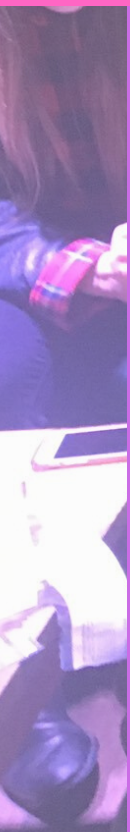


THE EMPOWER
PROJECT

ANNUAL REPORT

MARCH 1ST 2018 TO
FEBRUARY 28TH 2019



Hello and welcome to the Empower Project's second annual report.

As with all two year olds, we've experienced some pains along our journey in navigating the challenges of growing this past year, but have emerged triumphant and are ready to take on the future!

In the spirit of the Empower Project's rallying cry, Learn, Support, Resist, and Party!, this trustee's report is split into sections.



LEARN

With the help of our funders and the kind donations from supporters, we were able to develop a project looking at community responses to tech abuse, visiting 5 areas across Scotland (3 in 2018/2019, and 2 in 2019/2020). Sessions took place at the University of Edinburgh, Anima Women's Resource Centre, Aberdeen Uni, and in the Scottish Borders.

We made sure that we created spaces where young people (under 25) felt safe and comfortable in sharing their experiences and opinions on GBV manifested through tech and what community responses should be. Each session covered topics such as, what is tech abuse, what is sexual exploitation through tech, what have people's experiences with tech abuse been, and how we can respond to these problems as a community to support young people and amplify their voices.



SUPPORT

Using the knowledge gained from our sessions with young people from different communities across Scotland, we were able to provide training on tech abuse to fellow women's sector organisations such as Scottish Women's Aid, Rape Crisis - Argyll & Bute, Rape Crisis Scotland, and Dundee Women's Aid.



RESIST

There are many ways to resist the patriarchy and one way is to call s%!@ out! We launched a campaign called “Don’t Be A Dick” on cyber-flashing, calling on perpetrators to stop, on policy makers to take the issue seriously, and engaging with people to learn about their experiences with cyber-flashing across Scotland. We got a great response from people who shared their stories and received positive press coverage.



PARTY!

We hosted our first AGM in May 2018 and were able to show our members what we'd been up to. There was pizza, feminist bingo, and some awesome talks by Talat Yaqoob, director of Equate Scotland, and Amy from Chayn, a volunteer network tackling gender-based violence globally by creating intersectional survivor-led resources on the web.

We also took the time to discuss the importance of intersectionality and how to embed intersectional feminist principles into our structure and future work.



LEARN (AGAIN)

This brings us back to Learn (turns out our rallying cry is circular!); the directors and board took our member comments to heart and started to think about how we could engage different communities, in particular young people, and how we could put collaboration and co-production at the heart of our practice.

We came up with two proposals to diversify both our membership and leadership. The first proposal is for increasing and changing our membership through Empower Pods.



EMPOWER PODS

Membership is at the heart of our bottom-up approach to achieving societal change and influencing policy decision-making. We want to explore a membership structure that engages young people specifically to amplify their voices and facilitate meaningful exchanges that result in action across communities.

Our aim is to develop an infrastructure that can support local Empower Project volunteer groups of young people (Empower Pods) that are run by Empower Project members. Groups could be formed in affiliation with local neighbourhoods, schools, or universities. Alternatively, they could also be formed jointly with existing community groups and organisations.



THE EMPOWER PROJECT
COMMUNITIES TO END GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Our role would be to provide training and materials to establish these groups, as well as guides and how-tos, and offer ongoing support to help maintain these groups or start new ones. We would fundraise and look for other funding streams for paid staff support to maintain this infrastructure and for providing the necessary materials for these groups.

The objective of these groups is to provide young people with a space to talk about the issues that concern them, particularly with regards to sex and relationships in the digital age. It also provides a space for them to learn how to understand, address, and better cope with issues that arise from systemic oppression (sexism, racism, ableism, homophobia etc.) and the rapidly changing digital/media landscape.

By establishing a framework for these groups to flourish in, we hope to equip young people with the knowledge and skills that they need to raise their own issues and run their own initiatives. This in turn will have a wider societal impact as young people make more informed choices and become engaged in their local communities.



