



ANNUAL REPORT

2018



**THE
LEARNING
TRUST**
BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

THE BRONZE YEAR 2018 IN REVIEW

Eight years into operation, The Learning Trust aims to increase, improve and extend learning opportunities for young people growing up in conditions of poverty and exclusion. We do this by finding, incubating and progressively building the organisational capacities of community-led education initiatives through funding and capacity building partnerships. With a passion for community solutions, deep expertise and collective impact, The Learning Trust's work is transforming early-stage non-profits and supporting established organisation to pilot new ideas.

The 2017/18 period has been an exciting time for the sector, as part of the growing trend towards innovative and collaborative solutions for our systemic education challenges. Given the severe limitations of our public schooling system and the diverse barriers in wider society that contribute to our dismal education outcomes, After School programmes are more relevant than ever in offering critical additional support and alternative paths to learners to help them stay in school. We continue to be amazed at the critical role that our dynamic, community-based and grass-roots informed grantees are playing in generating these solutions.

It has been a year of learning, slower but steady expansion, and extensive strategising. Over R5 million in funding went to 66 After School Programmes reaching an average of 65,000 learners. We have developed a clearer, more focused plan to grow our donor base and more finely articulate our strong value add to the sector. With this in mind, we are now focused on shaping our growing role in advocating for the After School sector, as well as building the partnerships that accelerate and amplify our work.

What follows herein are the proud stories of “Learning” from some of our grantee partners and team as they collaborate for impact in the After School sector. You will read about how our organisation came about, the committed donors who support our work, and the dedicated NGO partners who work to change the reality for many young people in township communities. In this proverbial “Bronze year”, we invite you to join us in advocating for extended learning opportunities for every child, and for the support of those who work tirelessly towards their every success.



Internally, we continue to deepen the capacity of current team members to deliver quality services to our grantees. After eight wonderfully productive years, our founding Director (Charles Ainslie) decided to step down in July 2018. Read about his story below. We have since welcomed a new Director (Dylan Wray) to lead The Learning Trust into its next exciting development phase, as well as a Chief Communications Officer (Sibongile Khumalo), both of whom are supported by a strong programme team.

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TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS THE LEARNING TRUST SUPPORTS

			SCHOOL & COMMUNITY-BASED
LIBRARIES & COMPUTER FACILITIES	PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT	EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT	ADVOCACY & ACTIVISM
PARENTAL SUPPORT SERVICES	LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	ARTS & CULTURE	LITERACY & NUMERACY DEVELOPMENT
ACADEMIC & HOMEWORK SUPPORT	HOLIDAY & WEEKEND PROGRAMMES	SPORTS & RECREATION PROGRAMMES	TERTIARY ACCESS & JOB READINESS

THE STORY CONTINUES

By Christine Downton, Board Chairperson

My commitment to After School programme access in South Africa arose from a variety of sources. In 2007/8, I took a sabbatical from the Atlantic Philanthropies board to join their staff in Johannesburg, to work on their human resources grant strategy. Almost everyone I spoke with in the field, talked of insufficiently qualified candidates arriving from the school system. So, I started to think of any contribution I could make to improving school outcomes, with my relatively small resources.

I had, from other experiences in my career, learnt of the value of After School activities, particularly for children and youth growing up in poor and marginalised communities. They can make a real difference in building self-confidence, provide knowledge of wider opportunities in life and give access to other supportive adults and role models. Furthermore, school dropout in the middle years can be significantly reduced, and education and life chances can be improved.



Exploring the availability of After School opportunities in under-resourced communities in South Africa, I came across many remarkable innovative and passionate NGOs. I knew there were other funders who had an interest in reaching such organisations in communities, and so the concept of The Learning Trust was born! I then had the great and serendipitous good fortune to meet Charles Ainslie in early 2010, who was moving back to Cape Town with a strong motivation to find an outlet for his prodigious energy in education. The Learning Trust had its Director, and we were on our way!

Charles and I have worked closely together in the subsequent eight years, bringing The Learning Trust to its present strength. His accomplishment created an organisation with a powerful record and platform for our new Director and Chief Communications Officer, together with the existing powerful programme team, to forge the new chapter in our history. I couldn't be more excited at the prospect.

