

artsWOK

collaborative



Annual Report

Financial Year 2022/2023

(Year Ended 31 March 2023)

Developing Community Creatively

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Artist Hasyimah Harith from P7:ISMA engaging with elders from Montfort Care - GoodLife! Bedok during an Arts Workshop session for Both Sides, Now: *Mengukir Harapan (Carving Hope)*





Self-portrait by a workshop participant, as part of an Arts Workshop session for Both Sides, Now: Mengukir Harapan (Carving Hope)



Artist Dahlia Osman during an Arts Workshop session for Both Sides, Now: Mengukir Harapan (Carving Hope)

“Welcome to our Annual Report, which tells our 2022-2023 story. In this first chapter, learn more about ArtsWok Collaborative: what we do, what drives us, and meet each of us!

We were started in 2012 by our founders Ko Siew Huey and Ngiam Su-Lin. They noticed the fundamental issue of the poverty of relationships in society. At ArtsWok, we believe that human flourishing can only happen in the context of healthy connections with self, others, institutions and the environment.”



Organisation Information

ArtsWok Collaborative Limited ('ACL') was set up as a company limited by guarantee on 30.10.2014. It was registered as a Charity under the Charities Act on 29.09.2015, and recognised as an Institution of a Public Character (IPC) as on 1 October 2020 to 1 December 2023.

ACL has a Memorandum and Articles of Association as its governing instrument.

Unique Entity Number (UEN)

201432448C

Banker

Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation Limited

Registered Address

Goodman Arts Centre, 90 Goodman Road,
Blk B #03-07, S(439053)

Auditor

Tassure Asia LLP

Governing Board Members

Name	Designation	Occupation	Past Charity Board Appointments
Lee Hing Giap, Justin	Chairperson	Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies	Chairperson (Since 4 Nov 2014)
Ngiam Su-Lin	Vice-Chairperson	Executive Director, ArtsWok Collaborative Ltd	Vice-Chairperson (4 Nov 2014), Treasurer (4 Nov 2016), Vice-Chairperson (25 June 2018)
Ko Siew Huey	Board Member	Investor	Treasurer (4 Nov 2014), Vice-Chairperson (4 Nov 2016), Treasurer (25 June 2018)
Low Patsian @ Nuha Maya Low	Board Member	Vice-President, Inclusive Impact & Sustainability (Asia-Pacific), VISA	Vice-Treasurer (Since 4 Nov 2014)
Charlene Delia Jayamani Rajendran	Board Member	Assistant Professor, Visual & Perf. Arts, NIE-NTU	Since 4 Nov 2014

Vision, Mission, Values, Objectives

Our Vision

Inclusive communities that allow the full expression of human potential

Our Mission

To nurture thriving communities by harnessing the power of the arts to create dialogue, invite social participation and build bridges across difference. We pilot and produce innovative community-based projects through creative producing; build the arts-based community development field through capability development; as well as share and generate knowledge and practice through research and advocacy.

Our Values

1. **Collaboration:** Harnessing strengths and sharing resources through processes that foster mutual respect, shared decision-making, honesty and open communication.
2. **Empathy:** Connecting with others by maintaining an openness, suspending judgement and listening deeply.
3. **Creativity:** Permitting time and space to play, fail, imagine and experiment.
4. **Agency:** Recognising everyone has strengths and abilities to be agents of change and to be equipped to realise their potential.

Our Objectives

The objects of the Charity are as follows:

- To facilitate change by enabling communities to express identity, concerns and aspirations through the language of the arts.
- To work with multidisciplinary teams to design and implement arts-based civic engagement projects.
- To pilot innovative arts programmes in community settings.
- To convene a community of practice and to conduct networking and training.
- To conduct research and advocacy in the field of arts-based community development.

Organisation Structure

Board of Directors

Chairperson : Dr Justin Lee
Vice-Chairperson : Ngiam Su-Lin
Treasurer : Ko Siew Huey
Hon. Treasurer : Patsian Low
Member: Dr Charlene Rajendran

Executive Director

Ngiam Su-Lin
Business & Resource Development,
Programme Development,
Partnerships & Community Engagement,
Human Resource,
Finance

Director

Seah Sze Yunn
Strategic Planning & Management,
Capability Development,
Business & Resource Development,
Strategic Communication

Programme Manager

Angie Cheong
Programme Manager &
Administration,
Partnerships & Community
Engagement

Programme Executive

Durrah Anwar
Programme Execution & Administration,
Community Engagement

Intern

Programme
Assistance

Marketing Manager

(Joined in Mar 23)

Shawn Lim
Integrated Marketing
Management,
Audience Development &
Engagement

Content Creator

(Joined late Mar 23)

