

kalasangam

Annual Review

2022/23





ACROSS THE ARTS ACROSS CULTURES

AT THE HEART OF BRADFORD

Kala Sangam is an intercultural arts hub which aims to reflect the diversity of contemporary Britain through the work we present, the artists we support and the communities we engage.

Specialising in South Asian arts and culture, most of our work takes place in our Arts Centre in the heart of Bradford (between Bradford Cathedral and The Broadway Shopping Centre) with our outreach activities extending regionally and nationally.

In Sanskrit, 'Kala' means arts and 'Sangam' means a meeting point.

Kala Sangam aims to bring people and communities together to create and experience high-quality, diverse art, to increase understanding and awareness of different cultures, and to provide talent development pathways for young people and emerging artists into a career in the arts.

Focusing primarily on music and dance, all artistic, education and outreach activity delivered by Kala Sangam aligns with at least one of our programming strands.

Our Vision

Programming Stands

This Is Bradford

Putting Kala Sangam at the heart of arts delivery in the city, we offer rehearsal space, development support and performance opportunities to local artists and companies. We also bring work to Bradford which addresses societal issues for the city or is relevant to one of its many communities.

South Asia Now

We programme work by South Asian artists and organisations or that showcases art forms from South Asia. A priority is placed on presenting work which develops the art form and/or is created by British people of South Asian descent.

British Diversity

To ensure we are at the forefront of what it means to live in modern Britain we support the creation of work which looks at cultural heritage in the context of modern Britain or is actively diversity focused. This strand also covers work that fuses together different artforms, styles and cultures.



Summary



I am very proud to present Kala Sangam's 2022/23 Annual Review.

It has been an amazing year for Kala Sangam and for Bradford. In May, the city was named as the next UK City of Culture, which will be transformative for the whole district in 2025. In November we were delighted to receive a substantial increase to our annual Arts Council National Portfolio funding - alongside our regular funding from Bradford Metropolitan District Council, this will allow us to support more artists to create and share more work for more audiences over the next three years. Thank you to both funders for their continued support.

We were also awarded funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and from the Department for Culture Media and Sport's Cultural Development Fund to move ahead with our ambitious plans for the redevelopment of our building. This work is scheduled to begin in 2024 and we are incredibly grateful to these funders for their investment in our future.



We would also like to thank Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Amal and Jerwood Developing Artists Fund for their ongoing support for artists and projects, including Bradford Producing Hub, and Exa Networks for their continued in-kind support.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who has visited Kala Sangam this year, whether it was to see a performance, attend a conference or visit the Cafe – it has been a brilliant year and we are looking forward to what comes next.

Jasbir Athwal DL
Chair of the Board



With our first full seasons since 2019, in 2022/23 we presented 65 performances and 5 exhibitions. Every performance aligned with at least one of our programming strands (This Is Bradford, South Asia Now and British Diversity) and over 80% of the performances featured South Asian artists or artforms.

We had 7 premieres of new work, including *Reflections of an Indian Dancer*, which was the first new work to be performed in Bradford following the announcement that we would be City of Culture 2025.

In April we hosted our first *Arts Iftar*, featuring a performance of *Nasheeds*, by Bradford based Ismail Hussain, and a delicious meal. The whole staff team fasted for the day and it was brilliant to bring together people from different faiths and communities to celebrate Ramadan.

In May we hosted the *Roma 600*, a new musical telling the story of Roma resistance during the Holocaust. This was one of the first times a Roma musical has been performed in the UK.

In July we took Yuvel Soria's *AJAYU Transitorio* to Bradford Cathedral for two performances combining traditional Bolivian dance with Indian Kuchipudi for a unique celebration of the Day of the Dead.

Mixing the best in poetry and spoken word, *Front Room Poetry* (part of BD:Festival) turned our car park into a unique performance venue, featuring kitsch décor and nostalgic vibes. Performers included Salena Godden and Suhaiymah Manzoor-Khan.

Supported by Kala Sangam, Kirsty Taylor's debut play, *Cashy C's: the Musical* sold out runs in both Bradford and Keighley. The show brought vacant shops back to life as recreated pawnbrokers and used rap and bassline to tell the stories of people who live hand-to-mouth, trading in a kettle on Monday and buying it back on Friday because they really need a fiver.

