



**SIGHT
RESEARCH
UK**

Sight Research UK

**A Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Audited Financial Statements and Report
Year Ending 30 June 2023**

Registered Charity Number: 1156134

Sight Research UK

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Charity number	1156134
Registered office and operational address	Redwood House Great Park Road Bradley Stoke Bristol BS32 4QW
Vice Presidents	Professor John Armitage OBE Professor Andrew Lotery MD FCROphth Professor John Marshall MBE Lady Wills
Trustees	Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows: Mr Simon Bowker Treasurer Dr Dolores Conroy Dr John Cottrell MA FCA resigned 31 March 2023 Mr Robert Drewett DL resigned 31 March 2023 Mr Clive Hetherington appointed 16 August 2023 Mr Philip Jackson Vice Chair Dr Richard Lee Mrs Carol Mayo Chair Mr Adam Ross MB ChB Mr John Swarbrick appointed 16 August 2023
Research Advisory Board (RAB)	Professor Sobha Sivaprasad DM, FRCOphth, FRCS (Chair, resigned 31 May 2023) Professor Catherine Bowes Rickman PhD Professor Matthew Campbell PhD, FTCD Professor Tim Curtis PhD, FTSP Professor John Greenwood PhD FRCPATH Professor Robyn H. Guymer AM, MBBS, PhD, FRANZCO, FAHMS Dr Pirro Hysi MD, PhD Dr Hari Jayaram MA, BMBCh, MSc, PhD FRCOphth, FRCSEd Professor Glen Jeffery DPhil Professor Keith Martin BM, BCh, DM, MRCP, FRCOphth Professor Reinhold Medina MD, PhD Professor James Morgan MA, DPhil, BM, BCh, FRCOphth Dr J. Arjuna Ratnayaka PhD Dr Marta Ugarte DPhil, FRCOphth, MFCI Dr Patrick Yu Wai Man BMedSci, MBBS, PhD, FRCPATH, FRCOphth

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Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Seed Panel Dr Jennifer Dewing BSc (Hons), MRes, PhD
Dr Hannah Dunbar BSc, MCOptom PhD
Mr Michael Gilhooley MB PhD FRCOphth
Dr Philippa Harding PhD
Dr Liying Low MBChB (Hons), PhD, FRCOphth
Dr Naseeb Kaur Malhi BMedSc, PhD
Dr Ben Mead FHEA, BSc, MRes, PhD
Dr Mike Powner PhD

Principal bankers CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JQ

Investment managers Evelyn Partners
Portwall Place
Portwall Lane
Bristol
BS1 6NA

Auditors Godfrey Wilson Limited
Chartered accountants and statutory auditors
5th Floor Mariner House
62 Prince Street
Bristol
BS1 4QD

Sight Research UK

Chair's report

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Introduction

The Trustees are deeply grateful to all the donors who have supported the charity over the last year. Their support continues to be vital to our work and we could not achieve any of our goals without their generosity and loyalty.

The 2022-23 financial year has been one of much change and much planning. The charity succeeded in making a number of large savings, thus enabling us to end the year with a small surplus. We did not see the income growth planned for this financial year due to a number of larger projects being put on hold whilst we awaited the arrival of the new CEO and the recruitment of two new positions within the team. We look forward to starting these projects in the 2023-24 financial year.

Our income was unfortunately lower than that in 2021-22, in part due to factors beyond the organisation's control. The knock-on effect of COVID-19 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine continues to make the fundraising environment difficult, with much competition for every pound. However, we are pleased to have been able to show profit for the year and create a firm foundation within the team to enable us to go forward and deliver on our plans.

On the grant making front, we undertook our second grant round in our translational research strategy and saw some rewards from acting on our learnings from the first round in 2021-22. While we continue to be on a learning curve as to how to best deploy our funding in line with our new Research Strategy, we now have convincing evidence of not only the viability of a funding scheme focused on translational research, but of the firm promise that it holds for providing tangible new solutions for patients.

Harnessing our new research strategy

Our donors trust us to spend their money to achieve the outcome they hope for the most – bringing forward an end to sight loss and blindness. To ensure that we work towards this end goal, in 2021 we launched our new research funding strategy, refocusing our funding to support projects that have the highest likelihood of making a tangible difference to patients in the shortest time possible.

Our funding will act as a catalyst to help researchers leverage further significant funding from statutory sources or industry to make that crucial leap from scientific discoveries in the laboratory to potential new treatments in the clinic.

This year saw the second grant call for our Translational Research Award, putting our new research funding strategy into practice once again, with the help of our Research Advisory Board (RAB). Following a rigorous scientific review process, the Trustees, on the recommendation of the RAB, decided to allocate funding to two translational projects. Unfortunately, one of these projects was unable to go ahead due to unforeseen circumstances. It was agreed that this was still a positive outcome as it demonstrated the ability to attract applications of the right quality and "Translational Readiness Level". The remaining project selected for funding poses a potentially cost effective and non-invasive treatment solution for a common cause of sight loss and holds real potential for future patient benefit.

We were encouraged by this increased number of high-quality applications and awards. We would like to continue to grow these numbers to ensure we can have maximum impact through future grant rounds. We are very grateful to the peer reviewers and our RAB for their help and advice in this matter.

Sight Research UK

Chair's report

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Governance

This year a fourth Trustee subcommittee was created: the People and Governance Subcommittee. This will sit alongside the existing three subcommittees and, through its biannual meetings, will further support dynamic and effective management of organisational matters. The subcommittees meet separately to the full Board to discuss issues in their respective areas and make recommendations to the Board at quarterly Board meetings.

March 2023 marked the end of two long and highly valued relationships for the Board of Sight Research UK, as we bade farewell to John Cotterell and Robert Drewett, both of whom had completed 3 full terms on the Board and indeed been involved for many years prior to this. Their passion for the organisation and years of commitment have, without doubt, contributed to the successful growth and change experienced by the charity and we are immensely grateful to them both for all that they have done for Sight Research UK.

With two Trustees stepping down, the Board held a number of productive conversations to ensure that recruitment of future Trustees fulfilled any immediate needs and addressed any gaps in skillset and diversity. It was agreed that for the first time the Board would use an external recruitment consultancy to aid the search for candidates and ensure maximum possible visibility for the roles. The Board hope to have completed this process before autumn 2023.

We also added to our Research Advisory Board (RAB) this year, with three new members. These additions will greatly support our ability to make unbiased and experienced decisions in our grant-making rounds and we are immensely grateful for their involvement.

This year also saw Professor Sobha Sivaprasad come to the end of her term as the Chair of the RAB (formerly Scientific Advisory Committee) and we would like to express our sincere thanks to her for the dedication and experience which she brought to this role. We are delighted that the RAB's previous Vice-Chair, Arjuna Ratnayaka, will be taking over as Interim Chair for the 2023-24 financial year, and we are currently in the process of sourcing a new Chair for the RAB from 2024-25.

