

# Annual Review

April 2024 – March 2025





# Welcome to Essex Cultural Diversity Project's Annual Review for 2024/25

Essex Cultural Diversity Project energises diversity in arts and heritage across the East of England. Our mission is to create opportunities, stimulate participation and provide a focal point for the development and celebration of diversity through arts and heritage activity.

Essex Cultural Diversity Project is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

Visit us at [essexcdp.com](https://essexcdp.com)



## Foreword: Miriam Stead, Chair of Essex Cultural Diversity Project

It's been a joy to look back at all the festivals, commissions, projects and events we've delivered this year - we are delighted to be celebrating another successful year for Essex Cultural Diversity Project!

Our work across Essex is going from strength to strength, thanks to the continued support from Essex County Council and other partners in the county. We are forging good working relationships with councils, funders and local partnership boards, working towards shared goals of improving community wellbeing, fighting inequality, championing the environment, and contributing to local economies.

One of the year's highlights was *Global Village Rayleigh*, funded by Rochford District Council via the government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The event was an opportunity for us to be ambitious and try something new, to nurture pride in place and uplift local businesses, while also celebrating multicultural communities and having a dance in the sunshine!

There has been strong focus on arts and health this year, from getting fit with *Bhangra Aerobics*, to using traditional cultural crafts to support mental health. We are passionate about the health benefits of the arts, and we've been busy laying solid foundations for a special Creative Health programme next year.

Strong environmental themes also ran through this year's programme; artists worked with the National Trust to explore queer ecofeminism in Hatfield Forest; we broadened access to nature in Epping Forest through community walks and a new podcast; another creative commission placed wildlife habitats in the grounds of Essex schools for hundreds of children to enjoy.

We've extended our reach across Norfolk and Suffolk this year, putting in place strategic partnerships and supporting creative projects in the area, including another *Festival of Thetford & Punjab* which celebrates cross cultural links in the area.

Thank you to all the artists, audiences and participants who have come together this year, and to Arts Council England, Essex County Council and other funders and partners who have supported us and our community. Thank you to our patrons The Singh Twins, to ECDP's core team for all their hard work, and our trustees for their continued support.



## Global Village

*Global Village* events take place across the East of England, celebrating music, song, performance and dance by artists from different corners of the globe. Events bring together diverse communities within a vibrant festival setting.

### Global Village Rayleigh

This year's flagship event at the King George V Playing Fields was funded by Rochford District Council via the government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund, fostering pride in place and investing in communities.

### Global Village Doddingtonhurst

We celebrated with storytelling, circus, live music and more at Doddingtonhurst Village Hall, in honour of Helen Runder Singh Ahluwalia of Kapurthala, the Indian Princess buried at All Saints Church.

### Global Village Rochford

Global Village took place at the WI Hall and marked the end of Orchard, a cultural programme funded by Rochford District Council via the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

### Global Village at Old Hall

We were invited to be part of the 50th celebrations of Old Hall, an intentional community who live together and manage the land in an old manor house in East Bergholt, Suffolk.

Thank you to all the creative practitioners who joined the *Global Village* community this year, including Ascharj Singh, BrazilArte, Circus Raj, Emmanuel Okine, Folk Dance Remixed, GIDHA, Hannah Brailsford and Jacqueline Johnson, Jaymini Bedia, Jitty Bajaj, Lu Yu, The Marley Experience, Rav Singh from the Little History of the Sikhs, Sefo Kanuteh, Southend Irish Association Musicians, TriggerBliss, UK African Acrobats, and Usifu Jalloh.



### What our audiences said:

"Amazing to see. Good to see different cultures being celebrated"

"It was very fun and like nothing before in this area"

"People were very friendly and kind, showing how all cultures can coincide with each other to create a great environment"



## Festival of Thetford & Punjab 2024

The *Festival of Thetford & Punjab* 2024 took place in venues across Thetford in Norfolk, with cultural celebrations inspired by the life and legacy of the Duleep Singh family, the last Royal Family of the Punjab who lived in nearby Elveden.

