ROBERTSON OUTDOOR BURSARY (ROB)

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Registered Charity Number 1156739

1. INTRODUCTION & WELCOME

The Trustees present their Annual Report for the Robertson Outdoor Bursary (ROB) for the year ended 31 December 2025.

In our twelfth year of operations ROB continued to deliver its programme of work and build its partnerships to transform the lives of the people in Tanzania, training another ten awardees to gain their guide licence.

We were happy to continue our partnership with the Exodus Travels Foundation announcing a Phase two of the Mountain Lioness Scholarships which will train a further fifteen women over the next three years and to start planning another 'Becoming Even Better Programme' which is we are currently planning to run in 2027. Places will be offered to previous ROB awardees to enhance their skills. This year we developed a new initiative with our partners Exodus Travels Foundation to offer our women awardees a pre-training summit experience to further support their preparedness for their end of training field exam.

The mountain guide English language programme commissioned in 2024 in collaboration with Exodus Travels Foundation and the International Mountain Explorers Collaborative (IMEC) has been a key focus of our work in 2025. Developing and testing the course curriculum ready for a more extensive roll out in 2026.

Our Christmas fundraising event at Namaste Sport in Chamonix, France, was a great success, and has now become an annual Chamonix tradition with residents and their friends. This year we also received several individual donations, and we again thank our regular donors for their continued support, their constant commitment to what we do really makes a big difference to our awardees in Tanzania.

We continue to receive donations via Easyfundraising a UK based free fundraising platform, enabling us to gain donations from supporters when they shop online. We have seen the number of people supporting us through this platform grow steadily.

Our journey continues and we keep our promise to obtain the maximum benefit from every penny our supporters donate to us.

We thank all who are walking this journey with us.

Yvonne Robertson
Chair and founder of Robertson Outdoor Bursary

'As long as there is a purpose there is no failure' (Swahili proverb)

2. ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2025 we have continued grow and adapt our work. Our key activities have been:

1) Training a total of ten awardees (of which six of these are men funded by individual donations, ROB's regular donors and our other fundraising activities).
2) The continuation of our partnership with the Exodus Travels Foundation announcing phase two of our highly successful Mountain Lioness Project to fund a further fifteen women over three years. We recruited the first four in 2025. All passed their training and are awaiting their guide licences.
3) Planning a further 'Becoming Even Better' advanced guide training programme to be delivered in 2027.
4) Proposing and agreeing a new initiative with Exodus Travels Foundation to give our women awardees a pre-training summit experience to help them prepare for their end of training field exam.
5) Holding the annual Christmas fundraising event hosted by Namaste Sport in Argentière, Chamonix, France.
6) Continuing to receive donations via Easyfundraising, a free fundraising shopping platform. We now have almost 40 people helping us as they shop online.
7) Announcing the new partnership with IMEC in collaboration with Exodus Travels Foundation to commission an English Language Programme for Mountain guides with 90 places available to run in 2025-2026.

2.1 Key Milestones

This year of operation was marked by the following key milestones:

January – March

- Continuation of our partnership working with the Exodus Travels Foundation
- Five awardees (three men and two women) commenced guide training in March

April – September

- Recruitment of a further five awardees for November 2025 start date
- Proposing and agreeing a new initiative with Exodus Travels to give our women awardees a pre-training summit experience to help them prepare for their end of training field exam
- Development of an English Language programme for 90 mountain guides

October – December

- Five awardees (two women and three men) commenced guide training at the College of African Wildlife Management in November. All passed on their first attempt
- Running our first English language classes with our partners.
- Christmas fundraiser in partnership with Namaste Sport, Argentière, Chamonix, France

3. AWARDS & AWARDEES

Guide Training Scholarships

In 2025 we funded a further ten places on guide training (four women and six men) at the College of African Wildlife Management, all of whom successfully completed their training and were awarded their guide licence. We worked in partnership with employers and the college to recruit and select the awardees. We have been regularly updated with the progress of all our awardees throughout their recruitment, training, and as they commence their new guiding careers on Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Meru.

Becoming Even Better

We are planning to run our third Becoming Even Better (BEB) programme in 2027. This four-day training course covers four elements / skill areas that are required whilst guiding clients on Mount Kilimanjaro, building on the basic skills received during the three-week national guide training programme and further developing the knowledge and skills of participants to an advanced level. We offer this additional training to give ROB awardees a competitive advantage in the workplace. We fund this training with our partners Exodus Travels Foundation and individual ROB donations.

