

# INDEPENDENT ACADEMIC RESEARCH STUDIES

ANNUAL REPORT 2008-9

COMPANY NO: 5348191 / CHARITY NO: 1124590



**IARS**

Independent Academic Research Studies  
Empowering young people to influence policy and practice

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# ABOUT INDEPENDENT ACADEMIC RESEARCH STUDIES (IARS)

IARS is a **youth-led social policy think-tank** that was set up in 2001 to empower and give voice to young people so that they can influence policy and democratically engage in society as equal citizens. Through volunteering, youth-led work, training, skills-development programmes and research, young people at IARS aim to improve practices that affect them and as role models participate in society and support their peers and youth-led organisations and groups in creating a tolerant and equal society where young people are respected and valued. IARS is unique in its structure and the only youth-led social policy think-tank in the UK. We believe in the value of the youth-led sector, and provide representation of the issues affecting it.

## IARS' VISION OF SOCIETY

**Youth people** living in an inclusive and cohesive society founded upon the 'FRED' human rights principles:  
**Freedom, Respect, Equality and Dignity.**

"Since I've joined IARS I have been enjoying my time meeting interesting young people from whom I learned new ideas. The experience of volunteering and contributing to a Youth Project as well as being a member of the Youth Advisory Group, has equipped me with rich skills and gave me the opportunity to give my opinions on how I feel about policies concerning the youth. It has been a great and rewarding experience."  
(Jabrane, age 23)

## IARS' MISSION

To be a **youth-led** organisation that will empower young people to take leadership and develop ownership over their lives and future, and champion, develop and support their peers and other youth-led groups and organisations to inform criminal justice, human rights and equality matters that affect them. IARS will achieve this through **working with** young people, particularly those from disadvantaged groups, the Third

sector, Government and national, regional and international organisations, carrying out research and by disseminating its findings to decision makers.

## IARS' STRATEGIC AIMS

IARS has identified strategic aims for future activities. These relate to the function and role of IARS as a **youth-led charity** working directly with **young people** and **youth-led organisations**, groups and networks to help them deliver their charitable objects. These strategies help to determine the focus and desired outcomes of all IARS' project activities, and the emphasis of any future plans:

1. Empower and enable **young people and the youth-led sector**, particularly those from disadvantaged groups, to influence, shape and inform policy and practices that affect them.
2. Provide youth-led **policy development, research and voice** to the youth-led sector.
3. Work with government and statutory bodies (regionally, nationally and internationally) to ensure that youth issues and views of **the youth-led sector** are heard.
4. Pilot new ideas in order to demonstrate new youth-led models, opportunities and emerging **good practice** for the benefit of young people and the youth-led sector.
5. Act as a **network** that enables young people and the youth-led sector to communicate with each other, work together and share best practice with the ultimate goal of influencing policy.
6. **Build bridges** between young people from different communities, and encourage them to find out what unites rather than divides them.
7. Engage disadvantaged young people at risk of exclusion into mainstream **educational and skills development** through tailored training and support programmes, provide accreditation options, the work-based IARS Certificate in Youth Policy and Youth Awards.



## IARS' VALUES

IARS is founded upon the four core human rights values that we aim to promote through our work: Freedom - Respect - Equality - Dignity. IARS is youth-led and believes in Youth Empowerment and Youth Leadership.

## IARS' SERVICES

### A UNIQUE MODEL OF FRONTLINE & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

The **end product** of all IARS' frontline services is **informing and influencing policies and practices that involve or affect young people**.

However, before producing and disseminating its evidence-based policy work, a **process of empowerment and skills development** takes place so that young people are enabled to carry out themselves Independent, Academic, Research Studies that will lead to IARS' evidence-based policy work. As a genuine youth-led organisation, it is important that the views of young people are written, disseminated and scrutinised by young people and not their representatives.

### IARS' THREE SERVICE AREAS:

- **a. Frontline (skills development services) working**

**directly with young people** (particularly those who are disadvantaged).

- **b. Infrastructure (research – policy & voice – campaigning) services to the third sector and others** covering government policies that impact on young people and related to human rights, equality, restorative justice and criminal justice. We achieve this through youth-led publications (online library, email bulletins, consultation reports, research papers in academic refereed journals, books, contributions to external publications, conference reports) and at events (consultations, seminars, and conferences).
- **c. Accreditation and progression services** to young volunteers registered with IARS by providing them with the IARS work-based Certificate in Youth Policy (in partnership with London Metropolitan University), Youth Achievement Awards and V Awards, and by enabling those accredited to progress to Level 3 and 4 Education courses.