For this year's *Festival of Thetford & Punjab*, we worked with our partners at Ancient House Museum of Thetford Life to put together a four-day programme for all to enjoy. Highlights included free cultural activities at Ancient House Museum; fascinating talks at Thetford Library and Elveden Village Hall; a curry night at the Thomas Paine Hotel; and the *Thetford Mela* at the Thetford Grammar School, with outdoor performances, music and dance to celebrate the end of the festival.

Supported by Breckland Council, Thetford Town Council, Norfolk Arts Service and Norfolk Museum Services.

### What our audiences said:

*"I learned more about my culture"*

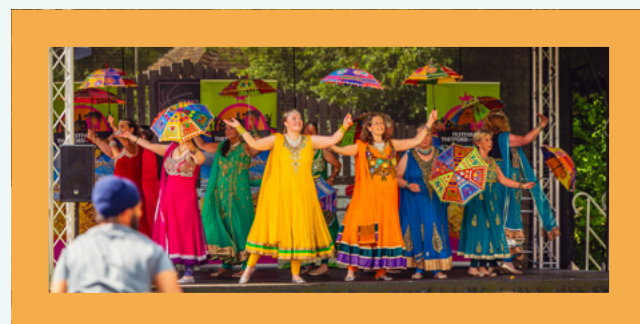
*"Such a wonderful reflection of diversity .... Beautiful to see so many people come together!"*

*"Will cherish the experience"*

*"It's a pleasure to be part of this cultural amazing adventure"*

*"A brilliant event bringing together many different cultures, developing understanding and appreciation of others"*

*"The speakers were excellent. Brought out extremely rare observations yet significant. Excellent scholars, I came all the way from New York for the festival that I am enjoying thoroughly"*



## Global Village Presents

*Global Village Presents* is a series of events with key partners across the region, to whet audience's appetites for world music and create a platform for diverse talent.



This year we teamed up with Colchester Arts Centre to create a special series of *Global Village Presents*, with four performances from world class musicians and storytellers.

**Nani Vazana** is one of the world's few songwriters who writes and composes new songs in the endangered Ladino language. We celebrated Diwali, The Festival of Lights with an evening of classical Indian percussion, bringing together the talents of **Gurdain Rayatt** on Tabla and **Jonathan Mayer** on Sitar.

**Corina Piatti** is an Argentine singer, songwriter and guitarist, whose songs have a strong folk blues sound with a South American flavour. And Sierra Leone's **Usifu Jalloh** came along to entertain families, using song, drumming and the power of story to share the warmth and colour of Africa, and the magic and nostalgia of childhood.

*Global Village Presents* was supported by Colchester City Council's Cultural and Creative Events Fund.

*"Excellent to have this type of event in Colchester"*

*"This was an amazing experience - thank you for bringing ... world class musicians to Colchester. It was an inspiring and transcendent experience".*

*"... a fantastic singer and fantastic onstage presence. Love the storytelling and cultural insights"*

*"We like acting, music, storytelling. It was nice that this was somewhat different with a fairy tale from Africa ... great at involving the children"*

### Development of Global Village

We spent this year looking at ways to develop *Global Village*, following the uplift in funding as part of our ACE National Portfolio Organisation programme.

The first stage of our research is now complete, mapping the events sector in Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire to gain an insight into the challenges and opportunities currently facing festivals in the East of England. We are working with organisations such as East Anglian Festival Network and Arts Council England to develop a programme of support for small to medium sized events, focusing on developing curatorial processes, building partnerships, and finding funding to help diversify grassroots events.

We attended WOMEX, the Worldwide Music Expo which takes place across the world every year. This year it was in Manchester, providing an opportunity to expand networks and identify creative talent on our doorstep.

As well as strengthening the brand of our *Global Village* programme, we have been testing out smaller scale models which could fit into and enhance wider festival programmes of local partners in rural areas and towns across the region. We have also been piloting more commercial models for our own events, including developing our food and drink offer to generate income.



