

CYMERA FESTIVAL

Annual Report & Financial Statements

For the year ended

30 November 2025



ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2025

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2025

The trustees are pleased to present their report and financial statements together with the independent examiner's report for the year ended 30 November 2025.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity Name	Cymera Festival	
Charity Number	SC048809	
Principal Address	35 Woolmet Crescent Danderhall Midlothian EH22 1NL	
Website Address	http://www.cymerafestival.co.uk/	
Current Trustees	Ann Landmann	Chair
	Paul Hudson	Treasurer
	Andrew Grant Bailey-Smith	Secretary
	Erin Hardee	
	Neil Chue Hong	
	Gabriella Rodriguez	
	Nick Wong	
	Sarah Emery	Appointed January 2026
	Eleanor Celia Suzanne Pender	Appointed January 2026
	Carolynn Reddell	Appointed January 2026
Bankers	Royal Bank of Scotland 36 St Andrew Square Edinburgh EH2 2YB	
Independent Examiner	Gillian Cameron, ACIE 46 Pennyfern Road Greenock PA16 9HD	

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2025

STRUCTURE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

Cymera Festival is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and received charitable status on the 5th November 2018 with the charity number SC048809. The charity is governed by its Constitution.

Appointment of Trustees

The Charity Trustees who are the members of the charity, are also known as the Board of Trustees.

The Charity Trustees are recruited by the members of the organisation at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and any other vacancies can be filled by appointment.

Under the Constitution, there must be a minimum of 3 trustees and a maximum of 11. At each AGM, all the Charity Trustees must retire from office, but may be re-elected. There is no limitation on the number of terms served.

Employees of the organisation cannot be nominated as or become Charity Trustees.

Organisational Structure

The organisation is comprised of Members and Charity Trustees.

Membership is open to organisations and any individuals aged 16 or over who demonstrate an affiliation with the organisation's purpose. The Members appoint people to serve as Charity Trustees and take the decisions on changes to the Constitution.

The Charity Trustees are responsible for the activities of the organisation and the monitoring and controlling of its financial position.

OBJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Charitable Purposes:

Cymera Festival was established with the following charitable purposes:

- The advancement of the arts, heritage, culture, or science.

Activities:

Cymera Festival is an annual celebration of science fiction, fantasy and horror writing that aims to nurture the enjoyment of those genres by bringing together writers and readers from Scotland and beyond to share ideas, create stories and celebrate their imagination.

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCE

"This was my first year attending and I loved it! All the volunteers were so helpful and friendly, I bought the coolest 3D printed dragon from geek and crafty stall. There were so many diverse authors, I also learnt about author's I had never heard of before".

2025 Audience Feedback

Cymera continues to provide meeting places for writers and readers of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror in Scotland and beyond.

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2025

2025 was a year of consolidation for the Cymera team. The four trustees that joined the board in January 2024 settled in and spearheaded own projects, while the 2025 Festival once again grew and our third Writers' Conference returned to Central Hall as part of Book Week Scotland.

Trustee Gabriella Rodriguez took on the overhaul of the Cymera website, Social Media and newsletter, resulting in a more professional look and higher engagement, especially on Instagram.

Our 2025 Festival was a great success, with a total 1842 tickets sold, an increase of 32 percent on 2024. This excluded the Pratchett Play, which brought over 1000 additional attendees to the festival. Over three days, Cymera hosted over 70 events, including 31 panels, 15 workshops, two open mics, the quiz and a number of RPG and Board Game sessions, hosted in collaboration with Edinburgh-based board game shop Ancient Robot Games and overseen by trustee Andrew Bailey-Smith.

Trustee Erin Hardee once again took the lead on the charity auction, which raised a record £1848. The festival bookshop run by Blackwell's Bookshop also sold a record number of books.

The Creator's Halls was filled to the brim with artists, creators and writers, and the frequent rain showers over the weekend meant that people spend more time (and money) there.

