**RSA**

<p align="center"><b>Minutes of the 270<sup>th</sup> RSA Annual General Meeting<br>
Thursday 10 October 2024, 6pm to 7pm<br>
Great Room, RSA House and via Zoom</b></p>

### 1. Welcome and Apologies

Tim Eyles, Chair of the RSA Board of Trustees, opened the 270th Annual General Meeting. Tim Eyles was joined by Chief Executive, Andy Haldane as his co-host for the evening.
A quorum of at least 25 Fellows was present in-person and online, and therefore Tim Eyles declared the meeting open.

The Formal Notice of the Annual General Meeting, together with the agenda and a copy of the Impact Report containing the 2023/24 Financial Statements, had been circulated to Fellows in accordance with the RSA's Bye-Laws in advance of the meeting and was taken as read.

### 2. Minutes of the 269th Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 19 October 2023 and matters arising

The minutes of the 2023 AGM of Thursday 19 October 2023 were noted. As there were no matters arising, Tim Eyles confirmed the signing of the minutes as a true record.

### 3. To receive and consider a report from the Board of Trustees including the accounts

Tim Eyles formally addressed the meeting by outlining key highlights of the previous year in reference to the contents of the RSA's Impact Report and statutory accounts.

The 2023–2024 Impact Report was published in July this year together with the financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2024.

It was noted that the financial review showed that total income experienced a modest decline, decreasing from £12.9 million to £12.5 million, despite specific income streams showing significant growth, such as in trading activities which rose by 18.9% to £4.2 million. Tim expressed that the RSA is also incredibly grateful to the Fellowship to be able to announce that Fellowship donations increased by over 10% to £6.4m this year. Total expenditure increased by 3% to £13.2 million driven mainly by the growth in trading, as well as increased Fellowship activities and routine repairs to RSA House which are conducted every five years.

**Reflections on the Year**

The theme for the year at the RSA was homage to one of the five core values of the RSA: Courage. It is evident across the board at the RSA that there have been courageous steps forward as we continued to bring the Design for Life mission to life.

After 18 months of development, the Design for Life programme is now delivering interventions that are having lasting practical impact in communities around the world.

Staying true to its heritage, the RSA was front and centre this year in championing innovative approaches to education.

It was highlighted that the RSA launched Playful Green Planet, aiming to ensure every child of primary school age has access to nature-based creative play, transforming how primary schools, early years settings and communities' foster children's connection to nature.

The RSA's Student Design Awards celebrated their centenary this year – the world's oldest design Awards for young people. This big birthday has caused us to rethink the next 100 years. RSA Spark, which will be launched later this year, will pioneer a new approach to learning, from pupils to entrepreneurs, rooted in practical solutions to societal problems and focused on those furthest from learning.

The RSA's Digital Badging Commission, in partnership with Ufi VocTech Trust was launched this year to broaden the understanding, development and adoption of digital badges by accrediting organisations and employers. The aim of the commission is to build a new consensus around the development and deployment of digital badges to recognise and reward learning and skills development, transforming the discussion about how we recognise and reward lifelong learning in the UK.

Moving from people to place, the RSA launched the RSA's Prosperous Places Programme this year. A practical suite of programmes to respond to the unique ambitions and challenges of places, working directly with place stakeholders to ensure these programmes flourish.

Last but not least, in May 2024, the RSA awarded the Benjamin Franklin Medal to Professor Raj Chetty in recognition of his work on how social connections can support social mobility. The ceremony marked the launch of RSA's Social Connections Programme, which will see social capital and mobility run as a golden thread through all the RSA's interventions.

Outside of the Design for Life interventions, the vibrancy of RSA House continues to grow, with a packed programme of events, music and lectures attracting an ever larger and more diverse audience.

The award-winning RSA Journal continues to be recognised as a leading print title, while also expanding its digital ambitions. The RSA Journal has been redesigned this year, with the new look introduced for the issue celebrating the RSA's 270th anniversary.

The RSA continues to expand the thriving array of diverse art exhibited throughout RSA House, in tandem with the display of artefacts from the archive. As part of this, the RSA is opening the Vaults to local artists and charities to provide them with the opportunity to display and share their artworks.

The success of all the work at the RSA relies on the support of the Fellowship, a formidably broad and diverse circle of around 31,000 Fellows that sits at the very heart of the RSA.

In the past 12 months, the RSA have launched multiple new initiatives to strengthen the engagement with Fellows and unlock more of their expertise and experience. With two-thirds of UK Fellows living outside London, the RSA launched RSA Connect – a Fellowship event series bringing the RSA closer to Fellows living outside the capital. Following its launch in April 2023, Circle (the RSA's online platform for Fellows) now hosts 4,000 active members, fostering connections and collaborations. And through the introduction in July 2023 of the Youth Fellowship initiative, Fellowship among those aged 18 to 25 years old has since doubled, with a Youth Advisory Council and Youth Mentoring Programme now also in place.

Beyond the UK, between 2018 and 2023, the global Fellowship grew by over 20 per cent, and the RSA now have Fellows in over100 countries. This is, in turn, reflected in the ambitions of the RSA

US and RSA Oceania Affiliates, which are now executing exciting three-year strategic plans, including developing international partnerships around the world.