## This Year's Projects

### After the Partition: A Shared Cultural Heritage in Essex

*After the Partition* encouraged Sikh, Hindu and Pakistani Muslim communities to reflect on their family's experiences, challenges and successes since the Partition in 1947. The project captured voices of the community through oral history recordings, films and interviews, culminating in an online archive and touring exhibition by Sikh historian Simran Bance. The exhibition was launched at a special event at Essex Record Office, accompanied by a film screening, poetry recital by Harlow based artist Suman Gujral, and panel discussion chaired by Rav Singh from A Little History of Sikhs.

Legacies of the project include an international bank of stories that can be accessible by all, at home and abroad, archived on our website, at the Essex Record Office, and at the Partition Museum in Amritsar, India. The pop-up exhibition will now tour around the region, and Suman Gujral will show her work in Amritsar in Autumn 2025.

Funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund.



### Colchester Tea Party

We collaborated with Colchester and Ipswich Museums, gathering cultural perspectives to retell stories around their collection in a more inclusive way.

For this project we focused on the theme of 'tea', and community groups joined us for tea and cake in Hollytrees Museum, to share stories and knowledge of tea, travel, trade and traditions.

Communities who took part included the Dosti Indian Seniors Group who gave a presentation about Indian tea, Lu Yu who shared a Chinese Tea Ceremony, Bangladeshi Women's Association Essex who hosted a tea party, and Women Assemble, who kickstarted the conversation with a 'tea and empathy' sharing exhibition for International Women's Day at the Minorities art gallery.

The *Colchester Tea Party* was part of Colchester and Ipswich Museums' *Hidden Histories* programme funded by Arts Council England, which aims to source communities' stories to help reinterpret collections, shape legacy, and inform new educational resources.

*"Engaging activities like this tea ceremony make deep and relevant connections"*

*"I learned a lot about tea and its significance to the community"*

*"So interesting to gain an understanding of the cultural importance of tea ... and such a treat to share in the tea tasting and cakes – delicious and beautifully presented"*

## Arts and Health: Harnessing Creativity for Wellbeing



**Bhangra Aerobics: Let's Get Fit**

*Bhangra Aerobics* took place at Hamptons Leisure Centre and Beaulieu Community Centre in Chelmsford. A range of community groups took part, including Sikh, Hindu and Muslim communities based in the city and surrounding areas. *Bhangra Aerobics* follows on from our previous project *Bolly Flex*, also funded through Active Essex, which demonstrated the need for free physical keep fit sessions, especially for those aged 35-65 from marginalised communities.



We worked with women in Chelmsford to promote the health benefits of the Arts and support mental health and wellbeing. Three diverse creative practitioners delivered weekly sessions in traditional cultural arts and crafts from the subcontinent, including Henna Art, Bhangra Dance and Rangoli. Through the project we evidenced that creative health and social prescribing programmes provide excellent opportunities for health and cultural organisations to collaborate to address health inequalities, reduce stress, and tackle long-term conditions that are putting pressure on the healthcare system.

Supported by Culture, Health, and Social Prescribing in Chelmsford funding administered by Chelmsford CVS on behalf of Culture Chelmsford.



**ABCD: Any Body Can Dance**

*ABCD: Any Body Can Dance* was a 10-week project for diverse communities in Chelmsford to get together, socialise and be active. Working with Bollywood Dance tutor Sarika Golcha, Essex Cultural Diversity Project delivered Bollywood dance themed movement classes with participants from four community groups: Chelmsford Sikh Association, Chelmsford Hindu Group, Chelmsford Muslim Association, and the Nepalese Gurkha Community Group.



**Epping Forest Walks**

Essex Cultural Diversity Project engaged with community groups for a series of walks in Epping Forest, as part of a project funded by Active Essex. Epping Forest has a rich history of interaction between people and nature, where biodiversity, culture and heritage interweave. Throughout the project we worked with community groups who have faced obstacles when engaging with this fantastic ancient forest, creating a more inclusive and welcoming place that can be enjoyed by everyone. Participants included members of local Muslim groups and the Chinese community (pictured here).



## Commissions Delivered this Year

Essex Cultural Diversity Project works closely with partner organisations to help artists explore diversity and develop their participant-led, socially engaged practices. Commissions capture the spirit of place, give people a voice, connect communities and let people tell their own story in their own words.