In August, *Bradford South Asian Festival* took over the building for three days of events, covering everything from Bollywood-themed disco to chapati making, and discussions about the impact of Partition.

Our programme for children and families continued to grow with the return of *Bird in the Window*, and Joss Arnott's magical retelling of a classic story, *Tin Man*. For *Altered Skin's Fatherhood*, we hosted our first ever relaxed matinee for parents and young children.

Artistic Programme



Our poetry *Open Mic nights* featured performances by Beyond Labels (young people from Lancashire), Ilkley Young Writers (celebrating 10 years of the group) and Safiya Kinshasa (who combines her poetry with dance). Joined by special guests from the Bradford music scene, Normanton Street presented an evening of music, fusing hip-hop, soul and jazz.

Other work presented at Kala Sangam this year included *From Stone*, which united musicians These Men with dancer Chemaine Cooke to explore the landscapes of Bradford, Kat Rose Martin's first full length play, *Pick and Mix*, and Rythmosaic's stunning new show combining Contemporary and Kathak dance, *Conversing with the Crow*.

“ I had a wonderful experience here - thank you so much for offering a place of such cultural relevance, where I was proud to bring my family and friends ”

– Audience Feedback

Exhibitions

We partnered with The Peace Museum for *Defining Peace*, which asked the question 'What is peace?'. In September, the People Powered Press' *Together in Bradford* exhibition looked back on the letterpress street art displayed across the city this year. Lisa Creagh's powerful portraits of breastfeeding mothers featured in the *Holding Time* exhibition and inspired a series of writing workshops. In the *Say Aphasia* exhibition, Bradford-born artist Mark Chappell shared his experiences of living with the condition which effects his speech and communication, including using immersive technology to bring the work to life.

“ Kala Sangam feels like home. It is Bradford ”

– Audience Feedback



Artist Support



We provided 200 days of free studio time to 49 different artists.

New shows rehearsed and developed at Kala Sangam this year included: Balbir Singh Dance Company's *Reflections of an Indian Dancer*, Yuvel Soria's *AJAYU Transitorio*, Akeim Toussaint Buck and Crystal Zillwood's *Souls and Cells*, and Kat Rose Martin's *Pick and Mix*.

As well as providing studio space to artists to research and develop new projects, we hosted sharing events for artists to receive critical feedback on their works-in-progress, including Mansi Dabral and Shivaangee Agrawal. We offered projects like Deborah Pakker Hull's *Otherhood* and Sandrine Monin's *Feathers* space for workshops with participants.

We provided developmental support to Bloomin' Buds Theatre and Tranquil Productions on their journeys to become new Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations. Two of our Associate Companies, Jaivant Patel Company and Company of Others, also joined the portfolio. Overall, organisations supported by Kala Sangam will now receive more than £700,000 a year investment from ACE over the next three years of NPO 2023-26.

As a consortium member, we continued to play a key role in Bradford Producing Hub's work to build a more representative and diverse community of organisations and individuals working across the arts in Bradford. On behalf of BPH we made a successful application to the Jerwood Developing Artist fund to launch PROPEL, a new programme supporting early-career Producers and Production Managers to develop their skills.

“ Thank you so much for our residency this month. We are still pumped from its momentum and learnings. As ever, the support team at Kala Sangam is amongst the loveliest and most helpful we have ever had the pleasure of experiencing ”

- Shivaangee Agrawal

““ Kala Sangam is a really important space for a city like Bradford – it brings together people and communities ””

– Audience Feedback



Audiences

More than 3400 people saw performances at Kala Sangam in 2022/23, with an average capacity of 60%, taking us to above pre-Covid audience levels.

37% of our audience were non-White British, more than double the national average for non-White British attendance at arts events (15% according to the Audience Agency). 22% of our audience identify as Asian.

As with 2021/22, 67% of our audience come from Bradford and 37% are from areas with low levels of arts engagement. 16% come from the Kaleidoscope Creativity segment, which is ranked 9th lowest out of the 10 segments that make up the Audience Agency Audience Spectrum tool for measuring engagement levels with the arts.