Dylan Wray brings a wealth of knowledge of transformation in the school system, and of the After School sector. I know his creativity and vision will lead The Learning Trust to even more success. In addition, our new Chief Communications Officer, **Sibongile Khumalo** brings brilliance, energy and passion for spreading the message of the importance of After School more broadly. Equally important, I have profound gratitude to the continuing wonderful programme team, with their deep commitment, knowledge and experience of the NGOs we work with. Those organisations and their beneficiaries remain the reason for our existence and mission. Working with everyone involved has been, and remains, one of the great privileges of my life.

MAKING THE CASE AFTER SCHOOL MATTERS

By **Dylan Wray**, Director

There is no doubt that South Africa's education system is broken in places. While there are many great schools, many of which perform despite a lack of resources and quality infrastructure, the majority of young people do not have access to even a decent education. Given the inequality in this country and the dire poverty that most of our children face, providing better education opportunities for all young people is paramount. While there are many points of entry on this path to bettering our education system, it is the After School space, the extended education opportunities, that are perhaps the least explored.

Across South Africa there are hundreds, perhaps thousands of individuals and organisations who are offering young people in their communities some educational experience that gives them the possibility of a better future. Often it is homework support or extra Maths. Sometimes it is reading or computer clubs that are run after school hours. At times young people are given the opportunity to discover themselves and their life choices through surfing or skateboarding.

Many of these opportunities are provided by organisations that are community-based. Many are small and reach a few hundred young people. Some are new and emerging from the desire of an individual who thought that she could do something to make a change. Some of these organisations have a national footprint and are offering thousands of young people extended education support.

The Learning Trust partners with these organisations as they provide the crucial extended learning and education support to young people who wouldn't otherwise have it. If these organisations can deepen their work, if some can extend their reach, and if the new ones can get through those first founding years, the impact of After School activity can shift South Africa's education path to improvement. The After School sector offers us potential solutions. Our partner organisations offer us hope beyond the classroom.

UNVEILING OUR NEW BRAND IDENTITY

Through grant-making and capacity strengthening, The Learning Trust supports the leaders and practitioners who have started and work with After School programmes to help them maximise their impact and increase learner success. By so doing, The Learning Trust seeks to strengthen the After School sector in South Africa, and to advocate for each child being supported “Beyond The Classroom”.

In order to better capture the essence of this work, The Learning Trust was pleased to formally unveil its new look in 2018! Our logo design is intended to communicate The Learning Trust’s ideology and the importance of nurturing talent within the After School community. The use of a nest as a visual icon incapsulates “incubation” and signifies potential for growth, while the intertwining lines denote partnership and community. In its spiraling form, the figure shows movement and flow, indicative of how one positive motion sparks off the next. The different colours within the nest represent the collaborative relationships that form as a result. With its honest and solid feel, the font evokes a sense of transparency and trustworthiness.



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This major make-over also translates onto the pages of [our new website](#), and will carry through into future resources and documents to be shared with the broader sector. Regardless of this and other improvements, we continue to be passionate about the work we do and believe our track record speaks to the significant acceleration effect that our funding and capacity strengthening work achieves. It clearly results in boosting the impact of small, emerging education non-profits, and ultimately strengthens the After School sector.

EMBRACING LEARNING

CELEBRATING OUR WORK AND MY PERSONAL GROWTH

By Charles Ainslie, Outgoing Director

I will never forget the first time I met Christine, in a coffee shop in London. She was relaxed, kind and curious as she described some of her experiences in South Africa and her thoughts for setting up The Learning Trust. It was a wonderfully serendipitous time. I had taken time-out from my corporate finance career in London to explore work opportunities in my home country. Since qualifying as a Chartered Accountant, I have always heard a small voice inside, calling me back to grass-roots development work.

So, in 2010 I 'passed' on my next promotion at Ernst & Young, London and moved back to Cape Town to be nearer my family and to return to more meaningful and relevant work. Christine and I began the exciting task of setting up The Learning Trust as a catalyst for learning, and eight years later, we had exceeded our goals and supported over 100 community education NGOs in three provinces of South Africa. We had also developed a unique 5-year model of strengthening these organisations and built strong partnerships with various donors and local government teams.



I reflect on how almost every engagement with our stakeholders has been such a gift to my own learning. How I've marvelled at the ingenuity, perseverance and outstanding courage and warmth that has oozed out of almost every community leader I have worked with. Together with their curiosity and willingness to open their hearts, these were true models of excellence that I have been consciously and unconsciously learning from.