### Kirsty Badenoch with Wayward: National Trust Hatfield Forest

Kirsty Badenoch and Wayward's project, *A Common Way* marked the 100th anniversary of the gifting of Hatfield Forest to the National Trust. Their commission celebrated this ancient site and helped articulate the importance of acts of kindness that enthuse and inspire us to care for the environment and our communities. The project harnessed the power of queer ecofeminism, an ideology that breaks binaries and acknowledges the diversity of the natural world. They launched with a *Queer Summer Solstice Spell*, delivered workshops for women and members of the LGBTQ+ community, and led a *Mother Earth Forest Parade*. From these exchanges they developed a 'walking tarot' pack of cards, which proposed new ways to explore and navigate the woods through acts of care and connection with nature.



Photographer Sam Williams

### Sam Williams Wildlife Habitats for Schools

Sam Williams was the third and final commissioned artist for the Dunton Hills Garden Village housing development, in partnership with Brentwood Borough Council. Sam designed a series of totem wildlife habitats inspired by diversity, nature and home in collaboration with 130 children from four local primary schools: West Horndon and St Joseph's in Brentwood; Great Berry Primary School in Basildon; and Bulphan Primary School in Thurrock. This Summer, life-sized prototypes were presented to each school to be housed in their grounds, and a pack of designs delivered to the council, ready for the housing developer to consider as a public art trail and fun ideas that could be embedded into the streets, houses and community buildings of the new development.

### Talia Randall Voices of Epping Forest

Talia Randall spent time walking and talking with visitors and community groups in Epping Forest, recording their stories and experiences. The interviews culminated in a new podcast, *Voices of Epping Forest*. Talking points include women of colour and LGBTQ+ groups who feel empowered by the forest; access to nature; the history of witches; and how children and young people relate to the forest. Talia is passionate about helping others explore vital green space, discussing how issues regarding ableism, sexism and racism intersect and can sometimes prevent us engaging with nature. The commission was delivered in partnership with Epping Forest Heritage Trust and supported by the City of London Corporation, and the podcasts can be accessed at [essexcdp.com](http://essexcdp.com).

## Commissions Launched this Year

### TriggerBliss and Kim Davey: A Parade of Self

Spoken word artist TriggerBliss, and artist, writer, prop-maker and learning curator Kim Davey have been commissioned to deliver a project that celebrates women across Suffolk and Essex. *A Parade of Self* will celebrate community, diversity and the power of the written and spoken word. Through a series of workshops launching on International Women's Day, the artists will invite participants to explore how words can signify strength, self-assurance, and empowerment. They aim to encourage women to embrace self-celebration and self-love, challenging societal expectations by demanding respect, validation, and self-worth.



### Cobnuts: Finding Lost Nature Words

Cobnuts Cooperative, an eco-artist collective in Brightlingsea, will deliver a new environment-focused project for communities in Tendring. At a time of collective anxiety over biodiversity loss and children's decreasing interaction with wildlife, Cobnuts will dig deep into the relationship between children's language and nature. Spending time with local communities, especially those whose voices are not often heard, the artists will enable nature stories from different childhoods to be told and remembered.



### Moving House Films: The Changing Faces of Diss

Moving House Films will celebrate the changing faces of Diss, in partnership with Diss Corn Hall, DesignerMakers21 and No 8 Market Place, through a participatory film project that invites residents to retrace their footsteps down memory lane. Through collaborative and playful re-creation, this project will capture Diss as shaped by personal and collective memory. Putting the community at its heart, the project will invite participants to step into the past – not as passive observers, but as active storytellers. Local residents will have an opportunity to take part in the filmmaking process on all levels – as production designers, performers, costume makers or narrators.





## Salons

Essex Cultural Diversity Project runs a programme of networking events offering professional support, insight and training to creative practitioners working in diversity, in collaboration with partners across the East of England.

**We delivered six Salons this year, attended by around 100 arts and heritage professionals.**

### Diss Salon

Hosted by Designermakers21 in Diss, Norfolk, this gathering provided an opportunity for creatives and communities based in the area to develop ideas for projects, programmes and collaborations, and access advice and information on funding.