THE EMPOWER PROJECT
COMMUNITIES TO END GENDER BASE

TRUSTEE MENTORING SCHEME

The second is a trustee mentoring scheme, to make sure that young people are involved not only as members and users of Empower, but also as leaders. We will recruit a number of young people to participate in our trustee board activities under the guidance of the current trustees as well as a project manager. If successful, we can run the programme every 2 years or so to get new young people involved as trustees.



NEW CO-DIRECTORS

As a last change, we decided to recruit two amazing new co-directors, Elena Soper and Emily Liddle to take over from our equally amazing founder and director Ellie Hutchinson. Ellie felt that it was important to make space for a new generation of young women to lead the Empower Project, and while we're sad to see her go, we absolutely support the ethos of centring young people in our organisation!

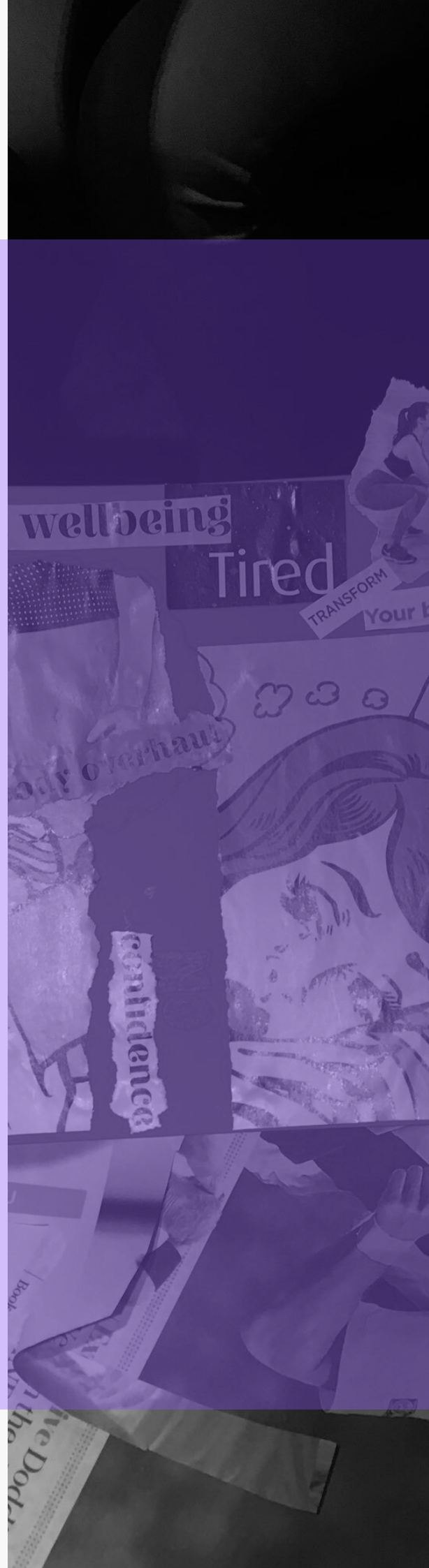


THANKS

Finally, I just wanted to take the opportunity to thank our directors, trustees, volunteers, and members for their hard work and incredible enthusiasm for the Empower Project, and for feminism in general. I also wanted to thank our independent examiner, Kathy Draxlbauer, who has helped us navigate the financial aspects of OSCR reporting and our funders who made it possible for us to grow and extend our services further. A breakdown of funding and expenditure can be found on the next page.

Love and Solidarity,

Rahnuma



FUNDER BREAKDOWN

In our second year of operation we started with £2,102, we raised £14,159.44, we spent £10,246.97 and finished the financial year with £6,014.47

For full break down check out our website and the OSCR page.



LEGAL

The Empower Project is an intersectional, feminist, membership organisation supporting communities to lead change to end violence against women and girls in Scotland.

This is the second Trustees Report of The Empower Project, charity number SC047389, address 57 Marionville Road, Edinburgh, EH7 6AQ. The Empower Project is an SCIO with a two tier membership constitution.

