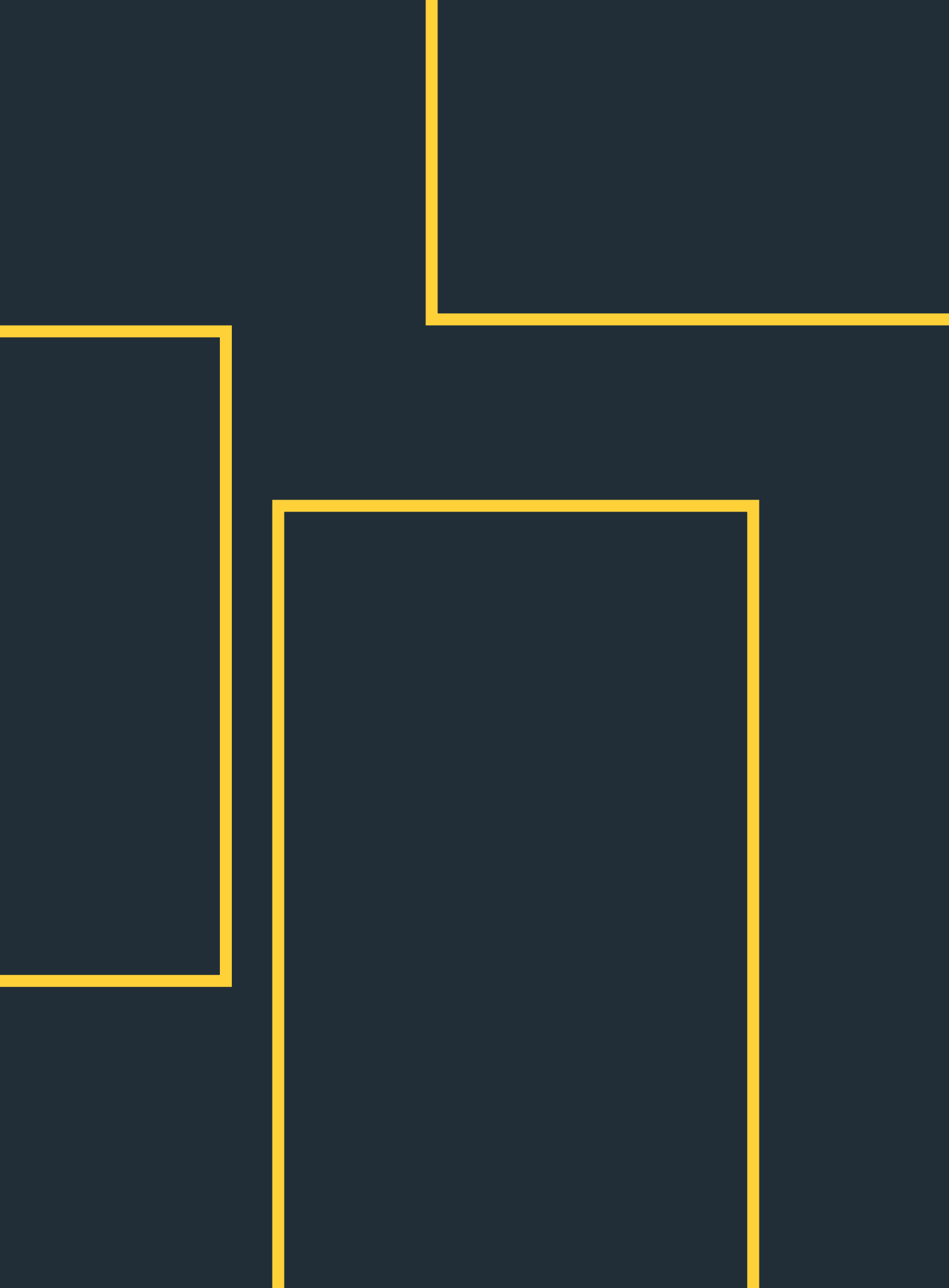




Annual report 2023



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Chair's foreword

It is my great pleasure to introduce this annual report for the Nuffield Foundation. The Foundation marked its 80th anniversary in 2023. Eight decades after we began working to make a meaningful contribution to social change, many aspects of contemporary Britain would be beyond recognition to our founders. Our predecessors would also have marvelled at fast-paced technological innovation and its impact on almost every aspect of lives today.

Some things have changed less than we would have wished. The original Foundation Trustees would recognise many sadly persistent themes – deep disadvantage and inequality in social well-being in all age groups, a lack of opportunity within education and housing for a large sector of society, isolation and growing divisions, and a lack of equal access and support within the justice system. For all our technological progress, human and societal problems remain acute.

We are deeply fortunate to have the endowment given to us by the industrialist Lord Nuffield to help make meaningful change where it is most needed. His gift of financial independence and a broad remit offers the Foundation a unique opportunity to rise to the challenge of tackling social inequity.

In 2023 we launched *Changing Lives for the Better*, a year-long series of events and activity. Our aim, to anticipate issues that will shape life in the UK over the next 20 years, and to develop research priorities that will address these.

The projects we fund share a determination to advance educational opportunity and social well-being through an understanding of how to make a meaningful difference. From the economy, bioethics, and the ethics of AI to very specific research on work and well-being for people living with arthritis, the Foundation is in the privileged position of targeting its work in those areas it can use its independence for societal good.

Education has always been at the heart of the Foundation's work and we take care to consider how this interacts with other aspects of society: the economy, health, housing and justice. The Institute for Fiscal Studies' *Annual report on education spending in England: 2023*, funded by us, focused on how aspirations to

'level up' education achievement and opportunities have met with the complex realities of provision and current need.

In 2023 we held a seminar to mark the midpoint of our *Understanding Communities* programme. In collaboration with the British Academy, we awarded £1.1m to six research teams for projects aimed at exploring how local communities function and can improve people's lives.

We also opened a *General Election Analysis and Briefing Fund* to inform policy, manifesto commitments and the public, as the UK seeks to respond to a daunting array of individual, local, national and global challenges.

These are just a few examples of our work in 2023. As a Foundation we do not assume that there are easy solutions to societal problems, or that we have all the answers. What we do have is a special opportunity to bring insights to bear on social interventions, so they have the maximum chance of success. We do this by working with others. Our research community is exceptional and our staff and many partners across the third sector, practitioners, industry and government are similarly committed to improving lives.

I must express my gratitude to our programme directors and Trustees, including this year a new Trustee, Brian Bell, Professor of Economics at King's Business School. Alongside new Chairs of the Nuffield Council of Bioethics, Ada Lovelace Institute and Nuffield Family Justice Observatory, we also welcomed a new Director of Strategy and Engagement.

Finally, I wish to thank our Chief Executive, Tim Gardam, who formally retires in 2024. The quality of our work, and the respect in which it is held, is a true tribute to Tim's thoughtful leadership and dedication to making a difference to the lives of the people the Nuffield Foundation serves. Whoever takes up the leadership at a time of great social need and change will benefit from the wise stewardship of an outstanding predecessor to whom we all owe our thanks.



Professor Sir Keith Burnett
Chair of Trustees

Chief Executive's foreword

The Nuffield Foundation's value has always derived from the capacity of the work we fund to stand back from the noise of day-to-day debate. In 2023, 80 years after the Foundation was established, our founders would recognise current projects as being true to our original purpose of improving lives, while reflecting contemporary pressure points of uncertainty and insecurity.

Our most ambitious projects of the past five-year strategy are now coming to fruition. The *IFS Deaton Review of Inequalities* paints a holistic picture of what is known about inequality in the 21st century, in the UK, Europe and USA.

The Economy 2030 Inquiry, from the Resolution Foundation, brought the phrase 'Stagnation Nation' into the public lexicon. It has also provided a diagnosis and prescription for the structural problems in the UK economy.

The *Nuffield Early Language Intervention* (NELI) is now an essential tool in many of England's primary schools, helping largely disadvantaged children master language challenges intensified post-Covid. A large-scale trial of *NELI Preschool* also shows children made the equivalent of three months' additional progress.

Our *Changing Face of Early Childhood* programme, a synthesis of over 90 Nuffield-funded grants alongside many other studies, has framed the urgent debate on the well-being of UK infants and preschool children. Carey Oppenheim, its author, is now an adviser to the Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood, along with Beverley Barnett-Jones, Associate Director of the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory.

The Nuffield Council on Bioethics' independent review of disagreements in the care of critically ill children recommended a new Government taskforce, now established. The Ministry of Justice has also committed to exploring less adversarial court models.

The Ada Lovelace Institute has become a powerful voice in the understanding of the impact and regulation of generative AI, taking its place at the UK government's global AI Safety Summit. The Ada team is now working with Nuffield's Education team on the future impact of AI for children, teaching and teachers.

The Nuffield Family Justice Observatory is now the trusted data source for those working in the family courts system. In 2023, it identified major questions around how children are subjected to deprivation of liberty orders. We also funded work on children's participation in the justice system and the implications of racial disparity in the schemes designed to divert them from the criminal courts.

Other Nuffield-funded projects included Professor Emma Hitchings' *Fair shares?*, investigating what really happens to assets at divorce. Dr Laia Becares' work on *Ethnic inequalities in later life*, still in progress, has already led to the ONS considering changes in the way it collects data.

Nuffield awards research funding to original and robust ideas. We look for comprehensive proposals that use rigorous methodology credible to policymakers and practitioners. We are seeking new and more diverse talent to reflect the complexity of modern Britain. Our online webinar, designed to reach new audiences, led to a 40% increase in applications. Our new Emerging Researchers Network is now connecting post-doctoral and early career researchers working on our projects. In 2023 we also met with the Ukrainian refugee social science researchers our funding has brought to UK universities, through the Researchers at Risk Fellowship Scheme.

In the coming year we will publish our next five-year strategy. We will address the changing nature of work within the context of the UK's demographic change and culture. Our longstanding interests in place, communities and education will focus on the skills that new generations will need to flourish. We must continue to interrogate the enduring question of the relationship between a caring and a productive society.

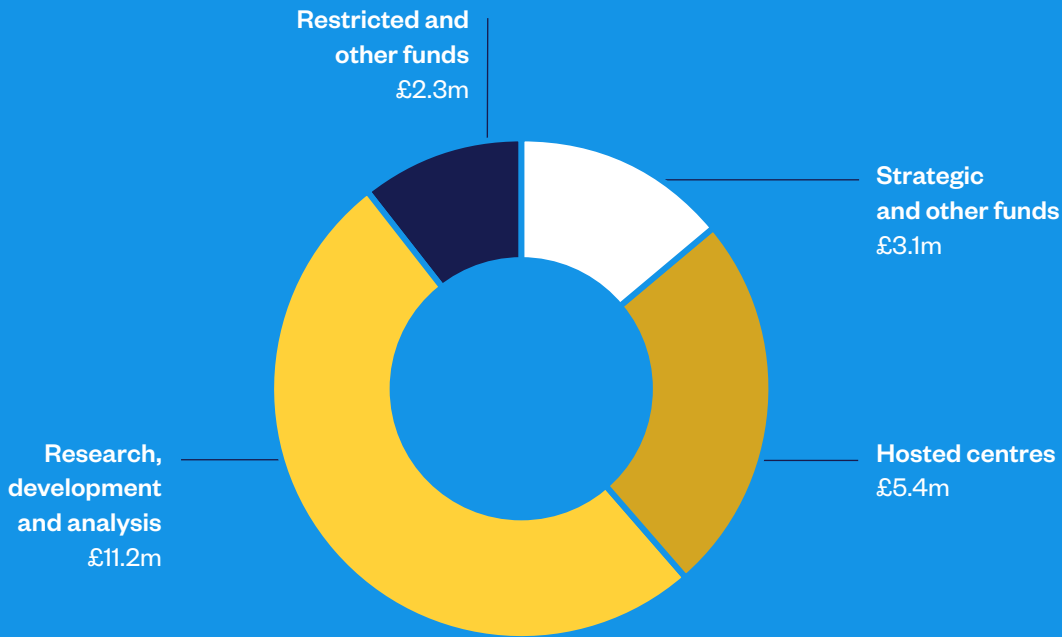
It has been a huge privilege to lead the Foundation for the past eight years. Our new Chief Executive will continue to lead our mission to advance educational opportunity and social well-being as we have always done.



Tim Gardam
Chief Executive

The year in numbers

Charitable expenditure of £22 million in 2023 (down from £23.2m in 2022)



* Our Oliver Bird Fund is a restricted fund for improving the lives of people living with musculoskeletal conditions.

Nuffield Foundation – Annual report 2023

Most of our charitable expenditure comprises grant awards.

£11.7m

Total value of grants awarded

52

new projects funded

12

projects that received additional funding

Applicants submit a short outline application and those that meet our criteria are invited to submit a full application, which is subject to independent peer review and considered by Trustees.

478

outline applications received*

65

full applications invited and considered

* The General Election Analysis and Briefing Fund is a single stage application process: 23 applications received 8 funded in 2023

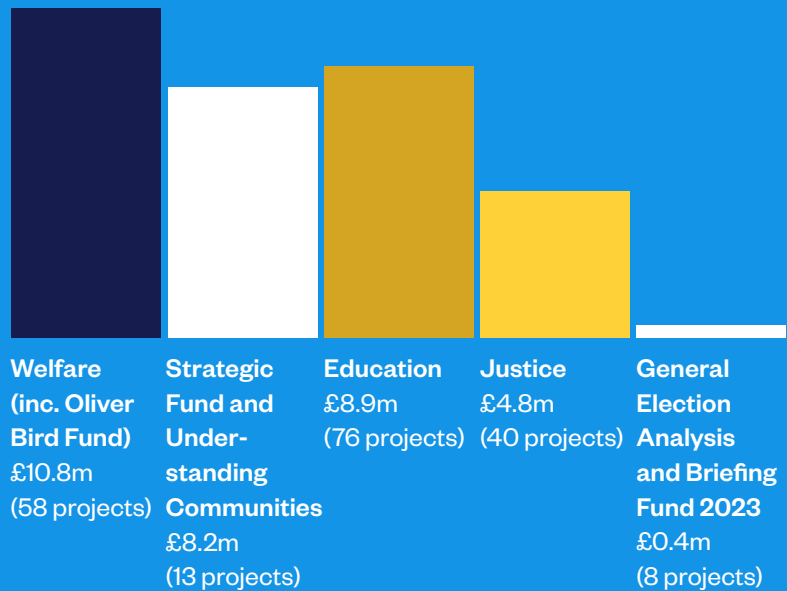
Current portfolio of research, development and analysis grants

195

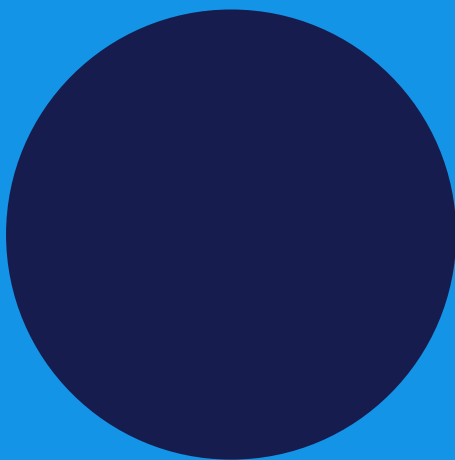
total grants outstanding value of

£33.1m

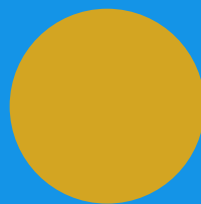
Total value of research grants being managed at the end of 2023
Split by domain (including Strategic Fund)



Who do we fund?