Audience feedback remains extremely positive, with more than 98% rating us Good or Very Good for Quality of Performance/Event, Value for Money and the Whole Experience of visiting Kala Sangam.

Our digital reach continues to grow, with Twitter, Facebook and Instagram followers increasing by around 10% each year. Subscribers to our newsletter have more than doubled since 2020, with open and click through rates staying high.

““ Delighted to be back after an unusually long break. Warm and inspiring evening. Lovely stuff. Thank you! ””

– Audience Feedback





Education & Outreach

Our engagement with Children and Young People continues to grow and in 2022/2023 we delivered a total of 101 workshops with over 2,000 pupils from 18 primary and secondary schools.

Schools

Our School's Takeover Week returned, with 870 Key Stage 2 children from 12 schools from BD3 joining us for a range of activities including drama, rap and Bhangra dancing.

In September, we welcomed back *Bird in the Window* and with it our Arts Award Discover Days – in total, 117 students achieved their Arts Award Discover. In December, Feversham Primary Academy brought 60 children and young people to see Joss Arnott Dance's *Tin Man*.

We continued to deliver a range of high-quality creative workshops for schools, including dance workshops for reception children at Killinghall Primary School, a spoken word workshop as part of Granger Day at Coop Academy Grange, a Bhangra dance workshop for Holybrook Primary School, and Visual Arts and Bhangra

dance workshops for students at Brontë House School. Jameela Khan delivered two puppetry workshops for children at St Mary's and St Peter's Catholic school and Feversham Primary Academy. We continued to deliver the drama after school club at St Mary's and St Peter's Catholic School. We helped 5 schools work towards their Artsmark.

Outreach

In partnership with the One in a Million charity, we delivered drama sessions across several sites, as well as a variety of workshops as part of their community days.

Working with National Youth Jazz Collective and Milap Festival, we hosted their Indo Jazz Club for young people with a passion for music.



Classes

We delivered a wide range of classes in partnership with other organisations, including Break Dancing for children and young people, in partnership with Tranquil Productions, our Bharatanatyam Academy, Bollywood Dance classes for adult with Zoobin Surty Company, and Women's Only Yoga with Ella Tighe. This year, Bhangra dance and Dhol Drumming classes with Punjabi Roots Academy also returned. We maintained support for Creating Together (a creative sanctuary for adults led by Displace Yourself Theatre), Dance United Yorkshire's Youth Company, Bradford Youth Players, Freedom Studio's Youth Theatre, and the Bradford Friendship Choir.

“ It was a complete treat from start to finish! Wonderful welcome from Fay and engaging workshop. The performance was incredible - an immersive and hugely varied creative piece which took us all on a rollercoaster journey of emotions where laughing and crying come hand in hand. ”
– Teacher feedback

“ All children were engaged in both activities, had a chance to try something they hadn't come across before. ”
– Teacher feedback

“ A super dance class where all abilities were able to take part - nothing was too much trouble for the staff involved. Super facilities lots of choice and colours available for both schools to able to take part together, really good to be able to talk to children from another school. ”
– Teacher feedback

Our People 2022/23

Our Board:

Jasbir Athwal DL
Sufyan Dogra
Amrit Gata-Aura
Caroline Harrison
Sameena Hussain
Jenny Jowle
Paul Nash
Marie O'Reilly
Manjit Virdee
Rashmi Sudhir
James Wilson

Chair
Trustee
Trustee
Treasurer
Trustee
Trustee
Company Secretary (resigned May 2022)
Vice Chair
Trustee (appointed Feb 2023)
Trustee
Trustee

NOTE: since the resignation of Paul Nash, the Board has appointed Jez Arrow (KS Head of Finance) as Company Secretary

Our Staff:

Jez Arrow
Fay Beesley
Sidra Bi
Bradley Cook-Pattison
Alex Corwin
Alex Croft
David Dearlove
Caitlin Grime
Philip Henegan
Mohammed Iftikar
Mo Khan
Haider Mahboob
Steve O'Connell
Amer Sarai
Dave Searle

