



ANNUAL REPORT

2019



**THE
LEARNING
TRUST**

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

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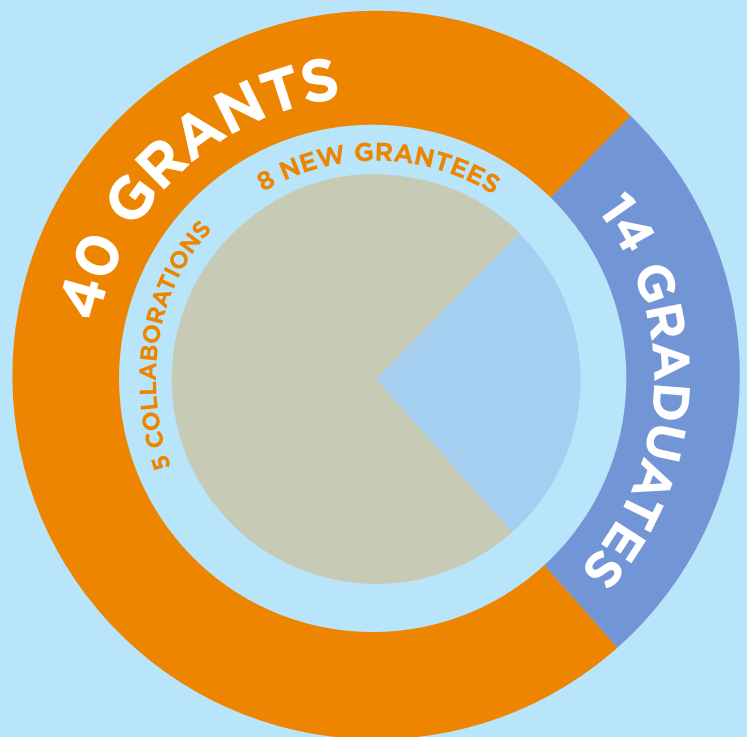
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2019 IN REVIEW

The Learning Trust is championing the After School sector in South Africa by developing quality practitioners and building sustainable organisations. We offer focused mentorship and coaching in a variety of organisational development areas, and provide platforms for sharing and collaborations that serve young people in underprivileged communities. Over the years, we've seen increased access to these programmes and witnessed the remarkable difference in the lives of many young people as a result. As we reflect on the past year, we acknowledge how our own growth is deeply connected to that of our community of partners and donors.

In 2019, our grantee partners reached over 60 000 learners through diverse programming. Beyond providing safety for learners, these interventions are often a bridge to networks, opportunity and access. We have strengthened the sector through tailored capacity support and funding, and marvel at the level of dedication, passion and resilience shown by those we work with. A further fourteen of these organisations have now graduated after 5 years of tailored organisational development, bringing the number of organisations we have supported to over 120. They join a growing cohort of alumni who continue to model excellence for embryonic programmes and the broader sector.

With growth comes opportunity for enriched learning. In the pages that follow, we profile organisations with inspiring stories of "Growth and Learning". From this collection, we witness the value of experience, failure as a catalyst for success, and both the organic and purposeful nature of collaboration. Fundamentally, 2019 was a transitional year for us, and we invite you to explore the manifestation of milestones from our incredible community of partners who deliver learning *Beyond the Classroom*.





Success through A Shared Purpose Chairperson's Message – Christine Downton

The past year was of significant transition for The Learning Trust. It brought with it much reflection on the evolution of the After School sector and our work with a community of grantees and alumni organisations. Nine years on, we have been fortunate to nurture and see the growth of over 120 organisations. With this, we have reached learners in marginalised communities who have consistently attended and benefited from an After School programme.

These significant achievements were coupled by new leadership, with Sibongile Khumalo at the helm, having accelerated our long-term succession plan. She is accompanied by Nonceba Mtwana in her new role as Operations Director leading the core grant work of The Learning Trust. Based in Johannesburg where we are now headquartered, both directors are frequently mobile and deeply involved in our strategic growth as we further develop our work through collaborations. Under this new leadership, we see even more potential to develop the case for the importance of After School opportunities for children and young people growing up in economically challenged environments.