Chloe Chua
Marketing Communication,
Audience Engagement

Communication Manager

(Left in Feb 23; Position Suspended)

Kirin Heng
Marketing & Publicity,
Communication

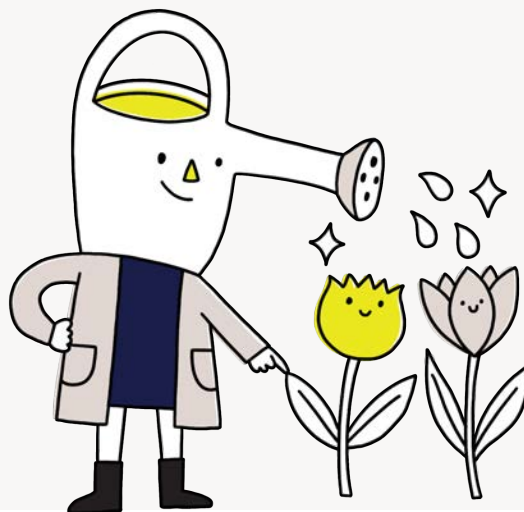
Intern

(left in Mar 23)

Business
Development
Assistance

We ended the financial year with a slightly expanded marketing and communication team, in recognition that more capacity is needed in this area to increase the visibility of our work, and engagement touch-points with our various audiences. This would help increase overall organisational impact, as well as contribute towards our sustainability.

At the same time, our Communication Manager who was with us for 4.5 years left the organisation towards the end of the FY to join another sector. Additionally, we converted the status of a trainee who was with us for a year under the YouthTech Traineeship Programme (NYC) into a full-time Programme Executive in November 2022.



Executive Director's Note

“It was so wonderful to be able to engage in-person, and in larger numbers with communities again after a few years of distancing and engaging online during the pandemic. This aspect of coming together, having conversations and intimacy from gathering physically in a common space is irreplaceable in terms of connection and building bonds. We managed to do this successfully with Both Sides, Now with our public engagement programme, ‘Lespaskan Sesalan (Release Your Regrets)’, as well as with the community of practice for arts-based community development through convening The Greenhouse Sessions #23. Overall, it has been a fruitful and reflective year, with changes still afoot given the developments in our society, and globally since the pandemic. This reflective spirit and process of transformation for ArtsWok which has been underway will continue as we turn 10 years old in 2023, in order to continue to be relevant and impactful.”

Ngiam Su-Lin, Executive Director of ArtsWok Collaborative



Year in Review

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Lepaskan Sesalan (Release Your Regrets) public engagement event 2022 as part of Both Sides, Now at Heartbeat@Bedok

Activities

Creative Producing

As creative producers, we bring together collaborators across different sectors to design and implement community-based arts projects, showcasing the possibilities of the arts to create positive social change. Both Sides, Now is a multidisciplinary arts engagement project co-presented with Drama Box in various communities since 2013 to create awareness and opportunities to have end-of-life conversations and planning.



Both Sides, Now

A dance performance, *Kembali* featuring elders from Montfort Care - GoodLife! Bedok as part of *Lepaskan Sesalan (Release Your Regrets)* public engagement event 2022 at Heartbeat@Bedok



An audience member participating in a facilitated conversation during *Lepaskan Sesalan (Release Your Regrets)* public engagement event 2022 at Heartbeat@Bedok



“Art in whatever form is such a universal language and a powerful tool. The exhibition got me thinking about how a family can be healed through this process, and how these adverse childhood experiences have impacted their faith, worldviews, self-worth, and everything and anything. I became more energised and empowered that this is another powerful tool to help my students, the women, and the families I am helping. We can help them change their narratives.”

Audience member who wrote to us after visiting the exhibition, of *life and legacy*, part of *Lepaskan Sesalan* public engagement

Both Sides, Now

The 2-year edition of Both Sides, Now with the Malay-Muslim community, *Mengukir Harapan* (Carving Hope) culminated with *Lepaskan Sesalan* (Release Your Regrets) public engagement at Heartbeat@Bedok in September 2022. This comprised an exhibition and guided tours, performances, participatory activities and talks by experts. There was a good audience turnout of more than 2600 audiences over the 4 days, with a lot of positive feedback received on the programmes and engagement. It continued to confirm our research findings in 2021 that having end-of-life conversations in the Malay-Muslim community is much needed, and the space to express grief surrounding loss and regrets.

The arts workshops leading up to *Lepaskan Sesalan* with community members, facilitated by visual artist Dahlia Osman and dance company, P7:1SMA were very well received with participants, with all of them hoping the workshops can continue. Being able to share their works with loved ones, and the public was a highlight for them, as well as the community that was built or strengthened with each other through the workshop process.



