



Impact Report 2021–2023



Contents

Intro	3
What we believe and what we do	4
Our values	5
Key achievements	7
International work	12
Spotlight on projects we delivered	14
In and around The Vale	19
Partnership working	22
Environmental Sustainability Impact	23
Finance	25



We create the environment for Carnival arts, people, and communities to thrive.

This report is a summary of the impact we have made between 2021 and 2023.

Thank you to our funders, supporters, staff, freelance artists and crew, partners, and volunteers. It's been a pleasure to share this journey with you all, long may it continue!



What we believe

We believe that Carnival can create positive social change. Creating a Carnival can build bridges, promote understanding, and provide an opportunity for creative cultural expression and celebration. We believe that healthy and happy communities need diverse, high quality art experiences in which everyone can get involved and feel uplifted.

What we do

By co-creating high quality arts experiences with communities, we use artistic expression to challenge dominant ideas of what art is. We focus on collaboration with communities, promote inclusivity, and celebrate diversity. Carnival has roots in resisting injustice, giving voice to marginalised communities, and challenging inequality through collective creativity.

We share the collaborative objective to build a progressive and grassroots arts culture in the UK and animate public spaces with jaw-dropping outdoor arts (music, dance and visual arts) for the enjoyment of everyone. We are proud to be the only Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) in Tameside, and to run the North's only Carnival Centre of Excellence. Artist-led and ambitious, we work throughout the UK and – as our name suggests – internationally, bringing together world-class artists with young people, communities and organisations to tell stories, create the most extraordinary opportunities, moments and memories. We provide training, mentoring, consultancy, volunteering, participation and performance opportunities.



Nana Buruku at The Queen's Jubilee Pageant 2022

Our values

QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE

Our passion is to demonstrate and showcase the life-changing power of Carnival arts rooted in diverse traditions. We are committed to delivering high-quality art and developing artists from all backgrounds. We make consistent investment in our own development and to bringing inspirational world-class artists to the UK to share their unique talents, skills and expertise with us, fostering a culture of mutual learning that inspires everyone.

HONOUR AND RESPECT

We continue to collaborate and learn from the richness of diverse artists and art forms from around the world. We cherish the vibrant contribution of artists from every culture and background and we strive to honour cultural heritage in our work. Together we aim to build an artistic space where everyone feels a sense of belonging. We are proud that our work contributes to the long-term sustainability of these very special art forms, nurturing our efforts to make conscious choices of materials and processes that are sensitive to our environment.



GROWTH

We do everything we can to support and nurture the sector in local and global communities that face unique challenges. As we evolve, we are intentional about bringing others along so that we can leave a legacy of skilled and diverse stewards who will protect and grow the art forms we love.

**“Carnival is
in safe hands”**

Colin Spalding, Artistic Director at Rampage Mas CIC

INCLUSIVITY AND COLLABORATION

We invest wholeheartedly in fostering inclusive spaces where people with different backgrounds can find and shape their own experience in Carnival arts. We care about the relationships we build and work hard to create understanding between people with different views. We know that creativity is enlivened when we collaborate widely because diverse perspectives enrich our collective work. So, our door is open to everyone to create safe spaces underpinned by a sense of common humanity.

HERITAGE AND REVITALISATION

We honour the rich legacies of the past while nurturing their relevance for the future. Our work safeguards and revitalises the vibrant expressions of Carnival arts, ensuring their stories, techniques, and cultural significance are celebrated and passed on to future generations. By investing in sustainable practices and building a community of skilled artists and advocates, we create pathways for heritage to inspire, connect, and thrive within contemporary and diverse communities.



Nigeria Community Association at Rochdale Feel Good Family Picnics

Key achievements

TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH CARNIVAL ARTS

At Global Grooves, Carnival is more than just an art form – it's a global movement that connects, inspires, and transforms lives. As a diverse-led, artist-driven organisation, we harness the power of creativity to ignite change, empower communities, and foster intercultural dialogue. Our dynamic, collaborative projects celebrate diversity, reimagine public spaces, and create inclusive cultural experiences that resonate deeply across communities in the UK and internationally.