Our digital offering remains popular, with bookings from Greece, Ireland, Canada, the US, Poland, Luxembourg and Germany. Overall, the digital audience shows little growth, but Cymera remains committed to providing this access and opportunity to those unable to join us in Edinburgh. Furthermore, attendees value the option to catch-up on panel recordings, as unavoidable event clashes mean they have to choose between events.

Between March and April 2025, 112 Early Bird Weekend Passes were purchased, up on 2024 by 47 percent, which shows that our audience trusts us to put on a good festival and is happy to commit to attending without knowing the full programme. In total, 185 weekend passes were purchased, an increase of 49 percent. The sales of 20 digital passes were on par with 2024. The new Day Passes were also well received and will return for the 2026 festival.

One of the programme highlights was the return of The Pleasures of Reading, which we hosted in collaboration with The Scottish Book Trust. Writer Adrian Tchaikovsky was in conversation with Philippa Cochrane (Head of Reading Communities at Scottish Book Trust) and Dr Sarah McGeown from the University of Edinburgh (Reading and Wellbeing research project), exploring the impact of being a reader by sharing some of his favourite books and the influence they have had in his life. The event was highlighted as a favourite by many attendees.

2025 also saw the return of two festival favourites - Dune The Musical! and Debbie Cannon, who debut her new show Flora MacDonald and Zombies to a sold-out audience.

The 2025 Writers conference tied in with Book Week Scotland and took its theme of Friendship as inspiration for the programme. Focusing on collaboration and networking, keynote speaker Gemma Creffield spoke about the importance of professional connections, while marketer Amy Portsmouth shared some marketing tips and tricks, including working with bloggers. The panel on Collaborative Writing with writing duo MK Hardy, writer Lindz McLeod and comic creator Dave Cook dived into the joys and challenges of shared writing, while representatives from Creative Scotland and the Scottish Book Trust shared how writers can work with each organisation.

"It felt like real attention and thought had gone into the curating of the conference and how to make it most beneficial for writers at all stages of their professional career."

2025 Attendee Feedback

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2025

Cymera also collaborated with indie publisher Comma Press to bring Palestinian authors Basma Ghalayini and Mazen Maarouf to the 2025 Radical Book Fair to speak about their book Palestine - 1: Stories from the eve of the Nakba, a book that resonated with the Cymera team but didn't publish in time for the 2025 festival.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Overview

Income of £78,218 (2024: £61,230) was received and the main source of funds were from grants and ticket sales.

Expenditure totalling £73,481 (2024: £60,981) were made carrying out the charitable activities. This has increased by 20.5% over 2023-24. This can be attributed to the overall increase in goods and services and the expansion of the project to include a Writers Retreat in November 2025.

At the end of the financial period, the charity had a surplus of £4,737.

Donated Facilities & Services

The Charity Trustees would like to thank the service provided by all the charity's volunteers, who have helped contribute towards the success and achievements made within this past year.

Reserves Policy

Reserves at the end of the year were £6,320. The Charity Trustees have set a policy of £3,000 to cover website costs and the engagement of a freelance administrator. They have met their target, but the financial position will be monitored carefully throughout the year by the Charity Trustees.

FUTURE PLANS

Cymera has successfully established itself as a must-attend event for many SFFH readers and writers. Over the next years, Cymera aims to grow not only its audience for the June festival, but also to create a complimentary year-round programme that reaches new audiences.