Artist Dahlia Osman guiding a community art-maker during an Arts Workshop session as part of Both Sides, Now: *Mengukir Harapan* (Carving Hope)



Both Sides, Now: Mengukir Harapan

When
2020-2023

Partners

Tote Board

Agency for
Integrated Care

ECCA Family
Foundation

GIC Pte. Ltd.

Montfort Care-
Goodlife! Bedok

Heartbeat@Bedok

National Library
Board

Another key group that has been developed through Both Sides, Now has been the volunteers, who are mostly Malay for this edition. They are an important asset for future work with the Malay community because of cultural specificities involved. In all, we have recruited and trained about 60 volunteers these 2 years with a significant number who are open to continuing and contributing in more ways to the project. This includes some volunteers from previous batches of the project who were invited to support *Lepaskan Sesalan*, especially the Mandarin or Chinese-dialect speaking audiences who attended.

The end of FY22/23 also marks the end of co-presenter and producer, Drama Box's involvement in Both Sides, Now, after a collaboration of 10 years. ArtsWok will thus continue presenting and producing this flagship programme on our own, and evolve it beyond large-scale public engagements that have been part of the project's methodology to date. Artistic Director of the project, Kok Heng Leun will also be stepping down from this role but will continue to work on the project in areas related to capability development.

We have also been laying the pieces for community engagement work post *Mengukir Harapan*, in the form of artist-in-residence programmes within different residential communities. A year-long pilot programme using arts and asset-based community development approaches to having end-of-life conversations, and building a supportive community on end-of-life issues will commence in FY23/24 in Yishun. Producing longer-term programmes within residential communities also provides us with the opportunity to further develop, hone and articulate arts-based approaches to community development work in Singapore.

[Both Sides, Now Website](#)

[Both Sides, Now Facebook](#)

[Both Sides, Now Instagram](#)

[Both Sides, Now YouTube](#)

Reach

More than 2600 audiences attended *Lepaskan Sesalan* public engagement from 21-24 Sept 2022 at Heartbeat@Bedok

More than 5000 audiences to date have watched the online variety show, *Kata-Kata Kita* (5-7 Nov 2021) public outreach programme

67 volunteers trained for public engagement with the Malay-Muslim community

21 participants over 2 groups in arts workshops facilitated by artists





Artist Hasyimah Harith from P7:1SMA engaging with elders from Montfort Care - GoodLife! Bedok during an Arts Workshop session

“The fact that grief is such a powerful emotion yet it is possible for us to unite together across culture and religion. ... it was eye-opening to see and learn about how the Malays and Muslims grieve in their unique ways, it was parallel to my own experiences (and) of others’ grief in other cultures and religion.”

Audience member who visited *Lepsakan Sesalan* public engagement

Capability Development

ArtsWok contributes towards capability development for practitioners in the field of arts-based community development. This is mainly in the form of 2 programmes – The Greenhouse Lab, action-learning and incubator programme on arts-based approaches to community engagement and development; as well as The Greenhouse Sessions, a community of practice that meets bi-annually to share practice and resources, network and explore potential collaborations. These programmes attract practitioners across sectors – arts, creative, community, social, health, urban planning etc., including policymakers and funders – interested in interdisciplinary work.



The Greenhouse Sessions



The Greenhouse Lab



The Greenhouse Gathering



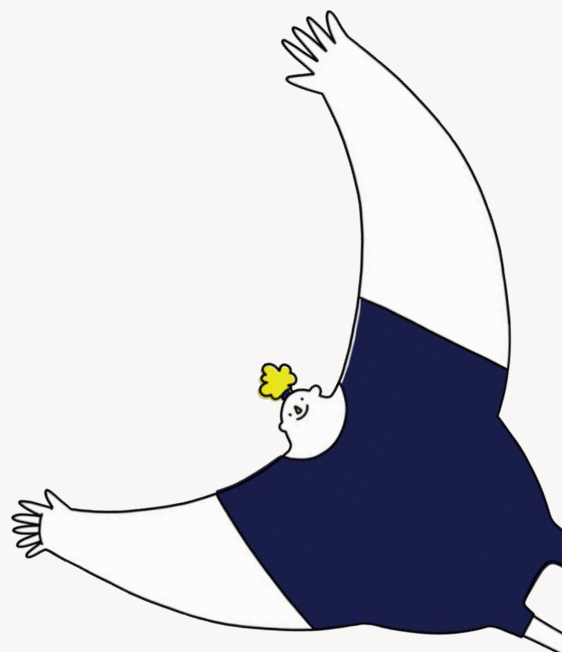
Participants engaged in a small group discussion during The Greenhouse Session #23



Participants engaged in a small group discussion during The Greenhouse Session #23

"It was insightful to hear from practitioners about the methodologies and mindsets they adopt in their work. The overlap between the practitioners despite diversity was comforting and eye opening."