Universities
(160 projects)



Research/
policy institutions
(30 projects)



Charities and
other organisations
(9 projects)

Communications and engagement

Across the Nuffield Foundation, the Ada Lovelace Institute, the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory and the Nuffield Council on Bioethics, we:



convened

46 events

attended by more than

4,094 people



had

745,665 visits

to our websites



were referenced in broadcast, print and online media

6,963 times



increased our Twitter following by an average of

6% across our accounts

to 52,734 followers



Nuffield Research Placements

930 students

were placed

95% of students

were satisfied with their Nuffield Research Placements experience



increased our LinkedIn following by an average of

103% across our accounts

to 17,305 followers

2023 Highlights

-
- *Ending stagnation: A new economic strategy for Britain*, the final report from **The Economy 2030 Inquiry** led by the Resolution Foundation and the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), is the product of nearly three years of research, analysis and strategic policy formulation. With people and places at its heart, it engaged influential national and local policymakers, media, and new audiences through its regional events programme.
-
- The series of annual reports – and more focused briefing papers – from the Institute for Fiscal Studies on **Education Spending** is now a well-established, authoritative and influential flagship in the education policy calendar. The work has played a key role in shaping policy and public debate, and outputs have placed direct pressure on decisions around spending settlements for schools, Further Education and other parts of the system, evidenced by Department for Education (DfE) and Treasury reports.
-
- The **NELI Preschool trial**, the nursery equivalent to the [Nuffield Early Language Intervention](#), showed children receiving the intervention made the equivalent of three months' additional progress in their language development. The 20-week programme was delivered by Teaching Assistants to nursery classes in socio-economically deprived areas, with additional targeted support for children with the weakest oral language skills.
-
- £0.4 million of grants were awarded from our new **General Election Analysis and Briefing Fund** to eight organisations for research aimed at informing policy, pledges and public debate in the run-up to the next UK general election.
-

→ **Full Fact report 2022** called on the government and Parliament to strengthen online media literacy, following which the Online Safety Act of October 2023 required Ofcom to introduce new objectives relating specifically to social media and search platforms. The 2023 report set out the case for MPs to agree to new parliamentary rules that make it easy to correct mistakes. MPs voted in October 2023 for changes to the parliamentary rules so that all MPs, rather than only Ministers, will be able to correct the official record.

→ Musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions are the greatest cause of pain and disability in the UK. Work on six projects began in 2023 aiming to inform policy and practice interventions to improve the well-being and working lives of people with MSK. The awards, totalling £1.94 million, were **made in 2022** from the **Oliver Bird Fund** in partnership with Versus Arthritis.

→ The **Fair shares?** project provides the first detailed insight into what happens to assets when couples divorce. The research report comes during a review by the Law Commission of England and Wales into the 50-year-old laws that govern how assets are shared after a divorce. *Fair shares?* is specifically referenced in the review's Terms of Reference. This is the first time that a single piece of research has so fundamentally underpinned a Law Commission review from the outset, demonstrating the centrality of the research to their work.

The Online Safety Act of October 2023 required Ofcom to introduce new objectives relating specifically to social media and search platforms.

-
- ➔ **Children subject to deprivation of liberty orders** are now recorded in national administrative data for the first time, following the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory (Nuffield FJO) work with the new National Deprivation of Liberty Court. With leading academics, the Nuffield FJO developed a set of principles outlining ways to better support children with complex needs, including those subject to deprivation of liberty orders. These were welcomed by the DfE and NHS England.
-
- ➔ The Nuffield Council on Bioethics' (NCOB) *Independent review: Disagreements in the care of critically ill children* recommended the creation of a government taskforce to take forward changes within the NHS and the courts to help reduce the profound impact these can have. In early 2024 the Government confirmed that an implementation taskforce has been established. NHS England has introduced regional conflict champions and launched resources and conflict management training for healthcare professionals. The Ministry of Justice has committed to exploring less adversarial court models.
-
- ➔ The Ada Lovelace Institute (Ada) was invited to attend the UK's AI Safety Summit to discuss advanced AI technologies. Ada's Interim Director Francine Bennett addressed world leaders and luminaries from the tech sector and beyond, emphasising the importance of putting people and society at the centre of all discussions about AI safety. Ada partnered with AI Fringe to support greater diversity in perspectives and discussion of a broader range of risks and issued a **Post-Summit civil society communique**.
-

Advancing our Mission, Sharing our Progress

The Nuffield Foundation is an independent charitable trust with a mission to advance educational opportunity and social well-being in the UK.

We are also the founder and co-funder of the Nuffield Council on Bioethics, the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory and the Ada Lovelace Institute.

Our aim, for all our activities, is to improve lives for people, families and communities within a just and inclusive society.

Our work addresses the inequalities, disadvantage and vulnerabilities people face in Education, Welfare and Justice, and considers the social and ethical implications of science and digital technologies for people and society.

In order to achieve our aim, we:

- Identify and explore interconnected and complex trends that shape society.
- Fund rigorous research and analysis to build the evidence base and improve understanding.
- Convene, connect and listen to diverse perspectives to foster meaningful debate and bring evidence to inform policy and practice to achieve meaningful change.
- Develop people and skills to strengthen capacity across the research ecosystem.

Our progress, or ‘impact’, means helping to create positive change that contributes to the Foundation’s overall aim of improving social well-being. We recognise that this takes time, may be indirect, and will always involve collaboration with others.

We assess our success by:

- Undertaking internal reviews of work funded within our core domains of Education, Welfare and Justice to assess their value and impact as a body of work and inform the development of new research priorities.
- Supporting and challenging our grant-holders to achieve impact. This focuses on regular reflection on progress against project aims, capacity building, and communications and engagement activities.
- Analysing our grant-holders’ evaluations of their projects. This helps us shape our funding criteria and improve the service we provide.
- Commissioning independent evaluations of areas of our work.
- Steering new ways of working in the Foundation, led by our new Strategy and Engagement directorate.
- Working on our communications and public affairs priorities, identifying our target audiences and measuring reach, engagement and impact.
- Growing our capacity to convene and connect in our fully accessible office, while continuing to recognise the value of the online space so that as many people as possible can engage with our work.

Measuring the true impact we may have on social well-being is difficult, so we focus on measuring interim outcomes and impacts, such as influencing government policy, shifts in public opinion, changes to practice or guidance, and notable contributions to debates around important societal issues.

Priorities for the next 20 years

In July 2023 we marked the Foundation's 80th anniversary by launching the *Changing Lives for the Better* programme, a year-long series of events and activity to explore the big themes that will define our work in the future. The aim is to anticipate the circumstances, challenges and changes that will shape life in the UK over the next 20 years, and to develop research priorities that will address these issues.

The programme is enabling us to consult with our stakeholders to identify the most pressing challenges facing society, determine

the urgent research questions that need to be answered, and contribute to the new strategic direction for the Foundation for the next five years.

80th anniversary events

The event series covers the breadth of our portfolio, bringing together people with different combinations of expertise and experience who otherwise might not connect, and in a range of formats, including conferences, seminars, workshops and webinars, to increase engagement with our work and generate new ideas. The series of events is culminating in a major Nuffield conference in June 2024.

The launch event for the series featured expert reflections from our Trustees and others on the trends and risks society is facing, and the implications for the future. Nuffield Foundation Trustees Professor Ash Amin, Professor Ann Phoenix, John Pullinger and Professor Lorraine Dearden each wrote a short provocation on what they regard as the most defining issues of our age, while Fran Bennett, Interim Director of the Ada Lovelace Institute, and Professor David Archard, Chair of the Nuffield Council on Bioethics, shared their insights on society's future trends.



“Since 1943 the Foundation has demonstrated the power of evidence to change people’s lives for the better. Eighty years later, in a fast-changing world, our challenge is to reshape the Foundation’s original purpose for the remainder of the 21st century.”

Tim Gardam, CEO

“The point is that inequities are complex, inequalities are increasing, and policy solutions to address precarity over the next 30 years will increasingly have to recognise that one size does not fit all.”

Professor Ann Phoenix, Trustee

Drawing on their collective expertise, their provocations prompted us to think about the urgent questions posed by widening inequalities, weakened institutions and a prescriptive education system, demographic change including migration, while encouraging us to consider the benefits and risks of rapid breakthroughs in bioscience, AI and data-driven technology.

Their reflections, along with those of our partners and stakeholders, will help to inform the Foundation’s strategic priorities in the years ahead.

Intersectionality

In November 2023 as part of the anniversary programme, we hosted a knowledge exchange afternoon exploring intersectionality and its implications for research, policy and practice. Delegates brought a wealth of expertise and experience, with the event specifically interrogating the benefits of, and barriers to, undertaking intersectional research.



At the event we shared a film featuring Professor Ann Phoenix in conversation with Carey Oppenheim, our Early Childhood Lead, discussing what intersectionality means, how intersectional approaches can help us to understand inequalities, and what the implications are for policy and practice.



Early career researchers

The Nuffield Foundation Emerging Researchers Network launched in October 2023 at a special event held at the Foundation as part of the 80th anniversary programme.

The network was founded to support early career researchers (ECRs) working on Nuffield-funded projects. It represents a proactive initiative from the Foundation to nurture and develop the next generation of future research talent from a wide range of disciplines, institutions and backgrounds.

The launch event aimed to facilitate skills development, grow connections with peers and provide an opportunity to contribute ideas to the development of the Foundation's new strategy and future research priorities.

The day included presentations from ECRs and a keynote speech from Professor Ruth Patrick of the University of York. She spoke about some of her landmark Nuffield-funded research on poverty, social security and welfare reform, as well as the value of participatory approaches and routes to achieving policy impact.

A 'planning for impact' session provided ideas on how to engage with policymakers, parliamentarians and general audiences. There was also an opportunity to meet the Foundation's grants team.



“Establishing a network for our early career researchers has been a long-held ambition of the Foundation. I am delighted to see it in place to support the professional and career development of our future social research leaders.”

Tim Gardam, CEO

Strategic goal one – research portfolio

We fund research that advances educational opportunity and social well-being across the United Kingdom. We will shape our research portfolio by bringing together researchers and users of research to identify the larger questions in our core areas of Education, Welfare and Justice

Education

Within our Education domain, our objective is to identify ways to improve educational outcomes – at all life stages – through policy change and approaches to teaching and learning that are grounded in robust evidence. We also want to understand wider influences on education and skills, such as the role of families and socio-economic context.

Key Education outputs published in 2023

What: An analysis of the demand for skills in the labour market: Working paper 3 (The skills imperative 2035: Essential skills for tomorrow's workforce)

Who: Jude Hillary, National Foundation for Educational Research

Headline findings: The research assessing future skills demand identified a set of six generic, transferable and harder to automate 'Essential Employment Skills': Collaboration;

Communication; Creative thinking; Information literacy; Organising, planning and prioritising; and Problem-solving and decision-making. These skills will be vital for powering the economy and careers in 2035. Employment in occupations that use these skills most intensively is also projected to increase, the majority in professional and associate professional occupations. A limited supply of these skills in the future could hold back economic growth, increase friction in the labour market and put some groups at significant risk of unemployment, resulting in widening inequality.

What: Digital skills in apprenticeships

Who: Dr Stefan Speckesser, University of Brighton

Headline findings: Acquiring relatively advanced digital skills has benefits for earnings and employment in jobs with mid-level skills, often accessed via apprenticeships. Vocational education should go beyond Functional Skills to provide advanced digital skills, this research implies, for apprenticeships standards in the UK.

What: Education priorities in the next general election

Who: Dr Jon Andrews, Education Policy Institute

Headline findings: The first report has proved a valuable resource, outlining some of the key challenges and research evidence across policy areas – from early years to higher education, school and college funding, and the education workforce.

Recommendations include:

- Increase per pupil revenue funding.
- Ensure funding is targeted to help close the disadvantage gap and extend the reach of funding to particularly vulnerable groups.
- Deliver consistent and sustained funding from secondary education onwards.
- Reform allocation of the high needs block of school funding.
- Support schools to deliver their wider role.

What: Digital equality in education

Who: Professor Morag Treanor, Heriot-Watt University

Headline findings: Scholar is an online digital platform delivering online e-learning to 97% of publicly funded secondary schools in Scotland. There have been patterns of increasing participation and student engagement in deprived schools, and the school environment influences this, data from 2018/19 to 2020/21 in all subjects (except English) shows. However, there remain socio-economic inequalities in participation and engagement. Students from the most deprived schools are still less likely to engage with Scholar. Students in rural schools engage with online learning between a quarter and a third more than students in urban schools.

What: Choice, attainment and positive destinations: Exploring the impact of curriculum policy change on young people

Who: Dr Marina Shapira, University of Stirling

Headline findings: This project identified ‘curriculum narrowing’, particularly in areas of high deprivation, impacting the likelihood of progressing to higher education in Scotland. Fewer subjects are studied in S4 in Senior Phase (ages 16–18), despite the aim of the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) to improve the breadth and depth of learning for young people. Significant variation in the number of subjects studied in the broad general education phase was also found, both between schools and in different year groups. Project findings inform CfE’s future direction and implementation, and other similar curriculum policies, that are being developed in the UK and internationally.

What: The kids are alright: Adolescents and their fathers in the UK

Who: Adrienne Burgess, Fatherhood Institute

Headline findings: We are not living in a ‘fatherless’ society, the latest in the series of research on contemporary fathers in the UK shows. In 2022 in England, more than 95% of mothers and fathers registered the birth of their baby together (similar across the UK); and of the 95% of fathers who were present in their baby’s life in the year 2000, nine in ten were still part of their lives when they were teenagers. Both ‘time with dad’ and the ‘closeness’ of the father–adolescent relationship during adolescence is also significant, associated with fewer risk behaviours and with teenagers’ positive attitudes to school and better grades. The need for data-systems (from birth notifications on) to include fathers’ details is highlighted. And further evidence showed that collecting equivalent data about fathers and mothers is central to researching the lives and development of children, including adolescents.

What: The effects of COVID-19 on families' time-use and child development: How did parents' experiences in the labour market shape children's social and emotional development during the pandemic?

Who: Dr Sarah Cattan, Institute for Fiscal Studies

Headline findings: The importance of protecting families during periods of significant economic uncertainty is demonstrated in this research. Overall, the socio-emotional skills of children whose parents had stable labour market experiences throughout the pandemic (whether employed or unemployed the whole time) held up better on average than the skills of children whose families faced more economic instability. This suggests that it was the *stability* of parents' labour market experiences, rather than being in any particular economic category, which was an important determinant of children's socio-emotional development during the pandemic.

