

# The Kartik Foundation

**NEWSLETTER** | Spring/Summer 2024

Welcome to our bi-yearly newsletter! As we mark our fourth anniversary, we are thrilled to share that the past few months have been our most successful yet. Our initiatives have reached new heights, thanks to the unwavering support of our dedicated community.

From expanding our outreach programs to adding several new partnering organisations, we have made significant strides in our core mission. We are deeply grateful for your continued support and look forward to building on this momentum together.

## Initiatives

We are currently focused on our four core initiatives:

- ReFAB
- Gradvisor (formerly voxpod)
- WriteSpace
- Access Interns

## News

In addition to our core initiatives, KPMF agreed to a one-off study loan donation initiative. Along with a generous donor, we are contributing to the first year of medical study for a young man, who would not be able to attend Oxford College without the loan. We look forward to seeing the positive impact of this donation on his academic and professional journey.

## Well-wishers

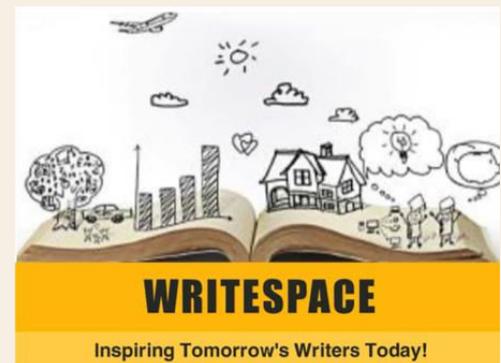
KPMF sends a huge thank you to Rajeev Khanolkar for his generous donation as well as providing the Gradvisor initiative with cybersecurity services *pro bono*. With SecurView's client base including Cisco, Verizon, JPMorgan, Bank of America, this is a very significant donation, both in terms of financial contribution as well as first-class credibility.

We also send a very warm thank you to our other *pro bono* contributors: Mukund Deshpande for Gradvisor; Anjana Ahuja & Susannah Hart for WriteSpace. Volunteering their time and experience helped push our initiatives to the next level!



**ReFAB**  
STYLE & SUSTAINABILITY

 gradvisor



**Access Interns**

# The Kartik Foundation

## ReFAB

ReFAB has been actively working towards building sustainable communities through innovative upcycling and educational initiatives. This spring and summer, the team has focused on training to further their mission of promoting upskilling and sustainability.

ReFAB continues to emphasize education and skill development through workshops aimed at both community tailors and students. Over the past months, conducted an intensive training program for up to 11 women from NIWBH. These workshops covered various aspects of upcycling, from understanding fabric waste to mastering advanced tailoring techniques. Participants were trained in fabric manipulation, applique, and creating high-quality lifestyle products from designer waste fabrics, which not only enhanced their skills but also boosted their confidence and creativity.

On the enterprise front, ReFAB's spring - summer collection is currently retailing at the stylish SoLo Craft Fair shop at Elephant and Castle. Our design and production team is now focussing on creating a bespoke capsule collection for the festive season.

ReFAB has been expanding its reach by forging partnerships with colleges, universities, and community organizations. Collaborations are being developed with the Royal College of Art and Morley College in London and the University of Leeds, a premier textile institution in the UK. These collaborations are designed to provide students with hands-on knowledge and opportunities in upcycling textiles but also to connect them with community tailors in their area. ReFAB is also in discussion with Green Grads, a national program that recognises exceptionally innovative sustainability projects created by design students in the UK. Closer to home, ReFAB is also working with the Kensington and Chelsea Social Council to help create local impact within the borough.

Looking ahead, ReFAB plans to increase its focus on education and training while continuing to salvage and upcycle designer fabric, and create capsule collections. The ultimate goal is to build a robust upcycling ecosystem that supports community tailors, educates the next generation of textile students, and promotes sustainable communities.



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## Gradvisor

Formerly called Voxpod, Gradvisor is the career exploration app initiative currently in development by KPMF. It aims to bridge the gap between university and the professional world for recent graduates, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds. This initiative addresses the challenges faced by students in transitioning from study to work, providing much-needed support and guidance.

In collaboration with Imperial College Business School, Gradvisor conducted an EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) study to identify gaps in support for socio-economically disadvantaged students. Conversations with eight UK universities and 40 employers revealed significant disparities in how institutions engage and support these students. The study highlighted the importance of digital tools for mentorship and outreach, forming the foundation for Gradvisor's platform.

This past year, Gradvisor has expanded its reach and impact, helping students build confidence and clarity about their career paths. Gradvisor's collaboration with universities and employers continues to grow, ensuring a broader and more inclusive support network for students.

Gradvisor leverages digital technology to create a supportive space for students to gain career insights directly from early-career professionals. Covering eight sectors and hundreds of job roles, the platform features real-life accounts of professionals' career paths, challenges, and achievements. By connecting students with professionals who share similar backgrounds, Gradvisor aims to prevent self-deselection and enhance student relatability with potential employers.

Gradvisor remains dedicated to fostering social mobility and inclusivity in the workplace. By continuously refining its platform and expanding its network, Gradvisor aims to provide even more opportunities for disadvantaged graduates to succeed in their professional journeys.