Head of Finance
Education & Outreach Officer
Bookkeeper
Technical Assistant
Programme & Marketing Manager
Creative Director
Facilities Assistant & Caretaker
Facilities Assistant
Facilities Assistant
Facilities Manager
Facilities Assistant
Marketing & Admin Assistant (until March 2023)
Head of Commercial
Head of Community Engagement (since February 2023)
Theatre Technician (freelance)

Our Patrons:

David Lascelles Earl of Harewood
Lord Patel of Bradford OBE

Honourary Lifetime President:

Dr Geetha Upadhyaya OBE

Over the year staff have taken part in First Aid, Fire Marshal, Manual Handling Training and Line Manager Training.

Mohammed Iftikar joined the Board of Lawrence Batley Theatre.

“ Kala Sangam staff were absolutely **INCREDIBLE** and worked tirelessly to ensure everything ran smoothly all weekend. They went above and beyond to take care of us and the artists and event attendees, and every task was accompanied by smiles and joy. What an amazing team you have. ”

– Bradford South Asian Festival



Staff Highlights



Sidra Bi - Bookkeeper

I loved bringing my little one to see *Bird in the Window*. He was laughing the whole way through and it was brilliant to see fun, relatable Muslim characters on stage.



Alex Croft- Creative Director

The highlight of the year for me was definitely Yuvel Soria's *AJAYU Transitorio*, which we presented at Bradford Cathedral. It was such a moving piece, combining beautiful dance with music and poetry that sounded incredible in the Cathedral's main space. Yuvel is an artist we've been supporting for a number of years, so it was really rewarding to see this piece come to fruition thanks to a vital commission from Bradford Producing Hub.



Marie O'Reilly - Vice Chair

I loved *Full English*. Such a great story, brought to life with the simplicity, warmth and humour. I thought the staging was simple and effective, the writing was beautiful and moving and the acting was first class.



Fay Beesley - Education and Outreach Officer

I absolutely loved *Cashy C's: The Musical*. Arriving for the show was like stepping into a real shop and there were even members of the public trying to come in and sell their stuff! The writing was incredible, with the characters really reflecting the people of Bradford and their struggles, particularly during the current cost of living crisis.

It was powerful, heart wrenching and funny, with brilliant performances by the whole cast.



Our Building

Commercial room bookings have continued to be high, with many returning customers including Bradford Metropolitan District Council, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Mediale and the National Science and Media Museum.

In partnership with our neighbours, Bradford Cathedral, we hosted Outdoor Arts UK's annual conference, with over 150 people attending 2 days of events across both sites.

Over 70% of bookers were for cultural, educational or third sector related events and a further 20% came from local authorities or the NHS.

“ I have worked with many venues in my career so far and the team at Kala Sangam were by far the most accommodating. Nothing was too much of an ask and the team always checked up on us to see if we needed anything. It is a beautiful venue and full of culture. ”

- Broadway House Chambers

“ Just wanted to thank you and the team for hosting us earlier this month – Bradford was by far one of our best received events and part of that was due to the venue/facilities/food and staff support on offer at Kala Sangam. ”

- Children's Society

Tenants

Our relationship with Mencap continues to strengthen and includes the use of two meetings rooms a week for their Skills to Work Programme as well as an office space. We continue to provide office space for fellow arts organisations Dance United Yorkshire and Freedom Studios as well as a number of artists and creatives using our basement offices and spaces.

Environmental Sustainability

We are continuing to work towards making Kala Sangam a more sustainable and planet friendly organisation.