What: The influence of headteachers on their schools

Who: James Zuccollo, Education Policy Institute

Headline findings: Effective headteachers significantly improve pupil attainment, teacher retention and teacher absenteeism, this research shows. Enhancing the quality of school leadership may be a cost-effective way of improving school performance and more work should be done on how to achieve it. Specifically, if the government wishes to close the attainment gap, it could encourage more high-quality headteachers to work in the most disadvantaged schools and in areas outside London.

What: Cost of living crisis: The impact on schools

Who: Jenna Julius, National Foundation for Education Research

Headline findings: Cost of living pressures are having a profound impact on schools, creating a self-perpetuating cycle of negative impacts on their pupils and settings, this report shows. Many mainstream and special schools are currently providing urgent support to pupils and their households. Looking to the future, these challenges cannot be fixed by schools working in isolation. Cost of living pressures are affecting schools' core teaching and pastoral provision. This is only likely to widen longstanding attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. Recruitment and retention challenges among teachers, teaching assistants and support staff are only compounding the situation.

Policy and practice impact of Education projects

Setting teacher pay and Department for Education teacher workforce policy

Research led by Jack Worth at the National Foundation for Education Research analysed teacher supply, shortages and working conditions in England and Wales. Through eight written reports over three years, and an interactive website reporting regional and subject breakdowns, this research provides accessible and impartial information set within the wider policy context.

Many mainstream and special schools are currently providing urgent support to pupils and their households

The research has had direct influence on the School Teacher Review Body's decisions on setting teacher pay and on Department for Education (DfE) teacher workforce policy. The team engaged directly with the Education Select Committee inquiry on the teacher workforce, special advisors, shadow ministers, parliamentarians and teaching unions. It has also had considerable coverage in the sector and mainstream press.

Education spending reports shaping policy and public debate

The series of annual reports on spending in all phases of education, from the project team led by Luke Sibieta at the Institute for Fiscal Studies, is now a well-established, authoritative and influential flagship in the education policy calendar. The briefing papers are all also curated on: ifs.org.uk/microsite/education-spending

The work has played a key role in shaping policy and public debate. The outputs have placed direct pressure on decisions around spending settlements for schools, Further Education and other parts of the system, evidenced by DfE and Treasury reports. Examples of significant impact have been seen in the determination of student loan interest rates, and the recent use of the team's analysis of the implications of VAT status for private schools and education budgets. Media coverage and policy engagement activity for the programme were extensive. The work is also regularly cited in reports from government, select committees, official and independent inquiries and think-tanks, and in opinion pieces.

Improving education for children from ethnic minority and migrant backgrounds

For this project, researchers from Queen's University Belfast conducted a review of literature, policy and data. Qualitative interviews were conducted with 62 children

and 53 parents from diverse minority ethnic backgrounds across the region. Interviews and focus groups were also conducted with 43 professional stakeholders. Research findings are presented in the report *Experiences of education among minority ethnic groups in Northern Ireland*, written by Dr Rebecca Loader, Dr Erika Jiménez, Dr Aisling O'Boyle and Professor Joanne Hughes. Recommendations include:

- Review 1) standard school admissions procedures, including school transfer and the applications process, and 2) 'in-year' admissions processes to address inequalities for minority ethnic and migrant families.
- Introduce anti-racism and anti-bias training as a core element of teacher education and development.
- Prioritise investment in initiatives that support parental engagement in schools with large migrant and newcomer populations, including the provision of family support services.

The main report, shared with people who make decisions about education, was launched in June 2023. A parents' and children's version, as well as summary versions in various languages, are also available at: qub.ac.uk/Research/Our-impact/ethnic-minorities-ni/resources/

The team have engaged with policymakers and third sector organisations to shape policy and public debate. For example, their work has informed the Department for Education in Northern Ireland's revisions to guidance on Supporting Newcomer Pupils, fed into the work of the Racial Equality Subgroup at The Executive Office, and has helped shape some of the recommendations within the Independent Review of Education in Northern Ireland. Academic activities via journals and conferences are expected to achieve significant reach.

Early years language interventions boosting language development

The Nuffield Foundation launched its special early years interventions funding call in 2017, in collaboration with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF). It was prompted by the recognition of a lack of high-quality evidence about intervention programmes aimed at improving cognitive development in the early years. Two of the grant-funded projects evaluated oral language interventions for children attending maintained nurseries in socio-economically deprived areas. These research projects were both successfully carried out despite considerable setbacks due to Covid. Both research teams have now gone on to secure funding from the EEF for effectiveness trials that will test the impact of the interventions at scale with a range of different early years providers.

NELI Preschool – the nursery equivalent to the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) – was trialled in the project *Development and evaluation of a preschool language programme*, led by Professor Charles Hulme. NELI

Preschool is a 20-week programme delivered by teaching assistants to nursery classes with additional targeted support for children with the weakest oral language skills. Children receiving the intervention made the equivalent of three months' additional progress in their language development, as shown by findings from the successful randomised controlled trial with 3–4-year-olds in 65 nurseries between 2021 and 2022.

UCL's Faculty of Education and Society, IOE, trialled a universal language-focused intervention. Talking Time empowers staff in early years education settings to boost oral language skills for 3–5-year-olds in the lowest quintile for social deprivation. The 16-week programme is delivered to all children within a nursery class, through small group activities complemented by a professional development element aiming to improve early years practitioners' knowledge and skills in supporting children's language development.

Both programmes have been covered in the sector and mainstream press, and social



media. We commissioned journalist Nicole Weinstein to write an article and case studies for [our website](#) on [NELI](#) and [NELI Preschool](#).

Fostering children's resilience through executive challenge in early maths

Researchers, led by Professor Gaia Scerif at the University of Oxford, worked with teachers as co-researchers to develop a combined maths and executive function intervention for preschool children. Findings show knowledge gains for early years practitioners, and preliminary evidence of improved early numeracy, particularly for disadvantaged children.

Early numerical abilities are one of the best predictors of children's later academic achievement. They are highly interrelated with executive functions, a set of cognitive processes related to self-regulation. These skills appear to influence each other and support growth reciprocally, highlighting the importance of bringing them together rather than targeting them separately.

The intervention is built on the Preschool Situational Self-Regulation Toolkit (PRISIST), an evidence-based Australian executive function intervention with both practitioner and child-focused elements. A shortened four-week version of the new intervention was first piloted in classrooms and then refined before the main study. Alongside promising results, findings highlighted barriers to implementation in early years settings and opportunities for future

refinement. The intervention is being further evaluated in a larger scale trial funded by the EEF and the Stronger Practice Hubs.

Love to Read

Love to Read: A co-designed intervention to motivate and engage child readers, led by Dr Sarah McGeown from the University of Edinburgh, has shown promise based on positive feedback from both children and teachers. Qualitative evidence shows changes in children's attitudes, skills and behaviours relating to reading motivation and engagement.

In the UK, reading daily outside of class is reported by only 39.1% of children aged 8–11. But there is little existing research-informed guidance for teachers on how to foster reading motivation. Previous reading interventions have tended to neglect the issue of motivation, focusing instead on reading comprehension. Co-developed with researchers, teachers, children and other professionals, *Love to Read* aims to increase children's desire to read in collaboration with teachers, interweaving their knowledge and expertise.

More research is needed to understand the contexts and conditions under which *Love to Read* is optimally effective. Also, on whether it can lead to measurable and sustained positive changes in children's reading motivation and engagement. And, in the longer term, whether this has an impact on children's reading and/or language skills.

Early numerical abilities are one of the best predictors of children's later academic achievement. They are highly interrelated with executive functions, a set of cognitive processes related to self-regulation.

Welfare

Within our Welfare domain, our objective is to improve people's lives by understanding how their well-being is affected by different social and economic factors. We want to understand the ways in which some people and groups are potentially vulnerable to adverse outcomes, and to identify how those risks can be mitigated or channelled more positively.

Improving work and well-being for people with musculoskeletal conditions

Musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions are the greatest cause of pain and disability in the UK, affecting people's ability to work, care for a family and live independently. In 2023, six research projects began aiming to inform policy and practice interventions to improve the well-being and working lives of people with MSK conditions. The projects were awarded grants in 2022 totalling £1.94 million. The new research grants are the second round of awards from the Foundation's Oliver Bird Fund which is dedicated to improving the lives of people with MSK conditions. We continue to work in partnership with Versus Arthritis, who are contributing £250,000. The charity's support means we can involve people with MSK conditions for the duration of the projects, ensuring the research has a basis in real life experience.

Key core Welfare outputs published in 2023

What: Connecting pensions, health and care

Who: Dr Olena Nizalova, University of Kent

Headline findings: Launched in September 2023, *Connecting pensions, health and care* is one of our latest strategic grants and will investigate how a joined-up approach to old-age support systems might ensure that they are financially affordable and support well-being in later life. As the UK

population ages, the three systems that work together to support older people – pensions, healthcare and social care – are becoming even more important, but pressure on them is increasing. However, policy rarely considers the interdependency between them. This project brings together academics and non-academics in a transdisciplinary approach to finding a solution. It aims to answer important questions including: What are people's preferences for support later in life? What are their attitudes towards key features of the support systems? How are the support systems linked through the combined effects of individual choices that people make at different stages of their lives?

What: History of the United Kingdom's planning and control of public expenditure

Who: Professor Christopher Hood, University of Oxford

Headline findings: Based on over 100 in-depth interviews and official archival material, this project examined UK public expenditure control over the period 1993–2015 and showed how spending numbers were 'gamed' (shaped and finessed), having real-world impacts on the decisions public institutions made and how policy was delivered. The findings were engaged with by large numbers of public officials wishing to learn lessons from history on how to administer public spending most effectively in the context of the UK's current challenging economic and fiscal circumstances.

What: Social policies and distributional outcomes in a changing Britain

Who: Dr Polly Vizard, London School of Economics

Headline findings: The report comprehensively examined developments in 10 major areas of social policy (social security; employment; early childhood; compulsory school age education; higher education; health; social care; physical safety and security; homelessness / complex needs; and social mobility) over the 2015–2020 period. The research found overwhelming evidence that a break in social progress

in multiple critical areas of life had already occurred, triggering economic and social shocks, prior to the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many key indicators of social progress slowed down, stalled or went into reverse over the period. The report set out five key cross-cutting social policy challenges for the 2020s, including finding sources for sustained increases in public spending as a foundation for the welfare state; strengthening social rights and accountability mechanisms; joining up of social policy areas; giving priority to the needs of the most disadvantaged; and integrating dignity and respect, recognition, and social value into social policy.

What: Redesigning labour market policies for the future of work: Lessons from the 'Intermittents du Spectacle' scheme in France

Who: Dr Guillaume Wilemme and Dr Piotr Denderski, University of Leicester

Headline findings: Twenty per cent of British workers have non-standard work arrangements. The team drew learning from a safety net developed for art workers in France. The scheme offers unemployment benefits based on a different criterion than for standard employees. It distorts workers' behaviours by generating individual eligibility cycles. Workers target the eligibility threshold of hours worked to become eligible for the benefits. The team suggest that a blanket adoption of a similar policy fully closing the protection gap in the UK may risk displacing workers from regular to unstable jobs where standard employment is prevalent, and therefore suggest a sector specific approach.

What: Understanding family and community vulnerabilities in transition to net zero

Who: Emily Morrison, Young Foundation

Headline findings: This research reviewed current data and evidence, worked with people in community-based workshops, and with stakeholders in local and national government, and social, welfare, energy and environmental sectors. It finds that the current patchwork of policies aiming to enable the transition to net zero is in danger of exacerbating existing inequalities and

identifies their impact on already vulnerable households and communities. But it also points to opportunities to create a just transition. National and local government, employers and the voluntary and community sectors should take note of the framework the team have developed to support them in building collective place-based strategies that unlock greater, inclusive participation in transition.

Key Oliver Bird Fund outputs published in 2023

What: Arthritis, work and well-being: A mixed methods study with policy recommendations

Who: Adam Martin, University of Leeds

Headline findings: The typical person living with arthritis in the UK is 20% less likely to be in work than their equivalent without the condition. And non-university educated women aged 60-plus are at least 37% less likely to be in work if they have arthritis, compared to matched individuals without the condition. Engagement with stakeholders indicates that potential interventions could involve making appropriate adjustments to the working environment, tackling workplace discrimination and supporting changes in people's roles especially cost-effective if they are designed for, and targeted at, the people identified as being most at risk of poor work outcomes.

Policy and practice impact of Welfare projects

Shaping economic policy

In December 2023, the Resolution Foundation and the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics released the final report of *The Economy 2030 Inquiry – Ending stagnation: A new economic strategy for Britain*. It was the product of nearly three years of dedicated research, analysis and strategic policy formulation. It shone a spotlight on the UK's economic stagnation, marked by low growth and high-income inequality, and set a path to prosperity and equality through leveraging the nation's strengths as a services exporter, increasing public and private investment, and improving job quality. The research also examined how to unlock the huge potential of Britain's second cities. The project engaged influential national and local policymakers, received significant and ongoing coverage in the media and brought in new audiences through its regional events programme. Policy developments informed by the inquiry's activities include changes to the pensions system, and a new emphasis in government policy on raising private investment.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies' Green Budget remains one of the major outputs of the economic year, supported by the Nuffield Foundation for the last 11 years. The *IFS green budget 2023* achieved widespread attention from the media and political commentators. It emphasised the risks of an upwards 'ratchet' effect on borrowing and debt, through the debt forecast for the next five years being based on tax and spending assumptions that appear unlikely to be maintained in practice. These assumptions include fuel duty rising with inflation, tight spending controls and continued freezes in personal tax thresholds through to 2027/28. Also highlighted in 2023 were the major implications of the NHS workforce plan and the need for reform of inheritance tax.

Both *The Economy 2030 Inquiry* and the Green Budget recommended that the temporary 'full expensing' arrangement, where there is a 100% corporation tax deduction for all qualifying plant and machinery investments, should be made permanent. Such a change was announced in the Autumn Statement in November 2023.

In June 2023, The Food Foundation produced the fifth edition of their *Broken plate* report, updating key metrics regarding the state of the nation's food system. The report was viewed over 8,000 times in its first four weeks, resulted in broad media coverage and was sent to civil servants in central government departments, agencies, and non-departmental government bodies. Their commitment to tracking household food insecurity continued, and the results were widely covered in the media and mentioned in an Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee report on food security.

Online safety policy

For the past four years, the Nuffield Foundation has supported the independent fact-checking organisation Full Fact in producing annual reports, used to press for changes to policy and practice, combined with other outputs and activities. In 2023, Full Fact secured two major policy changes stemming from arguments in those reports.

