



cabn

CREATIVE ARTS
BUSINESS NETWORK

ANNUAL REVIEW

September - August

2024-25

SUPPORT • CREATE • COLLABORATE





CABN'S WORK THIS YEAR HAS BEEN FUNDED BY CREATIVE SCOTLAND AND
DELIVERED BY SOUTHERN UPLANDS PARTNERSHIP

Our Mission

CABN, Creative Arts Business Network- works to develop, advocate for, catalyse and connect the creative sector in the Scottish Borders, focusing on professional practice while also welcoming emerging and community based creatives.

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Introduction

A warm welcome from the CABN Team

CABNs work over the past year has been delivered by Jane Somers, Catalyst for Engagement and Emily Moir, Catalyst for Communication with support from Southern Upland Partnership's Head of Culture, Climate & Community, Aidan Nicol.

In 2025, we are pleased to have taken steps forward for CABN's future, opening our CABN membership and becoming a constituted group. This has taken place alongside our ongoing Advocate programme of specialist artform support and delivery of a programme of networking opportunities, workshops and events delivered by 29 creative practitioners and reaching over 900 people this year.

A year full of firsts

SMALL GRANTS FUND

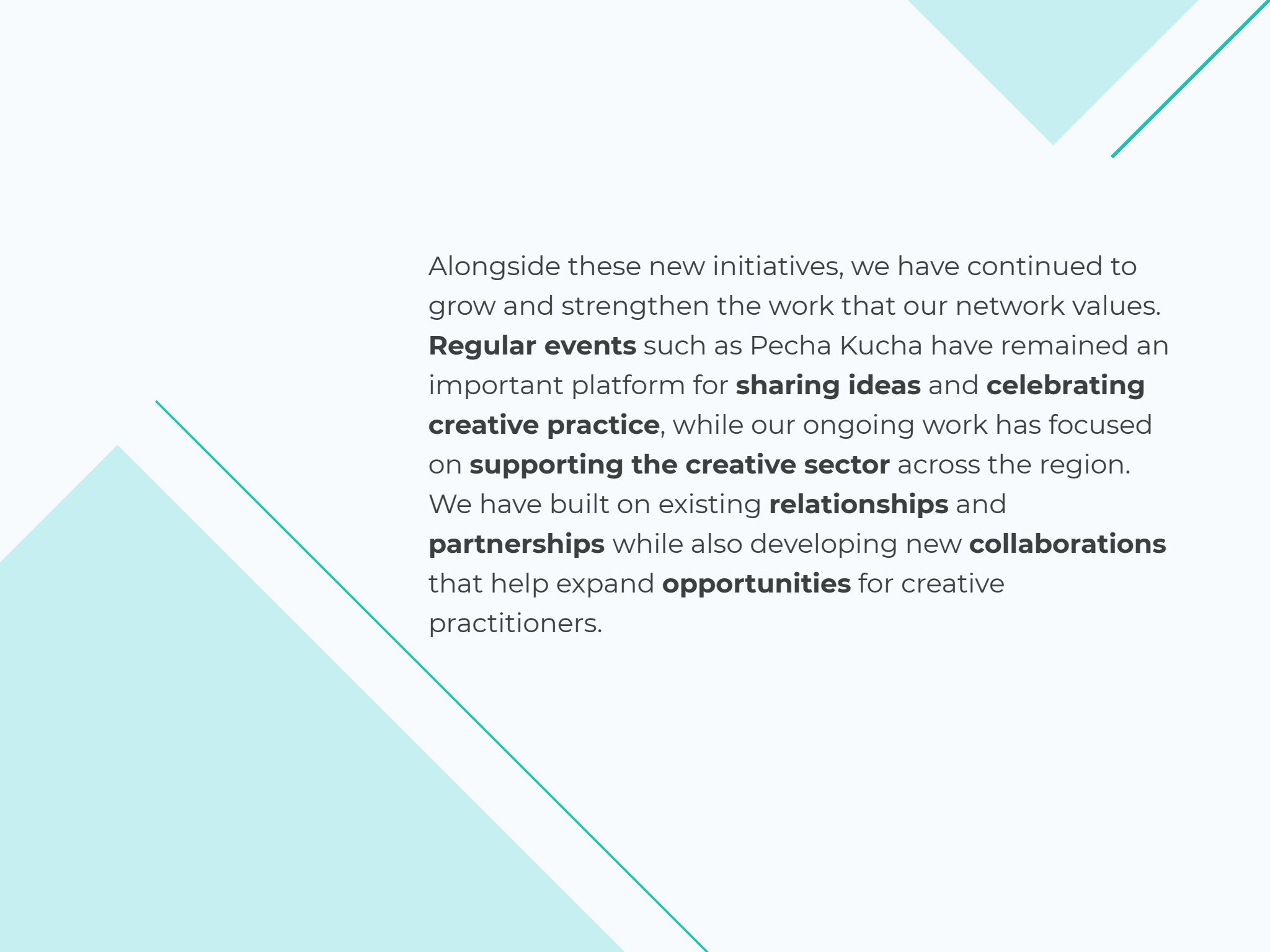
We launched our first Small Grants Fund, supporting creative practitioners to develop their ideas and projects.

