

Independent examiner's report on the accounts



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Solon Foundation UK

On accounts for the year
ended

31 December 2016

Charity no
(if any)

1125501

Set out on pages

This page only

Respective
responsibilities of
trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed. The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent
examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent
examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

30 October 2017

Name:

Catherine Chapman

Professional body

Chartered Institute of Management Accountants

Address:

78 Wytham Street

Oxford OX1 4TW



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From January, 1 2016 **To** December 31, 2016

Charity name: Solon Foundation UK

Charity registration number: 1125501

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	To advance the education of disadvantaged members of the public primarily, though not exclusively, in the developing world.
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19 and 1.36	Solon Foundation UK provided grants to Rising Academies to fund school construction, curriculum development and an on-going evaluation of school quality in Sierra Leone. Grants to Rising Academies also supported student scholarships for underprivileged children. Solon Foundation UK provided grants to support primary education on the Turtle Islands of Sierra Leone.
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	We, the trustees of Solon Foundation UK, do hereby confirm that we have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Additional information

<p>Aims and how the achievement of these aims will further the purpose.</p> <p>Strategy for achieving aims and criteria for measuring success.</p>	Para 1.36	<p>Solon Foundation UK aims to improve access to quality education in some of the most challenging contexts in the world.</p> <p>There is a crisis in education in Sierra Leone, West Africa. More students in Sierra Leone are in school than ever before but they're not learning. Studies repeatedly show that students are not learning the basic foundations of literacy and numeracy, and children who complete primary school do so without the ability to read a simple sentence. The reasons for this crisis include poor quality of teaching and a lack of accountability within schools and across the education system.</p> <p>Solon Foundation UK provides grants to organisations like Rising Academy Network, who are seeking to address the root causes of these challenges in education and to build scalable, long-term solutions.</p> <p>Providing grants to trusted organisations with proven track records for transparency is key for ensuring funds are used prudently and that the</p>
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		intended social impact is realised. Regular reporting of key performance indicators tracks progress across important domains, like student progress and number of teachers trained.
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	Solon Foundation UK makes grants to organisations with demonstrable impact on student learning outcomes in countries with the poorest quality education.
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	During this period, Solon Foundation UK did not make any social investment. A policy for social investment would be developed should an opportunity arise that would further the charitable purposes.
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	Solon Foundation UK is managed exclusively through volunteer contributions to keep overhead costs as low as possible and to maximise the allocation of funds towards achieving the charitable purposes of the trust.

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20 and 1.41	<p>Grants provided by Solon Foundation UK improved access to quality education in Sierra Leone, West Africa.</p> <p>A scholarship programme raised funds for children to attend junior secondary school, with a higher number of scholarships awarded to girls.</p> <p>A grant to Rising Academies supported the construction and refurbishment of schools. Support was also provided for the continued development of high quality lesson plans. Lesson plans are a proven strategy for addressing challenges of teacher capacity in resource poor settings and have been shown to improve the quality of teaching in the classroom.</p> <p>To assess impact, a school evaluation grant funded the first year of a three-year project to compare the quality of education provision across different types of schools in Sierra Leone. Baseline results demonstrated that students enrolling in their first year of junior secondary school were, on average, 5 years behind on their English reading and mathematics. At the end of the first academic year, students at Rising Academy schools were making twice as much progress on English literacy and mathematics compared to students in other schools; students in government schools made little to no progress. First year results reinforce the need to focus on improving the quality of education provision.</p> <p>Grants were provided to fund primary schooling on the Turtle Islands, located off the southern coast of Sierra Leone. Children on the islands often drop out before completing primary school.</p>

		Solon Foundation UK provided funds to support the first ever class of grade 6 students from the islands to sit their government exams. To increase the value of education and to encourage more families to keep their children in school, a scholarship initiative was launched for children from the islands to continue on to junior secondary school.
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Additional information

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	<p>Primary objectives for this period were achieved.</p> <p>Scholarships were provide to 69 students (26 boys and 43 girls) to attend junior secondary school in Freetown, Sierra Leone. At the start of the new academic year in September 2016, this increased to 260 scholarships (97 boys and 163 girls), of which 18 were awarded to students from the remote Turtle Island communities. The first 8 students to complete primary school on the islands were given a grant to sit their government exams. This was a significant milestone for the community.</p> <p>Three schools were constructed and five schools were refurbished as part of the UBS Optimus Foundation grant held in partnership with Rising Academy Network giving more children access to quality education. School enrolment grew from 390 students in January 2016 to 1,400 students in December 2016.</p> <p>Curriculum writers developed lesson plans for each and every class of instruction across 8 subjects at the junior secondary level. By the end of the period approximately 90% of curriculum had been developed.</p> <p>The first year of the external evaluation of Rising Academy schools was completed by researchers at the University of Oxford. Results indicated that Rising students made more than twice as much progress in English reading and numeracy as students in other schools (report available on the Rising Academy website). These results are an early indicator of impact on learning and an important metric of success.</p>
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	Fundraising performance achieved the objectives set for this period.
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	No investment objectives were set for this period.