Participant of
The Greenhouse Session #23



The Greenhouse Sessions

We held our 23rd community of practice (CoP) session in-person in March 2023 after meeting only in the online space for the past 3 years. It was an encouraging session which was over-subscribed, and with a good turnout of more than 30 practitioners on the day itself, of which about half were newcomers. We used the opportunity of 10 years of convening The Greenhouse Sessions (TGHS) to share findings from the CoP from 2013 onwards, from session reports shared after each session. This piece of research was conducted by a member of the CoP, Jerusha Tan, an arts producer who just completed her Masters in Arts Management.

The research findings provided the backdrop to the discussions by the CoP during the session, and will continue to feed other initiatives, such as the planning and content curation for our Learning Forum taking place in March 2024. Discussions by the CoP in facilitated smaller groups were also guided by the following questions:

What do you think is the greatest value of your community-engaged arts practice for the communities you work with?

What are some key areas of development that are important for your practice at this point in time, and why?

How has living through the recent pandemic affected the way you think about, and/or practice with communities through the arts?

What forms of support do you need for your ongoing work in the area of community-engaged arts?

Overall, the discussions were very rich and layered, with most participants for this session being from the arts sector. The findings from the discussion areas from TGHS#23 will be shared with the wider CoP in the form of a session report, as is usual practice. It will, together with the research report from convening TGHS since 2013 also inform our planning for ArtsWok's capability development work, in terms of focus areas and priorities.