## DR. THEO GAVRIELIDES: DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Dr. Theo Gavrielides

Just like another celebrity couple, “youth” and “empowerment” have recently attracted unprecedented attention from the media, several politicians, funders, mission-lost organisations and populists who often rush into generalisations about young people whether negative or positive. It is often believed that any media or funders’ attention is a good attention, but I believe the opposite. The same goes for any actions, “words of wisdom” or representation of young people by those who tend to think that they have the authority, the place and the years to do so.

“Youth Empowerment” is about “youth” and “empowerment” and “youth-led” means “led by youth” not adults. This is what makes us different at IARS and the trust that our funders, members and young people have shown us during this year is the best evidence of our genuine youth-led work.

During 2008-9, IARS remained focused on its charitable mission. We provided a unique combination of frontline and infrastructure services to all young people paying particular attention to those who tend to be marginalised or excluded because of their economic status, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity and belief. Through a **process**

**of empowerment and skills development** we enabled over 100 young people to carry out themselves Independent, Academic, Research Studies that led to IARS’ evidence-based policy work.

With the support of our members and funders we exceeded our set targets and established IARS as a unique youth-led social policy think tank. In particular, **V**, the volunteering charity, continues to be one of our main funders. We also received funding from **PLENET** and the **London Empowerment Partnership** as well as **London Councils, GoldStar, Clinks, Peace Alliance and the Equality and Human Rights Commission**. We continue to work with the **National Youth Agency** which also funded us to carry out a small research project.

In January 2009, IARS 5 year Business Plan was launched taking into consideration matters such as growth, consolidation and risk assessment. The new financial year looks very exciting with a turnover of over 250k. We have secured 3 year funding from **London Councils**, 2 years funding from **A Glimmer of Hope**, 5 year funding from **Big Lottery Fund** and 3 year funding from the **European Commission**. IARS has also been approached by **British Council** to help develop a youth-led research network in the Middle East and assist in the delivery of a ground breaking project on Arab identity. I am particularly proud of the establishment of IARS’ own accredited course leading to the Certificate in Youth Policy, delivered in partnership with London Metropolitan University.

IARS is without doubt one of my proudest achievements. Working for two organisations especially in a climate of financial instability and changing political priorities is not easy. Despite the many challenges of 2008-9, the year has been a big success and for that I want to thank my passionate staff team, my dedicated Board of Trustees and our many volunteers and young people. Many thanks to our funders who believe in our risky but genuinely youth-led programmes and our “jazzy” way of working. I look forward to another exciting year.

# ELENA NOEL: CHAIR'S REPORT



Elena Noel

It is hard to believe that a year has passed! For me it has been a thoroughly exhilarating year rich in rewarding experiences which as Chair I have been able to share with the IARS Board of Trustees based in the UK and abroad.

The year began with the Youth into Policy conference which was a great success with over 200 young people attending. Their participation and feedback from the workshops reflected issues that were topical and important to them. I was touched by the passion and conviction in which the young people voiced their views about the importance of having inclusive processes, and the importance of being able to impact upon policy and networking to build sustainable relationships for the future.

This year presented many more opportunities to interact with the IARS team in their new offices and to hear first hand about their many successes and some of the challenges faced in their work, and to be able to offer my support where needed. I am extremely proud of what the IARS team have achieved with the support of the valued work of the dedicated, enthusiastic volunteers who greeted me ever so warmly with their radiant smiles and warm 'hellos' when I met them.

It was a real pleasure supporting the staff team at events which successfully highlighted their work and brought it to new audiences. Such an event was the London Week of Peace in which IARS secured funding to hold the 'The Peace Cafe', at a venue in Camden. It was

an event with a powerful message, with the showing of IARS volunteer Carlene Firmin's DVD of interviews with young people about gang, knife and gun crime and the senseless loss of young lives on Britain's streets –very powerful and moving. I enjoyed watching Theo, Lewis, Alexandria, Ed and Anthony hard at work as a team, and I as Chair had the responsibility handing out the prize to the winner of the Art prize about peace.