Spring Up at The Vale

IGNITING COMMUNITIES AND REIMAGINING PUBLIC SPACES

From bustling city streets to serene town squares, Global Grooves brings energy, joy, and a sense of pride to public spaces. Our projects transform everyday environments into vibrant stages of celebration.

Through colourful parades, stunning costumes, and infectious rhythms, we engage local communities, turning spectators into active participants. Our outdoor events revitalise high streets and boost local economies while creating spaces where everyone feels celebrated and empowered.

As one Tameside participant expressed, “It felt amazing to walk down the streets and show the world it’s okay to be yourself.”

This sense of empowerment extends beyond individual communities, contributing to placemaking, civic pride, and linking local experiences to broader global movements.

CELEBRATING ARTISTRY AND INNOVATION

Creativity is at the heart of Global Grooves. Our collaborations span over 170 arts organisations worldwide, blending traditional and contemporary artistic practices in visually stunning puppets, costumes, street performances, and large-scale outdoor events. These works inspire, tell powerful stories, and challenge cultural perceptions.

Our home, The Vale, stands as a Carnival Centre of Excellence – an innovative hub for cultural collaboration. With purpose-built rehearsal spaces and immersive artistic environments, The Vale is where artists from all backgrounds converge to create transformative art that connects communities in the UK and beyond.

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF CREATIVES

Through our Future Leaders programme, we are nurturing over 200 young creatives through training, mentorship, and hands-on opportunities to perform on prestigious stages both in the UK and internationally. This programme equips young people with the tools, networks, and belief to shape the future of the arts.

We've created 1,151 paid opportunities for 217 artists, helping emerging talent thrive while promoting diversity and inclusion within the creative sector. By investing in artists from underrepresented backgrounds, we contribute to a more diverse and balanced creative economy.

“Performing at The Vale felt like stepping into a world where creativity knows no bounds”

Vale Live performer



BUILDING WELL-BEING AND SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Art is a powerful catalyst for healing and connection. Through initiatives like Our Space and Crafty Saturdays, we have engaged 12,769 visitors in inclusive, family-friendly activities that inspire creativity and foster social bonds.

By combating isolation and strengthening community ties, we demonstrate how creativity can promote well-being, enrich lives, and form the fabric of stronger, more resilient communities. We are not just creating art; we are fostering a sense of belonging that transcends individuals, communities, and borders, connecting people through shared experiences, regardless of where they live.

“This programme reignited my son’s passion and gave him his confidence back. It’s been life-changing.”

SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION

Championing Sustainability and Innovation is a core pillar of our work. The Vale is on track to run on 100% renewable energy, setting an example for environmentally-conscious arts spaces. We engage communities in critical conversations about climate action, showing how creativity can inspire change on global environmental issues. In partnership with Julie’s Bicycle, we ensure sustainability remains at the core of our production and performance practices. This commitment not only enhances our work but also amplifies our international impact, contributing to global conversations around environmental justice.



INTERNATIONAL WORK: CONNECTING, LEARNING, AND STRENGTHENING LOCAL IMPACT

Our international reach is key to the success and innovation of Global Grooves. We actively engage with the global Carnival arts community, gaining insights from leading artists, festivals, and organisations across Europe, the Americas, Africa, and beyond. These experiences feed directly into our creative projects, which reflect the rich, diverse, and ever-evolving nature of Carnival arts.

Our team's international work strengthens our connections to artists and communities in the UK. By sharing creative models, skills, and knowledge, we bring fresh, global perspectives to our UK projects. These cross-border partnerships not only enhance the quality of our work but also create opportunities for UK artists to engage with international networks, fostering an ongoing exchange of ideas and experiences.

Global Grooves brings UK-made art to international audiences, showcasing our unique creativity and cultural leadership. We perform at global festivals and collaborate with artists worldwide, enhancing the impact of our work and fostering deeper cultural exchange.