FAMILY FRIENDLY MANIFEST

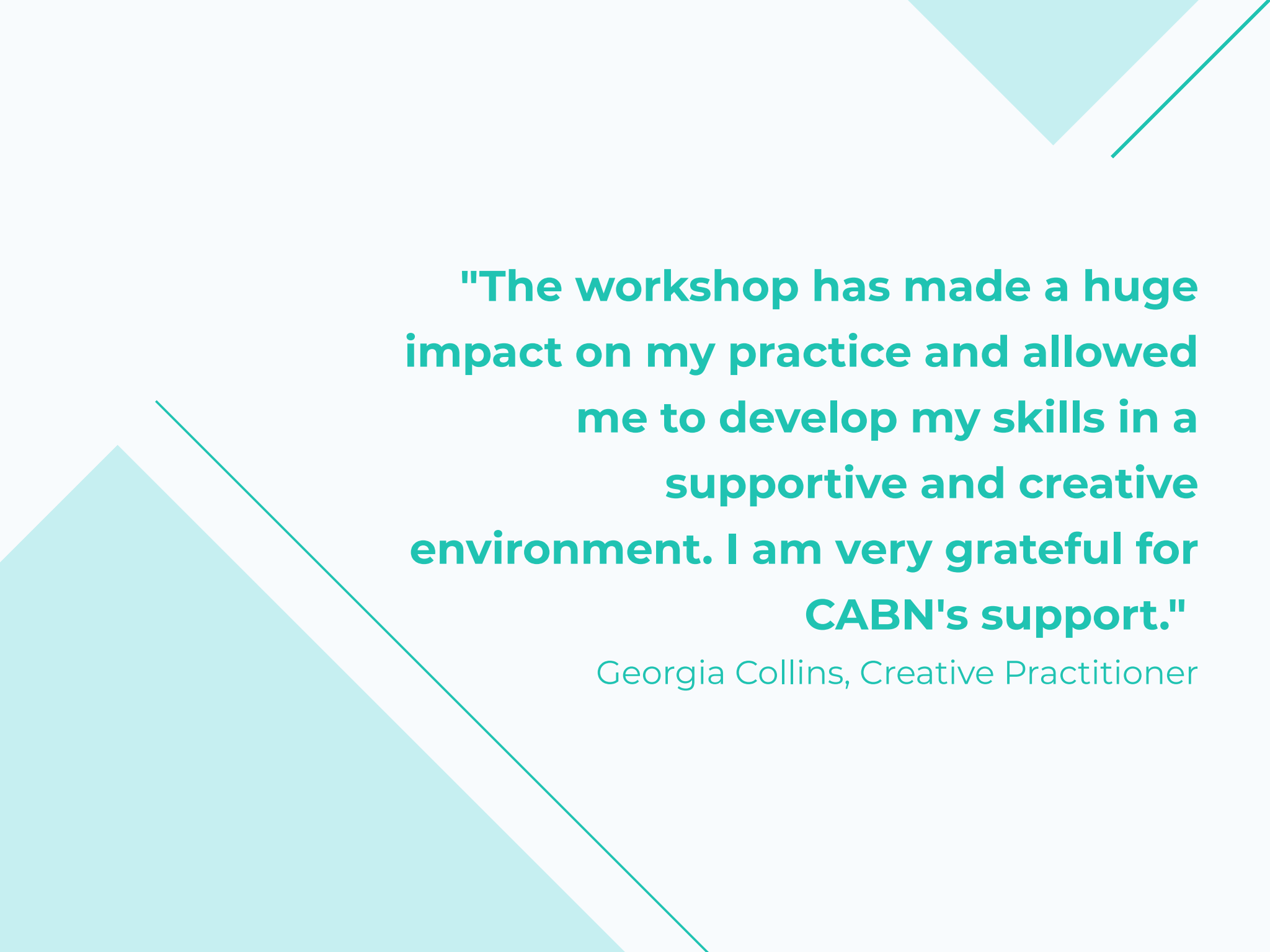
We hosted our first family-friendly Summer Manifest, ensuring creative practitioners with caring responsibilities could access networking opportunities, connection, creativity and conversation in a welcoming environment for all ages.

