

The Kartik Foundation

NEWSLETTER | Autumn/Winter 2024-25



Welcome to our bi-yearly newsletter! As we prepare for our fifth anniversary in 2025, we are very pleased to see all our initiatives continuing to flourish – thanks in no small part to the support and goodwill from all of you.

Our four initiatives to help young and disadvantaged people advance in life continue to grow:

- **ReFAB**
- **gradvisor**
- **WriteSpace**
- **Access Interns**

We would like to send a special thank-you to all of our pro bono contributors and advisors, whose help has been invaluable in driving all of our initiatives forward: Anjana Ahuja, Soumia Arif, Clare Carolan, Vishal Dalal, Luke Davis, John Evans, Adam Freudenheim, Federico Gaggio, Manish Gajria, Stephen Grey, Solly Hardwick, Susannah Hart, Inbali Iseries, Srikanth Iyengar, Warsha Kale, Gemma Kenyon, Jenny Kleeman, Sayce Holmes-Lewis, Edward Marsh, Tesula Mohindra, Sam Newhouse, Shirang Raddi, Naresh Ramchandani, Melanie Richards, Jo Rayner-Cook, Paul Schoonenberg, John Williams and Julia Yates.

ReFAB
STUDIO

 **gradvisor**



Access Interns



In early 2024, WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme) shared a shocking statistic in its Textiles Market Situation report: an estimated 700,000 tonnes of textile waste from interiors enters UK landfill annually. Of this, a quarter is believed to be unused. This alarming figure underscores the importance of ReFAB's pioneering mission of upcycling and upskilling.

Through the autumn and winter, ReFAB has remained focused on training students and community tailors, promoting green skills, and reducing textile waste by upcycling designer remnants from the interiors industry.



In September and October, we presented ReFAB to textile design students at the Royal College of Art (RCA). This engagement has led to an inspiring collaboration with RCA student Amy Chen, who created innovative artworks using our fabric remnants. Additionally, we hosted coffee mornings for RCA students, providing a space to brainstorm new ways to transform textile waste into valuable products.

In November, ReFAB Studio headlined *Common Threads*, a 10-day exhibition and event at the London College of Fashion (LCF) at the University of the Arts London. We participated in a panel discussion on circular economy and led a sold-out workshop for students and local community tailors. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and we look forward to delivering more workshops at LCF.

In tandem, we hosted a studio celebration and a special sale to thank friends and supporters, showcase our latest creations and discuss future collaborations. This evening also marked a significant milestone: salvaging over 1,000 kilograms of designer textiles. The event was filled with warmth and reinforced our mission to "find meaning and delight in the age of waste."



That month we also hosted our first Round Table, bringing together eleven exceptional sustainability leaders in textile design, interior design, fashion, education and upcycling. The group shared valuable insights during a productive and enjoyable session and we look forward to collaborating again with these experts in late 2025.



The Round Table paved the way for a collaboration with Fashion Enter, who hosted a pop-up sale throughout the festive season. A curated selection of our bespoke lifestyle pieces will remain on display at Fashion Enter's Fonthill Road shop until January 2025.

We ended the year by leading a workshop for six tutors at Morley College, each specialising in different textile disciplines but united by a shared passion for sustainability. Looking ahead, we will work with these tutors to deliver panel discussions and workshops for their students.

ReFAB Studio has also expanded outreach to community organisations. We are developing upcycling collaborations and fundraising partnerships with W11, Making for Change and Fashion Enter – all of which are set to launch in mid 2025.

As we look to the future, ReFAB Studio plans to increase its focus on education and training, while continuing to salvage and upcycle designer fabrics to create capsule collections. Our broader goal is to build a robust upcycling ecosystem that supports community tailors, designers, and textile students, while championing circular economies and green skills.

For more information on any of our activities please mail us at hello@refabstudio.org





gradvisor has made strong progress over 2024, gathering 4,000+ career insights from young professionals. By curating these authentic, peer perspectives on career roles and application processes, we can help diverse students from under-represented backgrounds to enter the world of work with greater assurance and success.

This spring, we're excited to launch the *gradvisor Ambassador Programme*, which recruits students at target universities to connect with alumni networks and elicit career insights. We hope the subsequent ripple effect will dramatically expand outreach and help achieve our overall goal of 10,000 insights on the platform.





National Theatre



WriteSpace continued to inspire and empower young writers from diverse backgrounds across London. Started as a joint venture with Westminster School's Platform+ initiative, WriteSpace featured a series of workshops led by experts in various creative disciplines:

20 Jan	2 March	27 April	18 May	15 June	5 July	21 Sept
Welcome	Prose - Fiction	Poetry	Journalism	Playwriting	Playwriting	Graduation
Tushar Prabhu Co-Chair Kartik Foundation	Becky Wait Best Fiction Book of the Year The Times, Guardian	Susannah Hart Winner National Poetry Competition	Anjana Ahuja Contributing Writer Financial Times	Katie Greenall Facilitator National Theatre	House of Fire Teulu Winners NT New Views	Juliet Gilkes Romero Writer in Residence National Theatre

WriteSpace also formed a partnership in 2024 with the National Theatre to introduce creative playwriting through workshops as well as curated visits to see productions written by both professionals and teenage authors.

The programme culminated in an uplifting, emotional graduation event at Westminster. Celebrated writer and former BBC journalist Juliet Gilkes Romero gave an inspiring speech describing her career and its life lessons, after which Dr. Ankhi Mukherjee, professor of World Literature in Wadham College at Oxford University, presented prizes sponsored by the Pushkin Press to the winners of the 2024 Spark Awards.



The Spark Awards are inspired by the story *Sparky the Dragon*, written by Kartik Prabhu when he was 6 years old. His school teacher shared it with the children's Laureate Sir Quentin Blake and this led to many years of friendship as well as this beautiful illustration by Sir Quentin for the story.

Get in touch

If you would like to host a workshop or partner with us, please contact us
WriteSpace@kartikfoundation.org

Learn more: www.kartikfoundation.org | www.writespace.uk
<https://westminsterplatform.org.uk/partnerships/westminster-platform/platform-plus>



Access Interns



Access Interns has been launched in collaboration with Variety the Children's Charity to support disabled, disadvantaged young people to explore pathways to employment. This initiative helps these young individuals gain new skills, build confidence and prepare for 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: 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 and 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 this wonderful 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, with whom *Access Interns* will be working in 2025 to engage more national businesses 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.