Key achievements

2021-2023

Audiences of
9.5 million

(inc Jubilee numbers of 8.7 million across broadcast, digital and physical audiences)

10,327
school workshop participants

23,558
hands-on participants

108
different shows performed around UK and internationally

200
Future Leaders now in our network

Workshops with
109
schools and other organisations

1151 paid performance opportunities for
217 artists

627
volunteers

17
masterclasses and courses

Vale visitor numbers
12,769

Artists worked, studied, and performed in
6
countries

9
long term projects delivered

8 partner orgs based at The Vale

15
early career artists supported into paid employment

116
puppets and outdoor creations made

Worked with
170
arts and cultural organisations

Supported by
22
funders
with 26 grants

36
live music and cinema events

6,792 miles walked by drummers (or thereabouts)

Brought Carnival colour to
28
towns and city centres

International work

We continue to collaborate and learn from the richness of diverse artists and art forms from around the world. We cherish the vibrant contribution of artists from every culture and background and we strive to honour cultural heritage in our work. During the period of 2021-2023, we enjoyed several adventures...

2023 CROATIA

Seven of our very best robot-clad percussion performers headed to Croatia as part of the Špancirfest in Varaždin to share some blistering beats in the heatwave streets. Three of our performers were Future Leaders alumni from our youth leadership programme.



2023 GHANA

Thirteen of the team including artists, musicians, dancers, and full time staff spent two weeks in Ghana exploring the organisation's vision, business planning, and their own creative practice. There were also opportunities to deepen cultural understanding which is integral to Global Grooves' work.

2021 PORTUGAL

Global Grooves attended WOMEX (the world-renowned Worldwide Music Expo) in Porto, invited as part of the 2021 cohort with Manchester Music City. The event is one of the most international and culturally diverse music meetings in the world and the biggest conference of the global music scene.

'The team development days were amazing, it was great to see that everyone was heard, ideas were shared and new skills learned. It was my first time ever to play a drum!' Ciara, former Arts Administrator

Team development trip to Ghana



Spotlight on projects we delivered

YOUNG PEOPLE

- We delivered 2 cohorts of our Future Leaders youth leadership programme (80 young people).
- We supported 15 early career artists into paid employment.
- Our production 'A Sharing of Gifts' presented at The Queen's Jubilee Pageant was produced and directed by 2 Future Leaders alumni, and featured 95 other performers under the age of 25.
- Cotton Carnival (HAZ Hi Street Fest National programme) in 2023, produced and directed by 2 Future Leaders alumni.
- Collaboration with a Future Leader on an audio visual project in 2022 exploring the development of LX controlled LEDs installed in robot costumes.
- Arts By the Sea in 2022 – emerging costume/makeup crew shadowed and supported our professional team who later completed our youth leadership programme.
- Future Leaders performed as part of our international touring teams in Croatia.
- Future Leaders also took part in an international study trip to Ghana.
- Vale Sounds project 2021.



Percussion class at Future Leaders

ARTISTS

We held 20 different masterclasses and creative workshops including:

- 4 hand drumming courses.
- 4 film screenings with workshops.
- 3 strands of weekly Carnival training in percussion, dance, and melody through our Bloco project.
- 2 cross-arts courses (percussion, dance, melody) leading to 3 large-scale Carnival productions (The Queen's Jubilee Pageant 'A Sharing of Gifts' and 'Cotton Carnival').
- 2 dance masterclasses with Adriano Oliveira and Adriana Rosso.
- 1 percussion and voice workshop with Guga Santos.
- 1 percussion masterclass with the Bossas Tour — Mestre Maurão, JP Courtney, Gabriel Lopes.
- 1 puppetry course with Andrew Kim.
- 1 melody and percussion composition masterclass with Sefo Kanuteh.
- Weekly Batukada Academy music classes.



COMMUNITIES

We've worked on projects with 12+ partner organisations in our community including:

- A Team
- Coder Dojo Stalybridge
- Dipak Dristi
- Emmaus Mossley
- Health and Wellbeing College Ashton
- Incredible Edible Mossley
- Khush Amdid
- Micklehurst Residents Association
- Mossley Heritage Society
- Mossley Litterbugs
- Phantasmagoria
- West African Development



PRODUCTIONS

116 puppets and outdoor creations made, including:

- 50 flags
- 20 dancer costumes
- 20 percussionist costumes
- 8 rainbow robots
- 4 Carnival queens; Spirit of Courage, Kaya, Nana Buruku, and Sofiya
- 4 banners
- 3 backpack fans
- 2 mill worker puppets, Maude and Charlie
- 2 peacocks
- 1 mountain hare
- 1 holy cow called Nandi
- 1 space goat called Cyclone



LIVE MUSIC

We have hosted 38 live music and cinema events attracting audiences of 4,275.