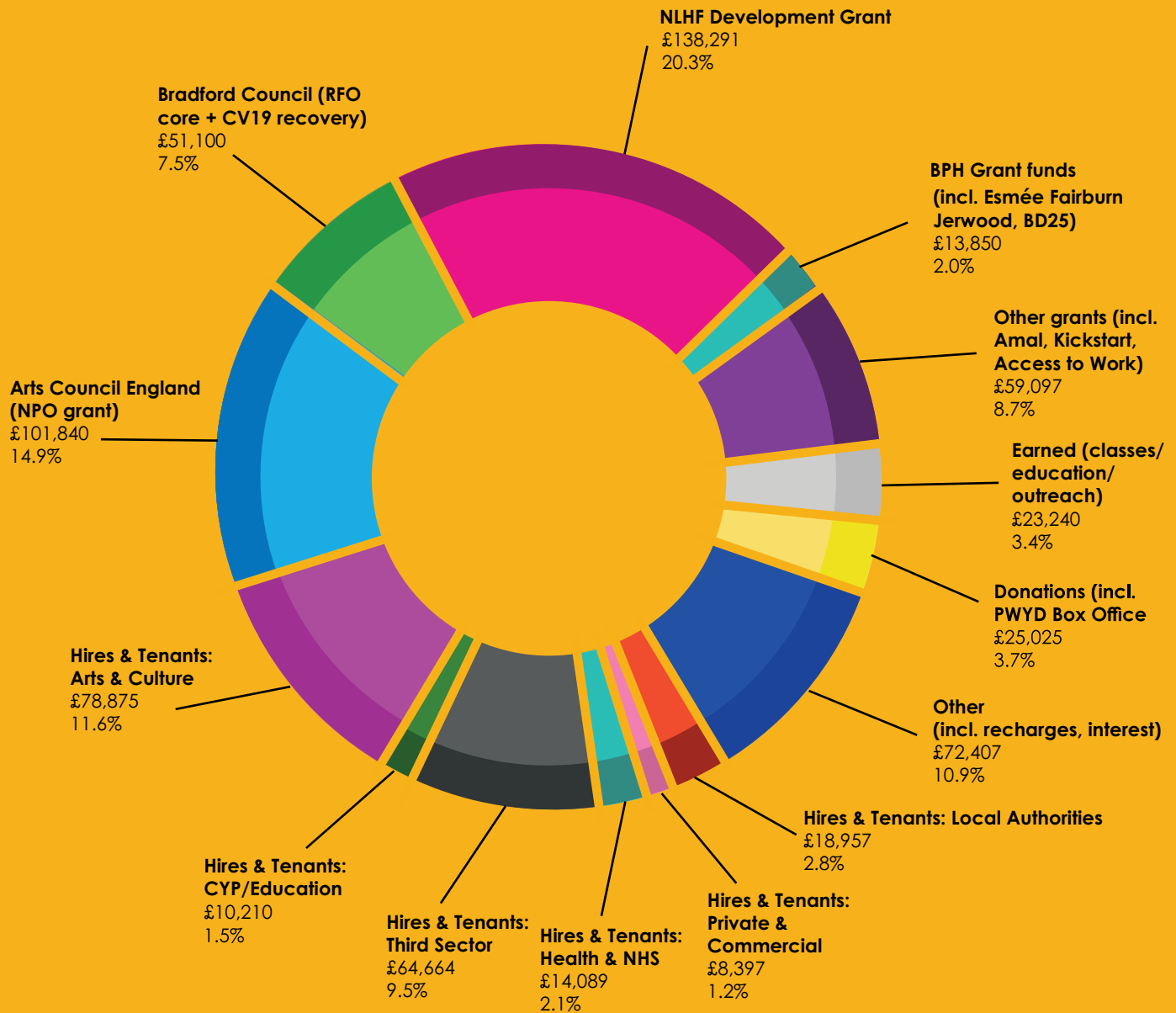
We worked with Green Street on a full environmental audit and made the following commitments:

- we will reduce our energy consumption by using more efficient equipment, changing our behaviours and monitoring our energy usage
- we will reduce the amount of printed material we use and pass on to our customers
- we will take steps to prevent, recycle and reuse as much of our waste as possible
- we will eliminate as much single use plastic as possible
- we will share our learnings and collaborating closely with our staff, artists, audiences, tenants and room bookers