Income

This year income was down across all funding streams, including legacies and this is addressed in the fundraising section of the Trustee report. We ended the year with an income of £389,668, down 53% from £825,818 in 2021-22. This was, in part, due to several planned activities being put on hold but it also highlights the continued harsh fundraising climate which remains, coupled with the unpredictability of legacy income. However, we were grateful to receive some unexpected legacy funding towards the end of the Financial Year which helped to ensure we ended the year on a firm footing.

We also received a further governmental grant this year through the Medical Research Council's Charity Support Fund for Early-Career Researchers. This award helped with the funding of one of the PhD students supported by Sight Research UK.

Sight Research UK

Chair's report

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Reserves

The Charities Aid Foundation's (CAF) UK Giving Report 2023 shows that donation levels in 2022 followed a similar pattern to 2021, except for certain months where donation levels were higher, likely due to the response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The overall level of participation in charitable and civic-minded activities in 2022 (84%) is broadly consistent with 2021 (83%) but has not returned to pre-pandemic levels (88% in 2019). Add to this the cost-of-living crisis and in total, a quarter (24%) of people reported they had made, or were considering making, changes to their charitable

Given this volatile fundraising environment, coupled with our continued over-reliance on often unpredictable legacy income, the Trustees remain cautious with regards to reserves.

A new Reserves Policy was ratified by the Board in August 2023, and this is set out in the report of the Trustees on pg. 14.

Expenditure

During the year, the charity paid out ongoing research grants for a total of £190,760 and made new grant commitments for a total of £163,061.

Grant expenditure was lower than anticipated as we refine our research strategy and the application process for our new grant rounds. The Research Advisory Board (RAB) and the Trustees felt that two applications to our Translational Research Award combined strong science with a strong strategic fit and were keen not to compromise on either of these areas to ensure clarity around our new areas of funding for future applicants. Unfortunately, one of these projects was unable to go ahead due to unforeseen circumstances. We continue to build on our strategy and refine our grant rounds to ensure maximum visibility and encourage participation. We hope to increase grant expenditure over the next 12 to 24 months.

As always, we are focused on ensuring that the organisation is well run, and that it is an outstanding steward of the funds donated by our supporters to advance eye research. In our non-charitable expenditure, we remain vigilant in our procurement, ensuring value for money is paramount in choosing external suppliers.

Our 5-year average return on investment (ROI) has dropped for a second consecutive year, having gone from 1:4.3 (2021-22) to 1:3.9. This is due to greater staffing costs as the organisation grows but decreased income levels as a result of reduced fundraising activities in 2022-23 whilst we awaited our new CEO. This is an expected and temporary shift following the Trustees' agreement to 'invest to grow' in 2021-22. In the same vein, our 5-year average cost to raise a pound (CTRP) has seen a slight increase from 2021-22, now sitting at 35p for every pound.

Sight Research UK

Chair's report

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Leadership change

Following the departure of the previous CEO in June 2022, Charlotte Parkin joined Sight Research UK as CEO in November 2022. She brings with her a background in fundraising across the Health and Higher Education sectors, and we look forward to supporting her in the delivery of the organisation's new Research Strategy. The Board remain grateful to the team for their consistent commitment and high-quality performance.

Summary

Eye diseases are the leading cause (82%) of sight loss among people who are registered blind or partially sighted. Yet although 20% of people will experience sight loss or blindness in their lifetime, only around 1.5% of public research funding is spent on eye disease. This is equivalent to just 0.8% of the annual cost of the NHS (National Health Service) and just 0.1% of the total UK economic cost of vision problems. It remains the case that without breakthroughs in research, the number of people with sight loss is predicted to double to over 4 million by 2050.

The five largest UK eye charities provide vital support and advice to blind and partially sighted people, but do not currently fund research into sight-threatening disease. It is therefore imperative that Sight Research UK does all in their power to raise awareness of the critical need for investment in eye research, and to encourage increased levels of support. The Trustees demonstrated this through their increased investment in the staffing of Sight Research UK in 2023, with the recruitment of a Charity Administrator and a Marketing and Communications Manager. It is hoped that this investment will grow our profile, influence and impact, and support our desired income growth plan, enabling more research and more breakthroughs.

Carol M E Mayo

Carol Mayo
Chair of Trustees
Sight Research UK

Sight Research UK

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 30 June 2023

The Trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 30 June 2023. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the constitution, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Appointment of trustees

Following the governance review in 2020-21, the Board has continued to strengthen its process and procedures to increase effectiveness and efficiency, make the most of the skills that each Trustee contributes to the charity, and support the operational team.

To date, the Trustees have been recruited on a word of mouth basis, taking into account any necessary skillsets required. In 2023 the Board undertook to replace two outgoing Trustees and used this as an opportunity to explore a more formalised recruitment approach. A recruitment consultancy was enlisted to support the search for candidates, helping to spread the net as wide as possible. Following a shortlisting process, candidates were interviewed and preferred candidates offered roles. If the Board approves the candidate and the candidate is willing to serve, then they are appointed. The Board will continue to adapt the recruitment process as necessary, depending on the scenario.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The charity is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales under registration number 1156134 and governed by its constitution dated 1 April 2014.

To maximise focus and adequately support the operational team on specific issues, we have created four subcommittees:

- Research;
- Finance;
- Income Generation; and
- People and Governance.

Each group is constituted of at least two of the eight Trustees currently serving on the Board, and they have become an invaluable tool to debate specific issues in detail and inform the decision making of the Board as a whole.

We continue to use the same method for the re-appointment of Trustees whose term of office has expired but who are eligible and willing to serve for another term. The Trustee in question submits a re-appointment form in which they state the contribution made to date, what motivates them to be a Trustee and how they see themselves further contributing to the charity's development and success in the future. The Board votes on the candidature in an anonymous online vote. This opportunity for reflection on the part of the candidate, and an unpressured, private vote, gives everyone the chance to thoughtfully evaluate the motivations and contribution of the Trustee seeking reappointment, and for the Board to assess whether it has the right balance of skill and commitment in all its members. This process continues to work well.

Sight Research UK

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Trustee induction and training

The induction of new Trustees is provided by the Chief Executive who briefs them on their legal responsibilities under charity law, Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, the content of the charity's governing document, the vision and strategy for the organisation, the business plan, operating budget, and current financial status of the charity. Occasional training is provided to the Board as a group or individually when a need is identified.

Organisation

The Board of Trustees comprises a minimum of three and a maximum of twelve members. The Board normally meets quarterly and is quorate for making decisions with a minimum of three members present. At its meetings the Board reviews financial performance, the management of research grants and fundraising, and exposure to risk. The day-to-day management of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive. All grant-making decisions are made by the Board collectively. The Board approves an annual operating budget and measures operational performance against this. Significant expenditure outside the budget must be authorised by the Board on presentation of a business plan.