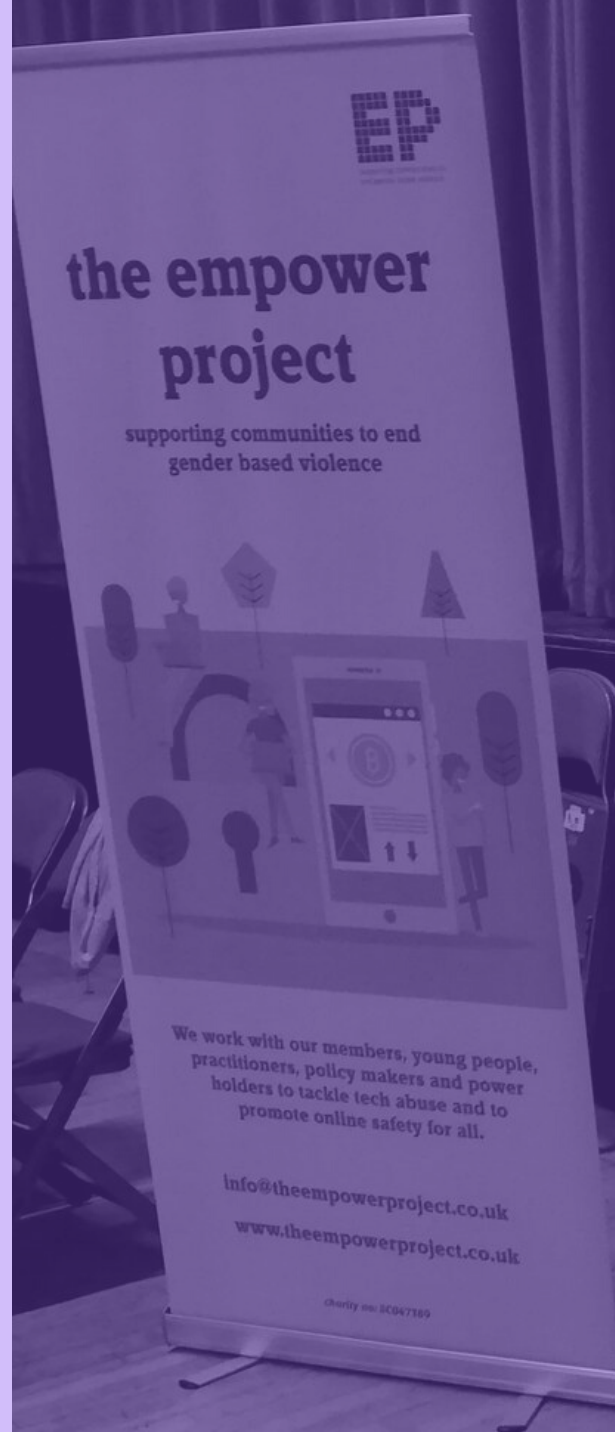
The trustees during the financial year were: Emily Beever, Rahnuma Feist-Hassan, Moira Garden, Aoife Hutton and Julia Zauner. Originally co-opted, all board members were approved as a group by Empower Project members during our first AGM in May 2018. In August 2018, Moira Garden stepped down as trustee.

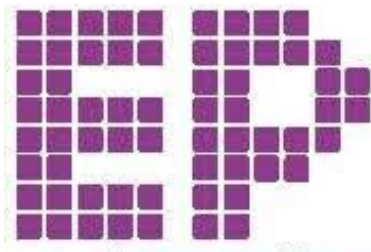


LEGAL

This report has been approved by the current board of trustees comprised of Emily Beever, Rahnuma Feist-Hassan, Julia Zauner, and Jane Miller (who was recruited through an interview process by the other board members and joined the board in June 2019. She was approved as trustee by Empower Project members during our second AGM in October 2019).

In 2018-2019, we received funding from Foundation Scotland MARS, Foundation Scotland Women's Fund, and the Co-Op Community Fund. We also received in-kind staff support from RASASH who ran a workshop for us in the Highlands and were supported by some volunteers during our AGM and for some social media work.





supporting communities to
end gender based violence



**LEARN
SUPPORT
RESIST
PARTY**

THE EMPOWER PROJECT
SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES TO END GENDER BASED VIOLENCE