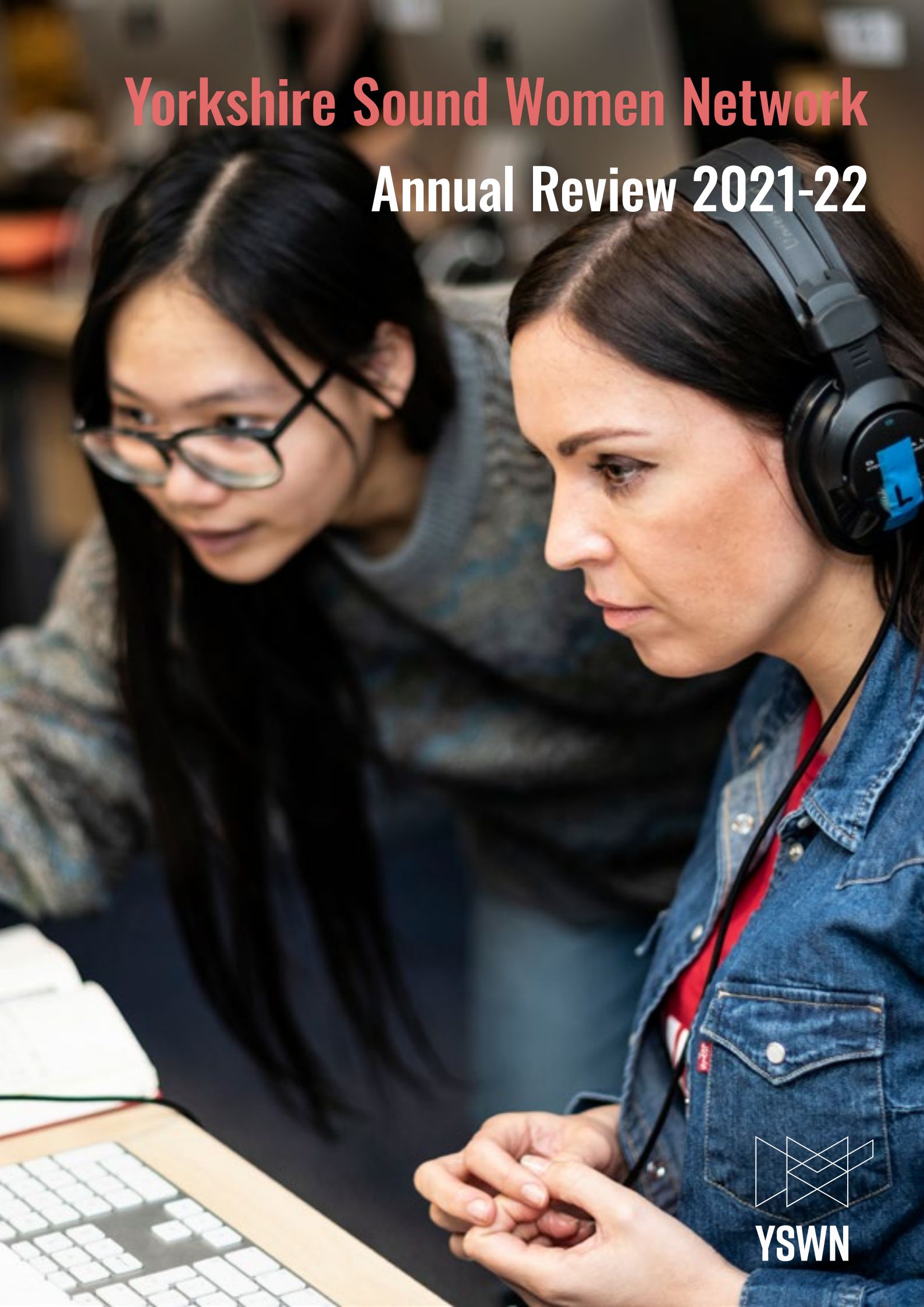


# Yorkshire Sound Women Network

## Annual Review 2021-22



YSWN

YSWN enables the artistic and technical development of women and people of minority genders through access to resources, skill-sharing and creative opportunities.

Our work has two key areas: education and community activities to increase participation in music technology by women, girls and people of minority genders, and industry-facing advocacy activities.

Our mission is to inspire and enable more women, girls and people of minority genders to explore sound and music technology; we want to support a flourishing industry which welcomes, encourages, progresses and respects their inclusion into the workforce at all levels from studio floor to board room and reflects the diversity of its participating communities.