### Rochford Event Organisers Salon

This Salon focused on event organisers in the Rochford district, who were invited to explore how we can collectively promote diversity, access and inclusivity through our work, and how we can support Rochford District Council's new Culture and Visitor Economy Strategy.

### Saffron Walden Salon

This event took place at Faircroft House and brought together the town's creative community to explore ways in which to develop the town's cultural infrastructure, discuss the proposed Creative Space programme, and how to support a more sustainable and diverse creative sector in the area.

### Kings Lynn Salon

Hosted by GroundWork Gallery, the Kings Lynn Salon provided hands-on advice about engaging with communities and applying for public funds for community art projects.

### Thetford Salon

We caught up with friends and partners who co-programme the *Festival of Thetford & Punjab* at this Salon, which was hosted by the Thomas Paine Hotel.

### Ely: East Anglian Festival Network

We delivered an impromptu mini-Salon in Ely as part of the East Anglian Festival Network conference, which tested the interest of the festival sector for advice and support relating to diversity, funding and partnership working.



## Stand Up For Diversity

*Stand Up For Diversity* is a series of regular events bringing together artists, activists and audiences who want to champion diversity in the arts and in our communities. Events are an opportunity for diverse creative practitioners to share their work and passions on a public platform.

### SU4D Southend

We teamed up with Essex Book Festival and Metal in Southend for *Stand Up For Diversity at Essex Writers House*. It was an entertaining evening of five-minute mini-talks and short soap-box shout-outs, putting a spotlight on diversity, writing, words and storytelling.



### The Human Library, Colchester

*The Human Library* took place at the Colchester Samaritans as part of Essex Book Festival. Just like in a real library, a visitor to the Human Library can borrow a book from a range of titles. The difference is that books are people, and reading is a conversation. Readers came along, connected with people they wouldn't normally meet, and celebrated positive differences in our community.



### Ipswich: Art // Tech // Play Live meets SU4D

*Stand up for Diversity* merged seamlessly with Collusion's *ART // TECH // PLAY LIVE* event at Dance East in Ipswich. We examined how emergent art forms can enable self-expression and capture joy in new innovative ways, hearing from a remarkable group of artists, and we had a play in the cutting-edge facilities of Dance East's Digital Suite.

### SU4D Thetford

Champions of diversity working across Thetford came together for *Stand Up For Diversity* at the Thomas Paine Hotel, with 14 speakers giving three-minute mini-talks about their work connected to the town.



### CALFE 2024: Chelmsford A Galaxy of Culture and Curious Adventure

We supported *The Children & Authors' Literary Fanfare Events (CALFE) Festival* at Chelmsford Museum, organised by Chelmsford based children's author Sade Fadipe. Children and families enjoyed an exciting line-up of multicultural, literary-inspired activities celebrating Black History Month 2024, fostering a love of reading and storytelling in young audiences.





## Nurturing Creatives Across East Anglia

The recent uplift in funding as part of our National Portfolio Organisation programme, funded by Arts Council England, has given us the opportunity to explore new opportunities and make connections with communities, local authorities, and arts and cultural organisations in Norfolk and Suffolk.

We have been supporting creatives to develop projects and funding applications, offering match funding to help uplift their bids. £9000 in seed funding across six projects levered a total of £118,383 worth of investment into the region.

Projects we've supported include *Fantastic Pablo Fanque!* By Ashton Owen, *Goodnight Maharajah* by the ŚŪNYA Co, *Brave Art Unlimited* by Suffolk Art Link, *Cultural Influence of African American Airman in the East of England* by Elma Glasgow, and a project by Dulce Duca.

We have also been forging new partnerships, working with new friends and partners to host Salons, events and commissions across the region. We've made connections with other NPOs in the region including Snape Maltings and Firstlight Festival, and are seeking new opportunities with Counterpoints Arts as part of their Platforma Festival in October.

*Fantastic Pablo Fanque!* is a new show about Britain's first recorded Black Circus owner, Norwich-born Pablo Fanque. The show was created by Ashton Owen and directed by Natalya Martin.