As the sector grows, it has become increasingly necessary to determine what has worked well and to what extent. The evidence from international research is solid and convincing; we are similarly participating in more research opportunities to reinforce the South African evidence. There is an undeniable need to show the difference that these programmes make. We remain confident that, through our support, thousands of learners have been encouraged and supported to stay in school, reach matric, and go on to tertiary and other enriching pathways of development.

Our highly committed Board recently welcomed Bongiwe Mlangeni, Executive Director of the Social Justice Initiative, who brings strong expertise in strategic communications and advocacy, as well as a great depth of knowledge of community organisations. Transitions are always challenging, but we ended the year with excitement for our journey ahead. We offer much gratitude to our ongoing and new donors, together with whom we are furthering the development of After School and bringing hope to children who need it most. This is the passion of The Learning Trust, and we all firmly believe it is a critical ingredient in securing a vibrant future for South Africa.



Smoother Transitions through Collaboration

Executive Director's message – Sibongile Khumalo

Stepping into the leadership of The Learning Trust, I was acutely aware of the eight-year legacy of a uniquely placed intermediary with a duality of purpose: funding and organisational development. As a grant-making entity, we conduit modest but significant funds that unlock the untapped potential of early-stage organisations. In our programmatic role, we deliver critical building blocks that strengthen the capacity of those organisations to thrive. Having overcome a transitional period, The Learning Trust remains resolute in its mission to nurture After School in South Africa; and the team is unwavering in its devotion to continually raising the stakes!

As such, 2019 was a year of great experimentation and meticulous refinement. We dedicated a considerable amount of our efforts to fine-tuning our organisational development offering to reach more people and organisations in areas where we already work. In aid of what is steadily becoming a movement, we undertook research to strengthen our external communications and polished our monitoring and evaluation practices. The Learning Trust is all the better for it – we are now telling more compelling stories and have extended our online presence; we are confident of the extent of our grantees' progress and they are more self-assured of their impact on children's futures.

Our advanced partnerships with donors, grantees and peers reminds me of a Setswana proverb – “Mabogo dinku a thebana” which loosely translates as “Collaboration makes the work lighter”. As our sectoral footprint grew, we started forming renewed partnerships with our growing band of alumni grantees, stretching our resources further by making collaboration grants towards scaling their working practice and tested models. In our Communities of Practice, we continue to engage with the wider extended learning network to further amplify its voice.

As we edge closer to a decade of our existence, we honour those donor partners who still support this work. Yet, the increasing contractions in private and philanthropic resources compels us to act. Now more than ever, it is an economic imperative to find alternative income streams and influence the flow of public funds to ensure access for more learners across the country. Not only do After School programmes keep kids off the streets, more importantly, they fortify learning, offer critical support to working parents, consequentially raise youth prospects, and ultimately strengthen our economy. The Learning Trust remains committed to championing and supporting the people and programmes that deliver this transformative work of engaging children *beyond the classroom!*



The Team



Sibongile Khumalo
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Nonceba Mtwana
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR



Monica Canca
PROGRAMME OFFICER



Zoe Mann
PROGRAMME OFFICER



Sibulele Mancayi
PROGRAMME OFFICER



Chubeka Kulu
PROGRAMME ASSISTANT

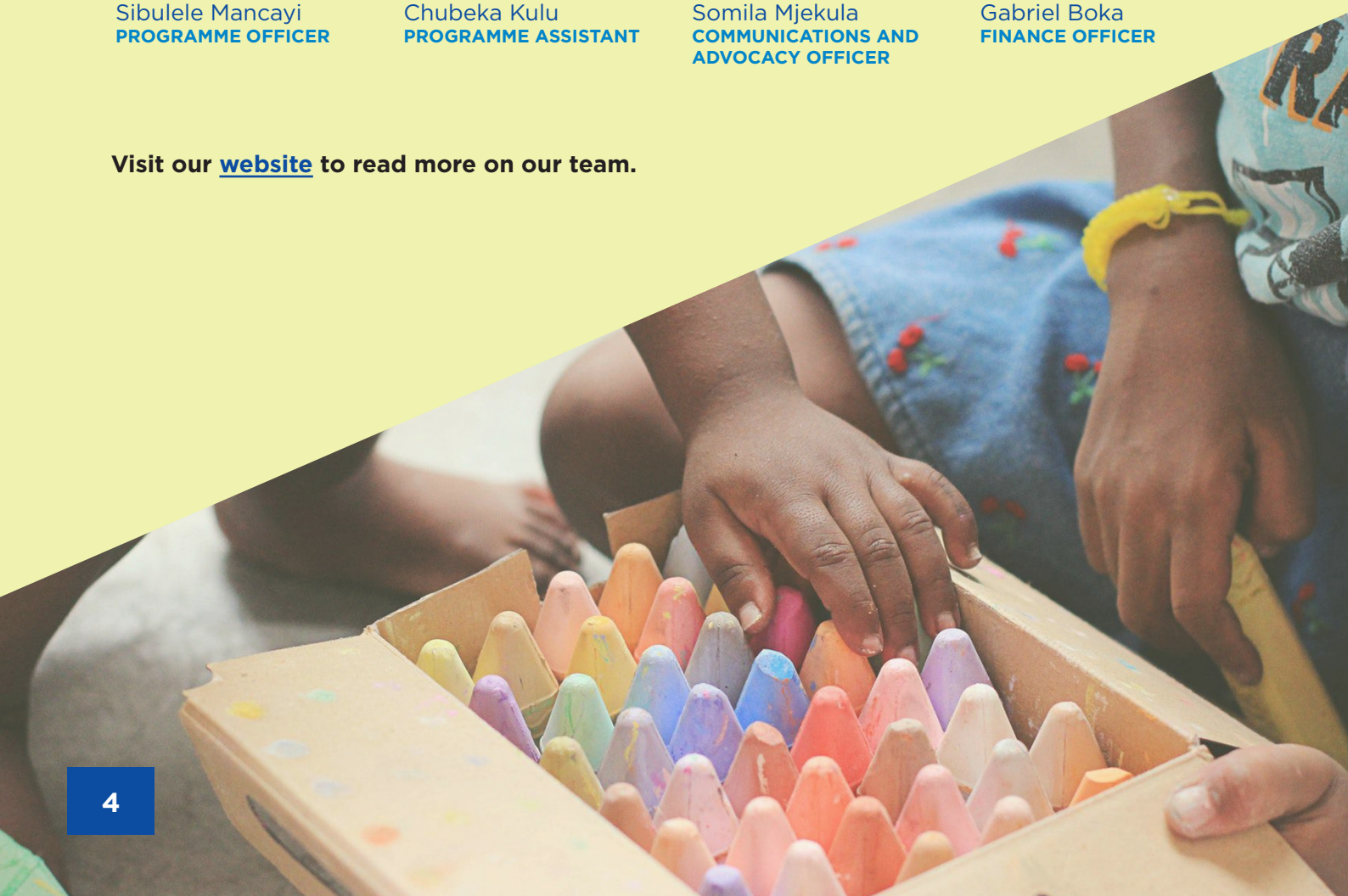


Somila Mjekula
**COMMUNICATIONS AND
ADVOCACY OFFICER**



Gabriel Boka
FINANCE OFFICER

Visit our [website](#) to read more on our team.





Eastern Cape

AT A GLANCE

Feb	OASIS CoP 1
Mar	Seminar: 'Behavioural Change'
May	OASIS CoP 2
July	Learning Café: 'Building strong teams'
Aug	OASIS Dialogue School
Sep	OASIS CoP 3

Capacity support events



Grantee Programme Areas

LEARNING TO GROW & GROWING TO LEARN

By Monica Canca, Programme Officer

In the heart of Makhanda, St Mary's Development Care Centre (DCC) operates as one of the oldest community development organisations in the country. Established in 1980, DCC has supported families in underprivileged communities through a variety of welfare services. Our partnership began in 2015, and since then we've walked a journey and seen them transform into a thriving non-profit.

Over the past 5 years, DCC has gone from looking after the well-being of vulnerable children, to providing educational enrichment, life skills, and developmental After School programmes. To strengthen this transition, DCC began to approach their work differently, implementing impact-driven interventions. A significant part of this was ensuring that an entire team could adapt and understand the importance of changing systems and working towards evaluative goals.

Drastic transitions can often be met with resistance from long-time staff members, slowing the rate at which a progressive shift can occur. For DCC, addressing such challenges created opportunities for learning and collaborations with other organisations. As a long-standing member of Makhanda's community, DCC has taken advantage of their networks and positioned itself as one of the key stakeholders in the education transformation agenda led by Rhodes University.