The 2022 report had called on the government and Parliament to strengthen online media literacy in the Online Safety Bill, and Full Fact campaigned on this issue alongside concerned MPs and Peers. Following agreed government amendments to the legislation, the Online Safety Act of October 2023 required Ofcom to introduce new objectives relating specifically to social media and search platforms. Ofcom is now required to focus specifically on helping the public establish the reliability, accuracy and authenticity of information they encounter online, and to understand

how to better protect themselves and others from misinformation and disinformation.

The 2023 report set out the case for MPs to agree to new parliamentary rules that make it easy to correct mistakes. In October 2023, MPs voted for changes so that all MPs, rather than only Ministers, will be able to correct the official record.

Improving collection of information on domestic abuse

The *Children living with domestic violence: Effects on children's well-being* project, led by Dr Valeria Skafida at the University of Edinburgh, used the dataset from the longitudinal study *Growing up in Scotland*. The aim was to explore the prevalence of domestic abuse for mothers and how domestic abuse is associated with young children's outcomes. Findings have been shared with policymakers, third sector organisations and professional groups, including all the members of the British Association of Social Workers. They have informed discussions with those who run large population surveys which collect

information on domestic abuse, with recommendations on how to improve them.

Justice

Within the Justice domain, our aim is to explore how the real-world application of law and the administration of justice meets the needs and expectations of individuals and wider society. Our particular focus is on issues of justice that have the most significant effect on the lives, opportunities and well-being of people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged in some way. We believe that the challenges currently facing the justice system make critical examination of who the system serves, and how it operates, more important than ever. We want the research we fund to help improve the effectiveness of the justice system and outcomes for the people who need to access it or are drawn into it. We are especially keen to encourage proposals for impactful research that takes an interdisciplinary approach and examines the effects



of involvement with the justice system on people's wider life chances.

Key Justice outputs published in 2023

What: Delivering administrative justice after the pandemic

Who: Professor Naomi Creutzfeldt

Headline findings: This research explored the effect of rapid service digitalisation, prompted by the pandemic, on the delivery of justice in respect of people's legal needs in the areas of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and housing, identifying the effects on access for marginalised groups and exploring how trust can be built and sustained in parts of the justice system. The team partnered with housing and SEND organisations to collect quantitative and qualitative data.

Findings suggest that processes to seek help through different pathways (including tribunals and ombudsmen) are difficult to understand. Those people who would not easily access the justice system in an offline setting are often faced with greater, in some cases unsurmountable, difficulties online. Continued monitoring and evaluation of online courts and tribunals systems to identify pain points and improvement measures is recommended. Sharing of data in the wider justice sphere and collaboration with other organisations will help to develop better strategies.

What: Forced marriage: Enhancing protection and prevention responses

Who: Professor Sundari Anitha

Headline findings: Forced Marriage Protection Orders (FMPOs) are civil injunctions introduced in England and Wales in 2008 to prevent forced marriage



and protect its victims/survivors through prohibitions, restrictions, or requirements such as limits on contact and passport seizures. This first comprehensive study of FMPOs finds that despite offering great potential, the court order can sometimes increase the risk of honour-based violence and other forms of abuse by the parents and family against those seeking its protection. Factors including a lack of knowledge about the complex coercive pressures on the victims/survivors, gaps between agencies, miscalculations in multi-agency working and the gatekeeping of services due to financial constraints, often impeded the provision of effective support.

Policy and practice impact of Justice projects

New evidence on financial settlements in divorce

Despite the prevalence of divorce – around 42% of marriages in the UK end this way – very little was known about how couples divide their assets, and the value of those assets, until this new research. The *Fair shares?* project, led by Professor Emma Hitchings at Bristol University, provides the first detailed insight into what happens to assets when a marriage breaks down. Surprising findings include the relatively small sums involved in most divorce cases; median total assets of £135,000 and almost a fifth of couples had no assets at all to divide. Just one-third of divorcing couples finalise their finances through a court order, and only 10% go to court. Only two in five divorcees used a lawyer, often due to fears of the cost. Worryingly, more than one in ten people sought no advice or information to help them with their divorce.

The research report comes during a review by the Law Commission of England and Wales into the 50-year-old laws that govern how assets are shared

after a divorce, with potential to influence change to make the system fairer. Reforms based on Professor Hitchings' findings could include:

- Making financial arrangements that properly recognise and value non-monetary contributions to a marriage and family.
- Promoting fairness by considering vulnerability and inequity between separating parties, most often the woman.
- Ensuring both parties are fully informed about the assets involved and the decisions made about their division.

Demonstrating the importance of the research to the Law Commission's review, *Fair shares?* is specifically referenced in the review's Terms of Reference. This is the first time that a single piece of research has so fundamentally underpinned a Law Commission review from the outset and demonstrates the centrality of the research to their work.

Ground-breaking research into children's experiences of the criminal process

The Foundation funded Dr Vicky Kemp from the University of Nottingham to examine the impact of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 on child suspects detained and questioned by the police. She is the first researcher to be given access to talk to children about their legal rights while detained in police custody. Thirty-two case studies were carried out in three police force areas. Diverse perspectives were examined from research interviews with those involved in the questioning of child suspects, recordings of police interviews and the experience of police custody from a child's viewpoint. The research concluded that children are processed through a punitive and adult-centred system of justice, the antithesis of a 'Child First' approach.

With further Nuffield funding, and based on the recommendations set out in this report, the research team will work with the police and other agencies in piloting a comprehensive set of measures aimed at achieving a Child First approach for child suspects in England and Wales. This will also include working with government and public bodies – particularly the Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board – to identify what changes are required to PACE to promote a Child First approach in police custody. The team will also work with the Welsh Government and other Welsh agencies to ensure that the approach adopted is based on the country's own distinctive policies. Researchers are engaging with analysts in the Ministry of Justice so that fully anonymised electronic custody record data can be shared in the future (subject to data-sharing agreements with individual forces), which is needed to increase transparency and fairness regarding PACE safeguards.

Supporting legal participation for people going to court without a lawyer

Previous Nuffield-funded research on *Litigants in person in Northern Ireland*, led by Professor Gráinne McKeever at Ulster University, identified the barriers to legal participation for people going to court without a lawyer and how this can jeopardise their right to a fair trial. Building on this, practical tools have been developed for assisting litigants in person (LiP) to address barriers to participation. Using a human-centred design (HCD) method for tackling design and reform exercises in the justice system is recommended, offering a new way to conceptualise and tackle problems not previously solved. The HCD process takes participants through six stages: Discover, Synthesise, Brainstorm, Prototype, Test & Refine, and Evolve. Officials from the Department of Justice for Northern Ireland (DoJ) and Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) engaged with the HCD process and provided positive feedback.

Understanding and supporting legal participation for litigants in person has brought LiPs into view. They are now being considered as part of a range of policy developments that have aligned with the research recommendations, including:

- A Litigant in Person Reference Group, with equal numbers of LiPs and other court stakeholders, was established by the DoJ in 2019 to identify ways to improve user experience in the court system. The group has been part of the shadow Civil Justice Council and Family Justice Board, and the NICTS modernisation stakeholder group.
- NICTS created LiP-specific procedures in the migration to remote hearings during COVID-19. This included the introduction of separate forms for LiPs, and LiPs being contacted directly by NICTS about their remote hearings.
- The DoJ has commissioned Ulster University to maintain and update the Northern Ireland Family Court Information website. Workshops on the research and website have been delivered through the Judicial Studies Board, and through the NICTS for court service staff involved in family proceedings services.

Born into care: Best practice guidelines

Born into care data shows that the number of newborn babies in care proceedings increased by 20% in England and 40% in Wales between 2012/13 and 2019/20. This project developed and tested evidence-informed guidelines to help improve practice when the state takes action to safeguard a newborn baby by initiating care proceedings. The aim of the research team, led by Professor Karen Broadhurst at Lancaster University, and working in partnership with the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory (see page 39), was to help professionals and parents navigate an emotionally difficult and ethically challenging situation.

Available on the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory website, the guidelines are designed to be adapted by local authorities, health trusts and other partner organisations to meet their local contexts and develop local area action plans and guidelines. The guidelines aim to inform multi-agency practice when the state takes safeguarding action pre-birth, at birth and in the immediate follow-up period, after discharge from hospital.

The project has had a range of impacts to date, with a number of emerging bespoke projects incorporating learning from the study. A project called *Giving hope* grew out of the study. This new practice initiative was developed and delivered collaboratively with a group of birth mothers who had worked on the guidelines, aiming to support mothers around separation at birth – it has been rolled out to multiple health trusts in England, with plans to adopt in Wales, and interest internationally. In addition, there has been an expansion of dedicated pre-birth teams in England and Wales reflecting a growing awareness of the need to improve practice in this area.

Substituted parenting: What does this mean in the family court?

The term ‘substituted parenting’ has been used by local authorities when they believe the support provided to parents is excessive, asserting that it is detrimental for children who become confused about who the parent is. A project, led by Beth Tarleton at the University of Bristol, sought to develop a common understanding of, and clarity about, the meaning and use of the term ‘substituted parenting’ by legal and social work professionals. It also aimed to ensure that parents with learning disabilities, who are often subjected to the concept, could understand the term, associated risks and how to mitigate them.

The project has highlighted the issue of ‘substituted parenting’ and the lack of clarity around the term’s use in the family

court. It confirmed the routine absence of any analysis of perceived risk or options to address that risk – an issue identified by the Court of Appeal in February 2023. The study has highlighted how problematic and unfairly ‘substituted parenting’ is applied in practice. It has led to the Official Solicitor instructing her case workers to be aware of the findings from the study, in their consideration of future cases.

Nuffield Council on Bioethics

The Nuffield Council on Bioethics (NCOB) is a leading independent policy and research centre, and the foremost bioethics body in the UK. The NCOB identifies, analyses and advises on ethical issues in biomedicine and health so that decisions in these areas benefit people and society.

In 2023 the NCOB secured joint core funding for 2024–2028 from the Nuffield Foundation, the Medical Research Council and Wellcome, and finalised its ambitious new strategy to embed ethics at the centre of decision-making in biomedicine and health.

Alongside this integral piece of work, the NCOB provided decision-makers with an ethical framework to ensure that the needs of older people are at the heart of ageing-related research and innovation, and continued advice towards achieving a gold standard in ethics in genomics-related research and healthcare. It also led work to improve how disagreements between families of critically ill children and healthcare teams are managed and began a major new project exploring public views on assisted dying in England.

A new strategy direction for 2024–2028

2023 was a significant year for NCOB in which it developed its new five-year strategy *Making ethics matter* and appointed its new Chair, Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley to oversee the change in strategic direction.

NCOB's new strategy builds upon its strong history of influencing policy (evidenced in its [impact report 2018–2023](#)), but with greater emphasis on ensuring that ethics becomes integral to the Government's bioscience and innovation agendas.

It's horizon-scanning function will evolve to better anticipate the scientific developments and health trends that pose fundamental ethical questions to society. This will be done through strengthening and expanding its networks to enhance its ability to prioritise where NCOB should focus efforts and highlight where others should focus theirs.

New priority areas have been identified to provide greater focus for NCOB's trademark independent and high-quality ethical

analysis. Within these, a greater range of outputs is planned, tailored to decision makers' needs, to help ensure that advice and information is given to decision makers at the right time and in a useful format that will enable them to embed ethics into their work more readily.

A blog from NCOB's Chair and Director has been published which explains more about how the NCOB will [change tactics to embed ethics in decision-making](#).

The future of ageing

The NCOB published the findings from *The future of ageing* report in April 2023. The in-depth enquiry links to the UK government's grand challenge to help meet the needs of an ageing society.

The NCOB's report identifies the values, principles and factors that are most at stake in the context of research and innovation connected with ageing, noting that research is often influenced by negative attitudes



to ageing, and by assumptions about the attributes and roles of older people in society. The report calls for the diversity, values and agency of older people to be placed at the heart of research related to ageing. It also proposes an 'ethical framework' to help everyone involved in conducting research relating to ageing to think through the ethical implications of their work.

The NCOB held a launch event in April 2023 bringing together key stakeholders from different the research sectors, to build support for collective action in the sector, taking forward the ethical framework for ageing-related research. The panel included Sir Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer for England, who went on use the NCOB's work to inform his 2023 Annual report *Health in an ageing society*. The NCOB's work was referenced a number of times in his report.

One of the aims of the ethical framework was to have some impact on the development of technology to support living well in older age. NCOB recommended that the British Standards Institution (BSI), the MHRA and Innovate UK, should collaborate to develop accredited standards for promoting ethical research practices for technologies designed to support people to live well in older age.

In line with this recommendation, the BSI have now established an Innovate UK-funded programme called the BSI/UK Standards Challenge Fund. This fund will support the creation of new standards including in the "Healthy Living & Ageing space". Professor Peter Gore, a member of the NCOB's working group on ageing, has been invited to join the Governance Board and will help ensure that the ethical framework and principles from NCOB's work are represented within these new Standards.

Disagreements in the care of critically ill children in England

In September 2023, the NCOB published an independent review into the disagreements that can arise in the

care of critically ill children. The review was commissioned by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care in December 2022.

The review focused on the relationship between parents/carers and healthcare teams in the care of a critically ill child and why, in some cases, the relationship breaks down. It also looked at how disagreements, once they have come to light, can be resolved as collaboratively and sensitively as possible, with all involved able to have their voices heard.

The key recommendation to emerge from the NCOB's review was the need for the government to convene a new taskforce with responsibility for overseeing the implementation of changes in the NHS in England and the Courts – to improve the experience of families and healthcare professionals in navigating disagreements.

The Government has since agreed to implement the NCOB's recommendations in full and has established an implementation taskforce to oversee progress. Amongst the progress to date, NHS England has introduced regional conflict champions, new resources and conflict management training for healthcare professionals, and the Ministry of Justice has committed to exploring how less adversarial court models could be used in these distressing cases.

Genomics in healthcare and research

The NCOB is playing a leading role in coordinating ethics in the genomics healthcare and research sectors, through a partnership with the Office for Life Sciences (OLS).

An initial report with the OLS and equivalents in the devolved administrations, to share best practice in applying ethical standards to genomics initiatives, and a collection of case studies, were published in July 2023.

The next phase, funded by the OLS, saw the NCOB begin crucial work to map all current resources and guidance on ethical

considerations in the use of genomics in healthcare and research in the UK. The analysis found that there are gaps in guidance that need addressing and the NCOB called for UK-wide coordination to facilitate the embedding of ethics in UK policy and practice within genomics.

This work supports the Government's vision for a gold standard UK model for genomics, as set out in its Genome UK Strategy. NCOB presented it to the National Genomics Board, who endorsed this work. Following this, NCOB has secured funding to develop and host this co-ordinating function, which will be developed and hosted by NCOB. The aim of this work is to encourage individuals and organisations across genomics research and healthcare to share their knowledge and work, towards achieving a higher degree of consistency in ethical approaches to ensure that the UK is making the most of genomic technologies.