In parallel, my personal introduction to the study of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) began a transformative learning process that is still gathering momentum. Since 2011, we have organised 20 multi-day NLP courses for 180 grantee delegates, most of whom have returned for more courses each year. The core of NLP is instilling a true curiosity for learning and modelling excellence in the world.

At the heart of The Learning Trust's success has been our efforts to develop a culture of learning and trust, of respect for others and of first listening before we seek to support. I want to pay tribute particularly to our donors who listened, believed in us and in many instances, continue to support The Learning Trust's growth. It is a wonder to see how organically, and skilfully our grantee partners have developed their own relationships with trusted partners and supporters, enabling them to directly and substantially improve the lives of children and youth. We continue to see how their actions directly catalyse much bigger systems of change – involving parents, schools, community networks, local and even national government frameworks.

I have valued the dynamic board members who have supported me during my time as Director. Having these role models to reflect with, take advice from and be friends with, has been an inestimable blessing. Christine has been the central figure; supporting, guiding and working alongside me and the team at every stage of our development. After eight wonderful years, sensing it was time for me to move on to new learning experiences and demonstrating sustainable leadership, we began a process of carefully recruiting my replacement. Our expectations were exceeded by the calibre and expertise of not only one but two new hires. I have every confidence that, together with the existing team members and the growing board, the new leadership team is well-positioned to guide TLT towards new horizons.

THE LEARNING TRUST TEAM



Dylan Wray



Sibongile Khumalo



Nonceba Mtwana



Gabeba Gaidien



Somila Mjekula



Tebogo Kakana



Gabriel Boka

BUILDING PRACTICE THROUGH COLLECTIVE LEARNING

As part of the Western Cape Government's current 5-year strategy, After School was identified as one of six Game Changers – bold, focused and innovative interventions that are intended to impact people's lives and catalyse change. Led by Jacqueline Boule, the After School Game Changer (ASGC) aims to increase the participation of learners from no- and low-fee schools in After School activities by significantly improving the attractiveness and quality of such programmes. Now in its final year, the ASGC initiative is well on its way to reaching its ambitious target of 112,000 learners (20% of learners in no- and low-fee schools) regularly participating in quality After School programmes by 2019.

This work could not be achieved without the committed partnership of NGO's that already deliver After School programmes in and around the City of Cape Town. We have seen evidence that demonstrates the impact of extending learning through After School interventions and want to spread good practice amongst practitioners and non-profit leaders. As such, The Learning Trust has been working with ASGC to facilitate learning and collaboration within the After School sector by convening a Community of Practice (CoP) that seeks to strengthen sectoral outcomes. The CoP serves as a platform for showcasing and sharing best practice models of After School, identifying opportunities for collaboration between organisations, and advocating for the After School sector.

With every CoP meeting, there has been an accompanying Learning Brief that summarises the contributions of presenters and participants, as well as outlines specific lessons drawn from each engagement. These Learning Briefs can be found on [The Learning Trust's website](#). In 2019, The Learning Trust's partnership with ASGC will continue with the Community of Practice to strengthen the sector and build practice through collective learning.



MY CUP OVERFLOWS

THE INSPIRING STORY OF IKAMVA LABANTWANA BETHU

By **Gabeba Galdien**, Programme Manager

Born in Crossroads Township, an often overlooked community with a high rate of gangsterism, crime, and drug abuse, Siviwe Dlukwana founded Ikamva Labantwana Bethu in 2012. His drive stemmed from a painful past of his brother's killing in a violent gang incident. Trusting that a quality education would be the way out for many young people around him, he sought to enable children from Crossroads to access a high quality education and job opportunities.

With strong leadership abilities and support system, Siviwe started with just one small group of learners and has gone on to lead the first ever After School centre in Crossroads, serving most of the schools in the community and reaching 120 learners daily. The programme trains and employs university students as tutors and empowers them with skills as an entry point into the formal economy. Unlike many tutoring programmes that I have come across, they work with learners from grade 4, when English is introduced as the medium of instruction in township schools. Their learner results have shown a gradual improvement, with one grade 6 girl even achieving 100% in Maths in the second term!