**Concluding Remarks**

Tim concluded by making a few personal remarks having completed his second term as Chair and therefore, in accordance with the RSA's Bye-Laws, passing on, as his successor, to Loyd Grossman whose appointment Fellows have been asked to ratify.

Tim expressed that serving as the RSA'S Chair has been one of the greatest honours of his professional life, and indeed, one of the most fulfilling experiences he could ever have imagined, especially as one of the fortunate few Chairs since the RSA's foundation in 1754 to serve two successive terms.

Tim went on to acknowledge that the RSA is an extraordinary organisation, rightly known as a beacon of creativity. Tim noted that he was in constant awe of the RSA's power to assemble the most brilliant minds and leaders, embracing all sectors and engaging deeply with government, financial institutions and corporates, as well as organisations in the voluntary space, both across the UK and internationally.

The RSA is a very special meeting place for diverse perspectives, where ideas are tested, debated, and refined — and where the lines between disciplines blur to create something new.

All this is inspired by and involves the direct participation of a very special and impressive group of people: that is the RSA's Fellows. And was stated by Tim to have been truly inspirational for him to be part of a community with such passion, always challenging the status quo, always thinking creatively, sharing common values and above all having such a noble aim: to deliver a better future for everyone: a world where people, places and planet flourish in harmony; where we all have a part to play, across the whole of society and involving all generations.

Tim shared that he was deeply grateful to have learned so much from working with the Fellows.

Tim also expressed heartfelt personal thanks and appreciation for the entire RSA staff body for the tremendous work they are undertaking. He noted that he sees evidence of their skills, dedication and commitment every day.

Tim also recorded his gratitude to his fellow trustees, past and present, without whom he couldn't have undertaken the role of Chair. Special thanks were offered to Andrea Kershaw who after serving 6 years also steps down as a trustee tonight and to Tim's two deputy Chairs over the past six years firstly Pip Wilson and then Charlotte Oades whom he relied on so much.

Tim went on to thank Andy Haldane, noting that it's been wonderful to partner with Andy, crediting him for what he has brought to the RSA since 2021 - a laser focus on achieving impact together through what's become the Design for Life strategy, a powerfully renewed collaboration with the Fellows, the restoration of colour and a vibrant joie de vivre in the House - with the arts especially front of mind - and a reach out for partners and profile to all sectors.

Tim then expressed that the RSA is blessed to have Loyd Grossman as the next Chair. He's a longstanding Fellow with an extremely distinguished and varied career and truly diverse skills, of which the RSA will be the fortunate beneficiary. Tim wished Loyd all the best for his time in the role.

Tim finished by welcoming Andy Haldane, CEO to the stage.

### 4. Speech from Andy Haldane, CEO

Andy Haldane expressed his delight at seeing so many Fellows joining the AGM this evening, highlighting that the work done over the past 12 months would not have had the same impact without the Fellowship.

He took time to thank Tim Eyles for his service to the RSA over the past six years, seeing the RSA through a period of transformational change with unstinted leadership and wise council.

Andy went on to highlight that there were exciting future plans that lie ahead at the RSA. He noted that in the next year, the RSA will be focusing on scaling up the Design for Life mission. He also unveiled that the theme for 2025 at the RSA will be 'connection' linking to the core values of the RSA. Andy went on the explain that in a world where social cohesion is needed more than ever, the RSA has ambition to be a global leader on a programme of social connectivity, linking to our heritage as a network and convening body. He again thanked the Fellowship for their support and expressed excitement for working with them in the months to come to continue to scale up the Design for Life mission.

### 5. Mi Voice voting

Tim Eyles then introduced Simon Thomson from the RSA's independent electoral services provider, Mi-Voice. Simon informed Fellows that the online vote had been open for some weeks as per the bye-laws and closed at 6pm this evening. He read the results of the vote, as follows:

**Resolution 1:** To approve the Trustee Board's appointment of Loyd Grossman CBE as Chair of the RSA Board of Trustees

For: 1247
Against: 118
Abstentions: 94

Loyd Grossman CBE was thereby elected for a first three-year term as RSA Chair.

**Resolution 2:** To approve the Trustee Board's reappointment of Ian Ailles as a Trustee and Co-Treasurer.

For: 1272
Against: 90
Abstentions: 96

Ian Ailles was thereby re-elected for a second three-year term as an RSA Trustee and Co-Treasurer.

### 5. Introduction from Loyd Grossman CBE

Following the vote, Tim Eyles asked Loyd Grossman to the stage to address the Fellows. Loyd acknowledged the great privilege of this appointment and thanked the Fellowship for the honour of their ratification. Loyd also thanked Tim, for his wise stewardship of the Society over his two consecutive terms as Chair.

Loyd expressed that he was looking forward tremendously to working with Andy, his fellow members of the Trustee Board and the RSA staff body to capitalize on the successes of the past year and to unlock the many opportunities for future positive social impact through the powerful work being generated by our Design for Life interventions – work that is shaped and championed by our incredible global Fellowship community and which is growing in scale and ambition by the minute.