When

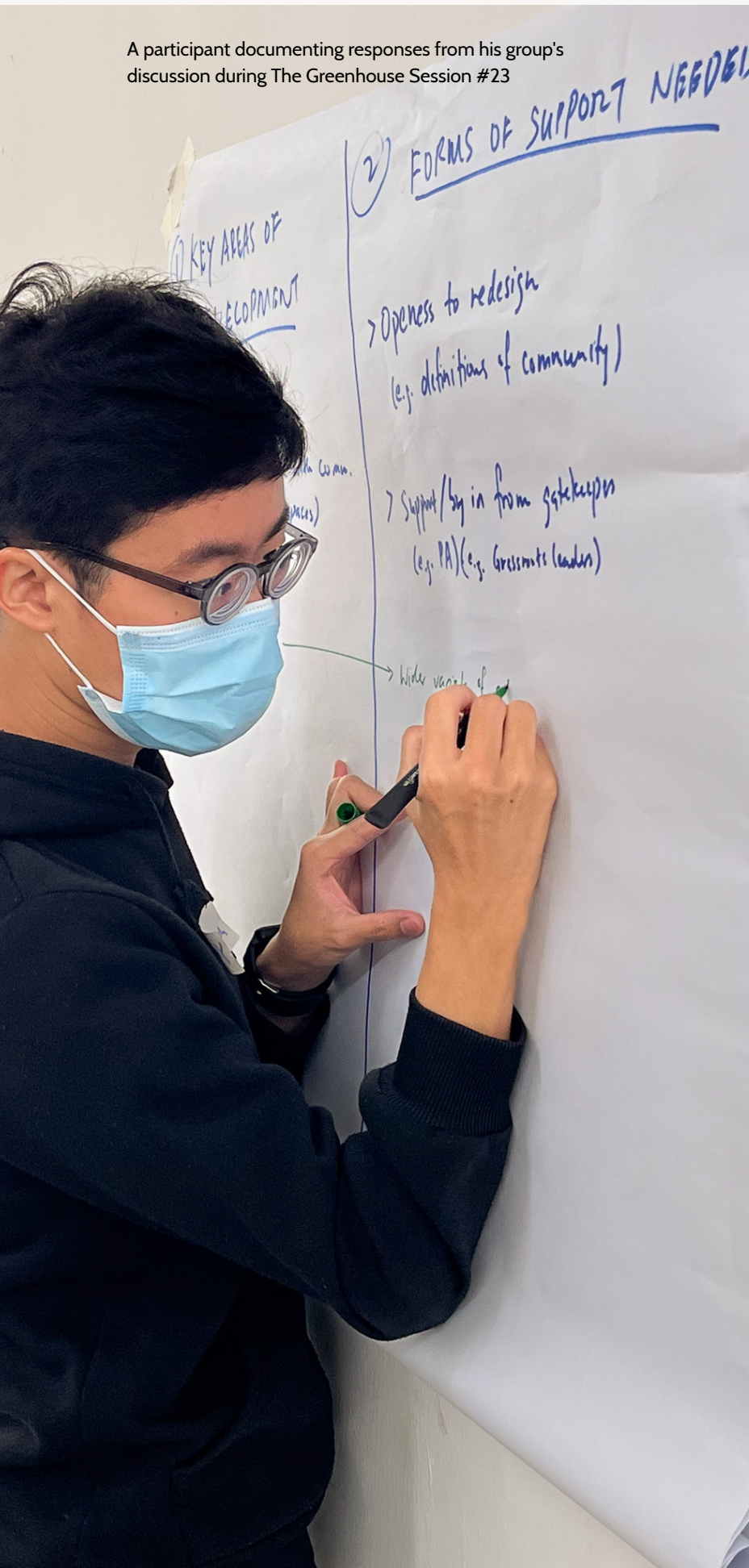
25 March 2023

Reach

32 participants

[The Greenhouse Sessions Webpage](#)

A participant documenting responses from his group's discussion during The Greenhouse Session #23



"It's easy to just network at an event or festival but this time round, what makes it different and better, is the fact that we hear about our issues collectively and from there seek out connections because we know how we can all work together, in one way or another."

Participant of
The Greenhouse Session #23

The Greenhouse Lab

Our action-learning programme, The Greenhouse Lab saw the end of the 2021 edition in early 2022, and was reported in the annual report for FY21/22. There are currently plans to revamp this capability development programme into more bite-sized workshops.

[The Greenhouse Lab Webpage](#)



When
June 2021 –
May 2022



The ArtsWok team with The Greenhouse Labbers, guest trainers, and *Thrive-Thru* participants

The Greenhouse Gathering

We launched The Greenhouse Gathering during the pandemic in 2021. The Gathering is positioned as more informal conversations on arts-based or socially engaged practices, and an open space for practitioners to initiate programmes, topics and discussions.

There was only one gathering organised during the year and held online. Featuring socially engaged arts practitioner, Han Xuemei who is the Co-Artistic Director of Drama Box, and a Young Artist Award recipient in 2022. Questions which framed her sharing included:

“How does one learn and navigate through the practices of socially engaged art?”

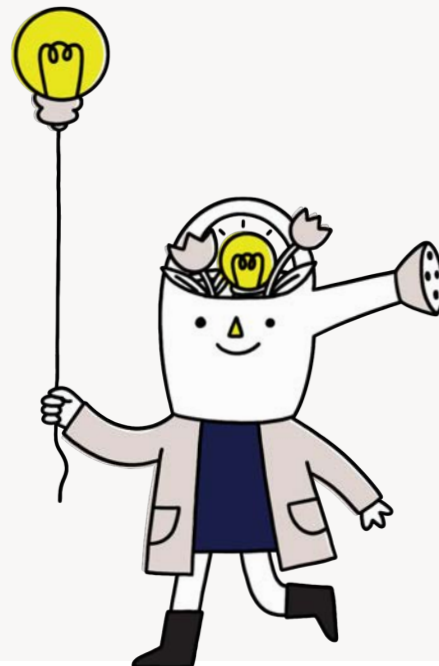
“How can artists marry social issues with their art form in reflexive and grounded ways?”

Participants who attended benefitted from an intimate and generous sharing, and dialogue with Xuemei.



When
21 May 2022

Reach
14 participants



Research and Advocacy

The publication of articles and case studies are our contribution to documenting and sharing practice in the field of arts-based community engagement and development, as well as thought leadership. They are largely distributed through our mailing list, including partners, funders and collaborators as well as social media. They are also hosted on our website, and available on some research portals.



Artist Hasyimah Harith from P7:ISMA engaging with elders from Montfort Care - GoodLife! Bedok during an Arts Workshop session



An elder from Montfort Care - GoodLife! Bedok rehearsing for dance performance, *Kembali* as part of *Lepaskan Sesalan (Release Your Regrets)* public engagement event 2022 at Heartbeat@Bedok

“An important part of our work is researching the field we are a part of: in turn, we also see our practice as research, and aim to constantly and critically reflect, document and engage with others on our work. Follow me to this chapter, to discover what we’ve learnt this year and documented for you!”



Articles

We published 5 full-length articles this year as part of our *Community Inspirations* series.

The first was written by Prof Thomas Kong from NUS Architecture on his social archiving project with Tsao Foundation in Whampoa. This was followed by an interview piece with Han Xuemei, socially engaged practitioner and new Co-Artistic Director of Drama Box.