Membership of professional bodies

The charity is a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities and is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and the Information Commissioner's Office. The charity seeks to always abide by these organisations' principles of best practice.

Related parties

Trustees are required to maintain a register of interests and, when the charity considers purchasing goods or services from a company in which a Trustee has an interest or making grants to institutions where the Trustee is employed, that Trustee withdraws from any discussion on the awarding of the contract or research grant and the value of any contract or research grant subsequently awarded is disclosed in these accounts.

Pay policy for senior staff

The remuneration of the Chief Executive is agreed annually by the Board of Trustees. The charity directly employs 4.6 FTE staff. Their pay is reviewed annually and an inflationary pay award is discussed and agreed, when affordable, by the Board of Trustees.

Objectives and activities

- The purpose of the charity is for research to find effective treatment and prevention options for all vision conditions affecting children and adults, and thereby bring forward the day when sight loss and blindness are a thing of the past. We invest in world class research that aims to accelerate the translation of scientific discoveries in the laboratory to new treatments for patients in the clinic; and
- The charity aims to fund the most scientifically rigorous applications demonstrating the potential for delivering impact as soon as possible. Each year the trustees allocate funding according to funds available and based on recommendations from the RAB and the Seed Panel.

Sight Research UK

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 30 June 2023

In shaping the charity's objectives for the year and planning its activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance Public benefit: running a charity (PB2). The charity's mission is the relief of sickness and the promotion of good health for the public benefit by funding and supporting research into the causes and treatment of vision conditions and blindness, and publishing and disseminating the useful results thereof.

The charity aims to raise as much money as possible for investment in the best vision research applications received during its grant calls for the Translational Award (annual) and the Seed Award (annual). The charity promotes its grant calls as widely as possible to attract a broad range of grant applications both nationally and across all vision conditions, from which it can select the best for funding. Funding decisions are aided by external peer review assessment, and by the expert advice of the charity's independent, volunteer Research Advisory Board or Seed Award Panel.

Research grant funding

- The aim of the charity is to prevent sight loss and blindness by investing in research into diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of any vision condition;
- The charity is a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) and abides by the AMRC's principles of best practice in peer review when prioritising which research applications demonstrate the best scientific merit and likelihood of patient benefit. These principles include the use of an independent Research Advisory Board and Seed Award Panel which make recommendations to the Board of Trustees regarding the most promising research applications. The Research Advisory Board (RAB) and Seed Award Panel are volunteer boards comprising national and international experts in the vision research field and are wholly independent from the charity's Board of Trustees;
- RAB play an instrumental role in the charity's grant application review and provide expert advice to our Board of Trustees regarding research funding matters, in particular for our Translational Research Award;
- The Seed Award Panel exists to review Seed Award applications and advise the Board of Trustees on Seed Award funding matters;
- New members of RAB were appointed in 2022-23 to ensure the RAB could make Quorum at any given meeting, taking into account potential conflicts, and thus effectively support the new focus of our research funding; and
- The Seed Award Panel was appointed in 2022-23 to allow for the first of our new Seed Award grant rounds to be run in the year. The panel currently comprises 8 members.

Volunteers

- The charity is grateful to the individuals serving on the Board of Trustees, the Research Advisory Board and the Seed Panel, as well as to dozens of external peer reviewers. The charity would like to express its thanks for the support of its Vice-Presidents.

Achievements and performance

The Trustees measure the charity's performance against its charitable objectives by assessing:

- The quality of outcomes from previously funded research as measured by:
 - The annual and final reports submitted by grant holders;
 - The publications record of grant holders; and
 - The further funding leveraged by grant holders to progress their research.
- The amount of money invested each year by the organisation in vision research;
- The quality of the research applications funded in the current year; and
- Performance against budget and the wider income generation plan.

Sight Research UK

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 30 June 2023

In February and March 2023, Sight Research UK ran its annual Researchfish (research reporting platform) submission call to help measure and track outcomes of previously funded research for up to 5 years after the grant end date. This process is repeated annually and will provide valuable long-term feedback on the impact of our research funding, allowing better evaluation of funding schemes and supporting fundraising activities for further research projects.

During the year, the charity paid out ongoing research grants for a total of £190,760 and made new grant commitments for a total of £163,061.

This year we were able to build on the lessons learnt in our first Translational Research Award in 2021-22, which was the first test of our new research strategy. This provided useful feedback which helped us to re-calibrate our offering to better position our funding schemes going forward. That being said, we continue to learn through delivery and our key learnings from this second grant round included:

- We need to continue to find further ways to advertise the availability of our grant rounds to relevant clinicians and researchers in the field; and
- We need to consider the potential of applications holding possible commercialisation benefits and the organisation's appetite for this.

From the Translational Research Award applications submitted in 2022-23, two were felt to combine a strong level of science with a clear fit to our research strategy, both being translational projects with clearly identified pathways to patient benefit. Whilst it is unfortunate that one of these grants was unable to proceed, we view the round as a success, demonstrating a growing ability to attract greater numbers of applications at the appropriate scientific level. Given there was once again a lower grant spend than anticipated this year, we will be looking to make significantly more new grant commitments in 2023-24.

In order to reduce the time burden on our RAB members, a separate Seed Award Panel was created to review applications to our new Seed Award grant rounds, for which the first round took place in 2022-23. The Seed Award Panel is a volunteer board comprising eight national and international experts in the vision research field and is wholly independent from the charity's Board of Trustees. Learnings from running this first Seed Award round have helped us to refine how this award review process works, with the primary outcome being:

- The Seed Panel will meet to discuss applications together rather than submitting separate reviews. The hope is that this will provide clearer scoring and recommendations for consideration by the Board of Trustees.

Investment policy and performance

The Trustees delegate the investment of specified funds to professional investment managers and agree a set of investment objectives which are reviewed annually at the January Board meeting.

The investment objective of the charity is to seek to produce the optimum total return from its investment portfolio, so that the real value of the assets is maintained and enhanced over the long term, by investing in a diversified portfolio of suitable investments.

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Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 30 June 2023

This year the Investment Policy was reconsidered in November 2022. The annual Investment Policy review saw the Board agree once again to maintain the current investment policy which sets targets of:

- The long-term inflation-linked target return is CPI + 3% pa, to be considered over a 5-year rolling period; and
- The portfolio is to generate a minimum spendable income equivalent to 3.0% of the capital value of the portfolio per annum.

The portfolio contains a balance between assets intended to maximise the predictability of returns, and assets with greater potential for growth.

In consultation with our investment manager, the Board took the opportunity to develop the organisation's approach to ethical investing and update the investment policy to state that direct investment in companies generating more than 5% of their revenue from the production or sale in the following sectors are to be excluded:

- Tobacco;
- Adult entertainment;
- Gambling;
- Weapons, arms & munitions; and
- Animal testing (except accredited companies which will be exempt from this restriction. Accreditation is in reference to "Animal Welfare – AAALAC Accreditation (Positive Indicator)").

