

# Yorkshire Universities

2021–2022 Annual  
Report and Accounts



**Reference and administrative details for the year ended 31 July 2022**

**Registered office:** 22 Clarendon Place, Leeds, LS2 9JY

**Registered company number:** 03467035

**Registered charity number:** 1109200

**Independent examiner:** Mark Heaton FCCA DChA FCIE  
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## CHAIR'S FOREWORD

It is my pleasure to introduce the 2021-22 Annual Report for Yorkshire Universities (YU). In my second and final year as YU Chair, it has been wonderful to see real progress and the growing collaboration that exists between members and with partners, which YU has been instrumental in forging.

The past twelve months has seen the higher education sector continue to manage the profound implications of COVID-19, particularly as we have moved towards the resumption of a degree of normality. I am proud that universities in Yorkshire have played a leading role in supporting the health response to the pandemic. This includes actions to promote positive mental health and wellbeing amongst our student population. Unfortunately, the impacts of the virus are still evident across all parts of the region; and they will be for some time. The economic instability we now find ourselves in will affect the sector, but YU members will work with government and local institutions to try and alleviate some of the implications of the 'cost of living' crisis.

This year, we embarked upon developing a new 2022-25 Strategy, finalised after an extensive period of consultation with members and partners. Having worked within an existing framework that shaped how YU could support the government's levelling up agenda, we now have a new plan that identifies YU's contribution towards the region's economic and social development and prosperity. The new Strategy builds on valuable activity undertaken in relation to climate change and the environment, health and well-being, skills and innovation, and enterprise.

One of the final decisions the YU Board took this year was to agree the submission of a business case to the Research England Development (RED) Fund for funding to establish the Yorkshire and Humber Policy Engagement and Research Network (Y-PERN). I was delighted that the proposal was successful, and that significant new investment will be coming to Yorkshire to take forward our ambitions to strengthen the partnerships between the region's research base and policymakers. The Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement (CAPE) Fellowship, based within the YU Executive Team, has been pivotal to the successful RED Fund bid. As was the Memorandum of Understanding we have with our friends at Yorkshire & Humber Councils.

In 2021, Professor Susan Lea announced that she would be stepping down from her role as Vice-Chancellor at the University of Hull at the end of the 2021-22 academic year. I would like to thank Susan for her commitment to YU, and we welcome Professor Dave Petley to the YU Board as he takes over from Susan at Hull.

I would also like to congratulate Professor Karen Bryan, my successor as YU Chair. Karen led YU's recent work on graduate employment and employability, which culminated in the publication in May this year of an authoritative report on the graduate labour market in Yorkshire, which included specific actions designed to increase support for the region's students and graduates entering the world of work. Karen will be an excellent Chair of the Board and I am looking forward to supporting her in her new role.

Finally, I am grateful to the Executive Director, Dr Peter O'Brien, and his team, for their support and advice during my time as Chair. YU finds itself in a strong position – perhaps the strongest for many years. With a new Chair, a new Strategy and real sense of purpose and momentum, the partnership has a very bright future.



**Professor Shirley Congdon**

## **STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

The trustees (who are also the directors of Yorkshire Universities for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the report of the trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. These should give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement Of Recommended Practice (SORP).
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## GOVERNANCE, STRUCTURE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

### Governance

Founded in 1987, Yorkshire Universities (YU) is a charity and a company limited by guarantee. Its governing documents are the Articles of Association, last amended on 2 July 2020, which can be accessed on the YU website under the [Members and Governance page](#).

YU represents eleven universities and one specialist higher education institution: the universities of Bradford, Huddersfield, Hull, Leeds, Leeds Arts, Leeds Beckett, Leeds Trinity, Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam, York, and York St John, together with Leeds Conservatoire. The vice-chancellors and principals of these institutions are the members of the company, forming its board of directors. The Board meets three times a year, regularly monitoring the organisation's performance, and setting the strategic priorities for YU.

### Board of Trustees:

Leeds Arts University	<b>Professor Simone Wonnacott, Vice-Chancellor</b>
Leeds Beckett University	<b>Professor Peter Slee, Vice-Chancellor</b>
Leeds Conservatoire	<b>Professor Joe Wilson, Principal</b>
Leeds Trinity University	<b>Professor Charles Egbu, Vice-Chancellor</b>
Sheffield Hallam University	<b>Professor Sir Chris Husbands, Vice-Chancellor</b>
University of Bradford	<b>Professor Shirley Congdon, Vice-Chancellor</b> <i>Chair of the YU Board</i>
University of Huddersfield	<b>Professor Bob Cryan CBE, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive</b>
University of Hull	<b>Professor Susan Lea, Vice-Chancellor</b> <i>Replaced by Professor Dave Petley on 1 September 2022.</i>
University of Leeds	<b>Professor Simone Buitendijk, Vice-Chancellor</b>
University of Sheffield	<b>Professor Koen Lamberts, President and Vice-Chancellor</b>
University of York	<b>Professor Charlie Jeffery CBE, Vice-Chancellor and President</b>
York St John University	<b>Professor Karen Bryan OBE, Vice-Chancellor</b>