For more information, visit [Gradvisor](#) and [The Kartik Foundation](#)



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## WriteSpace

This spring and summer, WriteSpace continues to inspire and empower young writers from diverse backgrounds across London. A joint initiative between The Kartik Foundation and Westminster School's Platform+ programme, WriteSpace offers creative writing workshops to students from state schools and Westminster School, fostering an inclusive and integrated learning experience.

The 2024 WriteSpace programme featured a series of exciting events led by expert hosts in various creative writing disciplines:



20 Jan	2 March	27 April	18 May	15 June 4 July	5 July	21 Sept
Welcome ~ <i>Tushar Prabhu</i> Co-Chair Kartik Foundation	Prose - Fiction ~ <i>Becky Wait</i> Best Fiction Book of the Year The Times, Guardian	Poetry ~ <i>Susannah Hart</i> Winner National Poetry Competition	Journalism ~ <i>Anjana Ahuja</i> Contributing Writer Financial Times	Playwriting ~ <i>Katie Greenall</i> Facilitator National Theatre	Playwriting ~ <i>House of Fire</i> <i>Teulu</i> Winners NT New Views	Graduation ~ to be announced Winners Spark Awards
						

This past year WriteSpace has formed a partnership with the National Theatre (NT) in which the collaboration will bring additional resources and expertise to WriteSpace participants.

As part of this partnership, NT will participate in the WriteSpace day at Westminster School in September 2024 and 2025. Throughout 2024-25 and 2025-26, NT will conduct in-person workshops with teachers and students, provide feedback sessions, arrange theatre attendance, and guide WriteSpace participants through the New Views programme.

The programme culminates on 21 Sept with the announcement of the Spark Awards winners. These awards celebrate outstanding creative writing, with entries up to 2,000 words in written, audio, or video format. Led by Dr. Ankhi Mukherjee, Professor of English and World Literatures at the University of Oxford, the judging panel will select winners to receive cash prizes and books from publishing partner Pushkin Press.

For those interested in hosting a workshop or partnering with WriteSpace, please contact [WriteSpace@kartikfoundation.org](mailto:WriteSpace@kartikfoundation.org) or visit [www.writespace.uk](http://www.writespace.uk)



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## Access Interns

The Access Intern initiative, launched by Variety in collaboration with the Kartik Foundation, aims to support disabled and disadvantaged young people by providing pathways to employment. This initiative helps these young individuals gain new skills, build confidence, and prepare for successful careers through bespoke hands-on experiences in internships and apprenticeship programs.

Access Interns pairs young people with supportive employers and offers interview preparation, mentoring, and job coaching sessions to build their professional profiles.

We are pleased to report significant progress this summer, with six interns placed across various industries. Additionally, three interns have been offered paid internships. Here is a spotlight on some of our current interns and their experiences:

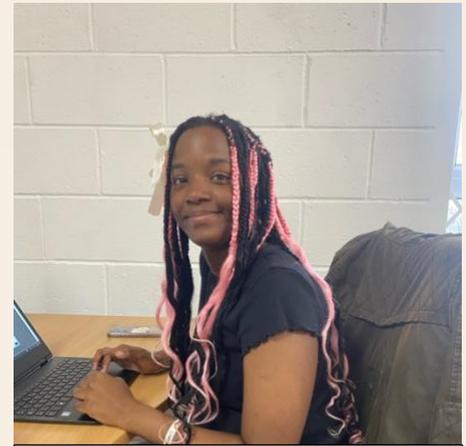
- Lilly, 19: Interning at McBains, Lilly is utilizing her passion for illustration and design in the Masterplanning & Urban Design team.
- Sophia, 17: At ChickenShed Theatre, Sophia is working with children and young people during summer activities programs.
- Chardelle, 18: At Variety, the Children's Charity, Chardelle supports the Access Interns program and other charity areas.
- Zahraa, 18: Working at Pell Frischmann in Social Value, Zahraa is involved in projects aimed at improving community wellbeing and inclusion.
- Stevie, 19: Also at Pell Frischmann, Stevie is enhancing her writing skills in the Bidding Team, having already published her first book.

Besme, who leads Access Interns for both The Kartik Foundation & Variety, had this recently to say about the initiative:

*"The Access Interns Programme helps young people gain valuable work experience that will set them up for adult life. I am thrilled to welcome our second group of interns. They are a fantastic group who I'm sure will really make the most of the programme and I can't wait to hear all about their experience."*

We are also happy to announce a collaboration with The Good Small Business Awards 2024 Sustainability Impact Project, with whom Access Interns will be working with to engage more national businesses for next year, to offer internships to young people with disabilities.

This initiative continues to create immediate and tangible improvements in the lives of young people with disabilities, helping them take the next steps towards a successful and independent future.



Chardelle, currently interning at Variety with Access Interns.



Stevie, currently interning at Pell Frischmann in the bidding team.

**McBains**

**CHICKENSHED**  
THEATRE CHANGING LIVES

 **variety**  
the children's charity

**Pell Frischmann**  
Excellence through innovation



**The Good  
Small Business  
Awards 2024**