At the end of June, the portfolio was valued at £2,025,047. Income received on the portfolio equated to a 3% yield on the starting value in line with the target. Encouragingly the portfolio return since inception is marginally ahead of CPI+3%.

The return for the financial year ended 30th June 2023 was +2.02%, net of costs. Over the same timeframe the market benchmark returned +3.94%. Whilst it is disappointing to slightly lag the benchmark over the year, it should be noted that our performance over the year has generally tracked the industry average for charity portfolios adopting a medium level of risk. Approximately 10% of the portfolio continues to be ringfenced in cash, to provide an additional, easily accessible, source of funds should they be needed.

The Board continues to take a reasonably cautious approach to our investment portfolio, and it is not proposing any significant further change to the investment strategy in the near term. This is especially important at a time when income generation continues to prove challenging, and when the charity is focused on diversifying its income streams which will take the next 3-5 years to yield a more predictable and substantial income.

Fundraising

The Charities Act (Protection and Social Investment) 2016 came into effect in November 2016. It states new requirements for annual statements about fundraising and these are covered below:

The charity's approach to fundraising and whether a professional fundraiser or commercial participator was used:

The charity's approach to fundraising is that the objective of all fundraising expenditure will be to maximise its return on investment whilst maintaining the best possible relationships with all our supporters. We employ 1 member of fundraising staff (0.8 FTE) and we continue to focus on raising funds from charitable trusts and foundations, from individuals in lifetime giving and gifts in Wills.

Sight Research UK

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Details of any voluntary fundraising schemes or standards to which the charity, or anyone fundraising on its behalf, has subscribed and any incidents of non-compliance:

Sight Research UK is a member of the Fundraising Regulator. We pay its voluntary levy and abide by its regulations and principles of best practice. We are pleased to report that there were no incidents of non-compliance during the year.

Whether and how the charity monitored fundraising activities carried out on its behalf:

The Trustees agree an annual income and expenditure operating budget for the charity. The Chief Executive utilises the resources allowed in the expenditure budget aiming to deliver the income targets. For each component of this fundraising activity, an income target is set that will generate an acceptable return on the fundraising investment made. The Chief Executive reports on a quarterly basis to the Board on the performance of each fundraising activity relative to the budget. If a fundraising activity fails to generate its expected return on investment the Chief Executive recommends strategies to improve the return, curtail the activity or implement alternative fundraising solutions. In 2022-23, the Income Generation Subcommittee, which reports to the Board of Trustees, revisited the charity's fundraising and communication strategy and used this opportunity to re-evaluate the previously agreed areas of fundraising priority. Primarily there was a recognition that fundraising from Trusts and Foundations was becoming increasingly challenging due to unprecedented competition in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. During that period, many community fundraisers turned their attention to trusts and foundations while they were unable to generate income from events. Currently, the pressure on trusts and foundations remains significant. As such, it was agreed that now more than ever, the organisation must look to diversify its income streams with a focus on individual giving. The strategy continues to address the charity's dependence on volatile and unpredictable legacy income by growing income from other funding streams, so that SRUK can continue to fulfil its charitable activities and remain a going concern.

How many complaints the charity, or anyone acting on its behalf, has received about fundraising for the charity:

The charity has an agreed complaints procedure and staff are required to bring any complaint to the attention of the Chief Executive and to record the complaint on the charity's CRM database. We are pleased to report that no complaints were received about the charity's fundraising – or other activities – during the year.

What the charity has done to protect vulnerable people and others from: unreasonable intrusion on a person's privacy; unreasonably persistent approaches; or undue pressure to give:

Sight Research UK has approved policies for safeguarding and privacy. The charity's website includes our privacy policy and a commitment to ensuring that supporters are in control of how the charity communicates with them. In compliance with GDPR regulations, we are responsive to all communications preference updates, and act according to the wishes of the supporter. Furthermore, every e-newsletter or fundraising e-mail sent to our supporters carries an unsubscribe option.

Fundraising summary

In 2022-23, we saw an expected drop in income from general donations, from £78,974 in 2021-22 to £57,990.

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In a similar vein, income from charitable trusts and foundations fell slightly from £92,172 (2021-22) to £77,913, with many in the sector experiencing the same downturn in this income stream due to increasing pressure on trusts and foundations. Overall, our fundraising income for the year was £389,668. This income figure includes both cash and new pledges received during the year.

Our ambition in previous years was to focus on growing income from trusts and foundations. It has, however, proved immensely difficult in 2022-23 and whilst we will continue to explore ways to harness this income stream, we must also look for other ways to bolster our income. We will continue to look at diversifying our income channels and we are hopeful that funders will respond positively as we amass a strong catalogue of successful translational grants.

In February 2021, we were delighted when our IT support partners, Nebula IT, chose us as their Charity of the Year. During 2022-23 they completed their fundraising challenge on the charity's behalf, ending their year-long support with a grand fundraising total of £2,484.

The Big Give Christmas Challenge in 2022 was the charity's second year being involved with this individual giving campaign. Unfortunately, we did not see the success we had in the previous year, with a reduction in both the number of donors and the average gift amount, despite an increased spend in social media advertising. Through the event, we raised a total of £15,165 including gift aid, compared to £25,000 in the previous year (2021-22). We continue to learn and develop the way we plan this campaign and will be taking a new approach to evolving our campaign for Christmas 2023.

Following the Trustees' planned investment for 2022-23, June saw the recruitment of our first Marketing and Communications Manager which will without doubt help us to improve and increase our print and online communications, enabling us to build better relationships with existing supporters and to engage with new audiences, with a view to increasing our support from individual donors over time.

Financial review

The charity had an expected drop in overall income this year, with a total income of £389,668 (£825,818 in 2021-22). This is primarily due to a number of planned activities for income generation being put on hold during a period of leadership change. Paired with a drop in individual and Trust and Foundation income experienced by many organisations in the sector, this was not surprising. In 2022-23, we continued to experience the effect of the over reliance on legacy gifts, with this income stream making up 43% of our fundraising income for the year.

With new leadership in the form of our new Chief Executive, and two new members of staff in post, we now feel confidently focused on implementing our fundraising plans to bolster other income streams. We continue to take every step to moderate the costs of running the charity and whilst salary costs have seen a planned increase, these did not cause significant impact on the 2022-23 expenditure as staff were not in post for the full year. Realistically we would expect to see the full impact of our increased staff headcount play out in 2023-24. However, we remain committed to ensuring that growth is also tempered with a strong consideration for maintaining reasonable running costs.

Sight Research UK

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 30 June 2023

The post-COVID and post Brexit environment, together with an immensely unsettled global outlook and high cost of living, will continue to be a challenging one in which to develop our fundraising plans. While we will continue to be cautious stewards of our donors' support, we are keen to commit to new grants to support our new strategy and to invest in the growth of our income generation plans, pressing ahead to deliver our ambitious research strategy and bring forward the day when sight loss is a thing of the past.