## **New trustees**

New trustees are welcomed by the Chair of the Board and the Executive Director (ED) and receive briefings about the strategic aims and objectives of YU. Any further initial preparation is agreed on an individual basis. YU maintains a staff handbook, which includes policies, procedures and governance information; this is regularly updated. The ED reports on attendance at the Board to the Chair, agreeing any necessary action.

## **The Board has two sub-committees:**

- The Audit Committee (AC): that reviews YU's policies and procedures and authorises any changes; it oversees the organisation's independent examination and advises the Board on follow-up actions. The AC meets at least twice a year.
- The Human Resources (HR) Committee: chaired by the Chair of the Board, is responsible for appointing and performance-managing the ED and dealing with relevant staffing issues as necessary. The HR Committee meets at least once a year.

## **Structure**

The Regional Development Group (RDG), chaired by Dr Sarah Want, University of Sheffield, acts as the main vehicle for members to operationalise and provide advice and guidance on the implementation of the YU Strategy. A West Yorkshire Higher Education Economic Development Group (WYHEEDG), co-chaired by Dr Liam Sutton, University of Bradford, is the collaborative interface between the nine YU members in Leeds City Region (LCR) and the West Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (WYMCA) /LCR LEP. An informal network of policy and communication advisers also meets under the auspices of the Policy and Communications Network (PCN).

In addition, YU convenes meetings and groups of members and partners as and when issues and matters arise or require detailed consideration, including on a task and finish basis. Communications with members and partners are delivered through a Weekly Digest, quarterly Newsletter, blogs and various social media platforms. The Chair and ED are also regular contributors in the regional press and media on matters relating to higher education.

As of 31 July 2022, the YU core Executive Team consisted of the following:

Three employees:

- Dr Peter O'Brien, Executive Director (also Company Secretary).
- Marina Tapley, Policy and Research Officer
- Monika Antal, Executive Manager.

Three contractors:

- Executive Assistant (Emma Dick)
- Accountant (Mark Hill)
- and one associate who supports the ED and Executive Manager in policy development and implementing the strategic and operational plans (James Ransom).

One secondment:

- Dr Richard Whittle, Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement (CAPE) Regional Development Fellow, was seconded to YU to work with YU and the Place-based Economic Recovery Network (PERN) on 1 July 2021 on an initial 12-month contract that was facilitated by University College London. At the time of reporting the contract was extended for a further 3-months beyond July 2022 (until 1 November 2022).

## **Risk management**

For membership organisations, such as YU, the principal risks relate to member engagement and maintaining sufficient income levels for the charity to continue and to develop and deliver its work. Additionally, risks are posed by changes in the external macro environment, such as new government policies or economic and societal shocks. These risks are reviewed on a regular basis and action taken as appropriate. YU reviews its strategy regularly to ensure it remains current and resilient; the new YU Strategy for 2022-25 was approved by the Board in June 2022. The organisation monitors its staffing complement to ensure it maintains sufficient capacity and appropriate structures to carry out operations aligned with its strategy. The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks that the charity faces and can confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reviews to be carried out to ensure necessary steps can be taken to mitigate these risks.

## **MISSION**

“Through our strategy, we will work collectively and collaboratively with partners to create more prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economies and communities in Yorkshire.”

## **Vision**

“As a regional partnership of higher education institutions, we have a shared commitment to place and to supporting aspiration and opportunity.”

## **Meeting and reporting on public benefit**

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission’s general guidance on public benefit, ‘Charities and Public Benefit’. The structure of the trustees’ annual report allows us to report on our strategic aims, our activities and achievements during the year and outline our future plans for 2022-23. We have embedded examples of how YU meets the public benefit requirement throughout our report. Examples of highlights can be found in the next section; you can find a detailed version of the YU 2019-22 strategy on the website.



## OBJECTIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

YU's 2019-22 Strategy has focused on delivering activities against three priorities, each with specific objectives:

1. Ideas: Strengthen HE contributions towards increased research and innovation activity in the region.
2. Talent: Extend and deepen partnership to improve higher level skills pathways into continuous development and learning.
3. Communities: Ensure universities / HE are recognised as influential anchor institutions.