APPROVAL

This report was approved by the trustees on 25 July 2026 and signed on their behalf by:



Paul Hudson
Trustee

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2025

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Cymera Festival

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 30 November 2025, which are set out on pages 8 to 11.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 ("the 2005 Act") and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) ("the 2006 Regulations"). The trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation (10)(1)(d) of the 2006 Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts under section (44)(1)(c) of the 2005 Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter came to my attention:-

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Regulations, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Regulationshave not been met, or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Gillian Cameron, ACIE

46 Pennyfern Road

Greenock

PA16 9HD

27 July 2026

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
		£	£	£	£
Receipts					
Donations		1,300	-	1,300	1,616
Grants	5	17,597	700	18,297	14,838
Trading Income		58,621	-	58,621	42,276
Loan		-	-	-	2,500
		77,518	700	78,218	61,230
Payments					
Charitable Activities	6	72,173	1,008	73,181	60,681
Governance Costs					
Independent Examination		300	-	300	300
		72,473	1,008	73,481	60,981
Net movement in funds		5,045	(308)	4,737	249
Transfers between funds		(308)	308	-	-
Surplus/(Deficit) for year		4,737	-	4,737	249

The Notes on pages 10 to 11 form an integral part of these accounts.

STATEMENT OF BALANCES

AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
Funds Reconciliation		£	£	£	£
Balance as at 01 December 2024		1,913	-	1,913	1,664
Surplus/(Deficit) for year		4,737	-	4,737	249
Balance as at 30 November 2025		6,650	-	6,650	1,913
Bank & Cash Balances					
Cash at Bank		6,650	-	6,650	1,913
		6,650	-	6,650	1,913
Liabilities					
Independent Examination		330	-	330	300
		330	-	330	300

The Notes on pages 10 to 11 form an integral part of these accounts.

These accounts were approved by the trustees on 25 July 2026 and signed on their behalf by:



Paul Hudson
Trustee



Ann Landmann
Trustee

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2025

1. Basis of Preparation

These accounts have been prepared on the receipts & payments basis in accordance with:

- (a) The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005
- (b) The Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

There have been no changes to the basis of preparation or to the previous year's accounts.

2. Fund Accounting

- (a) Unrestricted funds are those that can be expended at the discretion of the trustees in the furtherance of the objects of the charity.
- (b) Restricted funds are those that may only be used for specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor, or when funds are raised for specific purposes.
- (c) The purposes of the funds are shown in Note 8.

3. Taxation

- (a) The charity is not liable to income tax or capital gains tax on its charitable activities.
- (b) The charity is not registered for VAT, thus all costs are shown inclusive of VAT charged.

4. Transactions with trustees and related parties

- (a) No remuneration was paid to trustees or any persons connected with them during the year (2024: £Nil).
- (b) No expenses were reimbursed to the trustees during the year (2024: £Nil).

5. Grants received

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£
Creative Scotland	17,597	-	17,597	14,838
Scottish Book Trust for Book Week Scotland	-	700	700	-
	17,597	700	18,297	14,838

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2025

6. Payments relating to Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£
Speaker Costs	26,749	1,008	27,757	27,374
Venue Costs	18,163	-	18,163	11,730
Catering/Hospitality	12,139	-	12,139	9,544
Staffing Costs	6,425	-	6,425	5,713
Digital Events	3,110	-	3,110	2,614
Loan Repayment	2,500	-	2,500	-
Promotions	1,364	-	1,364	73
Marketing	638	-	638	1,373
Administration	321	-	321	832
IT & Websites	611	-	611	647
Travel	153	-	153	112
Volunteers	-	-	-	669
	72,173	1,008	73,181	60,681

7. Movements in Funds

	As at 30/11/2024	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	As at 30/11/2025
<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	£	£	£	£	£
General Fund	1,913	77,518	(72,473)	(308)	6,650
<u>Restricted Funds</u>					
Scotland's Future Forum	-	700	(1,008)	308	-
Total Funds	1,913	78,218	(73,481)	-	6,650

8. Purpose of Funds

Scotland's Future Forum	Restricted funds to be expended on the Cymera Prize for Speculative Short Fiction in conjunction with Shoreline of Infinity and Scotland's Future Forum.
Scottish Book Trust for Book Week Scotland	Restricted funds to be expended supporting the Cymera Writers Conference 2025.