Financial Review

	SORP reference	
Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	The financial position of Solon Foundation UK at the end of the period was solid. It had funds of £45,866 with a cash balance of £627. The foundation has no long term liabilities, future contractual or contingent liabilities.

Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	Solon Foundation UK only holds reserves in the event that it has future financial obligations for which it must make provision. As it does not currently have any future contractual financial obligations it does not hold any reserves at this time. The organisation has very low costs of operation and no need for reserves.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	None at this time.
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	Solon Foundation UK only holds reserves in the event that it has future financial obligations for which it must make provision. As it does not currently have any future contractual financial obligations it does not hold any reserves at this time.
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	Solon Foundation UK has no fund or subsidiary undertaking that is materially in deficit.
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	There are currently no uncertainties as to Solon Foundation UK's ability to continue as a going concern.

Additional information

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	Solon Foundation UK's charitable income increased significantly in 2016 due to grant funding secured in 2015 from the UBS Optimus Foundation.
Pension liability	Para 1.47	Solon Foundation UK did not have a pension liability during this period.
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	No social investments were made during this period and no social investment policies were adopted.
A description of the principal risks facing the charity and plans for managing risks	Para 1.46	The principal risks facing the Solon Foundation UK continue to be the capacity to seek out, secure and manage additional larger scale sources of funding such that it can continue to achieve its charitable purposes to an equal or greater degree in future years. Financial performance going forward could be affected by capacity challenges primarily in terms of raising new funding.

Plans for Future Periods

	SORP reference	
Summarise charity's plans for the future	Para 1.49	The focus for 2017 will be to continue to effectively manage the grant held in partnership with Rising Academy Network to increase access to quality education in Sierra Leone. Emphasis will be placed on trying to secure additional funds to support the development of this partnership given the successes achieved to date. A priority will be to raise additional funds for the Solon Foundation scholarship fund to increase the number of students receiving support.

Structure, Governance and Management

	SORP reference	
Type of governing document	Para 1.25	Trust deed
How is the charity constituted?	Para 1.25	Charitable trust
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	Trustees must be appointed by a resolution of the Trustees passed at a special meeting

Additional information

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees. Arrangements for setting pay levels.	Para 1.51	No new policies or procedures were adopted for the induction or training of trustees. No new trustees were appointed. No trustees receive any form of compensation.
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	Solon Foundation UK is comprised of five trustees and one director who oversees charity administration and management of funds. There is no wider network with which the charity works.
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	The primary source of funding during the period was received by UBS Optimus Foundation. The grant is held in partnership with Rising Academy Network, a growing network of quality schools in West Africa. During the year the Foundation received a donation of £1,500 from Kevin Cahill who is a trustee.
Other		Conflict of interest: A Trustee must absent himself or herself from any discussions of the Trustees in which it is possible that a conflict will arise between his or her duty to act solely in the interests of the Charity and any personal interest (including but not limited to any personal financial interest).

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Solon Foundation UK
Other name the charity uses	N/A
Registered charity number	1125501
Charity's principal address	Flat 3, 70 Gloucester Place London W1U 8HP

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	David Dobrowolski	Chair		
2	Kevin Cahill			
3	Adriano Rocca			
4	Jeffrey Russell			
5	Jennifer Wilson			
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Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		
N/A		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	
N/A		

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	No assets are held in this capacity at this time.
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

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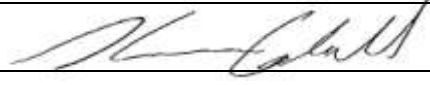
Other optional information

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Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	David Dobrowolski	Kevin Cahill
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	Trustee
Date	October 30th, 2017	

Solon Foundation UK

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

Charity no: 1125501

Statement of financial activities for the year ending 31 December 2016

	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total (£)	Total 2015 (£)
Income from:				
Donations and legacies	41,795.82	0.00	41,795.82	42,652.97
Charitable activities - UBS Optimus Foundation grant	0.00	478,917.93	478,917.93	107,315.61
Total	41,795.82	478,917.93	520,713.75	149,968.58
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds	-180.00	0.00	-180.00	0.00
Charitable activities	-24,566.19	-517,991.26	-542,557.45	-92,639.29
Other – bank fees	-72.00	0.00	-72.00	-24.00
Total expenditure	-24,818.19	-517,991.26	-542,809.45	-92,663.29
Net income/(expenditure)	16,977.63	-39,073.33	-22,095.70	57,329.29
Net movement in funds	16,977.63	-39,073.33	-22,095.70	57,329.29
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward	26,950.70	41,010.63	67,961.33	10,632.04
Total funds carried forward	43,928.33	1,937.30	45,865.63	67,961.33

