neurodiversity and Anti-Racism in Welsh Arts) project update
- Andrew Miller, UK Access Champion for Arts: All In presentation and Q&A
- Panel on BSL interpretation of live performances including: Anthony Evans (BSL interpreter), Krystal Lowe, choreographer (on BSL interpretation and integration on Swyn & Whimsy), Steph Bailey-Scott, Participation Access & Inclusion Officer, Taking Flight (also worked on Swyn & Whimsy); Rachel Fryer, General Manager, Theatr na nOg (re. Y Fenyw Mewn Du).

Feedback from the Symposium:

I found it really helpful and already have ideas on how we can approach BSL performances differently.

Just a word of thanks for making all the access arrangements today Megan, much appreciated, and we really enjoyed the Q&A with your highly informed audience!

...grateful for the opportunity to address your members. Met someone at Brecon recently who was there and has started making sure they include the name of the interpreter on their website – worth it!!!!

HYNT

Hynt Impact Report

Independently researched and written by Abigail Tweed, director Milestone Tweed, and Mark Richardson, director Social Impact Consulting, the report was funded by Arts Council England, the Hynt Impact Report was published on 6th November 2023 on the Arts Council of Wales website.

The report was received warmly by the sector and stakeholders. Press reception was positive but there was less pick up than we hoped. News of the All In scheme launch mentioned Hynt and the report heavily so the coverage was national.

The circulation of the report also prompted several organisations and individuals to contact MM for meetings or phone conversations about projects, ideas and issues. This included Stephan Stockton at the New Theatre and Tony Evans, BSL interpreter.

The recommendations made in the report are feeding into the priorities and development of Hynt.

HYNT

Breaking the Box

Hynt was a partner on Breaking the Box, a pan-Wales partnership funded by the Arts Council of Wales Connect and Flourish project on which Taking Flight Theatre Company were the lead applicant. The other partners include Disability Arts Cymru and venue partners were Theatrau Sir Gar, RCT Theatres and Pontio.

An away day took place on 24th January 2024 at Blaengarw Workmen's Hall, part of Awen Trust who are the newest venue to join the project to enable us to learn from the first round and plan.

Other

The Stage Awards

Hynt was shortlisted as Community Project of the Year 2023 at The Stage Awards. The team attended the awards ceremony at Theatre Royal Drury Lane, London on 29th January 2024. It was very positive for Creu Cymru and Hynt to use as a platform for celebration on social media, in email signatures and in person at the event. A valuable networking opportunity and useful to include in future funding applications.

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

Deryn

Community Leisure UK

Theatres Trust

Articulture

Diverse Cymru

WCVA

Event Wales - Arts and

Culture Group

Creative Wales

Cultural Freelancers Wales

Bectu

Cultural and Creative Skills

CIISA (Creative Industry

Independent Standards

Authority)

National Youth Arts Wales

UWSTD

PiPA (Parents and Careers in

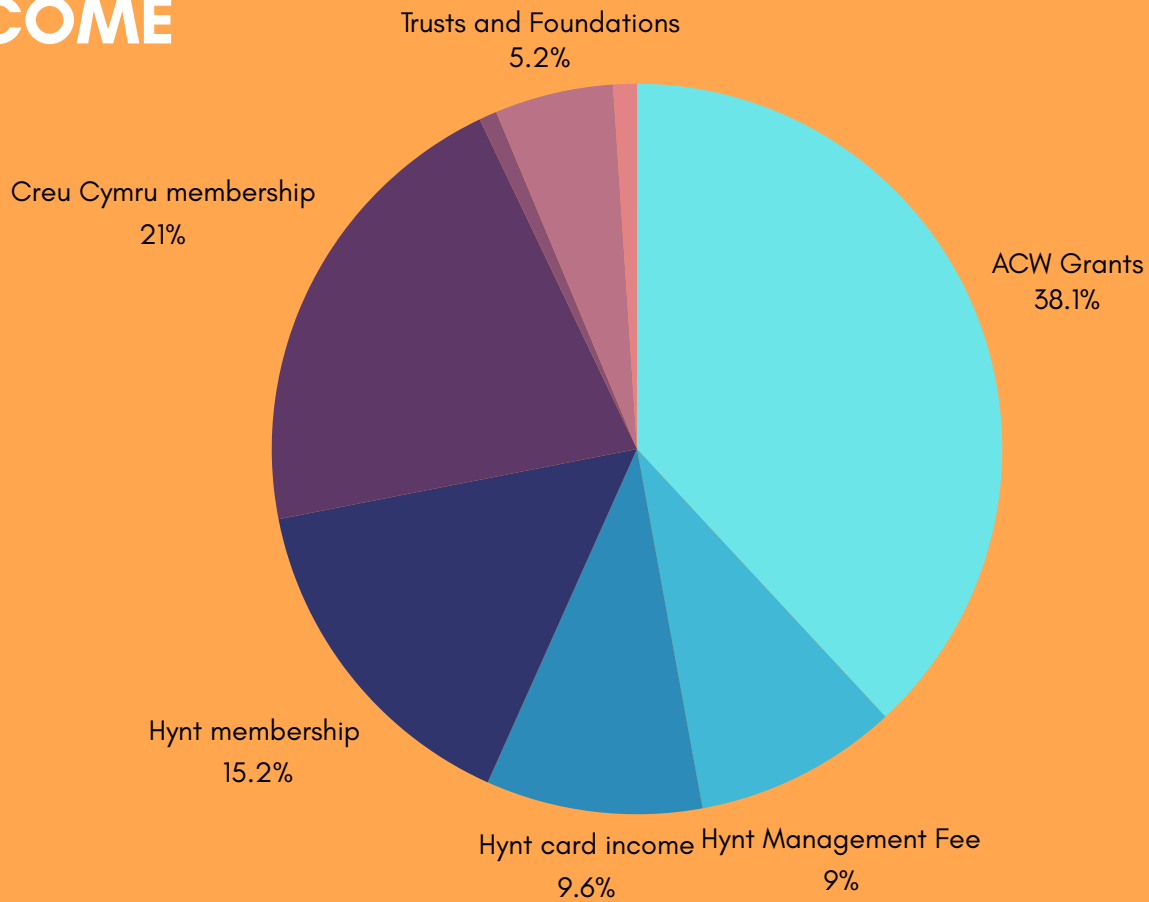
Performing Arts)