The third article was written by ArtsWok on co-creation as a methodology in community-engaged arts and through the lens of our Greenhouse Lab programme. The interview format was adopted again for the fourth article, and this time with artist, academic and Arts and Health researcher, Michael Tan.

Exploring the Social Curating and Archiving Project
[Read Now](#)

On Being Human, and Challenging One's Boundaries When Working with Communities
[Read Now](#)

The Value of Co-Creation in Arts-Based Community Development
[Read Now](#)

The Greenhouse Labbers with youths who participated in *Thrive-Thru*, a project designed by the Labbers on youth mental well-being



The last article for the year was by artist, academic and researcher, Regina De Rozario on cultural competency and the arts where apart from conducting an extensive literature review, the writer also drew from the Creative Team's learnings from Both Sides, Now: *Mengukir Harapan*.

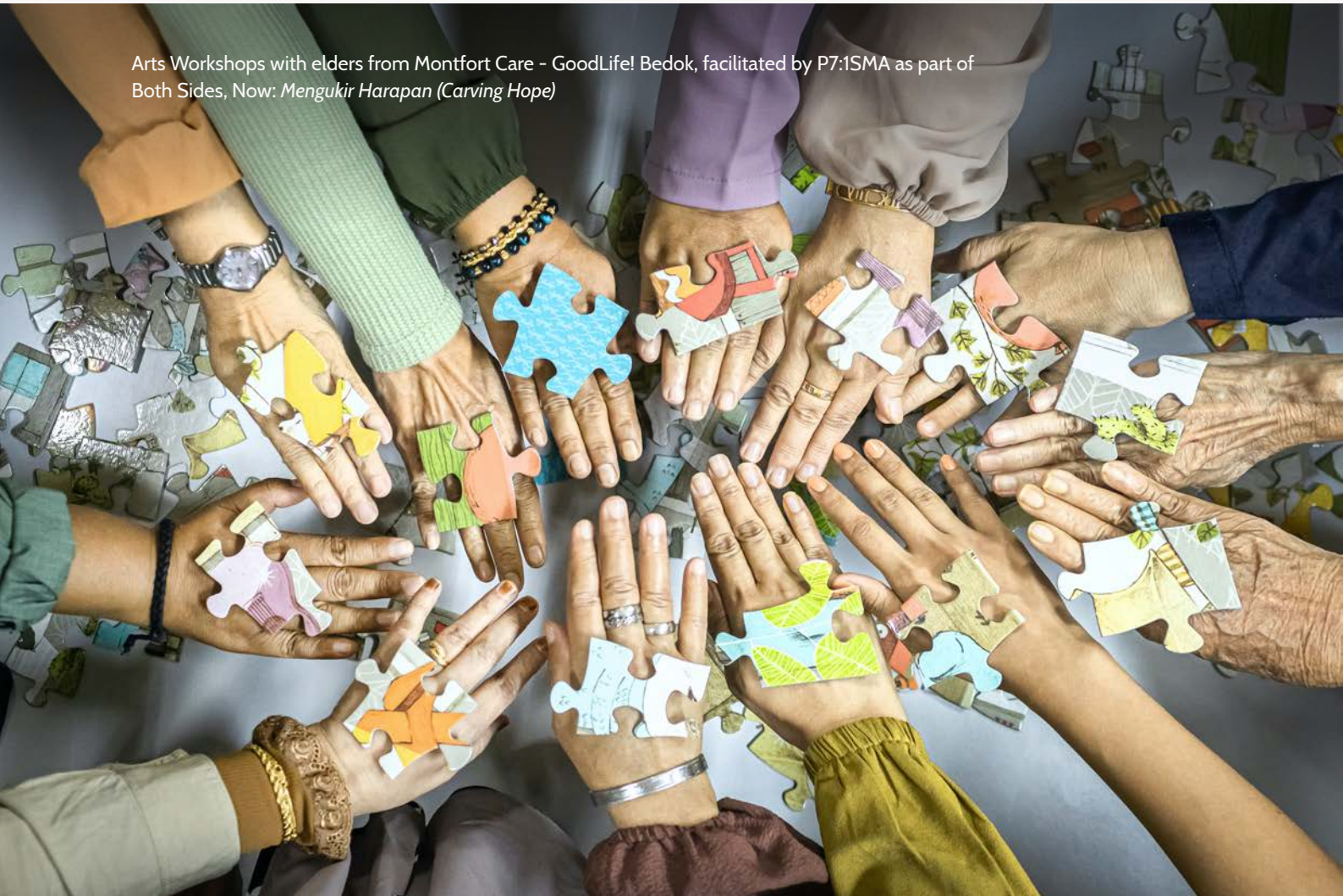
These articles continue our education and advocacy efforts to expand understanding and vocabulary around socially and community-engaged arts practice.