Assisted dying

In October 2023 the NCOB announced a major piece of work to explore public views on assisted dying in England.

Separately, there was a flurry of media coverage about assisted dying in December 2023, prompted by Esther Rantzen's call for a change in the law, sparking renewed debate on the issue. The Daily Express ran an article on 28 December 2023 about the NCOB's plans for a Citizen's Jury. It opened with the line "The campaign to reform assisted dying laws is set to be one of 2024's most important debates" and referenced the NCOB as follows: "The Nuffield Council on Bioethics, an internationally-recognised charitable body advising law makers, says it will run a citizens' jury so that voters have all the information they require on assisted dying. It plans to publish a report on recommendations from it." This media attention led to a petition in England for a parliamentary vote on assisted dying, with a debate taking place in Spring 2024 or April 2024.

The NCOB is continuing to engage with key journalists and parliamentarians to ensure that its surveys and Citizens' Jury, and their exploration of public views on assisted dying, will receive appropriate attention in the media and parliamentary debates on the issue.

Strategic goal two – evidence, data and digital society

We will work to improve the accessibility, use and collection of the evidence and data necessary to understand the issues affecting people's life chances. We will consider the broader implications of a digital society.

Justice

Children's information: Improving lives through better listening and better data

Good statistical and administrative information are vital for effective policy and practice in children's services. How the views and experiences of children and families are represented within that information is a critical issue, as is how the information is used. This Strategic Fund project, led by Professor Leon Feinstein at the University of Oxford, aims to ensure the voices of children, families and practitioners are better heard and used to improve services, experiences and outcomes in ways that are effective and ethical.

The project involves an innovative collaboration between four local authorities, five universities and the organisation Research in Practice, with researchers working closely with practitioners, children and families. It focuses primarily on children and families needing additional support from local authority children's services – who are often the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in society – but also considers universal services.

The project is establishing Information Use Projects (IUPs) in the four local authority sites (North Yorkshire, Hampshire, Oldham and Rochdale), actively testing ways to address the challenges of incorporating user voice in and about data, and improving the uses of data. These projects will be evaluated over two years. A network has been established of policy and practice leads from other local authorities interested in the themes of voice and data use, to test and co-develop wider learning from the project. Findings and insights from the project are being disseminated through different routes including podcasts, roundtables, webinars, academic conferences and submissions to policymakers.



Welfare

Developing a Minimum Digital Living Standard for households with children

Digital inequalities in access, skills and capabilities impact all aspects of peoples' lives, be that work, education, leisure, health or well-being. This research, led by Professor Simeon Yates at the University of Liverpool, has developed a Minimum Digital Living Standard (MDLS) for households with children. MDLS sets a benchmark, or 'basket', of digital goods,

services and skills which people agree households with children should be able to reach to have an adequate quality of life and participate in society.

The MDLS research establishes that the approach can provide not only a meaningful and accessible definition of an adequate standard of digital living, but also that members of the public can agree on what is needed for that to be reached.

The final report in 2024 includes: a UK-wide survey; statistical and geographic analysis to explore variation in reaching MDLS; and stakeholder consultations to explore the relevance and intersectionality of the standard

across key dimensions such as disability, ethnicity, rurality and poverty. Throughout the research, the team are engaging with policymakers and practitioners to share their learning and consider implications for policy and practice development.

Influence of social capital on life outcomes in the UK

The year also saw funding for a pioneering study, led by Dr Antonio Silva at the Behavioural Insights Team, that will shed light on how social connections – social capital – can shape individual opportunities and well-being throughout someone's life. Researching social capital at scale has been historically difficult, so research has often been conducted in specific closed-group environments, limiting the generalisability of the findings.

The research will be the first of its type to use Facebook and Instagram social connections data for the UK. In partnership with [Meta](#) and supported by [Opportunity Insights](#) and [Stripe Partners](#), anonymised data from 50 million Facebooks users and 30 million Instagram users, combined with other public datasets, will be used to identify the impact of social capital and the factors that facilitate its creation.

Later project phases, in partnership with [Neighbourly Lab](#) and [The Royal Society of Arts](#), will provide qualitative insights into how social capital is experienced and created, and develop actionable approaches for building it. Expanding on on the [work of Professor Raj Chetty](#) at Harvard University, this project will establish the evidence base for how social capital drives outcomes in the UK, where and how it is created and, ultimately, what policymakers and communities can do to foster social capital and improve individual quality of life.

The work of the Behavioural Insights Team, the RSA, Stripe Partners and Neighbourly Lab on this project is funded by the Nuffield Foundation. Contributions from Meta and Opportunity Insights are self-funded.

The Ada Lovelace Institute

The Ada Lovelace Institute (Ada) was established by the Nuffield Foundation in 2018 as an independent research institute with a mission to make data and AI work for people and society.

We do this by building evidence through our research, convening diverse voices, and shaping policy and practice on AI and data in the UK, EU and internationally. We amplify the voices of people to ensure that public opinions, attitudes and concerns inform debates and decision-making about data and AI.

2023 was the year that AI went mainstream. For example, OpenAI's ChatGPT became the fastest-growing digital service in history, reaching an estimated 100 million users in just two months. Public and policymaker awareness of AI and its potential impacts for people and society has never been greater, and this has implications for the scope and direction of Ada's work.

Ada responded by engaging in research and discussions about AI risk, safety and regulation, continuing to centre affected people and communities. We produced timely evidence in response to the needs of policymakers and informed and influenced emerging policy responses, both in the UK and the EU.

Putting people at the centre of AI

In 2023, Ada worked to understand and to amplify what people feel about and want from AI through empirical public attitudes and participation research. In a year of rapid AI expansion, this research reminded policymakers to listen to diverse publics, and to involve them in decision-making.

In June 2023, Ada and the Alan Turing Institute published a nationally representative survey of public attitudes to AI in Britain. We asked people about their awareness of, experience with, and attitudes towards, 17 different uses of AI, including facial recognition, welfare eligibility and cancer risk assessment. This research was presented to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on AI at their meeting on UK AI regulation.

In October 2023, we published a rapid review of evidence about public attitudes towards AI, looking at a broad range of studies.

The review found some clear and consistent public views on AI, such as strong support for the protection of fundamental rights (like privacy) and the belief that AI needs to be regulated. This helped to strengthen Ada's case for regulation ahead of the AI Safety Summit and highlight the need for meaningful public engagement.

We also reconvened the Citizens' Biometrics Council for their views on the Information Commissioner's Office's (ICO) proposed approach to biometric data. The council's reflections on the proposals provide detailed recommendations around practicalities of consent, transparency and accessibility, as well as purpose, data collection and storage, and opt-out processes. In August 2023, the ICO confirmed that the Council's perspectives and recommendations had been used to inform its guidance on biometric technologies.



Influencing policy

In 2023, Ada pushed against the narrative that AI technologies are too fast-moving and complex to regulate. Instead, we are building evidence and engaging with policymakers behind the scenes to make a case for effective AI and data governance that works for people and society.

In March 2023, the UK government published a white paper on AI regulation proposing a “contextual, sector-based regulatory framework”. [Ada’s blog post on the value chain of general-purpose AI](#) was cited three times in the paper. Our initial response – welcoming the engagement with AI harms but highlighting the failure to include legislation – was covered by [BBC News](#), [The Times](#) and [The Guardian](#), and we authored an opinion piece for the [New Statesman](#).

Ada’s evidence to the Commons Science and Technology Select Committee inquiry into the governance of AI was referenced multiple times in the Committee’s report, calling for “greater urgency in enacting the legislative powers” needed to regulate AI. We also gave oral evidence to the Lords Communications and Digital Select Committee’s inquiry into large language models. The report cited Ada’s evidence, as well as our research on foundation models and UK AI regulation.

Our report [Regulating AI in the UK](#) recommended strengthening the government’s proposals by improving legal protections, empowering regulators and addressing urgent risks. We also published two reports – on [monitoring AI](#) and [assessing AI risk](#) – to directly support policymakers

through the Government’s Science and Analysis R&D Programme.

2023’s highest profile forum for AI policy was the UK’s AI Safety Summit, held at Bletchley Park in November, and attended by representatives from governments, industry, civil society and academia.

In the run-up to the summit, [we published a blog post](#) providing suggestions for how to make the summit meaningful by expanding its focus and centring people, as well as [a policy briefing exploring examples of other sectors with safety-based regulation](#). We used the briefing to facilitate discussions with policymakers about the importance of effective AI governance, including Peter Kyle MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology.

Francine Bennett, Ada’s Interim Director, was one of a handful of civil society representatives to attend the Summit and she spoke about the importance of centring people and society during the closing plenary session. She was also interviewed by BBC News, Radio 4’s Today programme and ITV’s Good Morning Britain. Addressing the Summit’s initially narrow definition of ‘AI safety’, we partnered with the AI Fringe, a parallel series of events convening more diverse voices and discussing a broader range of risks. Ada’s participation helped build a broad coalition of voices around public deliberation and accountability and helped to amplify these voices in the national media and through a [joint communique](#).

The Data Protection and Digital Information Bill was a focus for our parliamentary engagement in 2023. We gave evidence

In 2023, Ada pushed against the narrative that AI technologies are too fast-moving and complex to regulate.

to the Commons Public Bill Committee, and briefed MPs and peers on proposals for amendments based on our research. The Institute was mentioned 13 times in Bill debates. As a result of our engagement, Labour tabled several of our drafted amendments on biometrics, which were debated in Committee stage. These were not successfully passed (as expected) but provided a platform for cross-party engagement and built momentum for further work in the House of Lords and the next Parliament.

In Brussels, our EU policy engagement continued to focus on the AI Act, the world's first example of comprehensive regulation legislation. Our views on the implications of general-purpose AI for the legislation were cited in a European Parliament explainer (and the UK government's proposals). Ada published a [discussion paper on the role of technical standards in the AI Act](#), examining barriers to civil society participation in standards development. We held an expert roundtable, attended by the EU Commission, to discuss how the findings of the report could inform the AI Act. The final Act text reflects our recommendation to ensure diverse expertise in standards.

In the autumn we published updated recommendations for the AI Act trilogues, a critical stage of EU lawmaking involving Parliament, Commission and Council. Ada engaged EU policymakers across the political spectrum, most notably the Spanish Presidency of the Council. The trilogues concluded successfully with political agreement in December 2023.

Several policy outcomes in the final Act relate to specific recommendations or themes identified in Ada's research and engagement on the Act: over half of our 18 recommendations were implemented in some form. The inclusion of 'affected persons' as a legally significant category is something that Ada has been advocating for since 2021. We also saw our recommendations reflected

in the AI Act's approach to the AI value chain, with specific obligations for developers of general-purpose AI, and post-market monitoring and enforcement through the EU AI Office.

Building evidence

The research we published in 2023 explains core concepts of AI and data, offers concrete policy recommendations, and helps to make sense of a highly technical and rapidly evolving landscape, as well as addressing urgent questions relating to the intersection of AI with climate technologies, genomic science, health inequalities and public services.

Ada's work on foundation models – general-purpose model powering services like ChatGPT – examined the risk and opportunities of this technology and explored the principles, regulations and practices necessary to deploy them in the public sector safely, ethically and equitably. Our explainer [What is a foundation model?](#) has been widely cited, notably referenced in the government's AI Safety Summit discussion paper, and used to inform its AI white paper consultation response.

We concluded our three-year project with the Health Foundation with the publication of [Access denied?](#), a report on socio-economic inequalities in digital health services. This set out recommendations for policymakers to overcome several key challenges, including digital exclusion, lack of public confidence in data use and poor data quality. Using a participatory research method, we trained six people with experience of poverty to become 'peer researchers' who conducted interviews in their communities. As a result of this, Ada was invited to give oral evidence at a roundtable in March 2023 as part of the Independent Review on Equity in Medical Devices. In November 2023, [Access denied?](#) was referenced in a House of Lords debate on the COVID-19 Committee report.

In our report *Going public*, we examined how commercial AI labs are involving the public to make AI systems more accountable. Through a series of interviews with industry professionals, we explored how these labs understand public participation, the approaches they take, and the obstacles they face when implementing these approaches. The paper was accepted into the Association of Computing Machinery's *Fairness, accountability and transparency in machine learning* (FAccT) conference and has been cited by the World Economic Forum.

We also published research with the NCOB looking at the cutting edge of healthcare, which investigated the ethical and societal issues raised by the convergence of AI and genomics. DNA.I. sets out early findings and emerging questions and it has been referenced in the ICO's *Tech horizons report*.

New partnerships and collaborations

As well as pursuing our own research agenda, much of Ada's influence comes through working in partnership with other organisations as an effective way to amplify our capacity, broaden our expertise and ensure the impact of our work. In 2023 we entered into several new partnerships, with academia, civil society and policy:

- Alongside the University of Edinburgh and the BBC, Ada launched Bridging Responsible AI Divides (BRAID), a national research programme funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.
- We contributed to the strategy group and public participation working group of UKRI-funded Responsible AI (RAI).
- Ada joined Partnership on AI, a non-profit, bringing together diverse voices from within the AI community.
- We partnered with Digital Good Network and Liverpool Civic Data Cooperative

to launch a new Participatory and Inclusive Data Stewardship project.

Ada also joined the special advisory committee for an AI taskforce launched by the Trades Union Congress to draft a Bill regulating the use of AI in the workplace. The draft Bill was published in April 2024. Other members of the advisory committee included techUK, the British Computer Society and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

- Through our 2023 research, we also worked with the AI Law Consultancy, the Alan Turing Institute, the APLE collective, AWO, the EU AI Fund, the Generation Foundation, the Health Foundation, the Information Commissioner's Office, Luminare, Minderoo, NCOB, Omidyar, and the Open Society Foundation.

Nuffield Family Justice Observatory

The Nuffield Family Justice Observatory (Nuffield FJO) has continued to break new ground in how data and evidence can be used to improve the lives of children and families in the family justice system.

We have sought out and analysed previously unstudied data as part of a journey towards understanding how a child or family's ethnicity affects their experience of the family justice system. Working with partners, we have brought parents and practitioners together to reimagine what humane practice should look like when a baby is at risk of being removed from its mother at birth. We have pushed for the growing number of vulnerable children deprived of their liberty in unregulated placements to be given a place in administrative data, and for the system to urgently find a way

to better support them. We have used evidence to shift the narrative in private law cases to focus on the needs of children and their families, and how we meet those needs.

Our relentless pursuit of rigorous, independent evidence continues to draw unseen issues out of the shadows and prompt reflection. We are also bringing people together to innovate and pilot solutions to complex and sometimes longstanding challenges.

Our work is focused on four themes:

- Separating families and private law proceedings.
- Babies who are subject to care proceedings.
- Young people and the care system.
- Inequalities in the family justice system.

We work with others – from judges and lawyers to local authorities, third sector organisations and academics – to gather insights and convene discussions about how evidence can be used to initiate change. We hold events to share evidence and innovation with thousands of professionals on the frontline of the family justice system, provoking connection and conversation.