ANNUAL REVIEW

And now, we celebrate another first with the publication of this Annual Review — an opportunity to reflect on the work, partnerships and community that continue to shape CABN.



Alongside these new initiatives, we have continued to grow and strengthen the work that our network values. **Regular events** such as Pecha Kucha have remained an important platform for **sharing ideas** and **celebrating creative practice**, while our ongoing work has focused on **supporting the creative sector** across the region. We have built on existing **relationships** and **partnerships** while also developing new **collaborations** that help expand **opportunities** for creative practitioners.



"The workshop has made a huge impact on my practice and allowed me to develop my skills in a supportive and creative environment. I am very grateful for CABN's support."

Georgia Collins, Creative Practitioner



Our Year 2024 - 25



Upholding Our Values

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

We collaborated on **Culture for Climate Scotland's Springboard Local Assembly** event in Walkerburn with the Scottish Borders Climate Action Network and Connecting Threads

We provide ongoing support to creative workers to develop a more sustainable practice through the climate crisis.

As well as co-delivery of the Springboard Local Assembly, we partnered with **Circular Arts Scotland** to deliver a materials swap and share event in Galashiels. This was a highly successful event with **over 90 people** attending over the course of the day to make use of second-hand equipment and arts materials and learn about the Circular Arts network.

Upholding Our Values

DIVERSITY + INCLUSION

Drawing on our CABN equalities and monitoring survey data from 24/25, we know that of those who engaged with CABN activity 37% had caring responsibilities and 29% of respondents identified themselves as having a disability.

We know that **41%** of participants identified themselves as living in a 'remote rural' or 'rural' area of the Borders.

We had uptake of our **travel and caring bursaries for artists**, also known as **CABN Access Fund**, participating in our programme.

We also provided additional access support to one of our small grant scheme recipients who required a PA to support their delivery of the project, as a neurodiverse artist.

Upholding Our Values

Upholding Our Values

FAIR WORK

CABN is committed to upholding the principles of Fair Work by ensuring that artists and freelancers are recognised and remunerated appropriately for their expertise. We pay our Advocate network in line with Scottish Artists Union (SAU) recommended rates wherever possible, recognising the value of artists' time, knowledge and lived experience. Alongside fair pay, we strive to create an inclusive, respectful and supportive working environment where creative practitioners have meaningful opportunities to contribute, develop professionally, and influence the direction of the organisation.