Office of the Future

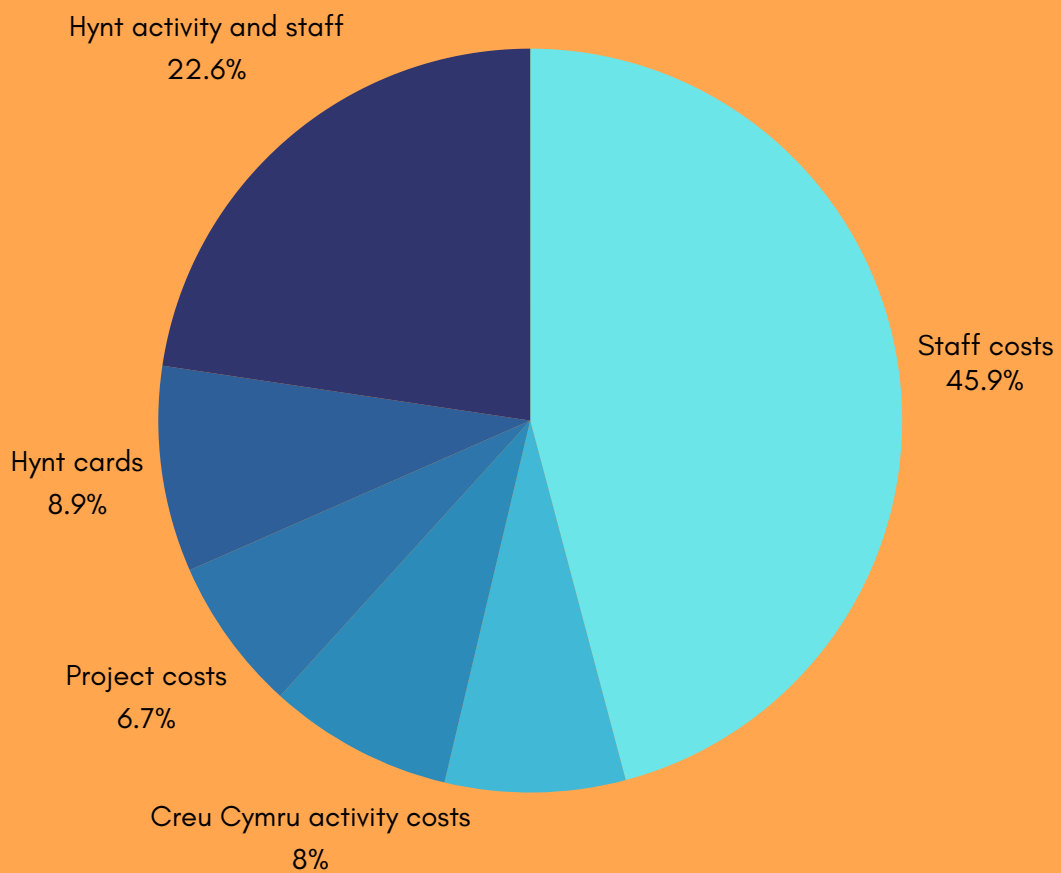
Generations in Wales

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

CONTACT

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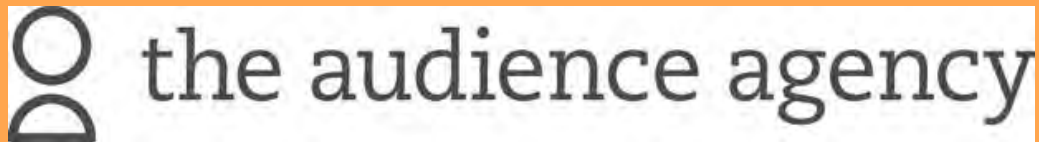
louise@creucymru.com

megan@creucymru.com



[@creucymru](https://twitter.com/creucymru)

Diolch! Thanks!



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 (resigned February 2024)

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