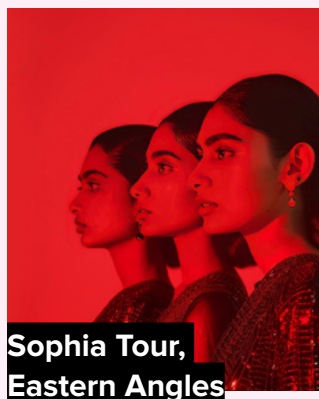


*Brave Art Unlimited* is a development of Suffolk Artlink's creative courses for learning disabled people.



*Goodnight Maharajah* by ŚŪNYA Company is a new stage production based on the life of Maharajah Duleep Singh, the last King of Punjab who lived in East Anglia.

## Other Projects Supported this Year



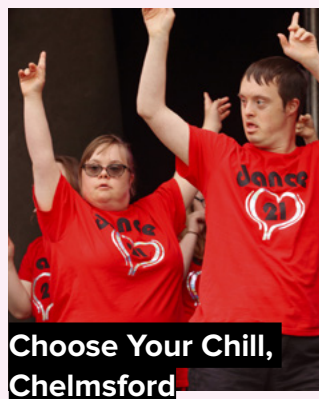
Sophia Tour,  
Eastern Angles



Global Rhythm,  
Ipswich



Grrrl Zine Fair,  
Southend



Choose Your Chill,  
Chelmsford

## Productive Partnerships

Partnership is at the heart of Essex Cultural Diversity Project's work, and we value strong alliances and collaborative working to celebrate and energise diversity in Essex and beyond. Here are a few productive partnerships which enhance our work, alongside our core programmes.



### Pop Up Exhibitions

We are building our bank of pop-up exhibitions that can tour the East of England, as a valuable educational resource and a legacy for past projects. We are always keen to find hosts for our exhibitions to keep these crucial conversations about diversity and inclusion in the public eye. This year, our Windrush exhibition was hosted by the National Trust's Rainham Hall as part of their Windrush Day celebrations. The Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara (Sikh temple) in Gravesend showed our exhibition on Sophia Duleep Singh for International Women's Day, and the Ideas Hub in Chelmsford recently hosted our newest exhibition, *After The Partition*, which shares personal stories and experiences of those who travelled from the Punjab to the UK and settled in Essex since 1947.

### Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance

This year we became members of the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance, a national membership organisation who provide advocacy, support and resources to promote good health and wellbeing for all through creative and cultural practice. This has fed into our past and future programmes, supporting our ambition to harness 'creative health' in a range of projects and activities. It has also led to stronger partnerships and support from various funders, including Active Essex, Essex Community Foundation and Culture, and Health & Social Prescribing work in Chelmsford in collaboration with Chelmsford City Council, who funded the project through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

### Essex Local Nature Partnership

Essex Cultural Diversity Project is a partner of the Essex Local Nature Partnership (LNP), which is responsible for delivering the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy, helping them to diversify engagement, raise awareness of environmental issues, and encourage positive action among the communities we serve. This has recently led to a new collaboration with the Essex LNP's Local Communities Working Group, who we will be working with to deliver an environment-focused creative commission in Tendring, launching in Spring 2025.



### International Collaborations

Through the *After the Partition* project, productive conversations have started with the Partition Museum in Amritsar, India, and will continue with an exhibition in October 2025 by Essex based artist Suman Gujral, whose artwork focuses on Partition and the effect of global traumas on individuals and communities around the world.

This year we hosted a Chinese delegation from the Jiangxi Federation of Literature and Art Circles. Through exchanges and dialogues with local arts and cultural organisations, we explored various ways to promote cooperation in theatre, visual arts and other artforms, and identified opportunities for future collaborations between Jiangxi, China and Essex, UK. This includes an exchange project with Tang Xianzu-Shakespeare Drama group, meetings with artists in the UK, and an exhibition of Jiangxi Chinese paintings in 2025/26.