The team took part in a ‘practice week’ – sitting in on public and private law proceedings, Family Drug and Alcohol Courts, private law pilot sites, magistrates’ courts and legal meetings, and visiting services across England and Wales.

Experts from academia, science and the early years sector – including the Nuffield FJO’s Beverley Barnett-Jones – were appointed to offer strategic advice to The Princess of Wales and provide oversight of the work of her Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood.

Throughout it all, it is our partners – the organisations and individuals working within

or alongside the family justice system – and, above all, the families whose lives have been affected by it, who have brought our work to life. We are grateful to those who have attended our events, shared our research, and contributed ideas and experiences.

Private law

The family court has a role when families cannot agree arrangements for children – most usually following parental separation – known as private law cases. Little is known about the children and families appearing in the system, their background and particular issues, or the services available to them on their journey towards the courtroom.

We have been working to better understand the families that go to court following separation, why they use the court, and how their needs can be better met. We are also looking at how children’s participation in proceedings could be improved. This is in response to our research which has highlighted both the benefits of good participation and the current limits to children having a voice in decisions made about their lives.

In 2023 we published two reports: [Uncovering private family law](#) and [What do we know about adults in private law proceedings? At the same time we convened conversations with practitioners and leaders working in the system to explore ways of bringing about change.](#)

What do we know about adults in private law proceedings? Spotlight series

This paper, designed for policy and practice audiences, synthesises key evidence on what we know about the adults involved in private law cases, how their characteristics may affect their needs when they go through court, and the type of information and support that could improve their experiences.

Uncovering private family law: Exploring applications that involve non-parents

Around 10% of private law applications feature people who aren't parents. This new research explores the types of orders being applied for and the characteristics of the people involved. In response to publication of this research, the President of the Family Division convened a working group of senior judiciary and other stakeholders to address how this previously overlooked group can be better served by the family courts. The Nuffield FJO sits on this working group and continues to support policy and practice level responses to the issues raised by this research.

Babies who are subject to care proceedings

As rising numbers of babies are being removed from their parents at birth (many of whom have previously had a child taken into care), we have continued to explore what needs to change to reverse this trend. Where it is considered necessary to take a baby into care, we have been providing evidence to help inform more humane experiences and lessen the likelihood of the subsequent removal of a child from the parent's care.

Born into care: Best practice guidelines for when the state intervenes at birth

We finalised and published guidelines developed and refined through work in eight pilot sites in England and Wales. In each pilot area, children's social care and health services worked together with parents with lived experience, to change and improve practice and the approach to pre-birth assessment and intervention where there are safeguarding concerns in relation to an unborn child. The final guidelines drew on these pilots to help professionals working in this complex and challenging area to better support the parents involved, who are likely to be experiencing extreme anxiety and trauma.

The activity in the pilot sites, particularly the involvement of mothers with lived experience, led to the development of HOPE ('hold on, pain eases') boxes. The boxes are given to mothers separated from their babies after birth. They contain items to help the mother feel connected with her baby, and a similar box goes with the baby so that memories can be shared. If the baby is permanently separated from the parents, the boxes provide important memories for both child and parent. The HOPE box project has been taken on in a wide range of health authorities with a positive response from midwives.

We also published a summary of a report that provides new evidence about entry routes to care, pathways through care, and placement outcomes for babies in the care system in Wales: *Understanding care pathways and placement stability for babies in Wales.*

Our bulletin to share research and emerging good practice in relation to newborn babies at risk of care proceedings has almost a thousand subscribers after only nine editions.

Young people and the care system

The sharp increase in the number of older children and young people who are being taken into care has prompted concerns about the ability of the family justice system to respond to their needs. We have been using data to shine a spotlight on this group of children and young people, and convening discussions across the family justice system on how to facilitate change.

From July 2022 to July 2023 the President of the Family Division oversaw the National Deprivation of Liberty (DoLs) Court, in part influenced by Nuffield FJO data on the rising numbers of DoLs orders being sought. Based at the Royal Courts of Justice, it dealt with all new applications seeking authorisation to deprive children of their liberty under the inherent jurisdiction and ran for a 12-month period.

Briefing: Children subject to deprivation of liberty orders

Nuffield FJO collected and published data on these applications and released monthly briefings highlighting high-level data trends. In addition, we published an analysis of applications, revealing who is making applications, the characteristics and needs of children who are involved, and the common reasons for a DoL order being sought. We also looked at the legal outcomes of applications. At the end of the period we summarised our key findings, and to support the change we believe is needed we developed five principles of care in collaboration with a panel of leading academics.

Inequalities in the family justice system

To be effective and fair, the family justice system needs to understand how the system is used and experienced by children and

adults, and how this experience differs for different families. We have been working to contribute to the knowledge base around ethnic diversity in the family justice system.

Ethnicity of children in care and supervision proceedings in England

This briefing paper mapped inequalities that exist between ethnic groups in the family justice system and showed how we can monitor and measure this using data.

How might our ethnicity affect our experience of the family justice system?

By following a child's journey through the family justice system – before court, through court proceedings and after court – we show that ethnic disparities exist across the spectrum. We summarised our learnings in this paper looking at how our ethnicity affects experiences of the family justice system



Strategic goal three – profile and influence

We will increase the profile and influence of our research portfolio and of the Nuffield Foundation as a whole.

Central to our grant-making ethos is that we are more than just a funder. We work with our grant-holders at all stages of their projects to plan and deliver communications and engagement activity to maximise the profile and influence of the work we fund. The result of that collaborative way of working is evidenced in the impact examples provided under strategic goal one.

We also produce syntheses – in different forms – bringing together findings from individual projects to strengthen their collective impact and to provide new opportunities for engagement. Our events programme convenes audiences to facilitate productive debate, and the public affairs team connects politicians and policymakers with the work of the Foundation, its centres and our grant-holders.

We provide access to outputs from all our grant-holder’s research projects on our website, and work to strengthen their collective impact. We use our own communications platforms to make the research we fund accessible to a wider audience and to amplify its message. We convene and connect in our fully accessible office, while continuing to recognise the value of the online space so that as many people as possible can engage with our work.

Teacher workforce crisis event

Our event in June 2023 about the causes and consequences of the teacher workforce crisis explored issues including teacher supply and school accountability. We had a total of 231 event registrations – 148 online, 83 in person – with attendees including researchers, policymakers, sector leaders and education practitioners.

The seminar featured presentations covering trends in teacher pay, subject teacher shortages, teacher workload and well-being, Ofsted inspections, the pandemic’s legacy, and the impact of academisation.

A report was submitted by our public affairs team to the Education Select Committee investigating these issues. The event generated media coverage and significant traction on social media, enabling us to proactively set the research within the context of the live news agenda.

Digital engagement and reach

2023 was the year we pivoted more towards digital channels, including social media, growing our audiences and delivering increased reach and profile for our grant-holders.



About Nuffield Foundation and our research grants

With Tim Gardam



We held our first *Grants outreach* webinar in May 2023. The event reached a much bigger audience than anticipated, with 1,001 unique viewers of the live event, and an additional 906 views of the recording.

The webinar promoted our grant funding opportunities to new audiences:

- 72% of attendees had never applied for our funding before.
- 81% said they are now more likely to apply for funding.

Levels of interest and engagement during the event were high. We received more than 200 questions throughout the webinar. Data shows a wide spread of organisations attended, and following the webinar there was a 40% increase in applications to our Research, Development and Analysis Fund, and a more diverse pool of applicants.

We also received new newsletter subscribers from the event – a 26% increase on our subscriber base. As well as continuing our contact with those who attended the

webinar, this is a significant increase in the numbers of people who will hear about future events, funding opportunities, grant outputs and impact stories. The Nuffield Foundation website landing pages also saw sharp increases in unique page views following the outreach webinar, reflecting the proactive communications campaign in support of the Foundation funding offer.

Media profile and opportunities

The Foundation was mentioned in the media 3,502 times in 2023 and comments from our spokespeople featured more than 1,270 times. A range of projects attracted significant media interest throughout the year, reflecting the broad scope of the work we fund.

Strategic goal three

In January, the Nuffield Foundation's Carey Oppenheim and the Nuffield FJO's Beverley Barnett-Jones were announced as members of the Advisory Group for the Royal Foundation Centre for Early Childhood.

Their appointments, and Carey Oppenheim's early childhood work, received extensive media coverage with more than 200 mentions. The Royal Foundation also launched its 'Shaping Us' campaign to raise awareness of the importance of the first five years in a child's life. Carey Oppenheim authored an article for early years education professionals to support the campaign.

In April, a report by The Institute for Fiscal Studies into education spending in the four nations of the UK received wide national and local media coverage. Josh Hillman was quoted in several Scottish and Welsh media outlets and other specialist media.

Alongside extensive social media coverage of our [teacher workforce event](#) in June, a Tes journalist attended and reported on it. The article included research insights and quotes from the National Foundation

for Educational Research (NFER) school's workforce lead, Jack Worth.

In the same month, The Food Foundation released their annual *Broken plate* report, containing a quote from the Nuffield Foundation, achieving national and specialist media coverage. Analysis by The Food Foundation was also covered by the national press, with The Food Foundation's Executive Director Anna Taylor interviewed on Channel 4's *Steph's Packed Lunch*.

The EEF published its [final evaluation](#) of NELI at-scale in September 2023. This analysis is the culmination of almost 20 years of rigorous trials underpinned by high-quality research. It finds that four- and five-year-olds who received the targeted oral language intervention made an additional four months' progress in language skills, compared to those who did not receive it. Children receiving Free School Meals benefited the most, with a seven-month boost to their language skills. The findings achieved extensive media coverage.



In November, Professor Emma Hitchings from the University of Bristol published the final report of *Fair shares? Sorting out money and property on divorce*. She was interviewed on national radio about the report and co-wrote an article for academic media with fellow report author, Professor Gillian Douglas. The study was also referenced in national newspapers, featured in blog posts by several leading law firms, and was picked up by local news titles.

December saw the culmination of the Resolution Foundation and LSE's strategic fund grant, *The Economy 2030 Inquiry*. Their final report received significant media attention, including featuring on a BBC Panorama episode: *Surviving the pay squeeze*. Alex Beer, the Foundation's Head of Grants Operations and Portfolio Development, spoke at the conference to launch the report and was quoted widely in the media.

"The Nuffield Foundation, among others, argued that there is 'a strong case for additional investment in the early years, as a foundational stage of early development' and as 'lifelong inequalities have their roots in early childhood, this would be investment in social and individual well-being over the long term.'" (para 16)

"The Nuffield Foundation said in written evidence that 'given that lifelong inequalities have their roots in early childhood' investing in quality 'would be investment in social and individual well-being over the long term.'" (para 105)

The committee has also echoed our recommendation on the need to create a long-term strategy for childcare and the early years, "encompassing supply side reforms, workforce development, and a considered focus on improving the quality of ECEC [Early Childhood Education Care] provision for children in all areas."

Public affairs

The public affairs team works across the Nuffield Foundation, the Ada Lovelace Institute, NCOB and the Nuffield FJO. Many of the policy and practice impact stories in this report are the result of our engagement and influencing strategies.

We share and promote the work of the Nuffield Foundation and its centres with parliamentarians, policymakers in all relevant government departments, public bodies and the third sector.

In 2023, the Nuffield Foundation continued to engage with political parties on the findings of the *Changing Face of Early Childhood in Britain* series of evidence reviews. We contributed to a significant Education Select Committee inquiry into support for childcare and the early years, and our evidence was heavily cited in its final report published in July.

We work also work directly with grant-holders, by advising on engagement opportunities, stakeholder mapping and management, and helping them develop outputs best suited to a policy audience. Where appropriate, we draw together research from current and past work we have funded to respond to live policy developments such as select committee inquiries and consultation responses.

In 2024, we plan to take an even more strategic and active approach to bringing our grant-holders together to respond and engage directly with policy developments. We are also developing resources on engagement and influencing plans to enable the research we fund to be as impactful as possible.

Strategic goal four – opportunities for young people

Our student programmes are direct interventions to create opportunities for young people to develop the quantitative literacy and critical thinking necessary to be engaged citizens in modern Britain.

Research Placements and Experiences

For more than 25 years, Research Placements and Experiences (RPE – formerly Nuffield Research Placements, NRPs) have supported students from the UK to develop a wide range of skills through engaging, real-world placements.

The programme continues to provide opportunities for year 12 (or equivalent) students from disadvantaged backgrounds to take part in authentic and meaningful science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) and STEM-related projects, gaining a unique experience through their participation.

The programme is funded by the Nuffield Foundation, but from October 2020 it has been delivered by STEM Learning, the UK's leading provider of STEM education and careers support.

There are now two options offered: a two-week Research Placement or five-day Experience Placement. Research Placements are collaborations with a STEM-related knowledge expert on a live research question or area of development. While producing a scientific or technical report and poster, the students benefit from the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the host organisation's current work. The Experience Placements are explorations with industry experts to identify essential skills needed for employment in STEM sectors. While producing a workbook and reflective report, students gain insight into working in professional environments, as well as knowledge of the challenges for different sectors, in turn preparing them for employment.

Evaluation of the 2022/23 placements was positive:

- **Overall satisfaction with the scheme was high.** 95% of students were satisfied with their experience, and 97% would recommend RPE to others. All teachers surveyed would recommend placements to future students, teachers and parents/carers, and 100% of providers would recommend placements to others.



- **Students and teachers reported benefits for participants.** 93% of students agreed that their confidence in their own abilities had been positively influenced, 94% of teachers agreed with this statement and 94% of students agreed their ability to work as part of a team improved.
- The majority (75%) of students said they want to go on to study a STEM or STEM-related degree after completing their placement. 48% said that their placement had confirmed they were happy with their plans, while 24% said that it helped them to decide which option was right for them.

POST Fellowships

We offer PhD students – in their final or penultimate year of studying within a scientific, natural or social science field at a UK university – the opportunity to undertake a three-month fellowship

at the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST).

POST Fellows benefit from the Foundation's expertise throughout the three months. Staff share their networks and make connections to other experts, and Fellows have access to our wide array of public outputs and historic research. Fellows are also given the opportunity to present to an engaged audience at the Foundation's offices.

In 2023 we increased the number of places offered in the year from four to six. Fellows co-author a POSTnote or briefing on a range of topical issues.

Stephanie Hartgen-Walker summarises child food insecurity and Free School Meal initiatives in England, highlighting relevant research evidence and stakeholder, and Jahnvi Bhaskaran summarises the emerging technology of human stem cell-based embryo models. Dugald Foster

was offered a place in 2023, and in 2024 will publish a report on *Reform of the Mental Health Act: People with learning difficulties and autism*.

POST Fellowships are increasingly touching on topics that are of interest to the Nuffield centres (the Ada Lovelace Institute, NCOB and Nuffield FJO). This includes Hannah Wolmuth-Gordon who writes about the One Health approach, its key features, and the challenges to and opportunities for implementation. One Health recognises that human, animal and environmental health are closely interlinked. Laura Heath's fellowship and POST briefing on gender incongruence and gender dysphoria is another example. As part of her Fellowship, she met with staff of the Health and Social Care Committee and attended a committee hearing.