It was nice to see teamwork in action, and to see customers at the cafe previously unaware of the work of IARS making enquiries about its work, and expressing an interest in becoming a volunteer. Another highlight was watching Carlene on a panel at the Mayors' Office at the Mayors' Peace Breakfast with others. She made a number of gritty, salient points and her participation was extremely impressive. She had no idea I was in the audience.

All of these activities could not be achieved without the leadership of Theo Gavrielides whose immense support to the team has been tremendous. His incredible passion, vision and relentless energy (and prolific report writing) has unpinned the incredible successes that the IARS team has had. It was clear for all to see that IARS is clearly a truly youth led organisation – one that leads from the front. Where it leads others have followed. The media interest has been awesome.

I remain incredibly proud of the accomplishment of the IARS team and I and the other Trustees will do everything we can to support and encourage the staff team, and to help them to face any challenge that may present itself in the coming year.

## IARS PATRONS



Professor Francesca Klugg



Sir George Newman



Lord Charles Falconer

"IARS brings the human rights framework for young people to life. By enabling young people to lead on their own research projects and by participating in human rights training young people gain a greater appreciation of their rights and capabilities."

**Prof. Francesca Klugg OBE**



# WORK CARRIED OUT IN 2008-9

During the year, IARS activities and services can be broken down into three groups:

## A. Frontline (skills development & empowerment) services to young people:

- **Human Rights Training:** IARS designed a specialised training course for young people (16-25) on human rights. The course is interactive and is based on the underlying values of the Human Rights Act such as dignity, respect, freedom, fairness and equality. The course aims to show the relevance of these values to young people's everyday life, and how they can be enforced through human rights and equality legislation. The course also aims to show to young people from various racial, social, economic and cultural backgrounds what unites rather than divides them. It is provided for free to all young people who become members of IARS.
- **Ethical Fitness Training:** IARS formed partnership with the Institute for Global Ethics to provide training on ethical values and their practical significance when dealing with ethical dilemmas. Training was provided to young people from all backgrounds.
- **Training on research methods, report writing and campaigning:** IARS in partnership with organisations such as the Young Researcher Network provided step by step guidance and face to face training on how to conduct desk research and fieldwork that is robust and academically accepted.
- **High Quality Volunteering Opportunities:** This included placements both within the organisation as well as other equality bodies that partner with IARS.
- **Peer mentoring, leadership and confidence building** through the setting up of project teams and placements in posts of responsibilities such as trusteeships, advisory panels and policy decision making bodies.

## B. Infrastructure (Research, Policy & Voice, Campaigning services) to organisations

### 1. Research: Examples of research projects:

**Addressing homophobic bullying in schools project:** The project aimed to directly empower young people to influence policies and practices in relation to homophobic bullying in schools and other educational institutions. Bodies such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and many Local Authorities in England and Wales have asked for written and oral evidence and feedback from this research project.

**Measuring Young People's legal capability:** A youth led research and policy project exploring the legal capability of young people particularly those from marginalised groups. The project is carried out for PLENET.

**Young People's Hate Crime Project:** A research project led by a group of young volunteers to gain a youth perspective on policies that tackle hate crime. The project was carried out with young people in London, Manchester and Liverpool.

### 2. Policy and Voice: Examples include:

- Maintaining seats on policy and decision making bodies
- Disseminating our youth led policy journal Youth Voice
- Maintaining a free online library with youth led papers
- Holding youth led policy events such as our Youth into Policy conference held in May 2008
- Responding to government consultations and influencing legislation



## C. Accreditation and Progression services

**A. Certificate in Youth Policy:** through London Metropolitan University, IARS is in the process of providing a work-based learning certificate (45 credits at year 1 level) in Youth Policy. The Youth Policy Certificate is structured as: (A) 1 or 2 work-based portfolios equaling 45 credits or (B) 1 taught module (based around study skills and introduction to social sciences) plus 1 larger work based portfolio (30 credits) based on IARS involvement.