In addition, there are a number of crosscutting enabling mechanisms: governance, finance, communications, partnerships, executive services, intelligence & analysis, monitoring & evaluation, each with specific objectives. A summary is given below of the objectives for each of these four priority areas, together with examples of activity and achievements in the third and final year of the 2021-22 Strategy.

### **Ideas: Strengthen HE contributions towards increased research and innovation activity in the region.**

#### **Objectives:**

- Promote HE research and innovation (R&I) assets and strengths within Yorkshire.
- Persuade government, UK Research & Innovation (UKRI), Combined Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and others to create more place-sensitive R&I systems.
- Encourage members to connect R&I capabilities across institutions and disciplines.
- Advocate stronger integration of R&I with economic development policies (including skills policies), strategies and funding.

#### **Activities and achievements:**

We supported the development of R&I frameworks in the region by being an active member of the WY Innovation Network. S, supported a WY Innovation Deal proposal through the WY Higher Education and Economic Development Group and contributed to the development of the next edition of the WY Innovation Festival.

- YU has fed into consultations on the LCR LEP Trade Strategy and Health Strategy to strengthen the understanding of the value of HEIs and their contribution innovation.
- Through RDG and PCN we have been able to discuss and keep our members up to date on developments related to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and other local and sub-regional investment plans.
- YU has facilitated conversations between Innovate UK and RDG members around the potential for a new mechanism to expand the number of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships in the region.
- We continued to support Space Hub Yorkshire (SHY) by contributing towards the submission of the SHY Strategy to the UK Space Agency and also work with SHY Engagement Managers and YU Members to implement the Strategy in Yorkshire .

- We influenced the UKRI 'Place Agenda' as part of the Levelling Up White Paper and UKRI's 2022-27 Strategy: YU participated in UKRI Place Toolkit consultation meetings and submitted written comments on the draft Toolkit.
- Through the successfully leveraged, CAPE Development Fellowship and the Place-based Economic Recovery Network (PERN), we continued to create stronger links between academic researchers and policymakers and lead on innovative projects to strengthen the use and application of university research to inform public policy at the WY Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA). The RED Fund Business Case to expand PERN to a Yorkshire-wide Y-PERN was developed in collaboration with University of Leeds colleagues, members and partners, submitted at the end of June 2022. The project was subsequently recommended for funding by Research England, which will have major implications for YU's activity in the coming three years.
- YU was invited by JiSC to join UKRI and other regional HE consortia (such as Eastern Arc, GW4, N8, Midlands Innovation) to discuss the future of research asset sharing (equipment.data service Jisc has run since 2014) and bring together knowledge about research equipment.
- The joint evidence YU prepared with the N8 Research Partnership informed and was quoted extensively in a new report published on 10 March 2022 by Policy Connect and the Higher Education Commission, entitled 'Empowering Innovation: The role of universities in boosting regional economies'. The ED attended the launch of the report at the House of Commons.
- We continued to make the case for more private sector investment in innovation-led growth in the region, across different sectors. This year, we published a discussion paper 'Universities and 'Place Promotion' in West Yorkshire' in which we outlined some of the key issues shaping the contribution of universities and HE institutions to the promotion of place, and to attracting inward investment and increased trade into Yorkshire and the Humber (Y&H).

#### **Related think pieces and communications:**

- [Universities and 'Place Promotion' in West Yorkshire](#) (discussion paper).
- [Why we need more inward investment to meet our R&D targets](#) (blog).
- [CAPE Case Study: Richard Whittle, Policy Fellow](#) (blog).
- [Working together, universities can connect diverse research assets, for the benefit of all](#) (blog).
- [Yorkshire Universities responds to the REF 2021 results](#) (statement).

#### **Talent: Extend and deepen partnership to improve higher level skills pathways into continuous development and learning.**

##### **Objectives:**

- Strengthen knowledge of the supply and demand for higher level skills in the region.
- Work with members and partners to improve graduate retention and job accessibility in the region.
- Align technical and vocational training, skills and learning to key sector and industry needs.
- Increase knowledge exchange and diffusion to support high growth, innovation and scaled-up firms.

