

# The Kartik Foundation

NEWSLETTER | Summer 2022 - Spring 2023

Our Foundation continues to grow and evolve! These last twelve months have seen many exciting developments and new initiatives.

## Initiatives

We have continued to focus on our three core initiatives throughout this period:

- *ReFAB*
- *voxpod* (formerly *FutureSelves*)
- *WriteSpace*

We also concluded our support to RESQ for *Project Maya*. Details on all four programmes below. In addition, we began a new initiative, *Access Interns*, for which we are sponsoring in partnership with Variety, the Children's Charity. More on this in our next newsletter!

## Team

We are delighted to welcome seven new members to the team:

- Maya Fawzi (*voxpod* co-founder, *ReFAB* research analyst)
- Cordelia Blair-Stickland (*ReFAB* head of design, operations)
- Will Horsfield (*voxpod* business intern, *WriteSpace* manager)
- Besme Al Al-Mudaris (*Access Interns* Programme Manager)
- Aya Ali (*voxpod* intern)
- Taapsi Kohli (*ReFAB* sales and marketing analyst)
- Monica Da Cruz (*ReFAB* e-commerce manager)

In addition, Stephanie Norén ably supported us during Brittany Downes' maternity leave.

## Well-wishers

Finally, we would like to say a massive thank you to everyone who supports us, both in terms of time, money and effort. **None of this would have been possible without you.**



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## ReFAB

ReFAB is our way of finding delight and meaning in the age of waste. Our bespoke, multi-use products are made from designer “waste” fabrics by women from disadvantaged backgrounds. To date, we’ve upcycled over 500kg of fabric creating 700+ products and upskilled 34 women.

Our Instagram account has over three thousand followers! <https://instagram.com/refabstudio?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=> where you can see our beautiful products. Our first ever pop-up shop through Janet’s List at the *Women of the World Festival* last year was well received and we have been now invited to exhibit on our own at *WOW 2023*. Other pop-ups followed, including the *Grittenham Barn Christmas Market* in Sussex and the *Pinsent Masons Christmas pop-up* in London.

We continue to receive fabric from Designers Guild and sold our products in its popular summer warehouse sale. Altfield, one of our earliest supporters, has not only continued to support us with donated fabrics but also signed a MOU with us to work together and proudly refers to this collaboration on its website.

<https://www.altfield.com/news-events/2022/december/refab/>

Production in the UK was recently launched in partnership with the Network of International Women for Brighton and Hove, who work with refugee women. Our collaboration has already begun to improve skills, provide jobs and enhance the livelihoods of these disadvantaged women.

ReFAB was selected by Barclays Bank as part of its *Pilotlight Insight* programme. We worked with a multi-disciplinary team to identify pathways for growth and develop a strategic business plan, which is currently under implementation.



Registered Address: 20 Pelham Street, London, SW7 2NG

Registered CIO in England & Wales No 1188703

The Kartik Foundation & KPMF are trading names of the  
Kartik Prabhu Memorial Foundation

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## RESQ Centre for Animals – Project Maya

*Project Maya* is a collaboration of KPMF with the RESQ Charitable Trust and the Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Pune) to prevent pet trade animal cruelty. by providing a platform to help relevant government bodies regulate pet shops, breeders and promote education and awareness particularly among young and disadvantaged pet owners.