**B. Youth Achievement Awards:** The Youth Achievement Awards is a peer education approach to recognising and accrediting young people's achievements. They are designed to encourage young people to take a more active role in the youth work activities that interest them, increase participation and encourage ownership over activities and projects.

### IARS youth-led Publications 2008-9:

- "Restoring Relationships Project: Addressing hate crime through restorative justice", 2008
- "Homophobic Bullying and Human Rights: Shared Values for a shared future" 2008
- "Effective Commissioning to reduce reoffending", 2009
- "Young People's Hate Crime Project", 2009
- "The Human Rights Dimensions of Community Cohesion", 2009
- "Empowering Young London: A youth-led investigation into what works and what doesn't in youth empowerment", 2009
- "Young People's Legal Capability: Empowering those most in need", 2009

### Also, we produced:

- 'Youth into Policy' Event Report, 2008
- London Peace Week Event Report and DVD, 2008
- Lost in Translation: (Mis)understanding youth empowerment event report, 2009

We also produced 4 youth-led policy newsletters. In 2009, IARS also published the first edition of "Youth Voice" its bi-annual youth-led policy journal that provides a platform where young people and youth-led organisations can share their views on policy with key stakeholders.

### Articles on IARS:

- Children and Young People Magazine on IARS RRP project, appeared in May 08
- Children and Young People Now, online article Homophobic Bullying Report appeared August 08
- Searches for IARS on the internet are now returning a large number of results – including people citing our work.

# FUTURE WORK AND FUNDERS

## PLANS FOR 2009 - 2010

During 2009-2010, we will build on our reputation for effective delivery of youth-led services by reaching more young people, youth-led groups and organisations. We will continue to work with others to ensure our mission is delivered. Over the next year, we intend to:

### → Start the following youth-led projects:

- The Big Lottery Fund 5 year funded **London Youth Now Project** that will provide skills and confidence to 500 Londoners to influence youth services and help make the capital a more cohesive and equal place to live.
- The A Glimmer of Hope 2 year funded **Young Justice Champions Project** empowering marginalised young Londoners to influence policies and practices that affect them
- The European Commission 3 year funded **Mediation in Prisons Project** identifying best practices in juvenile institutions that divert from traditional criminal justice methodologies and increase victim confidence
- The London Councils 3 year funded **London Youth Volunteering Project (LYVP): Rising to the 2012 challenge**

→ Continue our V funded 3 year **Youth Empowerment Project** (now in its second year) delivering at least fifty high quality volunteering opportunities per year to young people from marginalised communities.

### → Inform policies and practices affecting young people and the youth-led sector by disseminating youth-led information through:

- Our bi-annual Journal "Youth Voice"
- Two research reports.
- Ten information and consultation events.
- Four policy and consultation papers

### → Represent youth issues, youth groups and youth-led organisations by:

- Sitting on the Guidance Committee of the London Five Borough Alliance Youth Panel
- Sitting on the Public Legal Education Reference Group
- Sitting on the Volunteering sub-group of the London Regional Consortium of ChangeUp
- Sitting on the Transformative Justice Forum
- Sitting on the Crown Prosecution Service Community Involvement Panel.
- Speaking at five external policy events.
- Participating in three governmental consultations.

## INTERNALLY WE WILL:

- Increase our membership.
- Complete development of our database to give us easier access to our membership.
- Increase our annual turnover by 20%
- Update our Policies and Procedures.
- Move into new premises.
- Launch our new youth-led website.
- Re-establish the Youth Advisory Group.
- Acquire the Youth-Mark
- Launch our new youth-led logo and strap line.
- Review our 5 year business plan.
- Establish Board sub-committees (finance, human resources and communications).