### Activities and achievements:

- YU has been an active member of the WY Skills & Employment Committee and the Local Digital Skills Partnership Board who have been instrumental in developing and structuring strategies, and work programmes around the mayoral pledges.
- We continued to build and strengthen the strategic dialogue with the FE sector at a regional level through the WY Skills Partnership, contributed to the annual skills conference, and are scoping a joint event in response to the Civic University Network (CUN) & Association of Colleges 'Going Further and Higher' report.
- We continued to convene a region-wide network with the four sub-regional Uni Connect teams in Yorkshire to share knowledge, information, and intelligence.
- YU supported the Y&H Made Smarter pilot to support manufacturing companies with digital adoption, through representing the HE sector on the programme Steering Group. Through this we have highlighted the role of HE in innovation and developed internship opportunities for students. YU has supported the Made Smarter team to understand the current internships landscape so that they can continue to encourage internship opportunities in the second phase of the project.
- YU prepared a response to the Department for Education's consultations on Higher Education Reforms and the Lifelong Loan Entitlement, following discussion on this at Board level. The YU responses built on analysis around the impacts to learning and skills in Yorkshire and was centred around place and collaboration, as core areas of YU's strategy and experience, in order to add value to responses from individual HEIs and other membership organisations.
- We coordinated a task & finish group chaired by the Vice-Chancellor of York St John University, Professor Karen Bryan OBE, which brought together the skills teams from West and South Yorkshire MCAs, Hull/East Yorkshire and York and North Yorkshire LEP with business representatives and university enterprise and careers professionals. The aim was to agree a set of shared priorities that could collectively support graduate opportunities and outcomes in the region. These were published in the joint report: 'Supporting Graduate Employment and Employability in Yorkshire'. The implementation group chaired by Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Huddersfield, Professor Tim Thornton, has been established and will be tasked with developing a work programme.

### Related consultation response:

- [Response by Yorkshire Universities to the proposed changes to the funding of higher education in England.](#)
- [YU responds to DfE Higher Education and Lifelong Loan Entitlement consultations.](#)

### Think pieces and communications:

- [Plan to Improve Graduate Employment and Employability in Yorkshire – YU Launches New Report](#) (statement & report).
- [Y&H Student Mental Health Network](#) (statement & event).
- [Six projects to improve Black, Asian and minority ethnic students' access to postgraduate research in Yorkshire](#) (statement).

**Speaking roles:**

- ED spoke at the annual WY Skills Conference: Sustainability Through Skills.
- Chair of YU Graduate task & finish group was the keynote speaker role at the Universities UK 2022 Employability and Skills Conference and as a panellist at the Westminster Insight's Graduate Employability Conference.

**Communities: Ensure universities / HE are recognised as influential anchor institutions.****Objectives:**

- Support members to address the issues arising from climate change.
- Stimulate and share learning on civic universities and anchor institution strategies and activities.
- Promote the public value of HE in and for the region.
- Strengthen partnerships between HE, health and other sectors to drive more inclusive growth and well-being.

**Activities and achievements:**

- YU continued to make the case for universities, acting as anchors institutions with the health and care sector, local government and other partners by building on the YHealth4 Growth campaign with Y&H Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) and NHS Confederation. The recommendations in the YHealth4Growth report feature in the Levelling Up White Paper. Next steps for the campaign are being planned.
- We have been strengthening our relationship with the Y&H Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) and organised a second annual conference on student mental health and wellbeing, which was hosted at the University of Bradford and chaired by YU's Chair, Professor Shirley Congdon. Plans are underway to continue supporting the community of practice network.
- We continued working with the Civic University Network and other national and regional groups on anchor institutions to share knowledge and insights. YU is a member of the Regional Anchor Institutions Network. We continued to provide a forum for members to share learning on civic university/anchor institution activity through the YU PCN and invited guest speakers to the group too.
- We produced statements on the value of YU members to the region's efforts re. COVID-19, recovery and levelling up including a regional overview of member activity re. COVID-19 and commissioned a future impact analysis of YU members.
- We have worked closely with the Y&H Climate Commission (YHCC), including in the delivery of the YHCC Regional Climate Action Plan, through convening the YHCC Research and Evidence Panel and the ED's membership as a Commissioner on the YHCC. We continue to work closely with our members on supporting the YHCC, engaging academics with the Regional Climate Action Plan and engaging the leadership with the climate pledge and co-developing the regional leadership training programme.
- We developed a project bid for a regional sustainability service-learning brokerage pilot and submitted it to the UPP Foundation for consideration.
- YU was involved in the development of Project Yorkshire, which has promoted the value of HE within a broader campaign to promote the region.

### **Think pieces and communications:**

- [Solidarity or spectacle – two paths to levelling up \(blog\).](#)
- [Yorkshire Universities welcomes the publication of the Y&H Climate Action Plan \(statement\).](#)
- [Call to engage with the implementation of the Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission's Regional Climate Action Plan.](#)

### **Speaking roles / presentations:**

- Contributed to publications on the value of HE and YU members, especially in the context of COVID-19 and 'levelling up'. The YU Chair and ED provided press and media commentary, including BBC Look North, Yorkshire Post and other regional and trade press.