This success has been made possible by support from various corners, including The Learning Trust. In particular, our funding support has freed Siviwe up to focus on his strengths in leading a team. My steady work with him to strengthen his technical and organisational abilities has helped open up opportunities to accelerate Ikamva Labantwana's programme offering. The results have been a community-wide impact that goes well beyond academic outcomes. With The Learning Trust's support, he has been able to extend his network, build strategic partnerships, train his team and attract further funding. Siviwe attests to the strong communication and other soft skills that he has gained in the process, as well as more tangible financial management, M&E and Theory of Change knowledge through our seminars and one-on-one coaching. By participating in our NLP leadership development courses, Siviwe tells me that he has sharpened his people management skills, and broadened his vision for himself and the organisation.

With our encouragement and mentorship, Siviwe applied and was selected for the coveted Mandela Washington Fellowship in 2017. Concurrently, he and his team also secured their own site from local government, as well as funding from various government departments, including a youth café partnership with the Department of Social Development. I have found the depth of his leadership and ambitious self-confidence to be the most striking features of Ikamva Labantwana's progress. The access to a supportive yet professional sounding board has maximised the impact of a relatively modest investment. At the formal opening of Ikamva Labantwana's After School centre earlier this year, I was pleased to see Siviwe with the Deputy Mayor, Councilor and local community leaders, all invested in his project and pledging their support.

The story of Ikamva Labantwana demonstrates that with the right leadership and strategic intervention, there are meaningful opportunities to tackle some of the gravest community challenges. It is in such stories that we hope to inspire funders to invest in replicating successful community education models. I am reminded that my purpose is to walk a journey with talented and sincere community leaders who tackle our education challenges with courage that turns grief, despair and self-doubt into productive outcomes for a greater purpose. Siviwe affirms and inspires me to believe that despite everything that is broken in our country, it is the ordinary people, often in the direst of situations, that drive sustainable change where complex systems fail.