Artists included:

Mr. Wilson's Second Liners

Riognach Connolly and Honeyfeet

Renegade Brass Band

Sefo Kanuteh

Baked A La Ska

Agbeko

Kyla Brox

Rajasthan Heritage Brass Band

Loose Articles

Suntou Susso

Gaspar Nali

John Smith

Katherine Priddy

Jasdeep Singh

Beans On Toast

Hackney Colliery Brass Band

and many more!



In and around The Vale

SUNDAY SESSIONS

*"It's been a pleasure to play and sing for little ones clutching egg shakers and moving their bodies to our music, with **their parents smiling on** and enjoying family time together at The Vale. We always hoped these monthly sessions would be an opportunity for families and music lovers to enjoy an accessible afternoon music experience, and **we're delighted to have welcomed so many people** to build this environment together in Mossley. Having **emerging young musicians** playing alongside established artists and guest performers has been a real highlight."*

Holly, house band musician



Sunday Sessions percussionist

OUR SPACE

*“Our Space Garden is a **friendly gardening community**. On Saturday mornings, **people come together to build something beautiful**, to bring life to industrial landscapes and to build **a community of hope for the natural future of our neighbourhoods and world**. One of the best things about our Saturday mornings are the people. Together we have learned about reusing and recycling. **We’ve grown our own food, harvested it, and then learned and swapped recipes, and traditions, about how best to use the produce**. We have come together to share traditions and stories about agriculture and enjoy celebrating them together.*

***Children now play in places that were once empty and neglected concrete areas**, but now contain pollinator gardens that they have designed and created themselves. Mothers have told me they are happy on a Saturday morning to see their **children making mud pies and scented mixtures**, that their young people come home with soil in their shoes and smiles on the faces. **We love what we have built here and we love to see other people enjoying it too.**”*

Jayne, Our Space facilitator



CRAFTY SATURDAYS

*“Crafty Saturdays is a warm welcoming space where families can come and enjoy making different crafts each week that they can take home with them. The weekly sessions introduce new materials and skills such as **clay, printing, sewing, collage, painting and model making**. It is an **absolute delight to see children and their adults play**, express themselves using their imaginations and creativity with no distractions. **It brings a real joy to see a child develop their skills** over the time they spend at Crafty Saturdays and their **genuine surprise** that they are capable of making something really good. It is also a **space for adults to have a brew**, relax whilst giving their children freedom to get messy. It is, I am thrilled to say, somewhere **people are happily returning week on week**.”*

Martha, Crafty Saturdays facilitator

COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE FUND

*“We engaged a range of participants from our local communities, from **gardeners, Town and Borough Councillors, engineers, to students and IT consultants**. Local groups such as **Saddleworth Community Hydro** and **Mossley Litterbugs** worked with us to share knowledge and expertise which was invaluable. We explored **renewable and digital crossover** as **Stalybridge Coderdojo** got involved to engage young coders in coding for good, learning about **Raspberry Pi** open source energy monitoring, an application of coding with **sustainable benefits**. We’ve found new links and knowledge sharing with every group we’ve engaged with and a **hugely positive will to engage** and do more around renewable energy. **Thinking sustainably has become an embedded practice through this project** and is leading to **greater and better environmental strategy** for The Vale in the years to come.”*

Amelia, project lead

SUSTAIN SOCIAL

*“Each week we’ve opened up our studio for people to drop in, and we’ve offered some facilitated sessions. **Mostly it’s about creating a warm welcome for people to spend some time here and create something** or bring their own project from home to do with other humans and a brew. We’ve seen people **having a laugh together**, or sitting quietly observing, but **everyone can find their own way of being in the space**”.*

Jane, Community Engagement Lead at Global Grooves



Upcycling workshop at The Vale

Partnership working

We have hosted 12 partner organisations at The Vale including:

- Kyla Brox band
- Cabasa CIC
- Bangdrum CIC
- DrumJam
- WI
- Stone Carvers
- Full Stilt
- Juba do Leão
- Mossley Ukulele Group
- Knights of The Vale
- Abney Orchestra
- Jubacana

Supported by 22 funders within 26 grants including:

- ACE NPO
- GMCA
- Transport for Greater Manchester
- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Jigsaw Foundation
- Film Hub North
- Foyle Foundation
- UK Youth Grant
- Youth Music
- Sports England
- Robin Estill Fund
- Power to Change
- Small Business Covid-19 Recovery Grant

- Action Together, Community Wellbeing Fund
- Forever Manchester
- UKRI/Young Foundation
- Action Together – Use Your Energy
- The Cooperative
- TMBC Winter Pressures Fund
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- Saddleworth Hydro
- WEA



A network of creativity and passion

We're delighted to have such a passionate, energetic team behind our work at Global Grooves and The Vale.

*What I really love about my job is that I get to work with people that create all day and everyday.. **a kaleidoscopic melting pot of artistic talent** that encapsulates all. I treasure the fact that I'm given the opportunity to engage with and promote a music programme that reflects this.*

The sense of purpose this gives me is truly fulfilling** and has a positive impact on my daily life. I love that I get to put **twirling acrobats suspended from a bridge accompanied by a pianist** on a white grand piano in the pouring rain in the middle of Stockport... **good for the soul!

Johnny, programming manager (The Vale)

*I get to meet **genuinely lovely people**, who have a smile for the world and pass it on. **I'm lucky to meet people from different backgrounds**, people who are working to make things better and they do it with **such grace and so little fuss**.*

*Recently a group couldn't visualise how great their final piece would be. Not only was it **visually stunning** it meant so much to them. One person said, in that piece, I see my story, **I see the connection to my country and background**, everyone sees it."*

Jane, community engagement lead



*"I would probably say my fave part of the role I do at GG is when we've been working towards a large community event and the culmination of all the hard work and prep happens and you see **the spectacle we create on the street**, the child who wasn't super engaged at the beginning of the creative workshop but **by the end they absolutely loved the piece they created and now there sharing it with the world** on the streets. It's those unexpected moments of shared joy that are **really moving and unforgettable**.*

*Recently whilst out at an event in Bolton performing our Ukrainian puppet Sofiya, I had a lovely moment with a mother and her little girl, **I overheard she was called Sofiya, so told her 'that's amazing she had the same name as this giant Sofiya' and explained 'She's Ukrainian'** to which the mother replied, **'so am I and I used to dress in traditional dress like this and dance when I was a child in Ukraine, before I moved over to England'**. All while little Sofiya's face was beaming with amazement, these kind of interactions although fleeting I think **they have a lot of deep significance for people and communities and spread a lot of Joy.**"*

Lizzie, visual artist



Environmental Sustainability Impact

Formed a staff and freelance Environmental Sustainability working group

75% of full time staff Carbon Literacy Trained + 5 freelance team

Increased biodiversity and green space through 'Our Space' gardening project.

Programmed environmentally focused activities eg crafting, gardening, theatre and film