4. CORPORATE AND OTHER PARTNERS

Mountain Lioness Phase Two

We value our partnership with the Exodus Travels Foundation, and we were delighted to extend our collaboration with them to agree a phase two of our Mountain Lioness programme.

English Language Programme for Mountain Guides

We were delighted to start working with a non-profit organisation based in the United States of America with a long history of working in Tanzania: the 'International Mountain Explorers Collaborative' (IMEC). Together we have developed and commissioned a new Mountain Guide English Language that will be delivered in 2025 - 2026.

In this, our twelfth year of operations, our relationships with our Tanzanian partners, The College of African Wildlife Management, the Kilimanjaro Responsible Trekking Organisation and local employers, managers and guides, are well established. All continue to be an indispensable source of support and advice for us on how our donors' money can be allocated in the best way to achieve the biggest impact. We made several new contacts through our Guide Training Conference in 2025 which is broadening our relationship with employers, especially with the aim of receiving their nominations for our scholarships.

5. FINANCES

During the year our total fundraising contributions and donations totalled £4099 (inclusive of Gift Aid and Easyfundraising contributions). We awarded grants totalling £3234 to fund places on Guide Licence Training scholarships at the College of African Wildlife Management. Our other expenditure was on website and email hosting which cost £227.

The net surplus for the year of £638 will be carried forward to our 2026 budget.

6. LOOKING FORWARD

The key challenge for us continues to be how to adapt our operations to develop our fundraising opportunities, enabling us to offer new scholorships and support our existing awardees as they start their new careers. This will be a key focus for us in 2026 with the development of the Mountain Guiding English Language programme and the planning to deliver a further 'Becoming Even Better' Programme to our awardees in 2027.

Our core team's commitment is our strongest asset. We thank them for the time and energy they devote to volunteering with us. We will continue to review our ways of working and find new ways to support our volunteers who so generously gift their time to us, and we seek new volunteers to support us with their unique strengths in the future.

Maintaining our profile via our website, social media presence, and our newsletters will help us to continue build on new partnerships and keep our donors, supporters and awardees up to date with the impact of our work.

We hope to be able to continue to grow and will review how we fundraise to finance our work in the future, remaining responsive to the needs of the people we support in Tanzania.

Maintaining our relationships with our Tanzanian partners is a critical focus to ensure that we spend the money our donors have so generously given most effectively. We will continue to strengthen these partnerships and look to build new ones.

In the year ahead we plan to:

- Recruit our next cohorts of awardees to our Guide Licence Training and Phase two Mountain Lioness Scholarships
- Keep updated with the progress of awardees completing their Guide Licence Training
- Develop reports for our partner, the Exodus Travels Foundation, on the progress of the new 'Lionesses'
- Work with our partner the International Mountain Explorers Collaborative (IMEC) to deliver the Mountain Guiding English Language programme
- Maintain our web and social media presence
- Continue with the Easyfundraising platform and grow the number of people who support us by shopping online with this platform

We look forward to a successful 13th year of operations for the Robertson Outdoor Bursary.

7. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Income & Expenditure Account for the Year ended 31 December 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
Incoming Resources		
Regular & Single Donations received	3 035	2 153
Gift Aid	463	256
Other Fundraising activities	585	700
Money Collection fees	-101	-95
	3 982	3 014
Deferred Income - Grant from Exodus Travel		4 000
Easyfundraising Receipts	117	176
Total Funds Raised	4 099	7 190
Resources Expended		
Grants & Scholarships Training	-3 234	-3 324
Tanzania Guides Conference:	0	4 105
Grant from Exodus Travel	0	-4 010
Sale of Second hand Kit	0	-98
		3
BEB Training in Tanzania	0	-3 462
T-Shirts for Team & Attendees	0	-341
Web Hosting, Email Account & Mailbox Costs	-227	-236
Total Costs	-3 461	-2 716
Net Income/Deficit For the Year	£638	-£170

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
Assets		
Cash at Bank	**12 876**	**12 029**
Debtors - Gift Aid	**32**	**14**
Prepayment	**0**	**227**
	£12 908	**£12 270**
Less: Prepaid Donation	**-4 000**	**-4 000**
	£ 8	**£ 8**
Total Assets	**908**	**270**
Represented by:		
Accumulated Funds:		
Balance brought Forward	**8 270**	**8 440**
Net Income/Annual Deficit	**638**	**-170**
Accumulated Funds Carried Forward	**£8 908**	**£8 270**

The Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet were approved by the trustees on 06 October 2025

Yvonne Robertson (Chair & Founding Trustee)

Steve Smith (Treasurer & Trustee)

Sally Batley (Trustee)