



Update from the VTCT Foundation

Summer 2024

VTCT Foundation Showcase – 12th July



On Friday 12 July, over 30 Appearance Collective colleagues gathered in central London for the VTCT Foundation's annual grant holder showcase event.

As well as providing an opportunity for charity members and researchers to network, this year's agenda was focused around three themed strands. The event began with a focus on how projects can be successfully dovetailed to complement and enhance NHS provision, there was then a session on some of the research that is being funded by the Foundation and the day finished with presentations on the importance of campaigns and achieving cut-through to raise awareness of appearance-altering conditions and the charities supporting them. Read the full write up of the event [TCT Foundation Showcase – 12th July 2024 | The VTCT Foundation](#)

New 3-Year Strategy for the VTCT Foundation

The Board of the VTCTF have developed a new strategy for the period 2024-7. This has provided additional clarity and direction on the funding priorities of the Foundation, the aim of which is:

“to maximise the impact and reach of the Foundation's grant-giving and develop a lasting legacy for organisations and researchers working in the visible difference sector, which will ultimately have long-lasting benefits for those living with visible differences.”

To achieve this aim, the Foundation will focus on four strategic objectives:

- 1) Service Delivery
- 2) Career Development
- 3) Early Discovery Research Projects
- 4) VTCT Foundation Legacy Project

Read the full [VTCTF Strategy 2024-7](#)

Building a lasting legacy for the VTCT Foundation

One of the VTCTF Board's priorities for the next year is to explore your ideas for the future of the Appearance Collective, in the context of the VTCTF moving into its final legacy phase. The aim is to explore with you the extent of your appetite to continue the AC and if there is sufficient appetite, to develop recommendations for how we might support its sustainability and development to achieve maximum impact for organisations working in the visible difference sector.

The project will commence in September 2024 and will consist of a series of interviews with AC members either as face-to-face visits or online interviews. An interview framework will be developed, interviews will be recorded and thematically analysed. The interviews will explore a range of issues, including:

1. Your ideas for the future of the Appearance Collective.
2. What aspects of continuing the AC are attractive and conversely, which aspects currently work less well
3. Your ideas for how AC members might work more closely together in future in various ways.
4. How you see your own organisation's future over the next 5-10 years; challenges and priorities.
5. Your suggestions for improving access to the outputs from VTCTF funded projects (for example, evidence-based/authoritative information, support and interventions for people with visible differences).

Lizzie will be in touch over the next couple of months to organise visits and online interviews – please do get in touch if you would like to be part of this project. We look forward to delivering this exciting project with your help and to building a lasting legacy for the VTCT Foundation.

Update your details on the VTCTF Website

We have a listing of Appearance Collective charities on our website and it's time to check that we have your correct logo and weblink. Please do let Lizzie know if any changes are needed or if your charity details are not included and you would like them to be.

[Member Directory | The VTCT Foundation](#)

Appearance Matters 10

The VTCT Foundation was excited to attend **AM10** conference in Bristol from 11-13th June, hosted by the Centre for Appearance Research. The conference attracted almost 300 delegates from 13 countries, including charities clinicians, researchers, and students, and showcased 106 talks and 84 poster presentations, alongside special events and opportunities for professional development. The VTCT Foundation were delighted to host an exhibitor's stand at the conference and to support members of the Appearance Collective charities to attend. The VTCT Foundation also sponsored the Student Poster Prize, which was awarded by Grant Manager Lizzie Chambers to PhD student Morgan Zolkwer from the Francis Crick Institute for his research on parents' experiences of their first specialist appointment for their child's Congenital Melanocytic Naevi and Arteriovenous Malformations. View [Morgan's Poster](#).

VTCT FOUNDATION EVENTS

SAVE THE DATE!

Appearance Collective Chairs & CEOs Meeting – 7th November 2024, Toynbee Hall

Focus of the day: Finance & Full Cost Recovery

OTHER NEWS AND RESOURCES

Facial Palsy UK Website for Professionals

Facial Palsy UK's new website for Health Professionals is free for anyone with an NHS email address to access. Once registered, NHS professionals can access:

- Forums – where health professionals working with patients with facial palsy can discuss treatments and procedures
- Articles and Studies – a searchable database of research articles related to facial palsy
- Information – about the causes and effects of facial palsy, investigations, surgical interventions, evidence-based treatments and more.
- Specialist centres – details about multidisciplinary teams dedicated to the care of patients with facial palsy

Please do share this information with your NHS contacts. [Click this link to visit Facial Palsy UK's Health Professionals website](#)

Updates from CAR

Advancing psychological support for ethnic and culturally diverse groups affected by visible difference

The VTCT Foundation awarded a grant to Dr Nicola Stock and Dr Beth Herring for this new research project which will run from January-June 2025. As part of this project, CAR will be interviewing charity members of the Appearance Collective about what support they currently offer to ethnic and culturally diverse groups with a visible difference. They will also conduct a review of current research and policy guidelines in this area. Using this information, CAR will produce a report for the VTCT Foundation and the Appearance Collective outlining shared learnings, recommendations that charities can begin to implement, and next steps to address any gaps, barriers, and resource needs. Interviews with Appearance Collective members will take place in early 2025. If you have not yet signed up and would like to add your charity to the list of interviewees, please contact Nicola2.Stock@uwe.ac.uk. CAR are offering a small donation as a reimbursement for your time. We look forward to seeing the results of this research in due course.

The experiences of LGBTQIA+ adults with visible differences

An exciting new research project at CAR, funded by the VTCT Foundation and commencing in January 2025, will be exploring the experiences and support needs of LGBTQIA+ adults with a visible difference. This project, led by Maia Thornton who will be working with Emma Waite and Fabio Zucchelli, will consist of three phases, including a review of existing research, interviews with LGBTQIA+ adults with visible differences using arts-based methods, and development of support

resources based on this evidence. They will be inviting LGBTQIA+ adults with visible differences to be involved in the project in a variety of roles and will be back in touch with further details once the project has begun. For any questions in the meantime, please contact Maia Thornton at maia.thornton@uwe.ac.uk

A new online resource

The team at CAR have been awarded funding from the University of the West of England (UWE, Bristol) to create a new website which will host the range of resources & interventions they have been developing to support people impacted by visible differences. The website will ensure that these resources are freely and easily available to the Appearance Collective charities. CAR will be working with a small number of charity representatives who will be giving ideas and feedback while the site is being developed. The new site will be 'live' by July 2025.

If you would like to share your news, events or jobs through this bulletin, please do contact me
lizzie.chambers@vtctfoundation.org