Sources and application of funds

During the year, the charity paid out ongoing research grants for a total of £190,760 and made new grant commitments for a total of £163,061.

New grant spend was lower than anticipated this year, as we refine our grant rounds under our new research strategy. With the lessons and alterations to our grant round process that we are taking forward into next year, the most salient of which is an agreed desire to increase grant sizes, we are confident we will be looking to make significantly greater investment in grant commitments in 2023-24.

Risk management

The Trustees consider all the known risks confronting the charity every year and these risks are recorded in a risk register. The Trustees annually score all the risks on the register according to their likelihood of occurrence and their impact on the charity should they happen. This is managed according to the Charity Commission's guidance on risk in its publication CC26. In 2022-23 we have further developed our risk scoring and management procedures to ensure more regular visibility of the risks by the Board and more defined management strategies.

The Charity ensures any highly scored risks are monitored and mitigation strategies implemented with the support of the People and Governance Subcommittee. Any actions required are agreed by the Board. The charity continues to assess and develop its management of risk to ensure the organisation is as robustly protected as possible.

To underpin the management of organisational risk, in 2023 the charity developed a Serious Incident Reporting Policy and Procedure which is informed by the Charity Commission's guidance. This is complemented by an Incident Log registering all incidents, regardless of severity, which is to be reviewed at each quarterly Board meeting.

Reserves

In 2023 the Trustees agreed to restructure the charity's accounts to better futureproof the organisation and clarify external understanding of how Sight Research UK utilises and safeguards its funds. It is hoped that this will provide clarity for potential funders and will address two of the organisation's main priorities: ensuring continuity and growth in research spending and focussing on organisational development.

The Trustees have therefore approved a new Designated Fund called the Impact Protection Fund to hold reserves at the £1 million level. This level was agreed in 2020 and is deemed to be an appropriate amount to sustain one year of research funding and one year of charity operation should income generation fall significantly below forecasts. The objective is to ensure stability and continuity of our work in the event that the charity needs to respond to such a situation. The Designated Impact Protection Fund will remain at the £1 million level and only be utilised on the authorisation of the trustees.

Sight Research UK

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 30 June 2023

The previously created Designated Strategic Research Fund continues to support the charity's mission to fund pioneering research by enabling the organisation to underwrite research projects at the time of commitment and allow them to start as soon as possible.

The General Funds will support the core running costs of the organisation as well as our strategic ambition to diversify our income streams and expand our impact. The fund protects the charity as it works to grow its unrestricted funding pipeline. All new unrestricted income raised by the charity is first posted to this fund. Should any surplus occur, the trustees can advise at Financial Year End on whether they wish to make a transfer from General Funds into the Strategic Research Fund to increase the research underwriting funding balance.

As a result, our Financial Statements show our Unrestricted funds categorised by the 3 types explained above with the following balances at 30 June 2023:

- Designated Impact Protection Fund (£1,000,000);
- Designated Strategic Research Fund (£760,588); and
- General Funds (£400,000).

Expenditure on research grants is always conducted to ensure the best and most impactful return on investment, as evaluated by our scientific experts on the Research Advisory Board and Seed Panel. Our current levels of reserves are higher than we anticipate they will be in the medium-term and are due to the protective position we adopted during the Covid-19 crisis to restrict expenditure, combined with the implementation phase of our Translational Research strategy which is in a period of gearing up. The charity is maturing its financial planning by moving to 3-year forecasting for income and expenditure which includes our objective to accelerate spending on grants, where high-quality bids are received that meet our funding criteria. The outcome will be that that reserves levels will be brought down in a controlled manner. Tactically, this is due to improvements made to promoting our Translational Research Award to the research community, coupled with Trustees' decision to increase the standard grant value to £250,000. These changes are indicative of our ambition to utilise funds responsibly and effectively.

Going concern

As the charity holds reserves of £1,000,000 in its designated Impact Protection Fund, and unrestricted, general funds of £400,000 and, in addition to its investments, a cash balance of £667,139, the Trustees consider that the charity has sufficient reserves to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved.

Plans for future periods

In 2021, the charity launched its new research funding strategy and developed a new income generation strategy to support the necessary trajectory that will help to mitigate the unpredictability of legacy income in coming years and enable us to invest in more pioneering research.

Given the scale of our ambition, growing the capacity of our team of expert staff was a necessary investment in order to implement the income generation plans. We have now been able to recruit two new members of staff to support these plans and propel the fundraising activities which were put on hold at the end of 2021-22. These plans focus on broadening our supporter base to mitigate the identified risk of being over-reliant on a narrow range of income streams. We look forward to delivering on these plans over the next 36 months.

Sight Research UK

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Account Standards, including Financial Report Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the charity for the year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the charity are not required to contribute to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The Trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The Trustees have no beneficial interests in the charity.

Auditors

Godfrey Wilson Ltd were re-appointed as the charity's auditors during the year and have expressed their willingness to act in that capacity.

Approved by the Trustees on 1 November 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Carol M E Mayo

Carol Mayo - Chair

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Sight Research UK

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Sight Research UK (the 'charity') for the year ended 30 June 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and the related notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 30 June 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Sight Research UK

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- sufficient accounting records have not been kept;
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement set out in the Trustees' report, the Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The procedures we carried out and the extent to which they are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, are detailed below:

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Sight Research UK

(1) We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, and assessed the risk of non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Throughout the audit, we remained alert to possible indications of non-compliance.

(2) We reviewed the charity's policies and procedures in relation to:

- Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations, and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risk of fraud, and whether they were aware of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
- Designing and implementing internal controls to mitigate the risk of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud.

(3) We inspected the minutes of Trustee meetings.

(4) We enquired about any non-routine communication with regulators and reviewed any reports made to them.

(5) We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and assessed their compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

(6) We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected transactions or balances that may indicate a risk of material fraud or error.

(7) We assessed the risk of fraud through management override of controls and carried out procedures to address this risk. Our procedures included:

- Testing the appropriateness of journal entries;
- Assessing judgements and accounting estimates for potential bias;
- Reviewing related party transactions; and
- Testing transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. Irregularities that arise due to fraud can be even harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent auditors' report

To the members of

Sight Research UK

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and the regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's Trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity's Trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Date: 1 November 2023

GODFREY WILSON LIMITED

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors
5th Floor Mariner House
62 Prince Street
Bristol
BS1 4QD

Sight Research UK

Statement of financial activities

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	120,777	207,040	327,817	767,660
Investments		-	60,217	60,217	56,974
Other trading activities		-	1,634	1,634	1,184
Total income		<u>120,777</u>	<u>268,891</u>	389,668	825,818
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	187,920	187,920	188,101
Charitable activities		30,339	138,098	168,437	225,929
Total expenditure	5	<u>30,339</u>	<u>326,018</u>	356,357	414,030
Net income / (expenditure) before gains / (losses)		90,438	(57,127)	33,311	411,788
Net gains on investments	12	-	(10,011)	(10,011)	(125,179)
Net income / (expenditure)		90,438	(67,138)	23,300	286,609
Transfers between funds		(66,291)	66,291	-	-
Net movement in funds	8	24,147	(847)	23,300	286,609
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		61,464	2,161,435	2,222,899	1,936,290
Total funds carried forward		<u>85,611</u>	<u>2,160,588</u>	2,246,199	2,222,899

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17 to the accounts.