**EDUCATION
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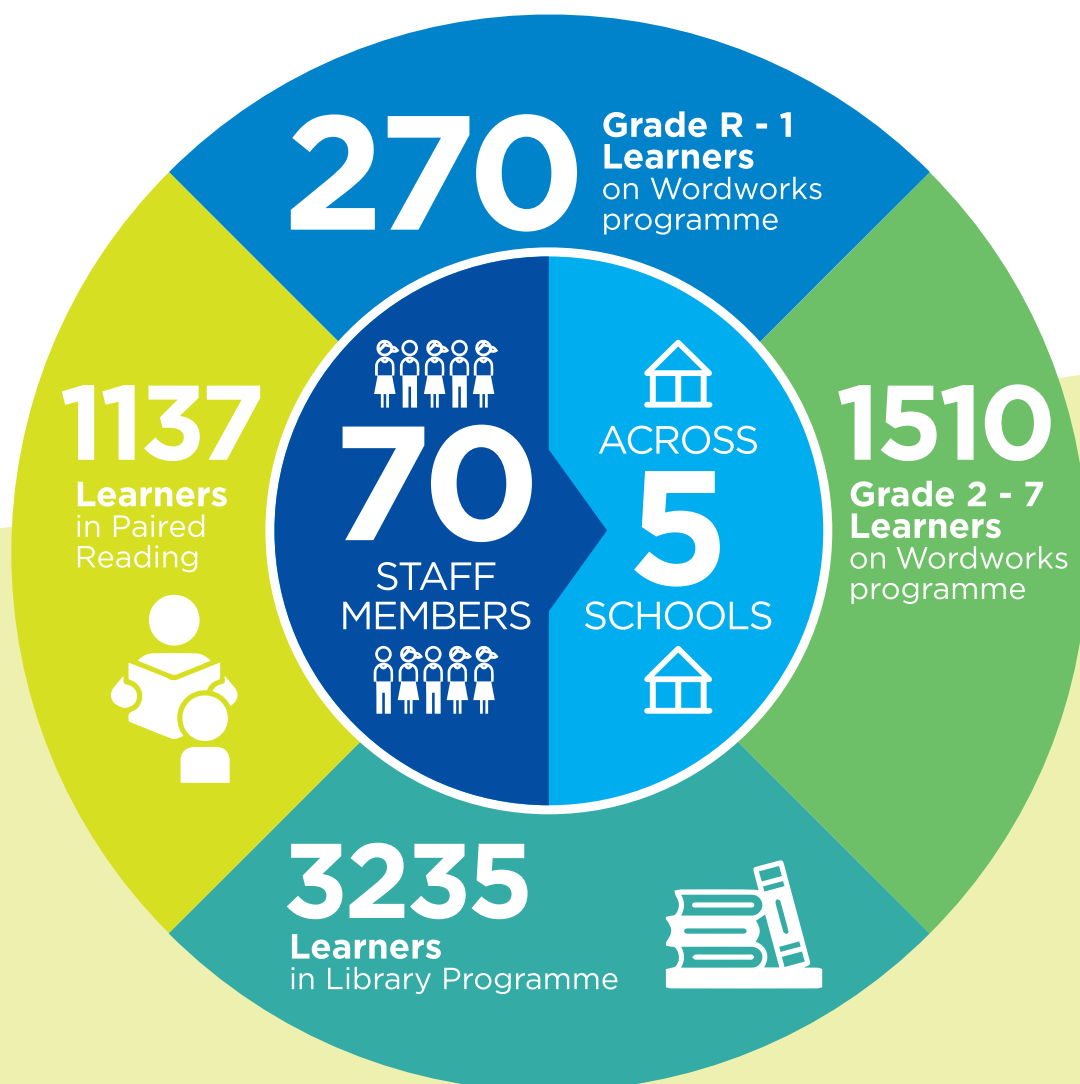


COLLABORATING FOR GREATER IMPACT

A LITERACY CASE STUDY

In the last financial year, an internal evaluation of our work has shown that the critical enabler of organisational transformation, from being fragile to increasingly mature, resilient and influential, is our capacity strengthening. We walk a five-year journey with each of our grantees as their leadership, programme and organisation develops. When our grantees graduate from our support, we seek to form extended partnerships with them to increase their reach and strengthen their programming.

Wordworks is one such partner. Following our support of their expansion into the Eastern Cape, we worked alongside them to support the development and sustainability of other organisations wishing to use the Wordworks literacy model as part of their Ready Steady Read Write programme. This partnership enabled Wordworks to scale their work through collaborations by supporting the implementation of quality literacy interventions using their model. Read more about this project of The Learning Trust [here](#).





“MASIFUNDE” LET’S LEARN

By **Somila Mjekula**,
Programme Officer

When The Learning Trust sought to support emerging quality education initiatives in Port Elizabeth, Masifunde Learner Development was an obvious choice. Despite being located closest to more affluent suburbs than other townships in the city, the community of Walmer Township, where Masifunde situates itself, is considered one of the poorest areas in the province. Its 70 000 odd inhabitants are victims of structural poverty, high levels of unemployment, HIV/AIDS, alcohol abuse, crime and violence. Moreover, the schools in Walmer are unable to cater sufficiently to the high number of learners in the community, leading to low academic performance and high dropout rates.

Responding to the needs of the community, Masifunde believes in the life-changing potential of their education and life skills interventions to contribute towards eradicating poverty in the area. Although an ambitious task, Masifunde’s great potential, passion and willingness to learn, as displayed in their co-founder and director, Jonas Schumacher, was the reason for The Learning Trust’s investment in the organisation.

“TLT has, without a doubt, been one of the most influential partners in Masifunde’s history. They challenged us to consistently improve in all aspects, while at the same time continuously supporting us financially. The relationship was always filled with trust and mutual transparency, while remaining professionally challenging at all times.”

I have personally known Masifunde since 2014, but it was not until I met Jonas at an M&E workshop facilitated by the Learning Trust that I started to see their influence in Port Elizabeth. What impressed me most was his charisma and modest demeanour – he never assumes to know better, despite leading a mature and impactful non-profit. From the start of our partnership, Masifunde was clear that they were more than just an academic support programme. They sought to also stimulate extracurricular activity amongst youth, facilitate life skills training, expose young people to good role models and leaders, as well as offer parental support to ensure continued learning at home.

Fifteen years on, Masifunde’s holistic approach towards community development is served by carefully planned and implemented programmes. The organisation has been deliberate about their staggered programmatic growth, steadily fulfilling the multiple needs of Walmer’s residents over time, while fortifying its own organisational capacity to do so. In time, they have been able to open a Learning Academy in Walmer Township – a significant milestone that serves to provide access to quality resources and programmes for the community’s schools.