**“The mentoring received was invaluable. It would not have been possible for me to have the opportunity to chat to experts in electronic and multichannel diffusion easily.”** Sound Pioneers participant

# Introduction

Opposite: WIRED, Leeds Beckett University, November 2020

Cover image: Level Up! in Music Production, University of Huddersfield, March 2019

**For Yorkshire Sound Women Network (YSWN) as for many, this year has been one of consolidation and rebuilding following the Covid-19 pandemic.** Over the past few months we have carefully resumed face-to-face events, including supporting YSWN-affiliated regional groups to meet through our Permission to Play project, and have shared in their excitement as they plan new activities, continuing the spirit of skill-sharing and confidence-building that fuelled YSWN's very first events back in 2015.

Looking to the future, we are currently strengthening our track record in project delivery through multi-year initiatives supported by Paul Hamlyn Foundation (Permission to Play) and Youth Music (WIRED). Their vital funding has allowed us to appoint Project Managers for each project and to contract freelance artists and educators to plan and deliver the activities.

**“I became aware of the level of editing that can and should be done to make pieces sound really professional and I feel I am now equipped to do that.”** Working in Sound participant

Meanwhile, we continue to use our experience of delivering online events over the past two years to inspire and support our community through courses, seminars, education workshops and podcasts, with the aim of reaching new and underserved audiences and overcoming the barriers that deter women and minority gender people from full participation in audio technology.

As ever, we are very grateful for the support of our community, Associates, Working Group, partner organisations, industry supporters and funders for helping make all this valuable work happen.

**Twitter:** @YSWN\_  
**Facebook:**  
yorkshiresoundwomen  
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# Our year in numbers

**32** events delivered including education workshops, training and seminars

**291** attendances at YSWN events

**41** women and people of minority genders paid to deliver activities through YSWN, including workshop leaders, seminar and podcast speakers and administrative roles

“All the tutors were excellent and I enjoyed the range and different styles.” Working in Sound participant

## Social media reach:

**2,357** Twitter followers (June 2022) & **238,388** tweet impressions (April 2021–March 2022)

**1,412** Facebook followers (June 2022) & **11,261** page reach (April 2021–March 2022)

**990** Instagram followers (May 2021)

“I really enjoyed learning about all that sound art has to offer. Learning about Audacity was particularly exciting as I can see how I could use it in my musical life. I now have a chance to experiment with composing using real life sounds.” Sound Adventures participant

Opposite: WIRED, The Point, Doncaster, March 2020

# Our activities

**During 2021–22 YSWN has delivered a variety of activities including:**

## Permission to Play

Funded by Paul Hamlyn Foundation and launched in 2021, our Permission to Play project aims to increase access to participatory music technology activities in the North, empowering the development of grassroots feminist sound collectives and centring the voices and experiences of a diverse range of women and people of marginalised genders.

Activities include mentoring and supporting YSWN-affiliated regional groups to reach new participants; mitigating against barriers to participation through online networking and skill-sharing; and developing an effective Associate scheme.

## Sound Pioneers

We reached the conclusion of our Sound Pioneers professional development project supporting six emerging women composers through creative residencies exploring multichannel electronic music at the University of Huddersfield and University of Hull.

Hayley Suviste, Nwando Ebizie, Kin (Cultura Plasmic INC), Charlotte Bickley, Rachael Gibson and Lottie Sadd benefited from access to high quality music studio facilities and mentoring support, ending in performances of new pieces at Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival (hcmf//), Electric Spring and the HEARO concert series (Hull).

Music website 5 against 4 gave a glowing review to the premieres at hcmf// of new music by Nwando Ebizie (*Solve et Coagula*) and Lottie Sadd (*I'm made up of more space than I actually take up*) created during their residencies, describing Lottie's piece as "One of the most superb things I heard at HCMF 2021".

“The time spent in the ambisonic studio was unlike anything I'd experienced before in terms of dedicated time to develop my practice. Creatively, it opened a lot of doors for me.” Sound Pioneers participant

## Associate Skills Exchange

We began supporting the professional development of YSWN's freelance Associates through an Associate Skills Exchange programme, where participants could ask for and offer expertise in a structured and mutually beneficial way.

## Volume Up: YSWN's Audio Equity Standard

We launched our bespoke framework for employers to demonstrate commitment to a gender diverse sector. Volume Up: YSWN's Audio Equity Standard uses seven different strands as a framework for businesses to structure their approach to supporting women and people of minority genders in sound. The standard recognises actions rather than just words and written policies – we aim to support the industry to make tangible, long-lasting changes.

“Loved the podcast stuff – can really see immediately how I can apply that knowledge to my own work.” Working in Sound participant

## Partnership collaborations

### Working in Sound

Following a pilot course in May–June 2021, we partnered with Screen Industries Growth Network (SIGN) to offer two free online eight-week courses for women and people of marginalised genders. One course was an introductory exploration of music technology and the moving image. The other catered for those with some existing experience who were looking to develop a career in sound.

Both courses offered opportunities to learn new or develop existing technical skills such as using a DAW (digital audio workstation) and video editing software.



Audio Club podcast artwork designed by Lois Iredale.