## FUNDERS

In 2008 – 2009 our work benefited from funding relationships with:

- London Councils
- V, the volunteering charity
- London Empowerment Partnership
- Goldstar
- Clinks
- Peace Alliance
- Equality and Human Rights Commission
- National Youth Agency
- Advice Now - PleNet





# BOARD AND STAFF MEMBERS

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Elena Noel, Chair
- Dr. Borbala Fellegi, Vice Chair
- Dinendra Haria, Treasurer (appointed 01/06/2008)
- Dr. Prof. John Winterdyk
- Francis Kadaplackal
- Lorna Robins
- Natalie Murr (appointed 12/12/2008)
- Helen Deakin (appointed 03/04/2009)
- Michael Olatunji (appointed 03/04/2009)

## PART-TIME VOLUNTEERS & INTERNS

- |                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1) Joey Ansah              | 16) Diana Medina     |
| 2) Gayatri Bhasin          | 17) Shruti Morzaria  |
| 3) Alex Brown              | 18) Ahmed Munir      |
| 4) Alicia Burnett          | 19) Tahani Mustafa   |
| 5) Jamexis Christian       | 20) Kiran Nihalani   |
| 6) Marta Cooper            | 21) Marian Ogun      |
| 7) Rose Driscoll           | 22) Maria Omara      |
| 8) Alice Dyke              | 23) Mahmed Omer      |
| 9) Jeremy Farr             | 24) Kym Otchere      |
| 10) Josephine Farr         | 25) Sana Rasoul      |
| 11) Mikayla Henry          | 26) Rochelle Sampy   |
| 12) Rebecca Jones          | 27) Eddie Strudwick  |
| 13) Sheetal Kumar          | 28) Chiara Van Gils  |
| 14) Patricia Likolo        | 29) Paris Westfield  |
| 15) Margheurita Malanchini | 30) Hannah Wilkinson |

## STAFF:



Director: Dr. Theo Gavrielides



Programme Director: Mr. Lewis Parle



Senior Project Officer: Rachel Cass



Youth Project Officer:  
Alexandra Burch



Youth Project Officer:  
Alexandra Molano



Administrative Assistant:  
Izabella Szykula



Finance Manager:  
Besa Hasaj

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

I report on the accounts of the Company for the period ended  
31 March 2009:

## RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES AND EXAMINER

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 43 of the 1993 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

## BASIS OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. 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 you as 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 386 of the Companies Act 2006: and
  - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

have 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.

Nicki Deeson ACA  
Charity Business  
Suite 37-40  
Cherry Orchard North  
Kembrey Park  
Swindon SN2 8UH

1st June 2009



# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES AS AT 31 MARCH 2009

		2009	2009	2009	2008
		RESTRICTED	UNRESTRICTED	TOTAL	TOTAL
	Note	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
Incoming resources from generated funds:					
Voluntary Income		62,210	42,100	104,310	42,516
Investment Income			551	551	154
Charitable Activities			-	-	-
Other Incoming Resources		-	2,059	2,059	250
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>62,210</b>	<b>44,710</b>	<b>106,920</b>	<b>42,920</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>					
Charitable Activities		47,869	28,742	76,611	16,845
Cost of generating funds					
Cost of generating voluntary income		6,903	4,676	11,579	-
Governance Costs	8	-	1,998	1,998	-
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	<b>3,6,7</b>	<b>54,772</b>	<b>35,416</b>	<b>90,188</b>	<b>16,845</b>
<b>Net Income/expenditure for the year before transfer</b>		<b>7,438</b>	<b>9,294</b>	<b>16,732</b>	<b>26,075</b>
<b>Transfers to fund fixed assets</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net Movement in funds for the year</b>		<b>7,438</b>	<b>9,294</b>	<b>16,732</b>	<b>26,075</b>
<b>Total Funds Brought Forward</b>		<b>25,934</b>	<b>3,972</b>	<b>29,906</b>	<b>2,144</b>
<b>Prior Year Adjustments</b>			<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,687</b>
<b>Total Funds Carried Forward</b>		<b>33,372</b>	<b>13,266</b>	<b>46,638</b>	<b>29,906</b>

## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2009

	2009	2008	
	£	£	
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
Tangible Assets	405	-	
	405	-	
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Debtors	16,825	-	
Cash and Bank	30,231	29,906	
Creditors: falling due within one year	823	-	
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>46,233</b>	<b>29,906</b>	
<b>Total Assets less Liabilities</b>	<b>46,638</b>	<b>29,906</b>	
<b>INCOME FUNDS</b>			
Restricted	33,372	25,934	
Unrestricted	13,266	3,972	
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>46,638</b>	<b>29,906</b>	



# IARS

Independent Academic Research Studies

Empowering young people to influence policy and practice

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LOTTERY FUNDED



involvedproject



matrix  
chambers