Total Income

£682,042



Financial Overview

Core Funders



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

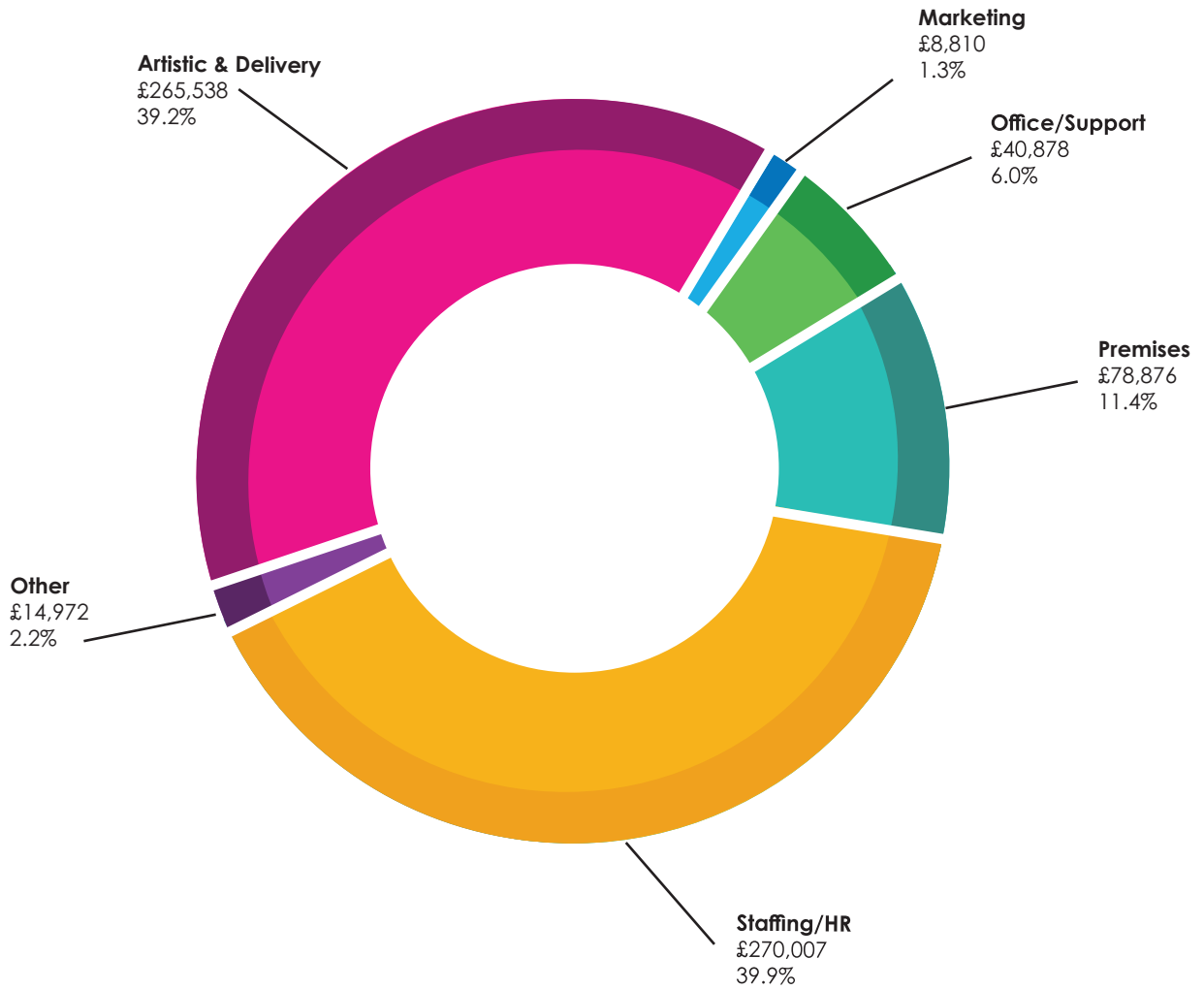


City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Total Expenditure

£677,081

Excludes Capital Building Depreciation of £85,939



Capital Project Funders

Supported using public funding by



ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND



Made possible with

Heritage Fund

Supported by

Supporter of



**1 Forster Square
Bradford
BD1 4TY**

Kala Sangam is just a 5-minute walk from both Bradford Interchange and Bradford Forster Square train stations.
Find us between Bradford Cathedral and The Broadway Shopping Centre.

Our building is accessible by a lift to all floors.
Disabled parking is available in our staff car park.

For more information:

www.kalasangam.org

01274 303340

info@kalasangam.org



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 /thekalasangam

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