Introduced a Supplier Policy for ethical, local suppliers

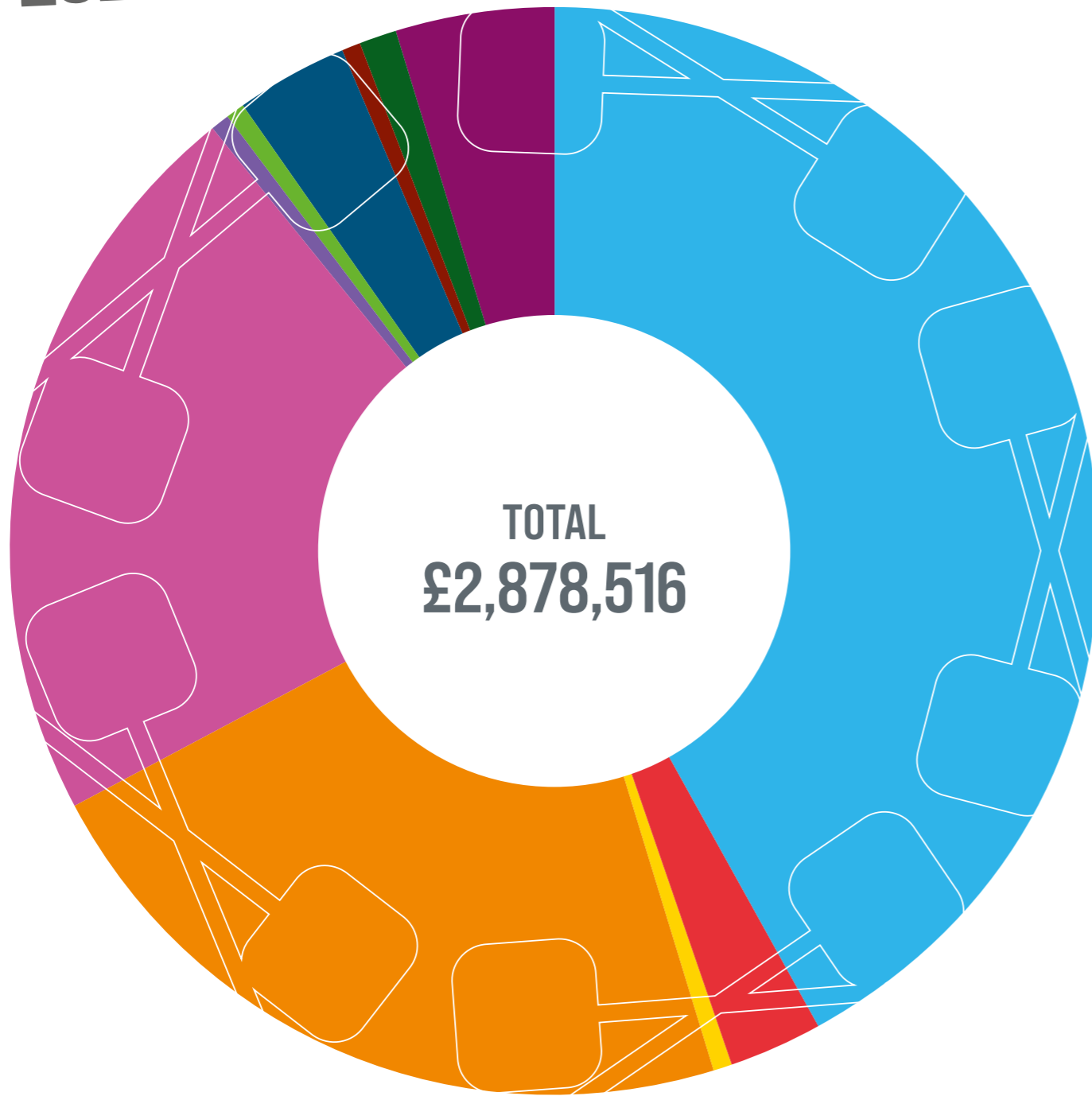
Joined GMAST (Greater Manchester Arts Sustainability Team)

Installed new tech for area specific, live energy monitoring for improved efficiency at The Vale.

The Vale received a grant from UKRI/ Young Foundation for a community research project to co-create a community micro hydro generator in the stream at The Vale.

Finance

2021-2023



- PUBLIC GRANTS AWARDED**
£1,508,407
- OTHER RESTRICTED INCOME**
£97,206
- ADMISSIONS**
£26,082
- COMMISSIONS**
£785,426
- DONATIONS**
£785,426
- INTERNATIONAL**
£18,540
- EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES**
£17,972
- SPONSORSHIP**
£120,000
- VENUE HIRE**
£26,645
- PRODUCT SALES (INC MERCH AND BAR)**
£36,707
- PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT AND OTHER***
£163,750


PHOTOGRAPHERS


Arts by the Sea and Hotshot Creative
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Christian Dyson
Greg Wolstenholme
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Lightpool – Dragon Creative
Pama Pageant
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Rochdale Borough Council
Sam Orchard
The Bridge / Richard Tymon
And our mysterious photographer friend in Croatia!

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