### Audio Club

We completed the first series of our YSWN podcast, raising the profile of women and people of minority genders in a wide range of audio industry roles.

Guests speaking to host Caro C across the eight episodes included TV & film dubbing mixer and sound editor Emma Butt, artist Ryoko Akama, synth expert Zoë Blade, YouTube educator Liina Turtonen and electronics engineer Ann Fomukong-Boden. The podcast successfully increased YSWN's reach, with listeners drawn from the UK, USA, Sweden, India, Germany and Japan, and 758 downloads as of May 2022.

In addition, industry professionals gave presentations and offered careers advice. The courses were delivered through a mix of weekly live teaching/workshop sessions, pre-recorded talks and 1-to-1 tutorials, with tasks set for completion in between sessions. Sessions were designed and led by AiAi Studios' Aiwan Obinyan, with additional sessions delivered by guest tutors Emma Butt, Eve Doherty, Eddie Dobson and Rebecca Gin.

### SoundCamp: Live Stream Your Dawn Chorus

We teamed up with arts cooperative SoundCamp to offer a free online workshop in April 2021. Led by sound artist Jo Kennedy, participants learned how to create live audio streams that would enable them to take part in Reveil 2021, SoundCamp's 24-hour live broadcast of nature sounds on Dawn Chorus day (1–2 May).

### Sound Adventures

Delivered in collaboration with Lawrence Batley Theatre as part of the Kirklees-wide Our Biennale festival, our six-week Sound Adventures course concluded in April 2021. Open to girls and young people of marginalised genders aged 11-16, the course was led by sound artist Jo Kennedy with technical assistance from Charlotte Rowe. Participants learned essential recording and editing skills used by music producers and sound artists. Sounds created were then imaginatively 'geolocated' using the Echoes app to build immersive soundwalks with an environmental theme, that people could experience through their smartphones.

### Gender Diversity and Inclusion

In March 2022 we delivered two sessions of training in gender diversity and inclusion to staff and volunteers of arts festivals across Kirklees.

## Plans for 2022–23

### WIRED

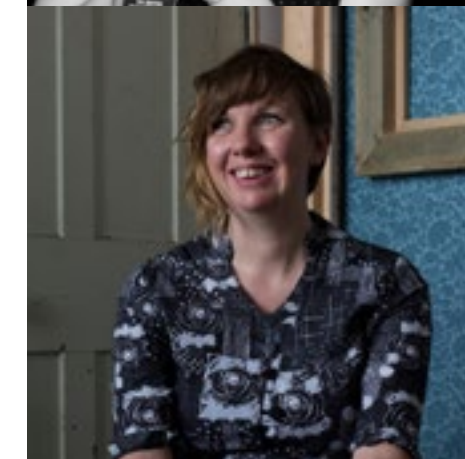
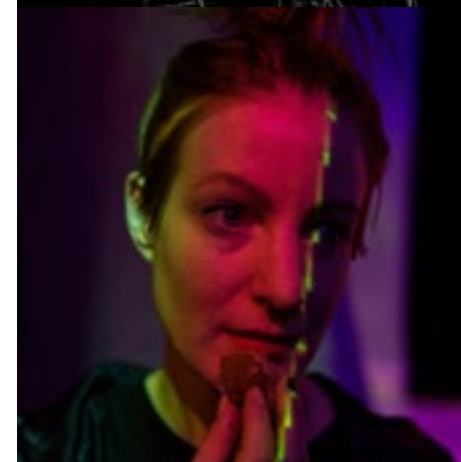
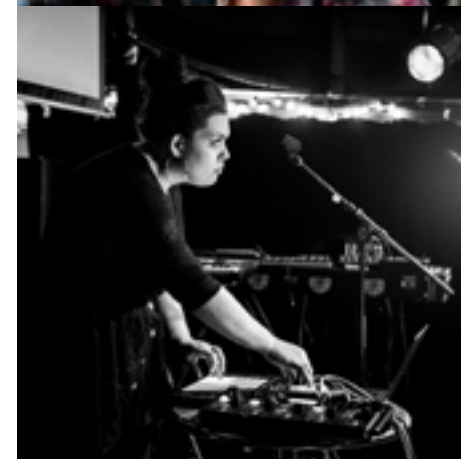
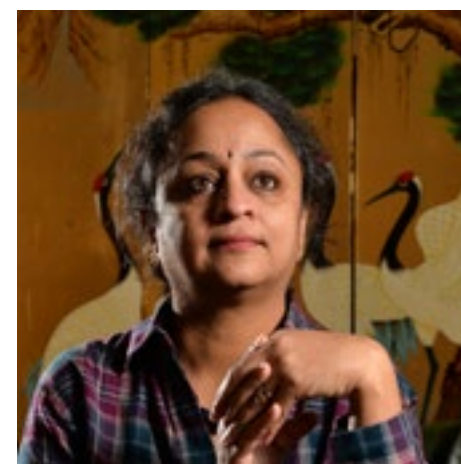
We have been awarded a Fund B grant from Youth Music to run our WIRED education project for three years, with delivery starting in Wakefield in May 2022.