Events Programme

Events Programme

Bringing people together

We reached **911 participants**
over
24 events

We delivered a programme of 24 events and workshops which offered opportunities to **skill-share and network** in the Borders.



CABN delivered a Summer **Manifest** event, a family-friendly gathering for creatives aimed to tackle access needs for those with caring responsibilities.

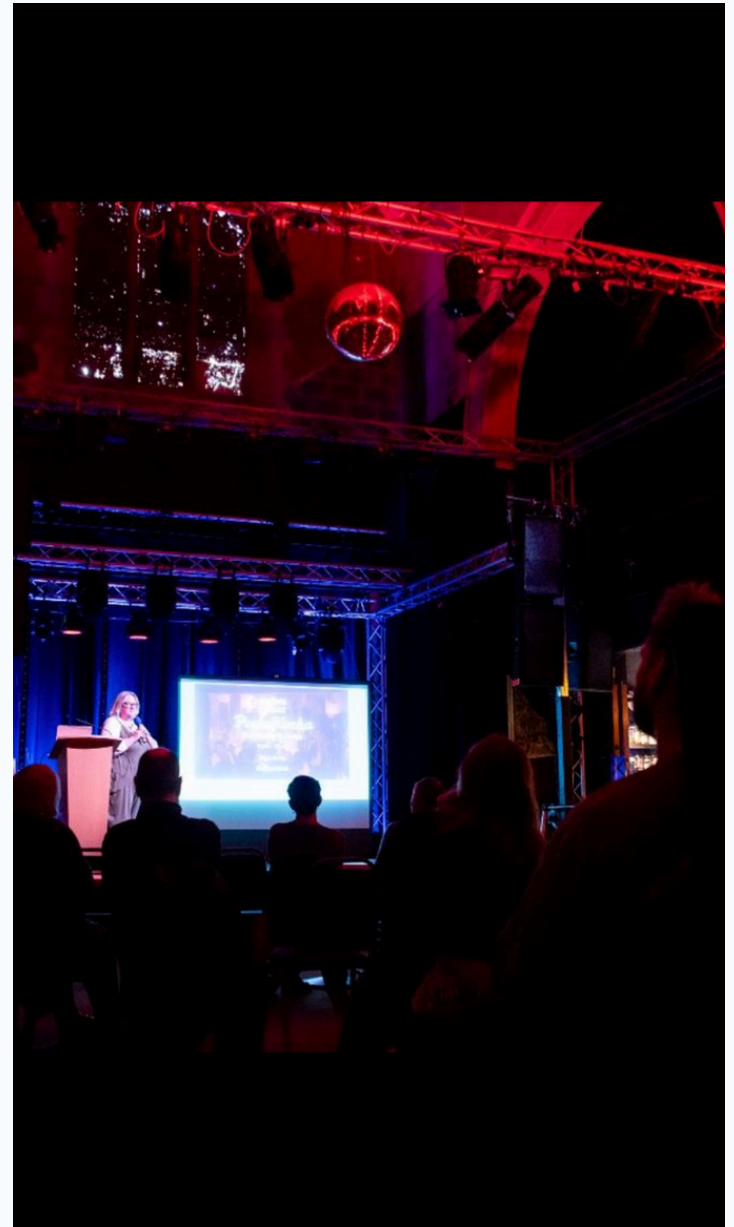
This event took place in Eyemouth at local arts venue the Hippodrome and featured performances from young musicians as well as a chance to network over food for creatives and their families.