Balance sheet as at 31 December 2016

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	<i>Total 2015</i>
Fixed assets	0.00	0.00	0.00	<i>0.00</i>
Current assets				
Debtors - prepayments	21.58	49,365.27	49,386.85	<i>19.19</i>
Cash at bank	1,915.72	-1,288.94	626.78	<i>73,422.14</i>
Total current assets	1,937.30	48,076.33	50,013.63	<i>73,441.33</i>
Liabilities				
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year - accruals	0.00	-4,148.00	-4,148.00	<i>-5,480.00</i>
Net current assets	1,937.30	43,928.33	45,865.63	<i>67,961.33</i>
Total net assets	1,937.30	43,928.33	45,865.63	<i>67,961.33</i>
The funds of the charity				
Restricted income funds	1,937.30		1,937.30	<i>41,010.63</i>
Unrestricted funds		43,928.33	43,928.33	<i>26,950.70</i>
Total	1,937.30	43,928.33	45,865.63	<i>67,961.33</i>

Cash flow statement for the year ending 31 December 2016

	Total funds	Prior year funds
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	-72,795.36	62,766.10
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the operating period	-72,795.36	62,766.10
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	<u>73,422.14</u>	<u>10,656.04</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	<u>626.78</u>	<u>73,422.14</u>
Reconciliation of net expenditure to net cash flow from operating activities		
Net expenditure for the reporting period	-22,095.70	57,329.29
Increase in debtors	-49,367.66	-19.19
Decrease in creditors	<u>1,332.00</u>	<u>-5,480.00</u>
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	<u>-70,131.36</u>	<u>51,830.10</u>
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in hand	<u>626.78</u>	<u>73,422.14</u>
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>626.78</u>	<u>73,422.14</u>

Notes to the accounts

Note 1 – accounting policies

Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies are set out below. Where a change of policy has occurred, the previous year figures have been adjusted to reflect this change.

Basis of preparation

The financial accounts have been prepared for the first time using the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP 2015) applicable to charities in accordance with FRS102. The accounts have been prepared using an accruals basis. Previously financial accounts have been prepared on a cash basis. Prior year comparators have been restated on an accruals basis.

Funds structure

The charity uses two funds, an unrestricted fund which relates to donated income and associated activity and a restricted fund which relates to income through a performance related grant from the UBS Optimus Foundation and activities which are in line with the grant agreement.

Incoming resources

Income from donations and grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the income, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.

Resources expended

Liabilities are recognised when all of the following criteria are met:

- Obligation - a present legal or constructive obligation exists at the reporting date as a result of a past event;
- Probable - it is more likely than not that a transfer of economic benefits, often cash, will be required in settlement;
- Measurement - the amount of obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Allocation of overhead and support costs

Bank fees have been charged to the unrestricted fund.

Costs of generating funds

The cost of registering to receive charitable donations online has been treated as fundraising expenditure

Charitable activities

Costs of charitable activities include curriculum development and grants made.

Governance costs

There are no governance costs

Tangible fixed assets

There are no tangible fixed assets. All assets costing more than £5000 would be capitalised and valued at historic cost.

Donated services

The charity receives a significant contribution of services from unpaid general volunteers. Given the absence of a reliable measurement basis, and in line with the SORP, the contribution from volunteers is not included as income in the charity accounts.

Note 2 – related party transactions & trustee remuneration

No trustees received remuneration during the period.

The Solon Foundation UK received a donation of £1,500 from Kevin Cahill, who is a trustee of the Foundation.

Note 3 – Analysis of charitable expenditure



Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Activity or programme	Activities undertaken directly	Grant funding of activities	Support costs	Total
Curriculum development	-68,911.20		-389.93	-69,301.13
Educational equipment, supplies & materials	-19,686.82	-17,080.70	-249.00	-37,016.52
Scholarship Fund Sierra Leone		-5,017.00		-5,017.00
School construction & refurbishment		-424,124.23	-7,098.57	-431,222.80
Total	-88,598.02	-446,221.93	-7,737.50	-542,557.45

Note 4 – Donated services

Volunteers provided administrative services for the Solon Foundation UK to oversee the management of charitable income. This included the ongoing recording and monitoring of charitable funds received and disbursements made to specified beneficiaries. Volunteers also communicated with funders and provided progress reports as required. All other reporting requirements and administrative duties were also provided by volunteers.

Signed by two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	David Dobrowolski	30 Oct, 2017
	Kevin Cahill	30 Oct, 2017