Sight Research UK

Balance sheet

As at 30 June 2023

	Note	£	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets				
Intangible fixed assets	11		6,624	9,936
Investments	12		2,025,047	<u>2,043,905</u>
			2,031,671	2,053,841
Current assets				
Debtors	13	68,413		117,799
Cash at bank and in hand		667,139		<u>636,248</u>
		735,552		754,047
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	14	(395,510)		<u>(338,096)</u>
Net current assets				
			340,042	<u>415,951</u>
Total assets less current liabilities				
			2,371,713	2,469,792
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than 1 year	15		(125,514)	<u>(246,893)</u>
Net assets				
	16		2,246,199	<u>2,222,899</u>
Funds				
Restricted funds	17		85,611	61,464
Unrestricted funds				
Designated funds			1,760,588	1,161,435
General funds			400,000	<u>1,000,000</u>
Total charity funds				
			2,246,199	<u>2,222,899</u>

Approved by the Trustees on 1 November 2023 and signed on their behalf by

Carol M E Mayo

Carol Mayo - Chair

Sight Research UK

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash used in operating activities:		
Net movement in funds	23,300	286,609
Adjustments for:		
Amortisation of intangible fixed assets	3,312	3,312
Losses on investments	10,011	125,179
Dividends and interest from investments	(60,217)	(56,974)
Decrease in debtors	49,386	50
Decrease in creditors	<u>(63,965)</u>	<u>(247,565)</u>
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	<u>(38,173)</u>	<u>110,611</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Dividends and interest from investments	60,217	56,974
Proceeds from the sale of investments	385,267	405,582
Purchase of investments	(375,243)	(369,454)
Increase in cash held within investment portfolio	<u>(1,177)</u>	<u>(27,837)</u>
Net cash provided by investing activities	<u>69,064</u>	<u>65,265</u>
Increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year	30,891	175,876
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	<u>636,248</u>	<u>460,372</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	<u>667,139</u>	<u>636,248</u>

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

Sight Research UK

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Sight Research UK meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider appropriate as the charity holds £1,000,000 in its designated Impact Protection Fund, and unrestricted, general Funds of £400,000 and, in addition to its investments, a cash balance of £667,139. The Trustees consider that the charity has sufficient reserves to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from the date on which these financial statements are approved and have no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

Sight Research UK

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

e) Investment income

Interest on funds held on deposit, dividends and other investment income are included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity. This is normally upon notification of the amounts paid or payable by the bank or investment managers.

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

Transfers from restricted funds to unrestricted funds represent income received during the year which carries donor imposed conditions to be expended upon specific projects. The cost of these projects has been recognised through the Statement of Financial Activities in a prior period when the grant commitment was originally made and therefore when the income is received it is transferred to unrestricted funds to follow the treatment of the expenditure when it was recognised.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

h) Grants payable

Grants payable are charged in the year in which the offer is conveyed to the recipient except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised as expenditure when the conditions attached have been fulfilled. Grants offered subject to conditions at the year end are noted as commitment but are not accrued as expenditure.

i) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs comprise all costs involving the public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on the basis of staff time spent on each activity:

	2023	2022
Raising funds	79%	84%
Charitable activities	21%	16%

Sight Research UK

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

j) Intangible fixed assets

Amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The amortisation rates in use are as follows:

Software and website	5 years straight line
----------------------	-----------------------

k) Listed investments

Investments in quoted shares, traded bonds and similar investments are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value (their market value). The statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluations and disposals throughout the year.

l) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

m) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

n) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

o) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

p) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are described below.

Amortisation

As described in note 1j to the financial statements, amortisation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset over its expected useful life.

Sight Research UK

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Grants payable due in less than and after one year

The value of grants payable due in less one year and after one year has been estimated on a straight line basis over the period which each grant is expected to be paid out. However, as grants are paid out on the basis of invoices received for costs incurred by grantees, results may differ.

2. Prior period comparatives: statement of financial activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	324,278	443,382	767,660
Investments	-	56,974	56,974
Other trading activities	-	1,184	1,184
Total income	324,278	501,540	825,818
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	-	188,101	188,101
Charitable activities	110,535	115,394	225,929
Total expenditure	110,535	303,495	414,030
Net income before gains / (losses)	213,743	198,045	411,788
Net losses on investments	-	(125,179)	(125,179)
Net income	213,743	72,866	286,609
Transfers between funds	(218,358)	218,358	-
Net movement in funds	(4,615)	291,224	286,609

Sight Research UK

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

3. Donations and legacies

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2023 Total £
Donations (including Gift Aid)	100,651	52,754	153,405
Legacies	20,126	149,286	169,412
Gifts in kind*	-	5,000	5,000
Total donations and legacies	120,777	207,040	327,817

* Gifts in kind are represented by:

Advertising and PR	-	5,000	5,000
Total gifts in kind	-	5,000	5,000

Prior period comparative:

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2022 Total £
Donations (including Gift Aid)	249,278	67,138	316,416
Legacies	75,000	371,244	446,244
Gifts in kind*	-	5,000	5,000
Total donations and legacies	324,278	443,382	767,660

* Gifts in kind are represented by:

Advertising and PR	-	5,000	5,000
Total gifts in kind	-	5,000	5,000

4. Government grants

In the year, the charity received government grants, defined as funding from the Medical Research Council, to fund charitable activities during the year. The total value of such grants in the period ending 30 June 2023 was £17,502 (2022: £145,270). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants in either year.

Sight Research UK

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

5. Expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2023 Total £
Fundraising	18,526	-	-	18,526
Publicity	3,181	-	-	3,181
Research grants (Note 6)	-	126,226	-	126,226
Salary costs (Note 9)	67,256	18,263	50,972	136,491
Printing, postage and stationery	-	-	1,843	1,843
Rent	-	-	15,505	15,505
Office costs	-	-	33,024	33,024
Audit and accountancy	-	-	9,220	9,220
Professional fees	-	-	162	162
Investment management fees	8,867	-	-	8,867
Amortisation	-	-	3,312	3,312
Sub-total	97,830	144,489	114,038	356,357
Allocation of support and governance costs	90,090	23,948	(114,038)	-
Total expenditure	187,920	168,437	-	356,357
Prior period comparative				
	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2022 Total £
Fundraising	21,081	-	-	21,081
Publicity	2,732	-	-	2,732
Research grants (Note 6)	-	196,036	-	196,036
Salary costs (Note 9)	76,537	14,939	36,504	127,980
Printing, postage and stationery	-	-	4,225	4,225
Rent	-	-	13,766	13,766
Office costs	-	-	25,510	25,510
Audit and accountancy	-	-	9,084	9,084
Professional fees	-	-	1,063	1,063
Investment management fees	9,241	-	-	9,241
Amortisation	-	-	3,312	3,312
Sub-total	109,591	210,975	93,464	414,030
Allocation of support and governance costs	78,510	14,954	(93,464)	-
Total expenditure	188,101	225,929	-	414,030

Total governance costs were £6,065 (2022: £4,916).