As a further testament to their impact, an external evaluation done in 2018 described DCC as,

“a highly agile and catalytic organisation that has been able to expand and implement a range of diverse activities for children and families over the past eight years. In the period of its existence, it has been a major anchor in the community and crucial to meeting the needs of some of the most vulnerable children in Grahamstown. In addition to providing social assistance, the centre has provided a safe haven for children before and after school. This is the true essence of an aftercare centre.”

Through our funding and trust-based coaching, DCC has transformed into a learning organisation that encourages and recognises the key elements to a healthy and flourishing organisational system. They demonstrate the value of building a strong team through good communication, coordination and collaboration.

ORGANIC COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Our OASIS Community of Practice (CoP) in Port Elizabeth, officially adopted Bayview Primary in Helenvale – a school confronted with extreme socio-economic challenges – as part of a 3-year school improvement project. Established in 2017, OASIS (Organising After School & In School) emerged out of a partnership with the Centre for the Community School, the community engagement unit of Nelson Mandela University's Faculty of Education.

By its nature, OASIS is a collaboration – between learners, teachers, parents, NGOs and government representatives from across the Nelson Mandela Metro – rooted in the strong principles of collective purpose, trust, commitment and partnership. The past year's work with Bayview's school management has cemented these principles in the co-construction of a joint solution for the extended Helenvale community. In this way, the project centres the needs of the community and school, following a beneficiary-led approach.

A recent partnership with the Mandela Bay Development Agency has already provided the CoP with substantive insights into the breath of Helenvale stakeholders to engage in order to ensure the sustained success of the project. The first of its kind, this CoP comprises 30 entities that bring a rich range of resources and skills to both the school and Helenvale community. As the project evolves, we can draw lessons of collaboration for possible application in other communities.

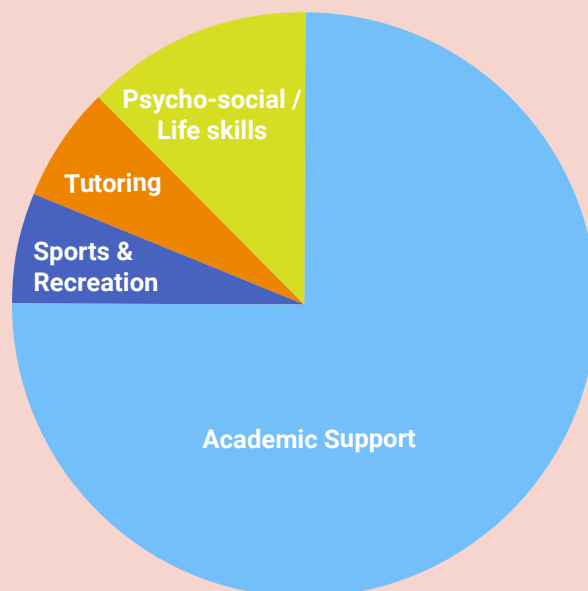
Gauteng

AT A GLANCE



- Mar** Seminar: 'Behavioural Change'
- May** Director's Circle 1: 'Collaboration and Partnerships'
- July** Learning Café: 'Organisational Planning'
- Sep** Director's Circle 2: 'Alternative Funding Streams'

Capacity support events



Grantee Programme Areas

A YOUNG WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE

By Nonceba Mtwana, Operations Director

As a partner that works to nourish organisational growth, our near decade in the sector has shown us that there are many factors that contribute to such growth – each requires a tailored, contextual and relationship-based approach. The formula is not always apparent, and determining what support is needed often requires months (or even years) of building relationships of openness, trust and reciprocity with our grantees. Occasionally, we encounter organisations that make the journey of growth and learning surprisingly swift and utterly fulfilling. Phakamani Young Minds Academy, a youth-led organisation based in Freedom Park, Johannesburg South, is such an example.

“PYMA has developed from serving 12 learners in 2014 to currently assisting a total of 388 learners from 28 feeder schools,” says Bokang Mokoena, the young Executive Director of the organisation. These numbers are just a snapshot of the organisation’s growth. With support from The Learning Trust, the team has made significant strides in organisational development, now boasting an active board, strong financial systems, an intentional tutor recruitment strategy, and a growing network for funders and collaborators.