Financial Overview

Essex Cultural Diversity Project celebrated its seventh year as an Arts Council England National Portfolio organisation (NPO), providing a financially secure base on which we can develop resources, fundraise further, and continue to support diverse creative practitioners and communities through ambitious programmes.

In 2024/25 funding from Arts Council England was 64% of our total income of £349,175, thanks to an uplift in NPO funding from 2023 until 2026.

We have also been successful in raising income through local authority grants, showing that we are being recognised for the significant role we can play in supporting local communities, fostering pride in place, and uplifting local business, infrastructure and skills. This includes substantial core support from Essex County Council; contributions from Norfolk County Council, Breckland Council and Thetford Council for the Festival of Thetford & Punjab; Chelmsford City Council through their Culture and Health project; and Rochford District Council and Brentwood Borough Council for Global Village activity.

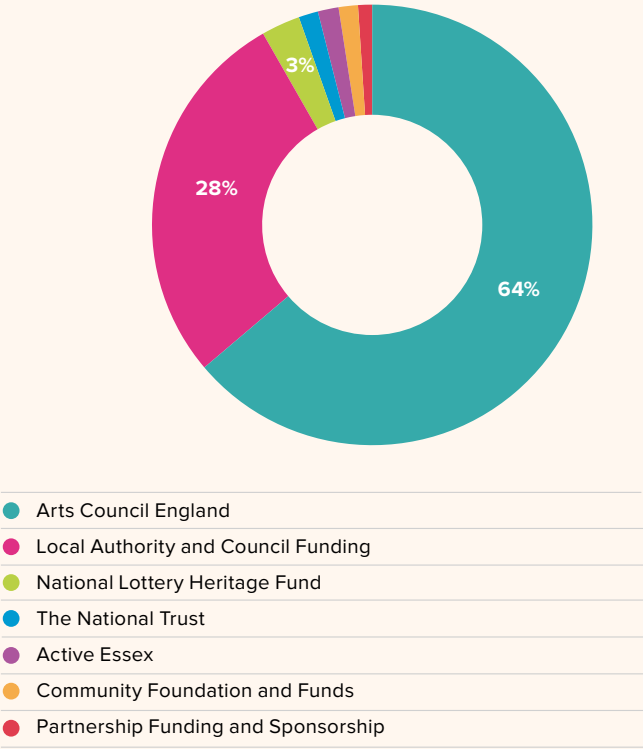
Our commissioning programme continues to attract partnership match funding from those wishing to co-host projects and invest in our work. Match funding from the National Trust is already in place for a new commission in 2025, and investment from new partners is also in the pipeline for next year.

This year, we continued research around one of our main assets, Global Village, our scalable festival event which has the potential to generate income to ensure the organisation's sustainability in an increasingly difficult public funding climate.

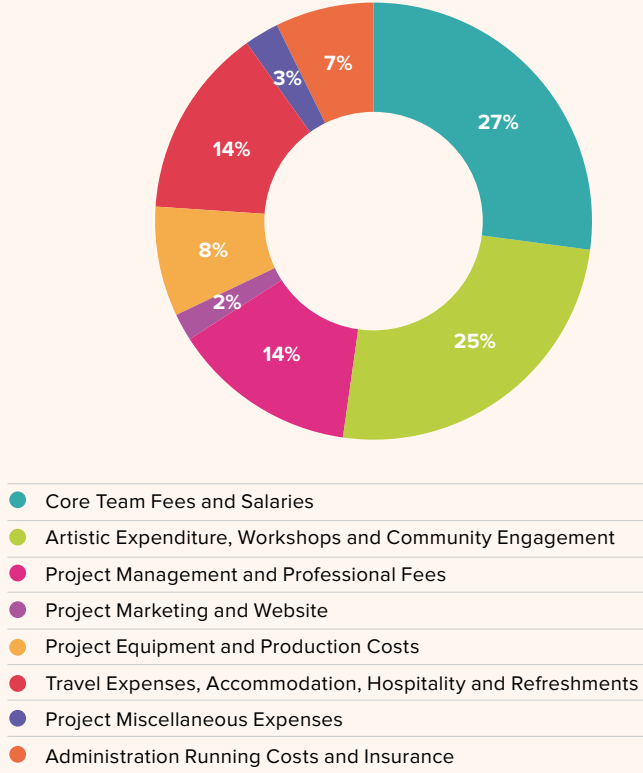
The funding uplift from Arts Council England is also enabling us to extend our geographical reach, supporting artists and communities in Suffolk and Norfolk, and to identify potential partners and funding sources in the area, going forward.