Sight Research UK

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

6. Grants payable to institutions

All grants were made for the purpose of carrying out research into the causes and treatment of diseases and disabilities of the eye and blindness and the prevention thereof. The amount payable and committed in the period for this period and future periods comprise the following:

	2023 No.	2023 £	2022 No.	2022 £
Research grants:				
University College London	2	68,138	-	-
University of Leicester	1	28,429	-	-
North West Anglia Foundation Trust	1	14,800	-	-
Ulster University	1	12,612	-	-
Moorfields Eye Hospital	2	25,384	-	-
University of Bristol	3	7,602	-	-
University of Southampton	1	4,732	1	70,000
Fight for Sight	1	1,364	-	-
University of Birmingham	-	-	1	150,000
University of Liverpool	-	-	1	5,000
		<u>163,061</u>		<u>225,000</u>
Total grants committed during the period		163,061		225,000
Grants overspent / (written back) from prior periods		<u>(36,835)</u>		<u>(28,964)</u>
Total grant expenditure		<u>126,226</u>		<u>196,036</u>

7. Grants commitments

	2023 £	2022 £
Grants payable to institutions:		
Grant commitments brought forward	574,810	826,023
Grants committed during the period	163,061	225,000
Grants paid during the period	(190,760)	(447,249)
Less: Overspent / (written back) grants from prior periods	<u>(36,835)</u>	<u>(28,964)</u>
Grant commitments carried forward	<u>510,276</u>	<u>574,810</u>

Sight Research UK

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

8. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Amortisation of intangible fixed assets	3,312	3,312
Operating lease payments	15,505	13,220
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	65	116
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT):		
▪ Statutory audit	5,000	4,000
▪ Other services	1,683	3,696

Trustees' reimbursed expenses relate to travel and subsistence for 1 trustee (2022: 1).

9. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Salaries and wages	124,293	114,807
Pensions	6,664	7,782
Social security costs	5,534	5,391
	136,491	127,980

No employee earned above £60,000 during the year (2022: none).

The key management staff of the charity comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive Officer Operations Manager and Fundraising Manager. The total employee benefits of key management staff during the period, including employer's social security and pension contributions were £70,655 (2022: £55,837).

The charity's employees took on more responsibility within the year and have therefore been included in the key management personnel disclosure. In the prior year this solely consisted of the CEO.

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
Average head count	3.3	3.0

10. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

11. Intangible fixed assets

	Software and website £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 July 2022 and at 30 June 2023	<u>16,560</u>	<u>16,560</u>
Amortisation		
At 1 July 2022	6,624	6,624
Charge for the year	<u>3,312</u>	<u>3,312</u>
At 30 June 2023	<u>9,936</u>	<u>9,936</u>
Net book value At 30 June 2023	<u><u>6,624</u></u>	<u><u>6,624</u></u>
At 1 July 2022	<u><u>9,936</u></u>	<u><u>9,936</u></u>

12. Investments

	2023 £	2022 £
Listed investments:		
Market value at 1 July 2022	2,043,905	2,177,375
Additions	375,243	369,454
Disposals proceeds	(385,267)	(405,582)
Movement in cash held by investment manager	1,177	27,837
Net gains / (losses)	<u>(10,011)</u>	<u>(125,179)</u>
Market value at 30 June 2023	<u><u>2,025,047</u></u>	<u><u>2,043,905</u></u>
Investments comprised:		
Listed investments	1,971,832	1,991,867
Cash held by investment manager pending reinvestment	<u>53,215</u>	<u>52,038</u>
Total	<u><u>2,025,047</u></u>	<u><u>2,043,905</u></u>

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

13. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other debtors	64,778	116,748
Prepayments	3,635	1,051
	68,413	117,799
Amount due after more than one year included above	-	22,490

14. Creditors : amounts due within 1 year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	891	1,763
Accruals	9,828	7,159
Grant commitments (Note 7)	384,762	327,917
Other creditors	29	1,257
	395,510	338,096

15. Creditors : amounts due after 1 year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Grant commitments (Note 7)	125,514	246,893

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

16. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	6,624	6,624
Investments	-	1,760,588	264,459	2,025,047
Current assets	85,611	-	649,941	735,552
Current liabilities	-	-	(395,510)	(395,510)
Long term liabilities	-	-	(125,514)	(125,514)
Net assets at 30 June 2023	<u>85,611</u>	<u>1,760,588</u>	<u>400,000</u>	<u>2,246,199</u>
Prior period comparative				
	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	9,936	9,936
Investments	-	1,161,435	882,470	2,043,905
Current assets	92,623	-	661,424	754,047
Current liabilities	(31,159)	-	(306,937)	(338,096)
Long term liabilities	-	-	(246,893)	(246,893)
Net assets at 30 June 2021	<u>61,464</u>	<u>1,161,435</u>	<u>1,000,000</u>	<u>2,222,899</u>

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

17. Movements in funds

	At 1 July 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains / losses £	Transfers between funds £	At 30 June 2023 £
Restricted funds						
Diabetic Retinopathy	32,199	430	-	-	-	32,629
Eye Cancer	-	-	316	-	-	316
Glaucoma	17,492	1,000	(14,800)	-	-	3,692
Inherited Retinal Dystrophies	100	-	-	-	-	100
Yorkshire Research Fund	400	-	-	-	-	400
Age Related Macular Degeneration Research	9,738	19,151	(14,970)	-	-	13,919
Inflammatory Eye Conditions	-	33,755	(885)	-	-	32,870
	1,535	-	-	-	-	1,535
Atan/Bristol - Insulin and Myopia	-	17,752	-	-	(17,752)	-
Ratnayaka/Southampton - AMD and Diet	-	48,599	-	-	(48,599)	-
Gene Therapy & Regenerative Medicine	-	90	-	-	60	150
Total restricted funds	61,464	120,777	(30,339)	-	(66,291)	85,611