The Learning Trust's support of Masifunde has been instrumental in ensuring that they build partnerships for delivery, strengthen their core team, attract new funding and better articulate their value add. With funding allocated to a full-time bookkeeper and HR administrator's salary, this allowed Jonas to focus more time and energy on operational procedures and fundraising. To the Masifunde team, we have stayed true to our "learning" and "trust" philosophy, remaining intensively engaged, genuinely interested in their specific challenges, and enabling them to reach their true potential.



"I personally struggled in my role as a young leader of a fast-growing organisation. While simply being part of a team of volunteers and like-minded friends in the beginning days of Masifunde, the growth of the organisation seemed to push me into the role of a "boss". I felt that with employing team members, my role changed against my will. At that time, TLT invited me to take part in a one-week NLP training together with leaders of other NGOs and TLT grantees. The week helped me to overcome my doubts about a changing role and to remain true to myself while being a leader."

With the help of The Learning Trust, Masifunde was able to significantly improve the daily running of their organisation; producing timely reports, accurate budgets, professional financial management, excellent forecasting, programme implementation and monitoring. Consequently, this contributed considerably to employee satisfaction and productivity. These systematic advances have positioned Masifunde to share learnings with others in the sector through stakeholder convenings funded by The Learning Trust. They remain an active member of the Organising After School and In School (OASIS) Community of Practice in Port Elizabeth wherein their participation has unleashed potential synergies and cooperation with other non-profits.

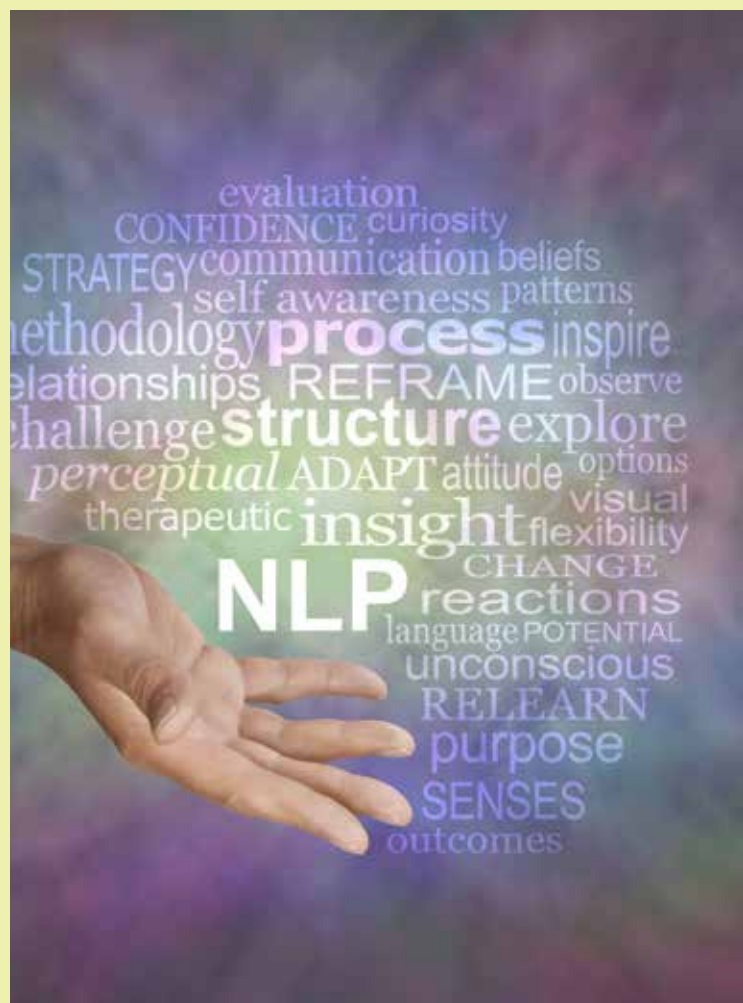
PARTNERING FOR LEARNING

NLP WITH ELMA PHILANTHROPIES

Beyond their commitment as a donor partner in The Learning Trust's core work, the ELMA Philanthropies leapt into a deeper alliance with us to extend Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) to more non-profit leaders. It was in March 2016 that we first joined forces to deliver NLP training to a mixed cohort of The Learning Trust and ELMA grantees. Along with the ELMA programme staff and director, eight of their grantees from other African countries have experienced this unique offering of personal and leadership development, while also taking the opportunity to connect with local grantees of The Learning Trust.