Showcasing

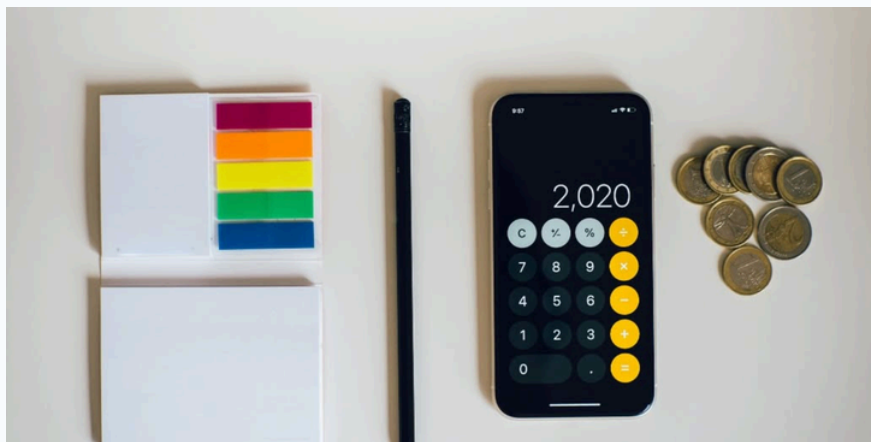
Our **Pecha Kucha** event showcased the work of **6** artists -Tom Swift, Lara Greene, Coz Harrison, Annie Lord, Jules Bradbury and James Wymes- with audiences in Galashiels.

We spotlighted creatives through our fortnightly then monthly e-bulletin feature and offered sharing space at our Summer and Winter gatherings.



Funding surgery

CABN led a fully booked funding surgery for creatives, held in Galashiels the intention was to offer 1:1 time to look at funding options/applications as well as giving an overview of the calendar of funding opportunities available in Scotland and locally.



Small Grant Fund

We delivered a small grant scheme, funding 3 development projects including a stained-glass workshop, pilot of a walking art residency in the Tweedsmuir hills and R&D with sharing of a new dance piece in Galashiels.

42

Total applicants

£

£4k Awarded

*“I would like to thank CABN for **funding this residency.** It was great as a performing **artist living in the Scottish Borders** to be able to access this kind of small award to **research and develop ideas.**”*



Partnerships & Projects



Young Creatives

An added goal this year was to reach more young people. Our Bloom Media project successfully engaged **28** young creatives **aged 12–18** in the Borders.

Working with Bloom Media and TDI Youth Hub, the project enabled young people to share what arts, culture and creativity mean to them, feeding their voices into the **SBC Culture Strategy development** and generating interest from Scottish Rural Action, who are considering screening the film at the 2025 Rural European Parliament.

CABN partnered with Live Borders to offer LGBT Youth subsidised tickets to events at Heart of Hawick.



Access Riders

We delivered training and upskilling sessions which benefit individuals as well as encouraging uptake of best practice within the sector, for example;

CABN worked with Door in the Wall, a CIC from Fife, to deliver specialist access rider training for creatives in the Borders. This took place in Hawick.

Toolkit

We supported development of a socially engaged 'toolkit' for artists with Transform Arts CIC.

Creative Spaces – support to Hub, Workspace and Facilities Development. We initiated new partnerships including with Borders College in Galashiels, as well as working with local businesses, e.g FINDRA to arrange use of space for artists events.

We developed working relationships with organisations offering networking opportunities, including Hugo Burge Foundation's artist coffee mornings. We supported SE Scotland Printmakers to establish their peer network.



Partnerships

We have developed new working relationships with:
Alchemy Film & Arts, Hugo Burge Foundation, Borders College.

CABN partnered with Live Borders to offer LGBT Youth subsidised tickets to events at Heart of Hawick.

We have also established a regular meeting with South of Scotland Enterprise Creative and Cultural team to share updates and work together better on provision of skill sessions and events in the region.



Advocacy

We introduced a **youth arts advocate** (Lisa Cowan) and engaged a **new visual arts advocate** (Gary Anderson), **performing arts advocate** (Clare Prenton) and **writing advocate** (Kerri Andrews)

Engaging more freelance Advocates from specialist backgrounds, enabled us to draw on expertise from across the sector – improving our knowledge and capacity to support a wide range of art form needs.

Working with our Advocates we were able to respond to expressed needs of the sector.

For example, working with Clare Prenton we partnered with Duns Play Fest to deliver a panel discussion for performing arts makers in the Borders for the first time.