View all our articles [here](#).

**Arts and Health:
An Expanding
Field of Activism
to Foster a
Flourishing World**
[Read Now](#)

**Fostering Cultural
Competence
through the Arts**
[Read Now](#)

Arts Workshops with elders from Montfort Care - GoodLife! Bedok, facilitated by P7:ISMA as part of Both Sides, Now: *Mengukir Harapan (Carving Hope)*



Press and Media Coverage

Features of our activities this year

Berita Harian, 17 September 2022

['Lepaskan Sesalan' teroka isu akhir hayat](#)

The Straits Times, 22 September 2022

[Art in odd places and the artists who are breaking urban boundaries](#)

Bakchormeeboy, 28 October 2022

[Review: Both Sides, Now – 'Lepaskan Sesalan' by Drama Box and ArtsWok Collaborative](#)



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A volunteer conducting a guided tour of *of life and legacy* exhibition during *Lepaskan Sesalan (Release your Regrets)* public engagement event 2022 at Heartbeat@Bedok

Financial Review

Review of financial state and explanation of major financial transactions

A financial statement of ArtsWok Collaborative Limited was drawn up for the financial period of 1 Apr 2022 to 31 Mar 2023.

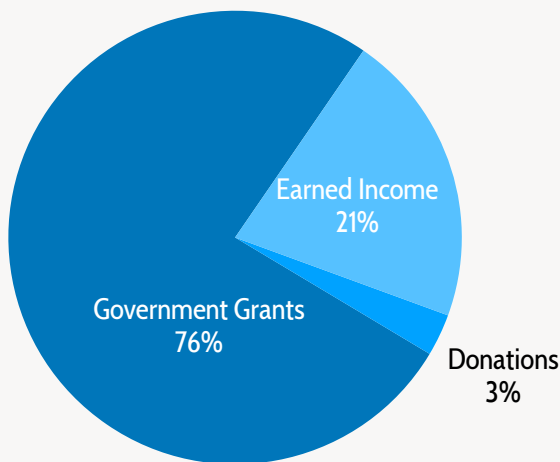
During this time, revenue from grants, donations, earned income and other sources totalled \$562,606. Total expenses for FY22/23 included Administrative Expenses of \$403,361, Finance Costs of \$268 and Programme Expenses of \$44,242. The financial year closed with a surplus of \$114,735. Together with a surplus from previous years of \$584,294 the financial standing of the Charity remains in healthy net surplus.

There are no major financial liabilities.

ArtsWok Collaborative Limited is supported by the National Arts Council's Major Company Scheme for the period of 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2024.

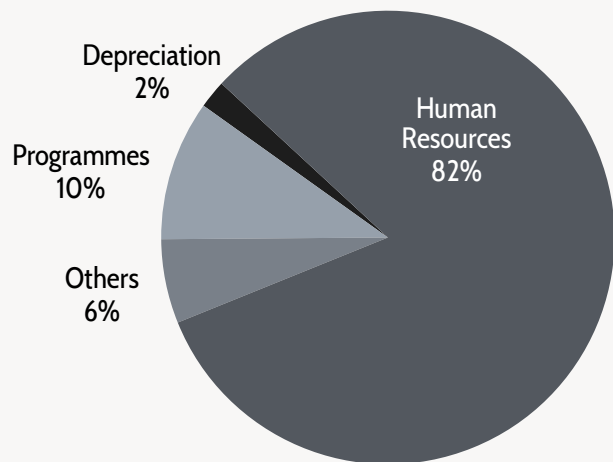
Summary Financial Performance

Principal Funding Sources



Total Income: \$562,606

Total Expenditure



Total Expenditure: \$447,871

Financial Statement

[Click here to download our audited financial statement for FY22/23](#)

Financial Plans for FY23/24

Fundraising plans include emerging a strategic roadmap on how to engage the diverse audiences of ArtsWok better, to increase opportunities for them to contribute towards, and support the organisation. This involves research on understanding these audiences better, and trialling some engagement approaches. This will be done via the Sector Transformation Fund from the National Arts Council that we successfully applied for.

As well, there will be efforts to more concertedly approach donors and sponsors to support the work of ArtsWok, leveraging on our track record for the past 10 years and impact made. There are also plans for a fundraising event, as well as our annual fundraising campaign. We will continue to tap on the Cultural Matching Fund to match donations received in FY22/23.

Our expenditure items would revolve around similar areas as before i.e. human resources, programme costs, overheads and administration, governance and accounting, fundraising and business development.