“Through TLT’s capacity support, we have maintained a sustainable progression in organisational development and with our team of dedicated young professionals, we have acquired a wealth of skills and experience in designing and implementing After School programmes.” – Bokang Mokoena

At inception, PYMA functioned informally and focused their programmes on homework support. They now offer academic and life skills support to both primary and high school cohorts, met with significant and earnest financial support from their parent community. The young leaders of the organisation have shown dedication and passion, and as such have expanded their network significantly, securing in-kind support whilst building the PYMA brand.

“We strive to brand our organisation as a formidable player in the sector.” – Bokang Mokoena

Collaborations are key to PYMA’s journey. Through our own networks, they have connected to like-minded entities within an After School community of practice. More impactfully, TLT’s capacity support has influenced the organisation’s emphasis on partnerships and their resulting steady rise in the sector. One such successful partnership is seen in their adoption of OLICO’s Maths Clubs to coach primary school learners. Owing to PYMA’s openness to learning, our relationship has developed into one of mutual learning and trust.

“WHAT MAKES US THRIVE IS WHO WE ARE”

OLICO believes in solving the maths crisis to unlock the potential of millions of young people. Since the inception of our partnership in 2014, we have helped OLICO develop their strategic direction and adapt their maths model into a more relevant and effective one. Our funding has also allowed for materials development for a curriculum that is now publicly available to the sector. Director, Andrew Barrett, shares why he thinks OLICO continues to thrive.

“Over the past few years, OLICO’s Maths Clubs programme has really exploded! A few years ago we were running a handful of Maths Clubs in the Diepsloot community and now we’re running over 200 Maths Clubs in Gauteng, Limpopo and the Western Cape. This has only been possible because of the wider Maths Clubs Collective which is a collaborative partnership between education NGOs and academics from Rhodes, UJ, Wits and UCT. At the very heart of the Maths Clubs Collective is a thoughtful, open and generous collaboration that serves as an example of what is possible through shared resources, effort and expertise.

Although we’re fairly obsessive about maths, we’re also aware that we’re working with young children (and youth) with hopes, dreams and aspirations far beyond ‘good maths marks’. It’s a unique privilege to be trusted with this work and every single member of the OLICO team brings with them a commitment and belief that change is possible. What makes us thrive is who we are and what we believe in!” - Andrew Barrett, Alumni Grantee

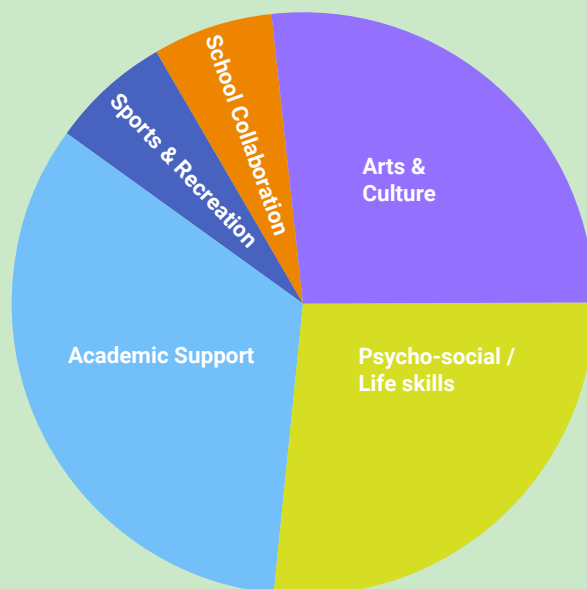
Western Cape

AT A GLANCE



Feb	CoP 1: 'Closing the opportunity gap'
Mar	Seminar: 'Behavioural Change'
Apr	Alumni Circle 1: 'Beginning to Advocate'
May	CoP 2: 'Why Learners Attend ASPs'
May	Director's Circle 1: 'Challenges of Directorship'
July	Practitioner Training
July	Learning Café: 'Fundraising and Grant Management'
Aug	CoP 3: 'Monitoring and Evaluation in ASPs'
Sep	Alumni Circle 2: 'Organisational Sustainability'
Oct	Director's Circle 2: 'Board set-up and Management'
Nov	CoP 4: 'Communicating Impact'

Capacity support events



Grantee Programme Areas

COLLABORATING TO CREATE AND HEAL

By Zoe Mann, Programme Officer

From enhancing critical thinking and creativity, to raising confidence through multiple forms of self-expression, art is undoubtedly essential to the human experience. What we don't hear enough of, however, is its healing and transformational power. In the South African context of ubiquitous violence, trauma, anxiety and depression, the ASTAR Project is setup to offer healing through art for children and youth.