ECDP maintained its general reserves throughout 2024/25 to ensure that the organisation can cover three months of operational costs if necessary and has contingency to support project work and further investment.

INCOME



EXPENDITURE



Looking Forward to 2025/26  
Indi Sandhu, Creative Director and CEO

The ECDP Team is busy putting together an exciting programme for 2025/6, promising another great year of festivals, projects and commissions for all to enjoy.

We are currently working on the *Festival of Thetford & Punjab 2025*, which will celebrate the diversity of the town through local, national and international perspectives. This is always an enjoyable joint adventure with local audiences, partners, supporters and funders, and a highlight in our calendar year!

We are also developing a strong focus on Creative Health, harnessing the power of the arts to improve mental wellbeing and physical fitness, with a host of activities to support diverse communities across Tendring and Essex.

Engagement with the environment and participation in nature is linked strongly to health, so we are also developing our work in this area. On the horizon is a new commission, underlining our continued support for the Essex Local Nature Partnership.

We have some brilliant commissions coming up, including a fifth project in partnership with the National Trust, this time at Lavenham Guildhall to nurture community connections to this historically significant building in Suffolk. We've teamed up with Start Thurrock on a creative project that will explore new ways to engage the public with Coalhouse Fort in East Tilbury. And contemporary circus performer Dulce Duca is devising a new performance with the community for Witham's Street Entertainment Festival, in partnership with Witham Town Council.

We'll be continuing our *Global Village* programme, bringing together communities for a picnic at Jaywick Sands; staging an event at Rainham Hall; and celebrating Diwali in Doddington. We'll also continue to engage proactively with the festival and events sector to better understand ongoing challenges and identify where we can work in partnership to offer support.

We're looking forward to more Salons and *Stand Up for Diversity* events, nurturing creative talent and providing a platform for those championing diversity in their localities, hosted by friends and partners across Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk.

There are plenty of plans not only at home but also abroad, including the last phase of *After the Partition: A Shared Cultural Heritage* in Essex, taking stories about Partition from the UK back to the Partition Museum in Amritsar, India, alongside the work of Essex based Sikh artist Suman Gujral.

Going forward, we will continue to build on the strong partnerships we have with local authorities, funders, and other arts and heritage organisations to put a spotlight on the amazing diversity of the East of England, create new platforms for artists, and support marginalised communities.

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Special thanks to  
OUR CORE TEAM: Indi Sandhu, Creative Director and CEO  
Nicky Bettell, Finance Administrator | Daisy Lees, Community Engagement Lead | Sean McLoughlin, Global Village Lead | Jo Nancarrow, Digital & Admin Lead | Giles Tofield, Strategic Lead

OUR TRUSTEES: Lora Aziz | David Guy (Treasurer) | Nita Jhummu | Enitan Kane | Kerith Ririe | Miriam Stead (Chair) | Joanne Webb (Secretary) | James Wenn | Simone Xue

ECDP Patrons: The Singh Twins  
Patron for Festival of Thetford & Punjab: Dr Satinder Sartaa

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Image credits: Front Page - *Mother Earth Forest Parade* part  
 of *A Common Way* in Hatfield Forest. Back page - *GIDHA* at  
 the *Festival of Thetford & Punjab*

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Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



Essex County Council

*“Having experienced first-hand and also benefiting  
 from the invaluable work that Essex Cultural Diversity  
 Project does in cultivating racial equality and  
 intercultural understanding through arts, heritage  
 and culture, we are delighted and honoured to have  
 been invited to be Patrons. In our own practice as  
 artists, we share many of the ECDP’s values and aims  
 and are very much looking forward to lending our  
 support”* The Singh Twins, ECDP Patrons