### 5. Fellows Question and Answer Session

There followed Q&As from Fellows, facilitated by Andy Haldane. Andy noted that as there was limited time for questions, not all those submitted via the Q&A function would be able to be answered this evening. However, the Fellowship Team would work to respond to Fellows directly within two working days following the AGM.

**Question One: What is the RSA's plan with the Day One manifesto?**

Andy Haldane noted that the 300 submissions the RSA received could not all feasibly be taken forward but noted that Circle and the wider RSA community of Fellows was being utilised to take forward the ideas that were chosen for the final published manifesto.

**Question Two: How might the RSA play a role in creating a more hopeful society?**

Tim Eyles stated that there is a real sense at the RSA that optimism is at the heart of what the organisation does. The Design for Life mission has been designed with this principle at the very heart. Tim went on to express that partnerships have been central for ensuring the flourishing of our Design for Life interventions and this collaboration has helped to bring this optimism to life.

Loyd Grossman added that a way of measuring how successful the RSA has been with growing a sense of hope in society is how much the Fellowship grows. He was hopeful that we will see real growth in the Fellowship as the Design for Life mission continues to scale.

Andy Haldane concluded by noting that any real impact in society will have to be big and systems shifting around which the RSA has ambition.

**Question Three: How do you see the RSA making responsible use of AI within the Design for Life mission?**

Tim Eyles stated that we are starting to see the transformational impact of AI and it is critical the RSA embraces this in coming years.

Andy Haldane acknowledged that the AI Fellows Network is one of the most energetic of the Fellowship. He also noted two positive use cases of AI from recent months, including the Khan Academy who showcased their work at the RSA this year.

**Question Four: How is the RSA going to keep improving places at the local level?**

Andy Haldane highlighted that the RSA has very close relationships with local authorities across the country, noting that the RSA needs to be at the heart of the solution to the Government's Local Growth Plan. He also noted that growth is best built from the bottom up and the RSA has a role to play here.

**Question Five: Is there appetite to continue to build out our Corporate Partnership offer?**

Andy Haldane noted that the RSA is planning to build out our Corporate Partnerships, through interventions such as RSA Spark but also across the RSA's large portfolio of work.

### 6. Updates from Design for Life Interventions

Andy Haldane then introduced Anna Markland, Head of Innovation and Change, Celestin Okoroji, Head of Research and Tom Stratton, Chief of Staff to the stage to present on progress being made on a selection of Design for Life interventions.

**RSA Spark**

Anna Markland showcased RSA Spark, highlighting that existing educational models are not set up to respond to societies most pressing issues and that RSA Spark has been designed to address this. RSA Spark is the beginning of a new chapter transforming 100 years of the Student Design Awards, 10 years of the Pupil Design Awards, and 15 years of the Catalyst Awards, for greater impact. She noted that the goal with RSA Spark was to create a diverse movement of one million learners by 2030.

**Prosperous Places**

Tom Stratton spoke to the RSA's Prosperous Places work. He noted that a focus on place has been woven through the RSA's long history, and that the Prosperous Places work trails from the UK Urban Futures Commission of 2023. He noted that places across the world are not currently meeting their potential and that disparities between places means that for many people, where you live determines where you end up in society. There is a growing need for place-based work which the RSA is tapping into. Tom outlined that this starts with a diagnosis for specific places and providing recommendations for how a place might develop and flourish. The RSA is also aiming to be central to implementing these recommendations by collaborating with places on existing RSA interventions such as RSA Spark, Playful Green Planet and Regions of Learning.

**Social Connections**

Celestin Okoroji then spoke on the RSA's Social Connections work. He explained that social capital is centred around your network, your community and the connections you have across society tied to values, norms and beliefs. He noted that studies have shown that those with higher social capital tended to live happier and longer lives, and that cross-class connections were the strongest predictor of someone's mobility. The RSA is working to be at the centre of bolstering social capital by developing a Social Capital Observatory, field building work such as collaborating on RSA Spark and by developing a Connected Places intervention to work with places to address the unique challenges in their communities to boost social cohesion and connectivity.

## 7. Updates from Fellowship

The floor was then handed to Line Kristensen, Director of Fellowship to present on updates within the Fellowship offering. She noted that the RSA Connect programme has brought RSA's senior leadership directly face to face with Fellows across the United Kingdom, with ambitions to expand this programme globally over the coming months.

She noted the Pay Fellowship Forward scheme recently launched to ensure that financial barriers were not a barrier to individuals joining the Fellowship. The RSA has also recently launched its Mentoring scheme to allow Fellows more opportunities to collaborate within the Fellowship. Line then noted improvements being made to Fellowship communications, making these more tailored, and to feedback loops, making feedback opportunities more regular, all with the aim to improve the quality of the Fellowship offer. Line ended by highlighting the continuing global ambitions of the Fellowship, with Fellows now residing in over 110 countries.

## 8. Conclusion

At the conclusion of the 270th RSA AGM Tim Eyles thanked Fellows for attending, and as there was no further business, the meeting was declared closed.