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

17. Movements in funds (continued)

	At 1 July 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains / losses £	Transfers between funds £	At 30 June 2023 £
Total restricted funds (from previous page)	<u>61,464</u>	<u>120,777</u>	<u>(30,339)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(66,291)</u>	<u>85,611</u>
Unrestricted funds						
<i>Designated funds:</i>						
Impact Protection Fund	-	-	-	-	1,000,000	1,000,000
Strategic Research Fund	<u>1,161,435</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(103,531)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(297,316)</u>	<u>760,588</u>
<i>Total designated funds</i>	<u>1,161,435</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(103,531)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>702,684</u>	<u>1,760,588</u>
General funds	<u>1,000,000</u>	<u>268,891</u>	<u>(222,487)</u>	<u>(10,011)</u>	<u>(636,393)</u>	<u>400,000</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>2,161,435</u>	<u>268,891</u>	<u>(326,018)</u>	<u>(10,011)</u>	<u>66,291</u>	<u>2,160,588</u>
Total funds	<u><u>2,222,899</u></u>	<u><u>389,668</u></u>	<u><u>(356,357)</u></u>	<u><u>(10,011)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>2,246,199</u></u>

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

17. Movements in funds (continued)

Prior period comparative

	At 1 July 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains / losses £	Transfers between funds £	At 30 June 2022 £
Restricted funds						
Diabetic Retinopathy	32,129	70	-	-	-	32,199
Young/Cardiff – AMD and Diabetic Retinopathy	(9,604)	10,000	-	-	(396)	-
Eye Cancer	4,669	-	(4,669)	-	-	-
Glaucoma	17,492	-	-	-	-	17,492
Inherited Retinal Dystrophies	673	100	-	-	(673)	100
Seed Funding Appeal	11,375	-	-	-	(11,375)	-
Yorkshire Research Fund	400	-	-	-	-	400
Age Related Macular Degeneration Research	160	75,000	-	-	(65,422)	9,738
Inflammatory Eye Conditions	8,225	-	-	-	(8,225)	-
Proudlock/Leicester - Retinopathy of Prematurity	560	975	-	-	-	1,535
Medical Research Council Fund	-	2,192	-	-	(2,192)	-
Ratnayaka/Southampton - AMD and Diet	-	145,270	-	-	(145,270)	-
Rauz/Birmingham - Ocular Mucous Membrane Pemphigoid and Conjunctival Scarring	-	63,000	(70,000)	-	7,000	-
Osborne/Cambridge - Optimising gene carrying vectors in gene therapy	-	27,641	(35,866)	-	8,225	-
	-	30	-	-	(30)	-
Total restricted funds	66,079	324,278	(110,535)	-	(218,358)	61,464

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

17. Movements in funds (continued)

Prior period comparative

	At 1 July 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains / losses £	Transfers between funds £	At 30 June 2022 £
Total restricted funds (from previous page)	<u>66,079</u>	<u>324,278</u>	<u>(110,535)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(218,358)</u>	<u>61,464</u>
Unrestricted funds						
<i>Designated funds:</i>						
Strategic research fund	<u>808,589</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(113,827)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>466,673</u>	<u>1,161,435</u>
General funds	<u>1,061,622</u>	<u>501,540</u>	<u>(189,668)</u>	<u>(125,179)</u>	<u>(248,315)</u>	<u>1,000,000</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>1,870,211</u>	<u>501,540</u>	<u>(303,495)</u>	<u>(125,179)</u>	<u>218,358</u>	<u>2,161,435</u>
Total funds	<u><u>1,936,290</u></u>	<u><u>825,818</u></u>	<u><u>(414,030)</u></u>	<u><u>(125,179)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>2,222,899</u></u>

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

17. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

Diabetic Retinopathy	Donations given specifically to fund research into Diabetic Retinopathy.
Eye Cancer	Donations given specifically to fund research into Eye Cancer.
Glaucoma	Donations given specifically to fund research into Glaucoma.
Inherited Retinal Dystrophies	Donations given specifically to fund research into Inherited Retinal Dystrophies, of which retinitis pigmentosa is the most common.
Yorkshire Research Fund	Donations given specifically to fund research being carried out in the Yorkshire region.
Age Related Macular Degeneration	Donations given specifically to fund research into Age-Related Macular Degeneration.
Research	Donations given to fund research into any vision condition.
Inflammatory Eye Conditions	Donations given specifically to fund research into Inflammatory Eye Conditions.
Atan/Bristol - Insulin and Myopia	Funds raised to fund a three-year PhD studentship carrying out research into insulin signalling and myopia pathogenesis at University of Bristol, under the supervision of Dr Denize Atan.
Ratnayaka/Southampton - AMD and Diet	Funds raised to fund a three-year PhD studentship carrying out research into diet-induced disease pathways in AMD at the University of Southampton, under the supervision of Dr Arjuna Ratnayaka.
Gene Therapy & Regenerative Medicine	Donations given specifically to fund research into gene therapy and regenerative medicine as treatments for vision conditions.

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

17. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of designated funds

Impact Protection Fund

The charity holds an agreed level of reserves of £1 million, as laid out in the charity's reserves policy. This is deemed to be an appropriate amount to sustain one year of research funding and charity operation should income generation fall significantly below forecasts. The Impact Protection Fund will remain at the £1 million level and only be utilised on the authorisation of the trustees, should funding fall below a level conducive to the continuation of the charity's work.

Strategic Research Fund

The Strategic Research Fund supports the charity's mission to fund pioneering research by enabling the organisation to underwrite research projects at the time of commitment and allow them to start as soon as possible.

Transfers between funds

Transfers from restricted funds to unrestricted funds represent income received during the year which carries donor imposed conditions to be expended upon specific projects. The cost of these projects has been recognised through the Statement of Financial Activities in a prior period when the grant commitment was originally made and therefore when the income is received it is transferred to unrestricted funds to follow the treatment of the expenditure when it was recognised.

18. Financial instruments

	2023	2022
	£	£
Financial assets measured at fair value	<u>2,025,047</u>	<u>2,043,905</u>

Financial assets measured at fair value comprise listed investments.

19. Operating lease commitments

The charity had operating leases at the year end with total future minimum lease payments as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Amount falling due:		
Within 1 year	16,279	13,825
Within 1 - 5 years	<u>12,209</u>	<u>24,194</u>
	<u>28,488</u>	<u>38,019</u>

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Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

20. Contingent assets

There are some legacies which have been notified to the charity at 30 June 2023 for which the amount receivable cannot be ascertained. These financial statements include payments received on account but not any estimates for future amounts receivable. Indications are that the estimated value of these potential legacies is in the region of £170k (2022: £70k).

21. Related party transactions

Dolores Conroy and Richard Lee, trustees, are employees of University College London, and Richard Lee is also an employee of Moorfields Eye Hospital. Sight Research UK has committed to fund researchers at both institutions. At 31 June 2023 the total commitment outstanding to University College London was £68,138 (2022: £73,604), and to Moorfields Eye Hospital was £25,384 (2022: £nil). Two new grants were awarded to both University College London and Moorfields Eye Hospital during the year totalling £68,138 (2022: £nil awarded) and £25,384 (2022: £nil awarded), respectively. Given the close working relationship between University College London and Moorfields Eye Hospital, neither Trustee was involved in the decision process to award any of these grants.