Governance

Role of the Governing Board

The Board's role is to provide strategic direction and oversight of ArtsWok Collaborative's programmes and objectives and to steer the charity towards fulfilling its vision and mission through good governance. As part of its role, the following matters require Board's approval:

- Approve budget for the financial year and monitor expenditure against budget;
- Review and approve financial statements;
- Regularly monitor the progress of the charity's programmes.

Term Limit of Board

To enable succession planning and steady renewal in the spirit of sustainability of the charity, the Board has a term limit of ten years. In particular, the Treasurer or Financial Committee Chairman (or equivalent) has a term limit of four years.

Board Meetings and Attendance

A total of 2 Board meetings and 1 AGM were held during the financial year with all 5 Board members being present for all meetings, except for Charlene Rajendran who was absent for 1 Board meeting.

Policies Adopted During the Financial Year

There were no new policies adopted during the financial year.

Disclosure of Remuneration and Benefits Received by Board Members

No Board members are remunerated for their services in the financial year.

Sub-Committees

Our Programmes Committee (2021-23) chaired by Charlene Rajendran who is a Board member met once during the financial year, with all present except for Ng Bee Leng and Dr Wong Sweet Fun.

The committee comprises –

1. A/P Thomas Kong, Department of Architecture, NUS
2. A/P Ijlal Naqvi, Associate Professor of Sociology, SMU
3. Ng Bee Leng, Director of Community Devt. and Corporate Support, AMKFSC Community Services
4. Ng Xi Jie, Socially Engaged Artist
5. Dr Wong Sweet Fun, Clinical Director, Population Health & Community Transformation

Disclosure of Remuneration of Three Highest Paid Staff

Disclosure of annual remuneration of three highest paid staff who each receives between \$100,000 - \$200,000: 1 staff who also serves as a Board member of the charity.

The charity has no paid staff, who are close members of the family of the Executive Head or Board members, who each receives total remuneration of more than \$50,000 during the year.

Conflict of Interest Policy

All Board members and staff are required to comply with the charity's conflict of interest policy.

The Board has put in place documented procedures for Board members and staff to declare actual or potential conflicts of interests on a regular and need-to basis.

Board members also abstain and do not participate in decision-making on matters where they have a conflict of interest.

Future Plans & Commitments

We will continue our innovation and transformation efforts for the organisation which started during the peak of the pandemic, and now making sense of changes in our ecosystem, and larger society as we continue to emerge from the pandemic.

For one, manpower for arts organisations has been negatively impacted as workers increasingly prefer working part-time or in the gig economy, and/or are expecting higher salaries. This has impacted our ability to retain and attract staff, and to have sufficient organisational capacity. As such, this is an area we will look more strategically into in terms of the types of capacities/roles that are required for an organisation like ours, and what are commensurate wages, benchmarked against other sectors. We are also exploring working with some freelance part-time workers, and working with interns will continue to be a mainstay.

On the programmes front, we have streamlined our focus to 2 flagships, Both Sides, Now: Living Well, Leaving Well, and our capability development programmes under The Greenhouse Series. For the former, we are looking forward to shifting away from large-scale public outreach efforts to deepening community development approaches within residential communities via end-of-life matters. We will be piloting this work with an artist-in-residence in Yishun to understand and trial approaches to fostering communities who support one another to live well, and leave well. In addition, we will look at offering training workshops for artists, care practitioners as well as the public, on using arts and creative approaches to end-of-life communication.

Our capability development programmes will undergo a revamp, involving a process of understanding what are key areas of training/development from the arts-based community development field. The development of skills and expertise can then be offered in the form of workshops, masterclasses and mentorships, for example. We will also be launching our inaugural Learning Forum in FY23/24, as a means to convene the arts-based community development field on a larger scale, in order to learn, dialogue and exchange across sectors, as well as grow the network. As part of capability development, we will continue to produce articles and other forms of content related to arts-based community development to be shared with a wide range of stakeholders.

We will also look into strengthening our marketing and communication capacity within the organisation, in order to better engage and develop our diverse audiences/stakeholders, and create increased visibility and support (advocacy, skills, monetary) for our work. Alongside this will be the development of a strategic roadmap for this work, to be done with the support of a Sector Transformation Grant from the National Arts Council. This will contribute towards our sustainability as an organisation in the long run.

Finally, ArtsWok's Board of Directors will be renewed in the new financial year, with most Board members stepping down, except for the Chairperson. New Board members have been identified, with their term commencing towards the end of 2023.

Thank you to all
partners and participants
for this fruitful year, and
for those who've
contributed to our
programmes through
donations and
volunteering!



[Donate](#) [Website](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#)