### **Enabling mechanisms.**

#### **Objectives:**

- Strengthen our relationships with national, regional and local partners to influence policy and strategy.
- Use innovative methods to communicate our messages to members and external audiences.
- Act as a 'knowledge hub' of information, intelligence and new ideas, drawing upon high-quality research and examples of successful practical action.
- Operate as an outstanding membership-based organisation.
- Embrace continuous learning and development.
- Monitor and evaluate performance to ensure key indicators and measures of success are met.

#### **Activities and achievements:**

- YU has been an active member of the Yorkshire & North Lincolnshire APPG on behalf of YU members.
- Each week, we collated policy developments in the areas relevant to HE, economic and regional development, skills, and R&I and produced a 'YU Weekly Digest' for over 200 recipients to read.
- YU has kept HEI leadership apprised of key developments and their potential impacts to the region by providing bespoke analysis on issues, including the Spending Review, Levelling Up White Paper, and Post-18 Education reforms. This intelligence was also supplemented by inviting external speakers to Board meetings. This year, contributions were received from Nick Hillman, Director of the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI), and Matthew Taylor CBE, Chief Executive, NHS Confederation. Additional meetings with Board members were also organised, and these included key figures such as Angela MacDonald, Second Permanent Secretary, HMRC and Yorkshire lead on the Cabinet Office-led Places for Growth Programme and the Chief Executive of the UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB), John Flint.
- We convened meetings between the YU Board and the Y&H Local Authority Chief Executive Group, to provide guidance on a joint definition of levelling up and what it means in practice for Yorkshire, higher education and local government. Following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in 2021, a joint Levelling Up

Position Statement was published, and scoping for developing a new Y&H Vitality Index started in 2022.

- We provided evidence on research strengths to inform bids from the region to the Great British Rail HQ competition and expressed support for Bradford 2025 City of Culture Bid.
- Through our WY Higher Education Economic Development group, we brought together experts from across the YU members to inform the WY Cultural Framework, the LCR LEP Trade Strategy and Health Strategy, and inform national Department for Education consultations.
- We continued to strengthen our relationships through a range of meetings and communications e.g. Y&H Councils, MCAs, LEPs, UUK, HEPI, government departments and agencies, etc. as well as convening the LCR Vice-Chancellors' meetings with LCR LEP Chair Sir Roger Marsh and WY Mayor Tracy Brabin. We produced a detailed overview of ongoing and potential YU member activity across the WY mayoral pledges to inform the evaluation of the Mayor's first year in office and planning beyond it.
- We scheduled a series of 1-2-1 meetings between the YU Chair, ED and Board members in order ensure that member priorities, in what has been an uncertain and evolving political and economic environment, continued to be recognised and reflected by YU.
- We completed the annual independent examination and produced the 2020-21 Annual Report and Accounts and accompanying Executive Summary.
- We developed a new 2022-25 Strategy for YU in consultation with the Board and wider partners and stakeholders.
- We successfully recruited a new Policy & Research Officer and integrated them into the team while we continued to work seamlessly using both remote and hybrid arrangements.

**Established groups and panels that YU participated in this year and made the case for our members and HE in the region:**

- Universities UK Task and Finish Group on Universities and Economic and Social Recovery; Leeds Beckett University External Engagement Advisory Group; Yorkshire & Humber Academic Health Science Network Strategic Advisory Board; National Institute for Health Research Applied Research Consortium Board in Y&H; Y&H Strategic Migration Group; Y&H Applied (Health) Research Collaboration Strategy Board; Welcome to Yorkshire Tourism Recovery Task Force; COP26 University Network; Y&H Climate Commission Core Steering Group; Y&H Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) Anchors Network.

**WYMCA and LCR LEP groups YU was involved in during 2021-22:**

- UK Shared Prosperity Fund Group (previously the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) Committee), Inclusive Growth and Public Policy, Innovation Network (and Framework development), WY Skills Partnership,
- Business Innovation and Growth Committee, Business Communications Group, Employment and Skills Committee, Local Digital Skills Partnership Board, Go Higher West Yorkshire Board.
- The YU Chair, Professor Shirley Congdon, is also a member of the LCR LEP Board and WY Economic Recovery Board.

## Related communications and consultation responses:

- [Levelling Up in Yorkshire and the Humber – A Position Statement by Yorkshire Universities and Yorkshire & Humber Councils](#)
- [Yorkshire Universities responds to the Levelling Up White Paper](#)
- [YU's take on the 2021 NCUB State of the Relationship Report](#)
- [Introducing YU's new Policy and Research Officer](#)
- [Levelling up is not a zero-sum game](#)
- [Yorkshire Universities congratulates Bradford on becoming UK City of Culture 2025](#)
- [Professor Karen Bryan appointed new Chair of Yorkshire Universities](#)
- Winner submissions of the student blog competition on Levelling Up:
  - [Levelling up and the dangers of rebranding equality](#)
  - [What on earth is 'levelling up'?](#)

## Speaking roles:

- ED spoke at Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire APPG webinar on Levelling Up Skills in Yorkshire.