CABN additionally had the opportunity to feed into **Scottish Borders Council's cultural strategy development** throughout 2024/2025 to give a voice to freelance creatives within the advisory group meetings.

Advocacy

STAFF

Our staff signposted
and met with
individuals to offer
advice

NETWORK SUPPORT

Signposted to other
organisations



ADVOCATES

Our Advocates provided specific art-
form support.

Our Advocates provided 18 one to
one sessions for creatives in the
Borders during the project period.

INFORMATION AND SIGNPOSTING



Membership & Mentoring

Membership

The programme has benefitted the development of CABN, with a now established membership who can support decision making, currently with **40 active members**. This will have a positive long-term benefit on CABNs work and will ensure real representation of the sector within future development of programmes as we move forward.

Mentoring research

We additionally arranged meetings with, and researched, 10 organisations delivering mentoring schemes in Scotland for creatives across a broad range of arts development bodies to understand different models, and the associated capacity demands. This included conversations with Upland, Creative Edinburgh, Wigtown Festival Company, Screenskills, Federation of Scottish Theatre, LUX and TRACS.



Marketing & Comms

Social media

Stats and results from our social media efforts this year

This year we focused on facebook and Instagram social content

1,300



167.2%

3,000



240.2%



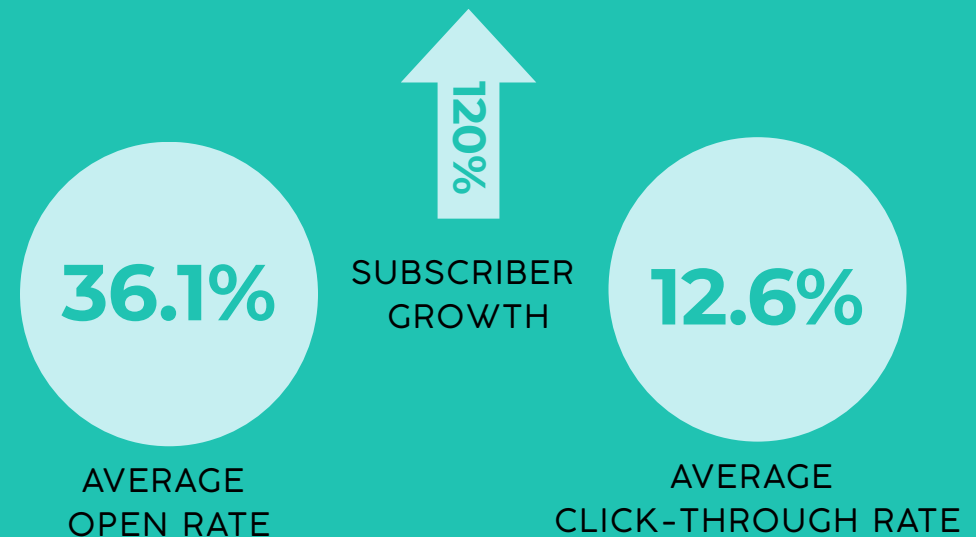
Facebook content interactions — likes, comments, shares — show how our audience engages with CABN's posts, highlighting what resonates and helping guide future content to better connect and build community.



Newsletters

Monthly Updates

We shared a fortnightly, then monthly e-bulletin (**31** during the project period) with our **272** subscribers, maintained a website and social media with regular updates and achievements from across the sector.





Staff

OVER THE COURSE OF THE PROJECT
WE EMPLOYED

3 PART-TIME STAFF

9 FREELANCE ARTISTS THROUGH
OUR ADVOCATE PROGRAMME AND

33 ARTISTS WERE ENGAGED ON A
PAID BASIS FOR DELIVERY OF
EVENTS/SESSIONS.



AIDAN NICOL

SUP
Head of Culture,
Climate &
Community



JANE SOMERS

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ENGAGEMENT



EMILY MOIR

CATALYST
COMMUNICATION

Meet the Team

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THANK YOU

www.cabn.info



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