Since 2016, ASTAR's (Awakening Spirit Through Art) education and training programmes have transformed the lives of children and youth through the power of art practice. Designed by Lindy Solomom, their model of delivering art curriculum training to other NGOs has enabled them to scale their programme. Its approach is centred on immersing others in an atmosphere of 'free authentic expression'. Through visual art practice facilitated by well-trained facilitators, young participants and adults alike receive therapeutic healing and personal growth.

“The programme had a marked effect on the students, who have described it in various terms, including ‘therapeutic’, ‘an emotional journey’ and, ‘working with and healing painful memories’” – Roni Simons

In 2019, ASTAR entered into formal partnerships with Indoni Arts Academy, Ikamva Labantwana Bethu and Matatiele Community as a strategic financial sustainability measure.

“The most important factors that make our work thrive are good partnerships, high quality facilitators and committed students.” – Roni Simons

Key to their partnership success is complementary programming, lean human resources and diverse beneficiary reach. The partners have expressed how essential TAP’s programmes are for their curricular.

“My artistic vision has grown and I have gained a new life.” – Creative Director, Indoni Arts Academy

ASTAR’s young facilitators are trained community artists, thereby meeting the prevailing youth development and employment needs. Their focus in the last year has been on deepening the quality of their content delivery while maintaining the integrity of their learner reach. By being adaptive in their model, ASTAR is poised to developing rich future collaborations that continue to heal and transform through creativity.





TRANSFORMED PEOPLE, TRANSFORM PEOPLE

By Zoe Mann, Programme Officer

In the non-profit sector where constant uncertainties prevail, long-term sustainability is often a proxy for success. Our alumni grantee, The Sozo Foundation, demonstrates a wealth of knowledge that ensures the sustainability of their organisation. Established in 2011, Sozo has not only transformed the lives of unemployed youth through education, skills and social enterprise development, but the lives of those who deliver this transformational work.

Sozo started with a modest cohort of 12 learners in their Educentre programme, ran by two staff members. Today, they operate in two centres, with four programmes and 41 staff members. The organisation has essentially rooted itself in the communities it has worked in for years, increasing its longevity and enhancing its financial security, using the centres as an asset. Whilst the centres have become a beacon of hope in their communities, it's the team working within these centres that give the programmes life.

Guided by the motto: *“Transformed people, transform people”*, Sozo's sustainability plan is centred around developing ordinary staff into exceptional leaders. The deliberate focus on their Human Resources has been a clear strength for the organisation. This involves putting in place and upholding clear disciplinary processes, training staff in the Labour Act and HR processes, and making time for regular team-building activities such as outings and games. Creating a people-centred culture that prioritises staff wellness is much needed in the non-profit sector. It is an area too often neglected, but one that Sozo has most excelled in.

At the core of Sozo's work is a team that is not averse to change, and is flexible and agile in programming. Their approach is to *pilot ideas, fail fast, learn and adapt as needed*. An anecdotal evaluation of their work revealed that learners have experienced a greater sense of belonging, and this is essential in creating a conducive learning space and ultimately sustaining learner participation.

“What makes Sozo's team different is their undeniable passion and pursuit of modelling unconditional love to every individual learner who walks through their doors on a daily basis.” – Anton Cuyler

With well-established sustainability measures in place, Sozo continues to vigorously drive transformation in their community. The organisation teaches us that sustainability is not always depicted in access to money and substantial reserves – sometimes it is in the deliberate compassionate care for the very people that keep the wheels spinning.

PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

[The Claude Leon Foundation](#) has been funding educational, developmental, and human rights projects in South Africa for over 40 years. For the past nine years, we have been the recipient of their funding towards non-tertiary education projects. With The Learning Trust conducting CLF funding, the foundation is able to reach many emerging organisations that would ordinarily struggle to attract funding from big donors.