## FUTURE PLANS

In looking ahead to 2022-23, we will be delivering the objectives set out in the new 2022-25 Strategy that has been developed in consultation with the Board, members and partners. The 2022-25 Strategy, which was signed off by the Board on 28 June 2022, is underpinned by a shared vision of the power and potential of Yorkshire and its global connections, has four key priorities:

- 1. Championing civic leadership in Yorkshire.**
- 2. Championing Yorkshire knowledge and skills.**
- 3. Brokering and leading partnerships.**
- 4. Promoting the value of higher education to society, culture and the economy.**

**Championing civic leadership in Yorkshire** – in our communities, towns and cities. Our work will support leadership by universities in building places where inequalities are challenged and eliminated. We will enable institutions to play their part in generating a greater sense of belonging in communities. YU will work with partners to strengthen the unique brand of Yorkshire on the national and global stage. We will be ambassadors for our members, enhancing the region's profile and helping to attract Foreign Direct Investment, Trade and Jobs. We will represent and support the case for greater devolution in Yorkshire. We will encourage and enable creative solutions that address the key opportunities and challenges facing the region. We will support our members to strengthen resilience and belonging in our communities.

**Championing Yorkshire Knowledge and Skills** – providing a platform for collaboration in research, innovation and knowledge exchange. Our aim of attracting more R&I funding to Yorkshire will help generate greater productivity, prosperity and employment. We will prioritise six themes of Climate, Health, Technology, Social Justice, Infrastructure and Capability. We will work towards Yorkshire being the most compelling and creative place in the UK for start-ups and scaleups in key sectors. We will ensure that the region harnesses

the full power and knowledge of our universities' graduates and post-graduates, through a proactive campaign. This will be the backbone of our employment and skills drive.

**Brokering and leading partnerships** – we will create the opportunities for strategic conversations that generate new ideas, fresh insights and innovation. We will have the confidence to challenge and disrupt thinking. We will also deliver on specific initiatives, which support our mission and priorities.

**Promoting the value of higher education to society, culture and the economy** – as an organisation, we will build a strong profile for the HE sector in Yorkshire through our use of data and intelligence. We will become expert in capturing and evaluating evidence on our performance as a sector. We will demonstrate how universities contribute to improved wellbeing and social mobility in cities, towns and communities.

The successful collaborative bid to the Research England Development (RED) Fund for funding to establish Y-PERN, signals a step-change in YU's ability to convene, identify and realise new opportunities for investment in the region. The University of Leeds will act as the accountable body for the Y-PERN project, on behalf of a wide consortium, which will be tasked with enhancing research policy engagement within and across Yorkshire. We believe that this project will raise the visibility and profile of YU, and it will help to strengthen our partnerships with key national and regional institutions and sectors.



## FINANCIAL REVIEW

During the year, YU received £221k in general and designated funding (2021: £224k) including membership subscriptions. Membership subscriptions of £199k (2021: £199k) forms the bulk of YU's voluntary income for 2021-22.

At the end of the year, we are taking forward £55k (2021: £106k) of reserves. The use of funds is described in note 9 in to the '[Notes to the financial statements](#)'. Our designated West Yorkshire PERN / CAPE fund was at £23k on 31 July 2022 (2021: £23k).

In addition to current account balances, we hold £108k (2021: £137k) of these balances in deposit accounts. These are in excess of the actual fund balances. Funds are invested on bank deposit at the best rate obtainable, with recognised financial institutions and banks.

### Reserves policy

Our reserves policy sets unrestricted reserves to be held to meet the working capital requirements of the organisation, to meet specific costs (e.g. staff cover for illness and maternity leave) and to meet contractual liabilities should the organisation have to close. The policy requires the organisation's unrestricted reserves to be between a fifth and a sixth of its unrestricted budget expenditure. This was between £42k and £50k for anticipated unrestricted costs in 2021-22 (2020-21: between £42k and £50k). At £55k (July 2021 £106k) our general reserves exceeded the target band.

As explained in pension costs note 3 in '[Notes to the financial statements](#)', we also carry a long-term pension provision of £50k (2021: £50k), which the Board does not expect to crystallise.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on 28 November 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



**Professor Shirley Congdon**  
Chair of the Board

# REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER TO THE TRUSTEES OF YORKSHIRE UNIVERSITIES

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 July 2022, which are set out on pages 16 to 22.

## Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

## Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached. Signed on 28 November 2022 by:



Mark Heaton FCCA DChA FCIE  
KM Chartered Accountants  
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## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(including the income and expenditure account)

for the year ended 31 July 2022

	General funds 2022 £	Designated funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
<b>Income</b>				
General subscriptions income	198,952	21,000	219,952	222,952
Investment income: bank interest	934	0	934	970
Other incoming resources	90	0	21,090	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total income	199,976	21,000	220,976	223,922
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Total resources expended	250,038	21,120	271,158	208,794
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net (expenditure) / income and movement in funds for the year	(50,062)	(120)	(50,182)	15,128
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward	82,562	22,904	105,466	90,338
Funds carried forward	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	32,500	22,784	55,284	105,466

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All incoming resources and resources are expended in the current year.

## BALANCE SHEET as at 31 July 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	5	2	2
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors and Prepayments	6	2,551	2,392
Cash at bank		19,782	38,882
Cash on deposit		108,067	137,142
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>130,400</b>	<b>178,416</b>
<b>Liabilities:</b>			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	7	(25,318)	(23,152)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>105,082</b>	<b>155,264</b>
Creditors: Amounts falling due after one year	7	(49,800)	(49,800)
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>55,284</b>	<b>105,466</b>
<b>The funds of the Charity</b>			
Unrestricted revenue accumulated funds			
General funds		32,500	82,562
Designated funds		22,784	22,904
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>55,284</b>	<b>105,466</b>

For the year ended 31 July 2022 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of Companies Act 2006. The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the YU Board on 28 November 2022 and were signed on its behalf by:



**Professor Shirley Congdon**  
**(Chair of the Board)**

The ['Notes to the financial statements'](#) form part of these accounts.

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## 1. Accounting policies

The following accounting policies have been used consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the financial statements.

### a. Basis of preparation of accounts

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with Section 1a of Financial Reporting Standard 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland, and the Statement of Recommended Practice – “Accounting and Reporting for Charities: revised 2015” (Charities SORP 2015 FRS102) and the Companies Act 2006. YU meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

### b. Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of YU. Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for a specific purpose. Designated funds are funds which have been set aside from unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

Subscriptions income represents member subscriptions and unrestricted grants. There are no restricted funds.

### c. Incoming resources

All income is accounted for as soon as YU has entitlement to the income, there is certainty of receipt and the amount is quantifiable. Subscriptions are accounted for in the year to which they apply.

### d. Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been listed under headings that aggregate all the costs related to that activity. Where costs cannot be directly attributed they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of the resources. Direct costs, including directly attributable salaries, are allocated on an actual basis to the key strategic areas of activity.

### e. Pension Fund

The institution participates in the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). The assets of the scheme are held in a separate trustee-administered fund. Because of the mutual nature of the scheme, the assets are not attributed to individual institutions and a scheme-wide contribution rate is set. The institution is therefore exposed to actuarial risks associated with other institutions' employees and is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme on a consistent and reasonable basis. As required by Section 28 of FRS 102 “Employee benefits”, the institution therefore accounts for the scheme as if it were

a defined contribution scheme. As a result, the amount charged to the profit and loss account represents the contributions payable to the scheme. Since the institution has entered into an agreement (the Recovery Plan) that determines how each employer within the scheme will fund the overall deficit, the institution recognises a liability for the contributions payable that arise from the agreement (to the extent that they relate to the deficit) with related expenses being recognised through the profit and loss account.

#### **f. Fixed assets**

Individual assets with an individual or aggregate cost when acquired in excess of £2,000, and which are intended to be of ongoing use to YU in carrying out its activities, are capitalised as fixed assets. Depreciation is charged on tangible fixed assets at 25% of cost per annum, so as to write them off over their expected useful lives. Computer assets are fully depreciated in the year of purchase.

## **2. Employee information**

The full-time equivalent number of staff employed at the end of the year was 3 (2021:2). Contractor costs are not included in staff costs. Total employee costs during the year were £188k (2021: £148k) broken down as follows (all figures in £000s):

	2022	2021
Salaries	142	117
Social security costs	17	13
Employer pension	31	25
Change in pension shortfall accrual	0	0
Change in leave outstanding at year end	2	(3)
Employment allowance	(4)	(4)
<b>Total</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>148</b>

Note that contractor costs are not included in staff costs. There is one employee whose emoluments for the year exceeded £80,000.

## **3. Pension costs**

The total cost charged to the Statement of Financial Activities is £31k (2021: £25k) as shown in Note 2.