Katerina Mentzou's fellowship was on *Problem-solving courts* (PSC), a problem-solving approach targeting the complex needs of individuals within the criminal or family justice systems. In her POSTnote she outlines the key components and outcomes of different PSCs, highlighting the opportunities for and challenges to implementation in England and Wales. Finishing her POSTnote early, she conducted scoping work for future POSTnotes and helped with the human trafficking inquiry of the Home Affairs Select Committee.

Devyani Gaijjar started her fellowship in 2022, examining the debate around assisted dying. After submitting her PhD thesis, she started working at the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology in 2023 as a physical sciences and digital adviser.

“I knew I was working on something that would have an impact and be used by parliamentarians – that the POSTnote I produced could help decision-makers make informed choices on laws directly affecting people.”

POST Fellow

Grants awarded in 2023

Principal Investigator and Institution	Project Name	Value (£)	Term (months)
New Education projects funded in 2023			
Sara Baker, University of Cambridge	A feasibility and pilot trial of the Early Years Library	460,193	36
Danielle Matthews, University of Sheffield	Can digital parenting interventions benefit early language development?	402,673	24
Matt Dickson, University of Bath	The Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) to 18 in England – has it worked?	357,978	20
Maria Cockerill, Queen's University Belfast	Vocabulary for reading: the power of words	319,754	33
Luke Sibieta, Institute for Fiscal Studies	Spending across different stages of education	303,459	36
Jack Worth, National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)	Teacher recruitment and retention challenges amid market structure reform	248,393	18
Kirsty Dunn, University of Lancaster	Investigating the origins of the 'achievement gap': the effects of adversity	242,810	22
Tammy Campbell, Education Policy Institute	What has 'Free School Meals' measured? Implications for research and policy	236,661	24
Victoria Simms, Ulster University	Improving early mathematical skills by supporting the home learning environment	223,580	24
Veruska Oppedisano, University of Westminster	The impact of exclusion on peers' educational and labour market outcomes	205,279	30
Joanne Hughes, Queen's University Belfast	Exploring academic selection and grammar schools in NI, and advancing the debate	204,077	24

Grants awarded in 2023

Principal Investigator and Institution	Project Name	Value (£)	Term (months)
Kirsten Abbot-Smith, University of Kent	Developing a classroom intervention to improve conversation skills in primary	195,108	24
John Jerrim, UCL Institute of Education	Long-term outcomes of high-achieving disadvantaged children	161,482	24
Carol Brown, Oxford Brookes University	Unequal access to higher learning: can the EPQ help with levelling up?	151,103	24
Jenna Julius, National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)	Cost of living crisis: impact on schools	129,720	11
John Jerrim, UCL Institute of Education	Investigating variation in performance across the Key Stage 2 maths curricula	98,728	18
Jon Andrews, Education Policy Institute	Education priorities in the next general election	80,021	20
Funding for one project less than £50,000		15,091	
Additional funding for Education projects funded in previous years			
Additional funding for six projects, each less than £50,000		79,954	
Total Education grants		4,116,064	
New Justice projects funded in 2023			
Vicky Kemp, University of Nottingham	PACE and child suspects: piloting a 'Child First' approach in police custody	334,151	24
Lorna Stabler, Cardiff University	Special guardianship families: experiences and support needs	326,288	24
Jo Garstang, University of Birmingham	Improving safeguarding outcomes after adoption or special guardianship	306,329	18

Grants awarded in 2023

Principal Investigator and Institution	Project Name	Value (£)	Term (months)
Rick Hood, Kingston University	Linking household benefits, financial precarity and child welfare	298,770	27
Clive Diaz, Cardiff University	Parental advocacy in England: a realist evaluation of implementation	295,145	30
Lucy Welsh, University of Sussex	Exploring the experiences of Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) applicants	122,900	20
Paolo Campana, University of Cambridge	Breaking networks of youth serious violence in the UK	115,843	18
Funding for one project less than £50,000		25,205	
Additional funding for Justice projects funded in previous years			
Additional funding for nine projects, each less than £50,000		98,287	
Total Justice grants		1,922,918	
New Welfare projects funded in 2023			
Antonio Silva, Nesta	Revealing social capital	488,008	24
Ashwin Kumar, Manchester Metropolitan University	Universal Credit, good work and progression	393,230	36
Nick Davies, Institute for Government	Performance tracker: are public services meeting people's needs?	308,666	41
John Armstrong, King's College London	Collective defined contribution pensions with investment choice	303,360	24
Gavin Parker, University of Reading	Just Neighbourhoods? Under-representation in UK Community-led planning	269,614	30

Grants awarded in 2023

Principal Investigator and Institution	Project Name	Value (£)	Term (months)
Caroline Oliver, University College London	Afghan resettlement in England: outcomes and experiences	268,792	18
Geraldine Lee Treweek, Birmingham City University	Gypsy, Roma, Traveller youth: mitigating exclusions using the digital?	268,436	33
Harriet Churchill, University of Sheffield	Virtual parent support portals: towards a new research and practice agenda	229,519	26
Jan-Emmanuel De Neve, University of Oxford	Reliability and validity of crowdsourced workplace well-being data	76,623	12
Funding for three projects, each less than £50,000		63,432	
Additional funding for Welfare projects funded in previous years			
Additional funding for five projects, each less than £50,000		31,434	
Total Welfare grants		2,662,682	
New Strategic Fund projects funded in 2023			
Calum Davey, National Institute of Teaching Teaching	Improvement through Data and Evaluation (TIDE)	2,435,909	54
Additional funding for Strategic Fund projects funded in previous years			
Additional funding for one project less than £50,000		25,484	
Total Strategic Fund grants		2,461,393	
Understanding Communities Fund			
Funding for two projects, each less than £50,000		27,070	
Total Understanding Communities Fund grants		27,070	

Grants awarded in 2023

Principal Investigator and Institution	Project Name	Value (£)	Term (months)
General Election Analysis and Briefing Fund			
Andy Summers, London School of Economics and Political Science	Reforming capital gains tax: Detailed modelling and tax simulator	73,000	16
Paul Johnson, Institute for Fiscal Studies	IFS general election analysis	70,000	19
Mike Brewer, Resolution Foundation	Briefings on UK general election 2024	69,429	11
Gavan Conlon, London Economics	Examination of higher education fees and funding	65,627	17
Jagjit Chadha, National Institute of Economic and Social Research	General election briefings on key economic and social issues	50,000	15
Funding for three projects, each less than £50,000		118,790	
Total General Election Fund grants		446,846	
Other			
Funding for six projects, each less than £50,000		49,000	
Total Other grants		49,000	

Future plans

Nuffield Foundation

New strategic focus

Life in Britain today has changed beyond recognition in many ways since the Foundation was established in 1943. But there are persistent themes that continue to connect the present to the past – access to opportunities, inequalities, family and working life, and how we can improve well-being in our society.

In 2024 we will continue to apply the independence, authority and trust we've built since 1943 to new research ideas that will contribute to shape all our futures. To this end, we are working towards finalising our next five-year strategy which we anticipate will launch in the next year.

Towards this strategy, we have:

- Mapped our stakeholders in research, policy and practice and conducted interviews and surveys with them. In 2024 this will help us focus the themes of our new strategy, and consider how we work and how we can have most impact.
- Ran a strand of work on futures and horizon scanning involving teams from across the Foundation, NCOB, the Nuffield FJO and Ada.
- Set up staff groups to discuss how we might improve the ways we work and to ensure that the strategy development is an inclusive process.
- Worked on a new approach to portfolio development which will identify gaps, trends and untapped talent, creating opportunities to enhance and inform the research and innovation we fund, to better meet new strategic priorities.

We have also ran *Changing Lives for the Better* – a year-long series of events and activity to celebrate our 80th anniversary, and to contribute to our new strategic direction. This is ongoing and topics featuring in 2024 include:

- The future of work and skills – a webinar with key grant-holders, and regional policy and business leaders.
- The future of the justice system.
- AI and the public sector.
- Risks across the life course: Meeting the challenge of change and insecurity – a major Nuffield Foundation conference.

Synthesis projects, strategic grants and new funds

Our *Changing Face of Early Childhood* series demonstrated the tangible benefit in bringing research together across the Nuffield Foundation's domains and centres. The important series of evidence reviews – of our funded and other research – synthesises new insights, answers larger questions beyond those of individual projects, identifies knowledge gaps, and develops priorities for policy and practice. In 2024, we begin the exploratory phase for a new synthesis project, *Grown Up?*, exploring transitions from adolescence to adulthood.

Our Strategic Fund continues to make possible our most ambitious projects, including four new grants awarded in 2023 for research starting in 2024.

The first is an innovative five-year project from the National Institute of Teaching (NlOT). *Teaching Improvement through Data and Evaluation (TIDE)* aims to improve outcomes for pupils by improving teacher development practices. Analysing a wealth of strictly anonymised data from the NlOT's founding school trusts, the project is the first of its kind tried at this scale in the UK on approaches to teacher training, classroom practice and

continued professional development (CPD) – and the impact of these on pupil outcomes.

There is a knowledge gap around the impacts of major reductions in funding and procedural reforms in the justice system in England and Wales. *Transforming justice: The interplay of social change and policy reforms* is a major integrated research project from the IFS, led by Professor Imran Rasul. It has the potential to revolutionise public understanding of the role and impacts of the justice system and to improve the quality of policy through high-quality evidence and independent challenge. The project will also seek to build research capacity, ensuring that economic and quantitative methods are better represented within the study of the justice system.

Research led by Professor Ruth Patrick at the University of York, alongside a four-nation team, will be the first major programme to examine the extent of devolution and impact on people’s everyday lives. A single UK social security system has not existed for some time, with significant differences depending on where you live. Decisions made at Westminster and at the national, regional and local level all affect the social security a family will receive. *Social security in a devolved UK: Realities, risks & opportunities for families*

will build an understanding of what works, in what contexts, and for whom – with scope to improve policymaking and, subsequently, the lives of millions of families in the UK.

The *Well-being in later life in Bradford* (WeLL-Bradford) study, led by Professor Andrew Clegg, will focus on the experiences of older people with frailty who experience multiple, avoidable disadvantages. These groups of people are often missed by current national studies (for example, older females with a low income and from a minority ethnic group). Data will be used to identify groups of people at higher risk of certain life events – needing carers at home, falling, being admitted to a care home or nearing end of life. This project will provide valuable insights to inform further national studies to investigate how policymakers, services and communities can find ways to address these longstanding unequal opportunities.

A current Strategic Fund project, *Understanding Communities*, is working towards a major report in 2024. Launched in 2022 in partnership with the British Academy, the project brings together several pieces of research exploring how to enhance people’s lives in the context of their communities. Funding was awarded

“The next government will need to confront significant and challenging decisions regarding matters such as the economy, taxes, and public services. Our general election projects aim to ensure that political promises are grounded in robust evidence and subject to expert and public scrutiny.”

Mark Franks, Welfare Director and lead for the General Election Analysis and Briefing Fund

to early or mid-career researchers, policymakers and practitioners, and applicants were encouraged to create multi-disciplinary teams, capture residents' lived experiences and, alongside traditional methods, use innovative methods like art-based approaches and social network mapping.

Ahead of the next general election, the Foundation funded eight projects through its General Election Analysis and Briefing Fund. The high-quality work that we are enabling in 2024 aims to drive up the reliability and accuracy of political parties' claims through impartial assessment, and to improve understanding of the factual evidence on key economic and social policy issues among the public and the media in the run-up to the election.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies, the Resolution Foundation and the National Institute for Economic and Social Research will produce a range of outputs that will examine different aspects of the economy and public finances in the context of the election, while a team from the London School of Economics is examining in detail the issues around Capital Gains Tax. The Education Policy Institute is looking closely at the implications of the parties' manifestos on our education system, while London Economics will examine different models of funding higher education. We are also supporting the Nuffield Trust to summarise evidence on key issues around health and social care in England, and the Social Market Foundation to carry out an international comparison of housing policy in light of the UK's housing crisis. Finally, the Fraser of Allander Institute at the University of Strathclyde will draw out the implications of the parties' manifesto commitments for Scotland.

2024 will also see the launch of a new research programme focused on racial diversity in the UK. This exciting new grant funding programme will explore the influence of migration and ethnic diversity on present-day UK society and its future

trajectory, improving understanding of pathways to a racially just and inclusive society.

Developing our people and organisation

In 2023, following a period of slow but steady expansion in staffing numbers, we focused on developing our people, as part of a refreshed people-development strategy and plan. The plan encompassed the development of core soft skills, a management development programme and Equity Diversity and Inclusion training for all staff (see Equity, diversity and inclusion section). We also joined the recently launched Charity Mentoring Network to provide opportunities for our staff to be mentored and/or become a mentor to others, and continued to support personal development through access to online training and regular reading and development days.

At the end of the year the focus moved to engagement and two staff surveys – the first on staff inclusion, and the second (carried out in January 2024) being a full staff engagement survey. The findings from both surveys will inform actions to be taken forward in 2024.

In line with our ambitions for creating opportunities for graduates and those earlier in their careers, in 2023 we partnered with local universities and recruited two new Research Assistant positions within the Ada Lovelace Institute.

Emerging Researchers Network

For 2024 we have a new programme of events and opportunities to support early career researchers (ECRs) on Nuffield-funded projects. The Nuffield Foundation's Emerging Researchers Network, launched in October 2023, furthers our aim to support ECRs to develop successful careers. Training events include how to write about research for the media, facilitated by The Conversation UK, and an insight session on policy and parliamentary engagement. The network's



LinkedIn group members are connecting with each other, and sharing learning and opportunities.

Fellowships at POST

We continue to offer PhD students – in their final or penultimate year of studying within a scientific, natural or social science field at a UK university – the opportunity to undertake a three-month fellowship at the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST). Six Fellowships will be awarded in 2024 – four in POST’s Social Sciences team and two in the Biology and Health team.

POSTnotes being published in 2024 include Jahnvi Bhaskaran’s summary of the emerging technology of human stem cell-based embryo models, their regulation, and wider ethical and societal implications; and Dugald Foster’s report on *Reform of the Mental Health Act: People with learning difficulties and autism*, part of a series of reports by POST on the reform of the Mental Health Act.

Nuffield Council on Bioethics

The new NCOB strategy ‘Making ethics matter’ sets out three priority areas of work for the next two to three years:

- Reproduction, parenthood and families.
- The mind and brain.
- The environment and health.

These three areas represent some of today’s most urgent and important developments in biomedicine and health. They each raise critical ethical, social and policy issues on which the NCOB will offer a distinctive contribution. Work on the ethics and regulation of ‘model embryos’, and a briefing note on the use of ‘brain organoids’ in research are among the planned outputs of 2024.