Three collective NLP courses later, the feedback has been encouraging. Anecdotally, the developmental tools of NLP have been useful in highlighting and bringing an awareness of personal patterns and blind-spots in participants, but have also offered practical application in confronting everyday relational challenges. The seven transformational tools of NLP are known to effectively improve communication skills and reinforce problem solving techniques. Of particular value to professionals has been the lessons on giving and receiving feedback, as well as integrating that feedback into shaping an organisational culture of learning and development.

The praxis of NLP is boundless! Despite the diversity and experience of participants, there remains a wide-range of lessons still to uncover in its extensive practical application. In ELMA, we trust that we have an abiding partnership that will see The Learning Trust further embed a practice of reflection and learning in non-profit leaders.



THE OCTET

DONOR PARTNERS

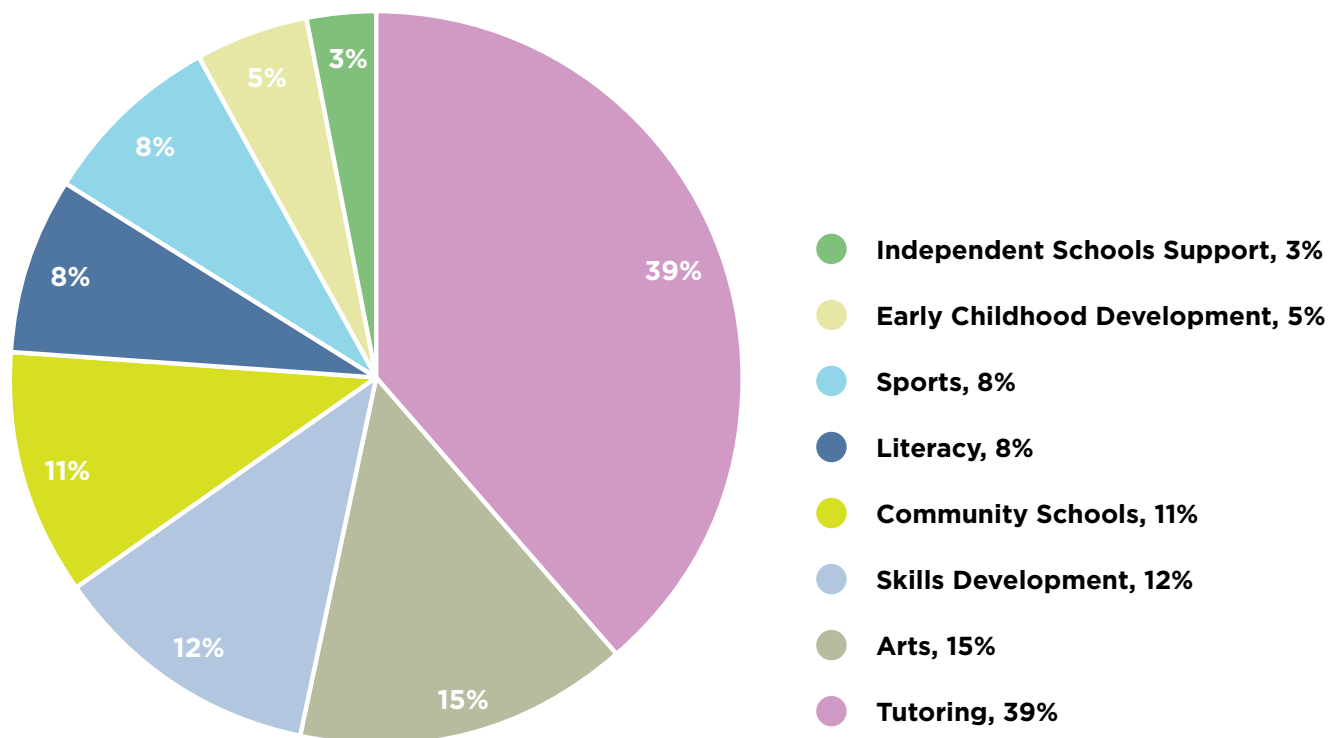
The Learning Trust is privileged to leverage the resources, wisdom and collective strength of our community of partners. Each new donor enlarges the reach of our work and makes possible lasting positive change among our grantee partners. We continue to build a community of donors interested in collaborating 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.



OUR FINANCES

BDO completed a 'clean' audit of our 2017/2018 Annual Financial Statements.

Percentage grant spend per programme area



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