A formal valuation of the USS fund, as at 31 March 2022, is underway but not yet complete. Nevertheless, it is already apparent that the deficit has decreased radically. The USS annual accounts report that the deficit in 2022 has fallen 'to £1.5bn, from £14.1bn as at 31 March 2020 and £5.6bn as at 31 March 2021. Assets have risen substantially since the valuation date and, as anticipated in the 2020 valuation, this effect has outweighed the smaller increase in liabilities.' USS is now 98% funded.

The latest available complete actuarial valuation of the Retirement Income Builder is as at 31 March 2020 (the valuation date), and was carried out using the projected unit method.

Since the institution cannot identify its share of USS Retirement Income Builder (defined benefit) assets and liabilities, the following disclosures reflect those relevant for those assets and liabilities as a whole.

The 2020 valuation was the sixth valuation for the scheme under the scheme-specific funding regime introduced by the Pensions Act 2004, which requires schemes to have sufficient and appropriate assets to cover their technical provisions. At the valuation date, the value of the assets of the scheme was £66.5 billion and the value of the scheme's technical provisions was £80.6 billion indicating a shortfall of £14.1 billion and a funding ratio of 83%. The financial assumptions used in the 2020 valuation are described in the Statement of Funding Principles ([uss.co.uk/about-us/valuation-and-funding/statement-of-funding-principles](https://www.uss.co.uk/about-us/valuation-and-funding/statement-of-funding-principles)).

In accordance with FRS102, an accrual is held for the amortised anticipated costs of pension shortfall recovery payments anticipated now but be payable in future years. As the 2022 valuation reports a 98% funding ratio, this year we leave our provision unchanged. It has been £49.8k for three years. The deficit recovery plan that underpins this valuation required a payment of 6% from 30th Sept 2021. The liability figure was discounted over a ten year horizon at a rate of 2.59% (2021: 2.59%), and growth of 2.00% (2021 2.00%). Our annual deficit recovery contributions are £9k (2021: £7k). More detail of the costs and valuations for the USS pension scheme are available at: <https://www.uss.co.uk/about-us/valuation-and-funding/2020-valuation>

#### 4. Resources expended

a) Analysis of resources expended / £000s	Staff Costs	Consultant costs	Support costs	Total 2022	Total 2021
General	188	36	26	250	208
WY CAPE (Designated)	0	16	5	21	1
Total expended	188	52	31	271	209

b) Analysis of Consultant/ support costs / £000s	Core	WY CAPE Designated	Total 2022	Total 2021
Self-employed administrator & consultants	36	16	52	38
Independent examination	1		1	1
Director insurance	1		1	1
Premises	2		2	2
Phone, office and website	3	3	6	3
Travel costs	2		2	0
Subscriptions	2		2	4
Professional fees & insurance	10		10	11
Equipment	2		2	2
Staff Development	3	2	5	(1)
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>61</b>

## 5. Tangible fixed assets

	Office equipment £	Fixtures & fittings £	Total £
<b>Asset cost</b>			
At 1st Aug 2021	3,791	664	4,455
Additions	-	-	-
At 31st July 2022	3,791	664	4,455
<b>Accumulated depreciation</b>			
At 1st Aug 2021	3,790	663	4,453
Charge for the year	-	-	-
At 31st July 2022	3,790	663	4,453
<b>Net book value</b>			
At 31st July 2021	1	1	2
At 31st July 2022	1	1	2

## 6. Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Debtors	-	732
Accrued income	376	10
Prepaid expenses	2,175	1,650
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,551</b>	<b>2,392</b>

## 7. Creditors and commitments

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Short Term</b>		
Trade creditors/Credit cards	8,514	3,129
Accrued expenses	1,851	1,611
Employment Related	14,953	18,413
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,318</b>	<b>23,152</b>
<b>Long term</b>		
Pension shortfall accrual	49,800	49,800



## 8. Related party transactions

There were no transactions with related parties undertaken during the year such as are required to be disclosed in detail (2021: none). No remuneration was paid to any trustee during the year (2021: £Nil). There were transactions with the institutions represented by the charity's members that were all undertaken at arm's length, or at nil profit. Principal among these are costs from the University of Leeds for accommodation and supplied services.

## 9. Analysis of movement in funds

All figures in £000s	Brought forward	Incoming	Outgoing	Total 2022	Represented at bank (see below)
General funds:					
Unrestricted funds	82	200	250	32	105
Designated fund:					
West Yorks PERN	<u>23</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>23</u>
Total	<u>105</u>	<u>221</u>	<u>271</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>128</u>

The analysis of funds shows our funds are fully available in cash. The unrestricted general fund held as part of our bank and deposit balances is now £105k (2021: £152k).

The expectation is that the £23k closing balance on the Designated fund will be spent out during the forthcoming year. For the year of reporting, we held no restricted funds.