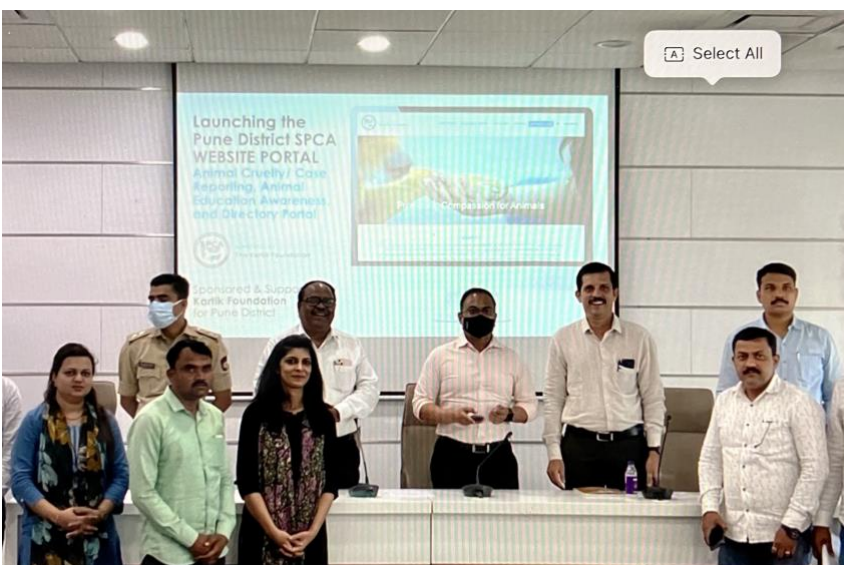
The project is designed to inform the three key stakeholder groups:

1. Educate the demanders – Pet Owners
2. Improve the suppliers – Pet Shops and Breeders
3. Reduce Animal Cruelty – Empower Public Citizens

The platform includes online reporting forms, a resource centre that brings together all kinds of useful information in a single place, directories of Pet Shops and Breeders in Maharashtra, and compilations of relevant notices, circulars and other relevant legal updates for the animal sector.

Soft-launched in January 2022, in its first month alone, *Project Maya* helped over 340 domestic, wild and exotic animals! It has also provided pet owners with the resources to make informed choices surrounding pet suppliers, breeders, and pet shops.

The District Collector of Pune, Rajesh Deshmukh, praised the ease of use of the dedicated portal <https://www.punespca.org/maya-by-kf> that we have set up and thanked us warmly for all our support!



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## WriteSpace

Launched in 2021, *WriteSpace* is a creative writing collaboration between Westminster School, twenty *Platform+* non-fee-paying schools and us. For the first time in its 600+ year history, students from public and private schools are sitting together to listen, learn and create their own work across all genres of literature.

Our first session was run by Dr Ankhi Mukherjee, a professor of English and World Literatures at the University of Oxford. The session included a stimulating discussion on postcolonial literature, followed by an interactive creative writing workshop hosted by Rebecca Wait author and teacher at Westminster.

Our second session focused on creative writing and was hosted by Nayanika Mahtani, a renowned author and screenwriter. After the workshop, attendees submitted their own creative writing pieces, the best of which were kindly critiqued by Nayanika.

Going forward, we have exciting plans for *WriteSpace* this year. We are planning interactive workshops run by experts in poetry, fiction and journalism for Year 10 students. We are also planning a summer writing festival for Year 12 students along with interested alumni at university.

All work produced through *WriteSpace* will be entered into the creative writing competitions offered by over fifty organisations in the UK. In addition, there will be special prizes instituted by The Kartik Foundation for both Year 10 and Year 12 students, which Dr Mukherjee has very kindly agreed to judge.



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## voxpod

We are currently developing voxpod, a career exploration app that offers practical advice from relatable sources to help disadvantaged students and graduates find their best career fit.

Often it is the first few steps into a career that are most daunting. The challenge is amplified for those from underrepresented and underprivileged backgrounds, who lack the networks to provide perspective, introductions and job opportunities.

The app helps 'Seekers' choose their careers by providing access to advice from 'Sharers' with similar backgrounds in the early years of those careers. It holds a browsable library of experiences – soundbites tagged and paired with practical facts and figures to explain “what’s it really like”, “things I wished I’d known” and “where can this lead” as well as direct advice through conversations with real people. The app is easy to use as it is modelled on a familiar, Spotify-like interface.

We were selected by Morgan Stanley’s *Skill Connectors* programme in autumn 2022, where we worked with a multi-disciplinary team to frame the business plan, confirm viability and develop the launch strategy. In addition, voxpod was recently selected by Imperial College Business School to be a Strategic Consulting Project for this year’s MBA programme.

We aim to launch the app in the spring of next year!

