Over the last year we have taken significant strides towards realising our vision to be an inspirational creative community where contemporary culture is imagined, created and experienced.

A highlight has been the launch of Somerset House Studios, our new experimental workspace connecting artists, makers and thinkers with audiences. Made possible through a number of generous supporters who helped us transform former Inland Revenue offices into affordable workspace, it was opened by the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan in October 2016.

For the first time Somerset House worked with colleagues across the Courtauld Gallery and Institute and King’s College London to present a multi-dimensional year-long programme to mark the 500th anniversary of the publication of Thomas More’s seminal Utopia. Across all corners of the site Utopia 2016: A Year of Imagination & Possibility challenged artists, residents and audiences to consider what Utopia means today.

Throughout the year a record number of visitors were able to enjoy an expanded programme of contemporary culture in the magnificent setting of this architectural masterpiece of which we are proud to be the custodians.

William Sieghart CBE  
Chairman

Jonathan Reekie CBE  
Director
SOMERSET HOUSE IS MADE UP OF...

**Our Building**

500,000 SQ FT of Grade 1 listed architecture

**Our Visitors**

OVER 3.4 MILLION VISITORS

**Our Residents**

Creative Enterprise

123 resident organisations

Artists & Makers

300+ artists and Makerversity members

**Our Neighbours**

THE COURTAULD GALLERY AND INSTITUTE

and

KING’S COLLEGE LONDON

**Our People**

70 Staff

100+ Volunteers

In 2016/17 we achieved...

3.4 million visitors. 17 exhibitions, six of which were entirely free. 11 nights of live music, 14 nights of film screenings and 9 weeks of ice skating in the Edmond J Safra Fountain Court, attended by 175,522 visitors. 65 artists resident and 30,865 sq ft of previously disused space opened as part of Somerset House Studios and 250+ Makerversity members. 90 events and workshops as part of our Learning programme attended by 6,000 participants. 4,200 visitors attended free Historical Highlights tours. 13 new resident organisations. Installation of 3 new lifts in South Wing to improve visitor experience and accessibility. 

Completed renovation of entire estate roof and chimneys. 16% reduction in our carbon footprint with the introduction of a Combined Cooling & Heating Plant.
2016/17 PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Somerset House seeks to be an inspirational place to experience the work of today’s boldest minds, providing intellectual and cultural connections with new ideas and the people behind them. The combination of our celebrated neo-classical setting and our bold, forward-thinking output creates surprising, stimulating and joyful shared experiences for our visitors.

UTOPIA 2016: A YEAR OF IMAGINATION & POSSIBILITY
17 exhibitions, 50 larger scale weekend events and 120 free workshops, involving 30 different resident organisations.

DAYDREAMING WITH STANLEY KUBRICK
“A captivating visitor journey which turns an exhibition into theatre.”
– Design Week

NOW PLAY THIS
A festival exploring the possibilities of games, gaming and play.

“A fun-filled weekend, from the lo-fi and familiar to the new and cutting edge.”
– Time Out

BJÖRK DIGITAL
“Björk Digital has significant implications for where technology and art can take us from here!”
– The Times

LONDON DESIGN BIENNALE
37 countries, 1 language: design.
“...the power of critical, speculative, truly utopian design.”
– The Guardian

SUMMER SERIES
“Somerset House remains one of the most atmospheric outdoor venues in the UK.”
– The Guardian

FILM4 SUMMER SCREEN
“Somerset House presents an edgier and more grown up selection of movies than the usual summer fare.”
– Daily Telegraph

SKATE
“London’s most fabulous winter tradition.”
– Vanity Fair

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS
Other cultural programme highlights included Hair by Sam McKnight, Malick Sidibé: The Eye of Modern Mali, partnership projects including the second annual Photo London site-wide fair and 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair and a growing public programming relating to Somerset House Studios.

CULTURAL PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS
SUPPORTING ARTIST DEVELOPMENT & INNOVATION at Somerset House Studios

Somerset House Studios provides affordable workspace and support for artists with the emphasis on cross-disciplinary practice, as well as being the home to Makerversity. This is a platform for the development of new creative projects and collaboration, promoting work that pushes bold ideas, engages with urgent issues and pioneers new technologies. By April 2017 we have 65 artists in residence as part of Somerset House Studios.

“It’s a place where artists can meet each other and work together - they have lots of events to promote this cross-pollination. It’s a great place for original work to come from. There’s a solid, yet moving and dynamic aspect to it, it showcases that a building can act as a home for so many different viewpoints and expressions of artistic endeavour.”

– Charles Jeffrey, Somerset House Studios resident artist

“It’s great that Somerset House, with its links to Inigo Jones, Canaletto and the Royal Academy, should be restored to its 18th-century use as a hub of artistic talent.”

– The Times
Last year saw the introduction of a new pilot skills programme connecting Somerset House Studios resident artists with young people. Our longer term aim is to establish an ongoing programme of activity connecting Studios artists with a new generation as part of our wider programme, nurturing new creative skills and offering meaningful progression routes.

“As our students have speech, language and communication needs, figurative language can be very abstract to them and often quite difficult to understand. I loved the way the kids were able to use the photos to help them break down what the words and phrases could actually be referring to.”

– Secondary school teacher, participating in Malick Sidibé inspired writing workshops with Royal African Society

“The students found out a lot more about Björk and started to discuss her influence on musicians and artists they like now. They got a lot from the VR experience and really enjoyed making their own videos using stop-animation.”

– Secondary school teacher, Björk Digital workshops
In addition to the new Somerset House Studios resident artists, 13 new creative enterprises joined as residents over the course of last year. New residents include producers Crying Out Loud, Hofesh Schechter Company, London School of Architecture and Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company.

“A phenomenal artistic cultural base in which to undertake your daily work.”

– Somerset House resident*

46% of our resident organisations are registered charities or social enterprises. We now have an active Residents’ Council working together to share knowledge and stimulate collaboration across this community.

“A dynamic organisation that’s redefining what it means to be a cultural institution.”

– Somerset House resident*

*Feedback from the annual Somerset House Residents’ Survey
Somerset House Trust aims to generate surpluses to fund both the ongoing restoration and maintenance of the site and a dynamic cultural programme. We strive to operate efficiently and effectively, investing our resources wisely to optimise the delivery of our charitable purposes over both the short term and long term.

Income for the year to 31 March 2017 was £14.8m. More than half of total income was generated through the Trust’s community of tenants in rent and service charges and this was invested back into property management and conservation.

Ticket income from the cultural programme represents just under a quarter of total income at £3.3m. Expenditure on the programme increased to £4.9m, equivalent to around a third of total expenditure.

Income from trading activities (including private venue hire and retail activity) accounts for a quarter of total income at £3.0m, with grants, donations and corporate sponsorship making up the majority of the remainder.

The overall decrease in total funds of £1.67m is the result of significant depreciation charges associated with the high value of our property lease from DCMS and other fixed assets. Our unrestricted ‘free’ reserves increased this year, consistent with our plan to build these reserves to a target level of £500,000 over the medium term.

The summary income and expenditure figures presented here are extracted from our full audited financial statements which can be found on the Charity Commission website.

For more information on how you can make a difference to our work, please contact supportus@somersethouse.org.uk

Or visit somersethouse.org.uk/support-us