Based on a strong and trusting relationship with its leadership and board, there has never been a more consistent donor partnership. Through biannual visits with its grantees, CLF is able to remain grounded and knowledgeable about the contexts in which they operate. These visits also serve as networking opportunities for young organisations, who also ultimately gain a broader perspective from their donor supporters.

Over time, a strategic partnership has developed – offering much guidance by the education heavyweights who make up the CLF board. As we graduate our most promising grantee partners, CLF has tended to extend its support beyond TLT. This is testament to their firm belief in the impactful work of After School, and further reinforces our goal to inspire and build a community of donors for the sector.

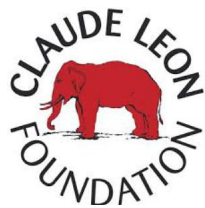
The CLF has shown its commitment to building a just and equal society, and education access for marginalised communities has clearly emerged as an integral part of that agenda. As we near a decade of our partnership with CLF, we look to lead as a collective advocate of the After School sector.



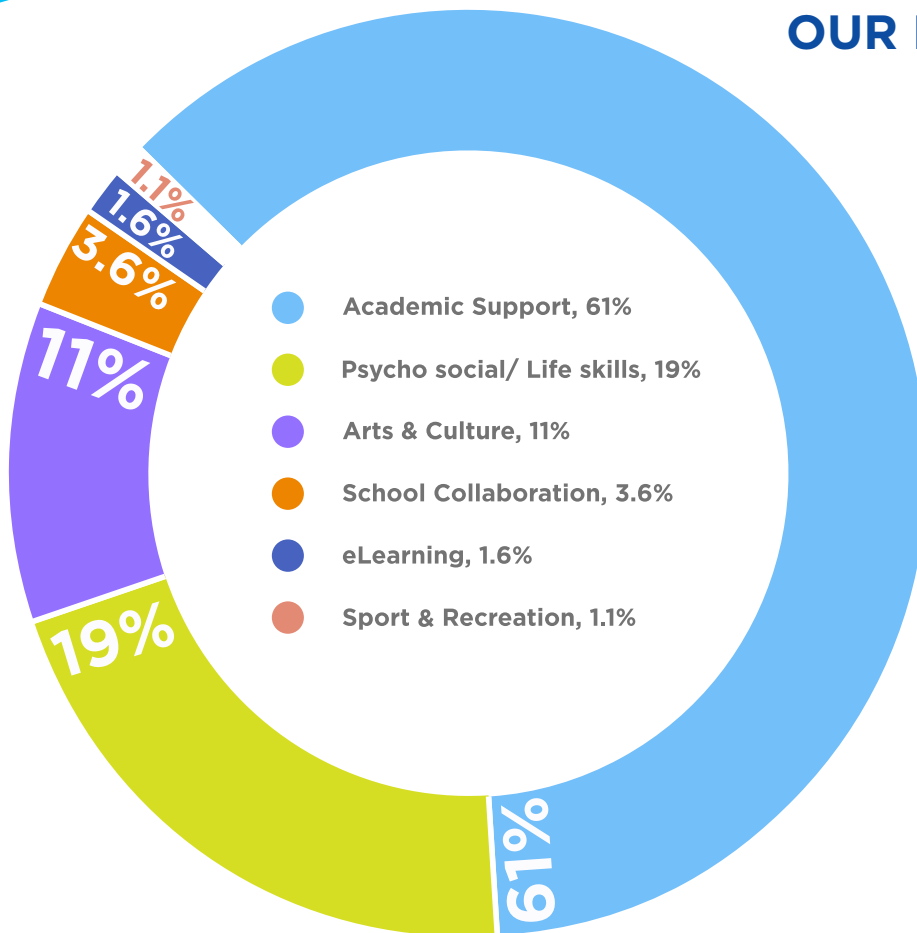
OUR DONOR PARTNERS

The Learning Trust is privileged to leverage the resources, wisdom and collective strength of our community of partners. Each new donor enlarges the reach of our work and makes possible lasting positive change among our grantee partners. We continue to build a community of donors interested in collaborating to support and grow the most exciting education interventions in South Africa. As a result of these instrumental investments, The Learning Trust is a more developed, embedded and resilient organisation than it was when we started our work.

The
ATLANTIC
Philanthropies



OUR FINANCIAL YEAR IN NUMBERS



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