### Permission to Play

Our Permission to Play project continues, with many YSWN-affiliated regional groups planning and running their own events and workshops throughout the coming months.

### Volume Up

We are continuing to roll out our Volume Up audio equity standard to companies across the music technology industry.



## Level Up in Audio

We completed our seminar series that kept the YSWN community connected and inspired during lockdown with 12 online Level Up events mixing skills-boosting sessions with artists sharing the creative and technical secrets of their practice.

Speakers included (anticlockwise from top left) Supriya Nagarajan, Mariam Rezaei, Kelly Jayne Jones, Sarah Angliss, Leslie Gaston-Bird, Lia Mice, Shell Zenner, Amble Skuse and Anna Bertmark.

“I’ll take away new knowledge about loudspeaker configurations, terminology, potential software, books, stats...” Seminar attendee





Go Compose, Small Seeds,  
Huddersfield, July 2019

# Finance

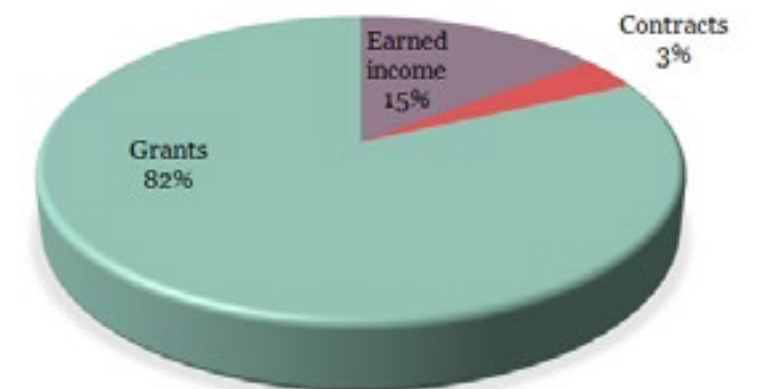
## Income

Earned Income  
£5,909

Contracts  
£1,456

Grants  
£33,041

Total income  
£40,406



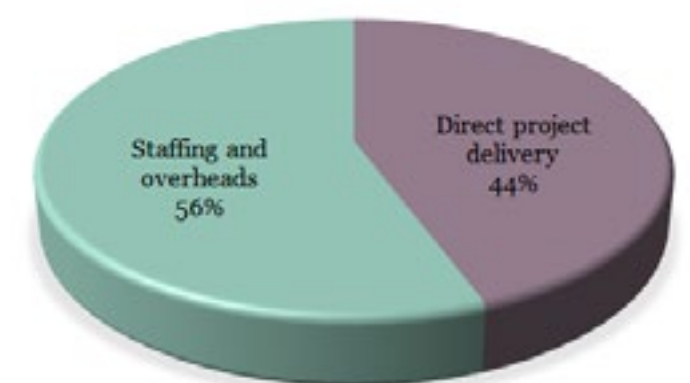
“I learned so much from [YSWN Associate] regarding the practicalities of installing a sound-based exhibition – many things that I had never even thought of. We’ve agreed to keep in touch and hopefully work together in the future.” Associate Skills Exchange participant

## Expenditure

Direct project delivery  
£18,916

Staffing and overheads  
£23,771

Total expenditure  
£42,687





## **Our thanks to:**

### **Funders**

Arts Council England  
National Foundation for Youth Music  
Paul Hamlyn Foundation  
PRS Foundation

### **Higher Education Partners**

University of Huddersfield  
University of Hull

### **Cultural Partners**

Brighter Sound Both Sides Now programme  
hcmf//  
Lawrence Batley Theatre  
National Science and Media Museum  
Our Biennale  
Screen Industries Growth Network  
SoundCamp

## **YSWN working group 2021-22:**

Amy Beeston (Associate)  
Abi Bliss (Director)  
Sophie Cooper (Co-opted Associate from September 2021)  
Eddie Dobson (Director)  
Jo Kennedy (Director)  
Emily Johnson (Co-opted Associate from September 2021)  
Supriya Nagarajan (Director)  
Irine Røsnes (Director)

## **YSWN staff team 2021-22:**

Abi Bliss (Coordinator)  
Chelsey Everatt (WIRED Coordinator)  
Heidi Johnson (Development Manager)  
Gill Wainwright (Bookkeeper)  
Lucy Woolley (Project Manager, Permission to Play)



YSWN Annual Review 2021-22 produced by Heidi Johnson and Abi Bliss. All photos by Laura Mateescu except p.4 by Sophie Cooper.