Meanwhile, the NCOB’s horizon scanning programme is set to evolve. In partnership with the Government Office for Science (GO-Science), the Council of Europe and the Ada Lovelace Institute, the NCOB has secured an Oxford Policy Engagement Network Fellowship. This is enabling a Fellow from the Ethox Centre at the University of Oxford to join the NCOB and senior methodologists from the National Institute

for Health and Care Research Innovation Observatory to design a new horizon-scanning approach that explores ethical considerations from the outset.

Also in 2024, the NCOB will be sharing findings from its public engagement project on assisted dying, and from a partnership with the Ada Lovelace Institute on AI and genomics. It will be welcoming a new researcher in the second half of the year to work on an [international collaboration led by the University of Birmingham](#) on 'ethical expertise in times of crisis'.

Nuffield Family Justice Observatory

In 2024 a significant focus will be on:

- Increasing children's participation in family court proceedings.
- Supporting the pathways of the 10% of private law applicants who are not parents.
- Raising awareness of the prevalence of learning disability among parents in care proceedings.
- Working with partners to develop a Baby Court to bring a problem-solving approach to care cases involving newborn babies.

We will be drawing attention to the lived experience of 'care' under deprivation of liberty (DoLs) orders, and facilitating the development of 'system change' pilots to change the way young people under DoLs orders are cared for.

We will be pushing for young people's voices to be heard in the family justice system. We will also look for ways to communicate a problem-solving approach to practitioners, and champion what it will take to achieve change throughout England and Wales.

We will continue to develop and disseminate research about families' experiences of the family justice system by ethnicity.

The Ada Lovelace Institute

The Ada Lovelace Institute ends the year with a new Chair and new Board members, and with renewed purpose from evidence of the urgency and impact of our work. 2024 will be exciting with our new Director, Gaia Marcus, appointed and as we work to refine our future strategy for 2025 and beyond.

There's no doubt that 2024 will bring more headline-grabbing jumps forward in the technical capabilities of AI systems. This is alongside growing concern about negative impacts, including generative AI's contribution to political disinformation in a year in which both UK and US elections take place.

The policy landscape will continue to evolve, with attention in the EU likely to turn to the implementation and enforcement of the AI Act. 2024 will also see two further AI Safety Summits in South Korea and France.

We'll continue to invest resource in understanding, translating and working with others to explore how data and AI can contribute to creating better, fairer societies for everyone – and our core principles and mission will continue to inform everything we do.

Equity, diversity and inclusion

We continue our programme of work to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion is embedded in all aspects of our work.

For our work to effectively recognise and reflect these issues, diversity and inclusion must be embedded in all aspects of what we do as a Foundation, including the people we employ, the projects we fund and those with whom we work and engage.

In support of this, we monitor the diversity of our staff and job applicants so that we can understand where we need to take further steps to ensure we are an inclusive employer.

Table 1 presents data on four protected characteristics for Nuffield Foundation employees as of 31 December 2023. During the year there has been an increase in the proportion of staff from ethnic minority backgrounds (from 17.5% to 20.0%). We've also seen an increase in the number of staff declaring a disability, which has increased from 3.8% in 2022 to 10.5% as of December 2023. We continue to look at actions and initiatives that might address areas of under-representation.

We have recently started collecting diversity monitoring data on those people holding governance roles in the Foundation. 75% of the Foundation's Trustees have provided this information. Of those disclosing, 57% are male and 43% are female, 71% are White and 29% are from other ethnic backgrounds. Incorporating members of our wider governance bodies (the Trustees, our committees, and the members of the governing boards for the Ada Lovelace Institute, NCOB and the Nuffield FJO), 58% have disclosed this information. From those disclosing, 50% of members are female and 50% are male, and 83% of members are White with 17% from other ethnic backgrounds.

During 2023, staff attended in-house equity, diversity and inclusion training workshops. We also undertook a staff inclusion survey, the feedback from which has been developed into actions that will be taken forward during 2024. We have signed up to the 10,000 Interns Foundation's scheme which provides paid internships for Black and disabled students and graduates, and we will be hosting four placements in the summer of 2024. We will continue to identify other opportunities that support young people (or returners) into work. We continue to use accreditation schemes to provide a framework for our employment activities.

We are still signed up to the RNIB's Visibly Better standard, we're signed up to the Age-Friendly Employer pledge, and during 2023 we were able to progress our Disability Confident standard from Level 1 to Level 2.

We want to ensure that our applicants and grant-holders reflect the diversity of society. Since 2021 we have introduced voluntary diversity and inclusion monitoring of applicants, grant-holders and their teams to find out more about the people who apply for – and are awarded – funding. Tables 2 and 3 present data on four protected characteristics for Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators named in applications and those who were grant-holders in 2023, comparing these against the same in 2021 and 2022. Overall, there has been little change in the rates in the three years. As can be seen in Table 2, there are noticeably more applicant respondents who completed the survey in 2023, reflecting the significant increase in the number of applications received when compared to 2022 (numbers for 2021 are low due to monitoring only beginning in the second of our two annual funding rounds in that year). Across all rounds on monitoring, the response rate to our diversity and inclusion monitoring survey has been high, exceeding 75%.

Over time, the data gathered helps inform what steps we can take to ensure our funding opportunities are accessible to all potential applicants.

In 2023 we undertook some foundational steps to broaden the diversity of the people we fund, our networks and our audiences, with a particular objective to increase applications and their success rate from Black researchers, as this has been identified as a key gap. The Foundation's data about the ethnicity of its applicants and grant-holders is in its infancy but preliminary analysis shows that for White applicants, one in every seven outline applications is invited to full application; whereas for racially minoritised applicants, this drops

to one in every nine outline applications being invited to full application.

We have noted the absence of Black or Black British. Principal Investigators within our current grant portfolio according to our data. This is broadly consistent with UK Research and Innovation data which shows that Black researchers are particularly underrepresented among their grant-holders, accounting for only 1% of awards in 2020/21.¹

We are considering what steps the Nuffield Foundation can take to increase the number of applicants and grant-holders who are Black or Black British. A project team conducted interviews with 10 organisations to learn about how they were approaching the challenge of increasing the number of Black grant-holders. The team also conducted some desk-based research.

Separately we commissioned [Hello Brave](#) to run focus-group research to gather initial insights about what is and is not currently designed well for Black researchers seeking Nuffield Foundation funding, and what could be done to make the Foundation's grant-making processes equitable and inclusive for Black researchers.

The findings and insights from these initiatives were discussed by the Foundation's Leadership Team, the Equality and Diversity Working Group and Nuffield Foundation's Board of Trustees in October. The Trustees strongly endorsed proposals to explore means of increasing the racial diversity of the Foundation's grant-holders, including a particular initial focus on Black researchers, given the lack of Black PIs among our grant-holders.

As a first step, the Foundation is reaching out to, and working with, representatives from Black-led networks to improve our communications and outreach programme. The Foundation has also recently launched

an Emerging Researchers Network and we will ensure this is inclusive and supportive for Black early career researchers.

Table 1:
Our staff as of 31 December 2023 (%)

Age	
29 or under	22.1
30–39	31.6
40–49	25.3
50–59	16.8
60+	4.2
Prefer not to say	0
Ethnicity	
Asian or Asian British	7.4
Black or Black British	4.2
Mixed	5.3
Other ethnic group	3.1
White	76.8
Prefer not to say	3.2
Disability	
No	84.2
Yes	10.5
Prefer not to say	5.3
Gender	
Female	73.6
Male	23.2
Use another term	3.2
Prefer not to say	0

¹ UKRI (2022) UKRI diversity data for funding applicants and awardees (UKRI diversity data for funding applicants and awardees 2020–21 update; accessed 30 January 2024)

Table 2: Applicant protected characteristics

	Principal Investigator			Co-Investigator		
	2023 (%; n=509*)	2022 (%; n=446*)	2021 (%; n=130*)	2023 (%; n=839*)	2022 (%; n=742*)	2021 (%; n=177*)
Age						
29 or under	2	3	3	3	2	0
30-39	25	28	31	25	24	24
40-49	36	40	38	37	35	36
50-59	27	21	19	24	28	30
60+	9	7	8	9	9	8
Prefer not to say	1	1	0	2	2	2
Ethnicity						
Asian or Asian British	6	9	5	9	6	5
Black or Black British	3	1	1	2	1	0
Mixed	4	3	2	2	3	2
Other ethnic group	3	2	2	4	2	2
White	83	84	88	81	86	90
Prefer not to say	1	1	2	2	1	1
Disability						
No	78	83	85	80	80	83
Yes	19	12	10	14	17	15
Prefer not to say	3	5	5	6	3	2
Gender						
Female	63	62	55	59	58	53
Male	35	35	42	38	40	46
I use another term	0	2	2	0	1	1
Prefer not to say	2	1	1	3	1	1

* Sample sizes (the number of respondents) are denoted by the 'n' value.

Table 3: Grant-holder protected characteristics

	Principal Investigator			Co-Investigator		
	2023 (%; n=74*)	2022 (%; n=100*)	2021 (%; n=107*)	2023 (%; n=143*)	2022 (%; n=186*)	2021 (%; n=191*)
Age						
29 or under	1	0	1	4	4	5
30-39	26	21	21	22	18	16
40-49	31	33	32	37	40	42
50-59	27	30	29	22	23	23
60+	14	15	17	13	12	12
Prefer not to say	1	1	1	2	3	3
Ethnicity						
Asian or Asian British	3	3	4	1	2	2
Black or Black British	0	0	0	1	1	1
Mixed	5	4	4	1	1	1
Other ethnic group	1	2	2	1	1	1
White	83	86	86	96	94	95
Prefer not to say	8	5	5	1	2	2
Disability						
No	85	86	87	81	80	81
Yes	14	14	13	15	16	15
Prefer not to say	1	0	0	4	5	5
Gender						
Female	60	61	62	58	60	61
Male	38	37	36	41	38	37
I use another term	1	1	1	0	0	2
Prefer not to say	1	1	1	1	2	0

* Sample sizes (the number of respondents) are denoted by the 'n' value.

Financial statements and notes

Consolidated Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £000s	Restricted Funds £000s	Endowed Funds £000s	Total Funds 2023 £000s	Total Funds 2022 £000s
Income and Endowments						
Donations and legacies	2	174	4,045	-	4,219	2,579
Charitable activities	2	108	18	-	126	61
Investment activities	7	-	-	4,155	4,155	2,753
Other income	2	38	-	-	38	13
Total income		320	4,063	4,155	8,538	5,406
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds						
Investment management costs		-	-	1,182	1,182	1,721
Charitable activities						
Research, development and analysis		10,920	687	-	11,607	12,163
Student and Other Programmes		444	(31)	-	413	237
Nuffield Early Language Intervention		-	1,852	-	1,852	1,141
In-house programmes						
Ada Lovelace Institute		2,417	569	-	2,986	2,718
Nuffield Council on Bioethics		783	658	-	1,441	1,417
Nuffield Family Justice Observatory		1,001	-	-	1,001	981
Other in-house programmes		13	-	-	13	181
Total in-house programmes		4,214	1,227	-	5,441	5,297
Strategic and Other Funds						
Oliver Bird Fund		-	13	-	13	2,048
Strategic Fund		3,093	-	-	3,093	2,296
Commonwealth Relations Trust		-	21	-	21	5
Total strategic and other funds		3,093	34	-	3,127	4,349
Effect of discounting grant liability		(480)	-	-	(480)	-
Total charitable activities	3	18,191	3,769	-	21,960	23,187
Total expenditure		18,191	3,769	1,182	23,142	24,908
Net gains on investments		-	-	37,945	37,945	(30,960)
Net (expenditure) / income		(17,871)	294	40,918	23,341	(50,462)
Transfer between funds	14	17,617	2,054	(19,671)	-	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)		(6)	-	-	(6)	-
Net (expenditure) / income after transfers		(260)	2,348	21,247	23,335	(50,462)
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward at 1 January		4,279	9,293	451,556	465,128	515,590
Total funds carried forward at 31 December	14	4,019	11,641	472,803	488,463	465,128

Consolidated and Charity Balance sheet for the year ended 31 December 2023

	Note	Group 2023 £000s	Group 2022 £000s	Charity 2023 £000s	Charity 2022 £000s
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	5	1,510	1,522	1,510	1,522
Intangible fixed assets	6	240	438	240	438
Investments	7	517,658	497,607	517,658	497,607
Programme-related investments		85	85	85	85
		519,493	499,652	519,493	499,652
Current assets					
Debtors	8	4,659	2,647	3,100	3,361
Bank and cash		1,797	3,571	438	1,988
		6,456	6,218	3,538	5,349
Liabilities: amounts falling due within one year					
Grants payable	9	(15,620)	(17,814)	(15,620)	(17,814)
Creditors	10	(3,831)	(2,569)	(2,695)	(2,462)
		(19,451)	(20,383)	(18,315)	(20,276)
Net current liabilities					
		(12,995)	(14,165)	(14,777)	(14,927)
Liabilities falling due after one year					
Grants payable	9	(17,836)	(20,160)	(17,836)	(20,160)
Provisions	11	(199)	(199)	(199)	(199)
Net assets		488,463	465,128	486,681	464,366
Funds					
Unrestricted funds					
Designated fund	14	7,664	11,426	7,664	11,426
General fund	14	(3,645)	(7,147)	(3,645)	(7,147)
		4,019	4,279	4,019	4,279
Restricted funds	14	11,641	9,293	9,859	8,531
Endowed funds	14	472,803	451,556	472,803	451,556
Total funds		488,463	465,128	486,681	464,366

Notes 1–15 form part of these financial statements.

The surplus generated by the Charity in 2023 after gains was £23,335k (2022: loss £50,462k).

These financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 17 May 2024 and were signed on their behalf by:


Professor Sir Keith Burnett
Chair

Reference and administrative details

Trustees

Professor Sir Keith Burnett CBE, FRS, FAPS, FOSA,
FInstPhys, FLSW FRS (Chair)
Rt Hon Sir Ernest Ryder TD, DL, FRSA (Deputy Chair)
Professor Ash Amin CBE, FBA, FACSS
Professor Brian Bell (from October 2023)
Professor Lorraine Dearden FACSS
Professor Ann Phoenix FBA, FACSS
John Pullinger CB, CSTAT, FACSS
Dame Clare Tickell DBE, FRSA, FCGI

Senior staff

Tim Gardam, Chief Executive
James Brooke Turner, Investment Director
Deirdre Carty, Director of HR and Office Services
Mark Franks, Director of Welfare
Danielle Hamm, Director of the Nuffield Council
on Bioethics
Ian Hanham, Director of Finance and Information
Systems (until December 2023)
Natalie Leon, Director of Finance and Information
Systems (from January 2024)
Lisa Harker, Director of the Nuffield Family Justice
Observatory
Josh Hillman, Director of Education
Rob Street, Director of Justice
Nicola Webb, Director for Strategy and Engagement
(from June 2023)

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