UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

# Philanthropy Report 2021/22

# Welcome

2021–22 was a remarkable year for philanthropy at Oxford. Donations to the University amounted to over £249 million, the second largest total received in a single year. This is testament to both the impact that Oxford is making in the world through the delivery of transformational teaching and research, and to the generosity of our donors.

This report features just a few examples of where your support is making a difference across a broad range of areas. From the establishment of the first-ever endowed chair in women's history to vital research being conducted at the Wolfson Centre for the Prevention of Stroke and Dementia, philanthropy is helping to make meaningful improvements to people's lives. The report also includes an interview with our Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dame Louise Richardson, who reflects upon the significance of philanthropy at Oxford during her tenure, and the role of visionary benefactors in helping the University to fulfil its mission.

With bold ambitions to advance research in response to global challenges and to create opportunities for the most brilliant minds to excel, there is much to look forward to as we start a new academic year.

Thank you for your support.

Liesl Elder
*Chief Development Officer*
University of Oxford

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**Discover more about the impact of your support at: www.development.ox.ac.uk/report2021-22**


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**Right, from top:** Professor Brenda Stevenson, Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair of Women's History; Professor Peter Rothwell, Director of the Wolfson Centre for the Prevention of Stroke and Dementia; Dr Paul Collins, the Jaleh Hearn Curator of Ancient Middle East at the Ashmolean Museum; and Bo Hu, Lecturer in Chinese Mandarin

# News highlights

## Improving agricultural sustainability through digital tools

A programme of research to explore the potential for digital tools to reduce the environmental impacts of agriculture has been made possible through a generous donation from the Login5 Foundation. Agriculture is a significant driver of humanity's most pressing environmental problems and finding solutions that can scale up to the world's 570 million farms is a key challenge. Through the development of highly scalable digital tools, like mobile phone applications, millions of farms could be reached with environmental monitoring, benchmarking, advice and incentives.

The project will allow the Oxford Martin School (OMS) and the Department of Biology to expand a data platform called HESTIA, which was developed at the OMS with support from the World Wide Fund for Nature. HESTIA allows environmental impacts to be calculated from farmer data.

By connecting existing digital tools they are using to the HESTIA data platform, farmers can better understand their greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity impacts, water use and other impact indicators, and receive advice on how to improve them. The project will also use field trials in different countries to quantify the effects of these tools on farmer behaviour.

> The global food system must be transformed for the sake of our planet's health as well as our own
>
> Professor E J Milner-Gulland

**Above:** Agricultural landscape in the UK

Professor E J Milner-Gulland, Principal Investigator on the project, said: 'The global food system must be transformed for the sake of our planet's health as well as our own. This project will look at ways to achieve this using a farmer-led approach, by providing farmers worldwide with ways to improve their sustainability.'

## Launch of the Bennett Institute for Applied Data Science

Earlier this year the Bennett Institute for Applied Data Science was launched with a mission to further the use of data, evidence and digital tools in healthcare and policy. Based within the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, the Bennett Institute builds on a foundation of world-leading healthcare data science.

The institute unites a diverse group of academics from a variety of disciplines, such as clinicians, software engineers, policy experts and statisticians. The result is that new tools and methods are being developed to ensure data and evidence can make a real impact by improving the lives of people across the world.

The institute has been made possible thanks to a generous donation from the Peter Bennett Foundation and is led by the inaugural Bennett Professor of Evidence-Based Medicine, Ben Goldacre. In April 2022 Professor Goldacre published a review of the use of health data in England, many of the recommendations of which have now been adopted by the British government within its new data strategy.

Explaining the motivation behind the donation, Peter Bennett said: 'More than ever before, we now have access to vast amounts of data. We have a responsibility to use, analyse, develop and apply this data in an ethical way to promote change for good – with an emphasis on targeting the right kind of growth and achieving levelling up in society. I am deeply passionate about the tools that data science can provide us with to facilitate positive change in a systemic way.'

> More than ever before, we now have access to vast amounts of data. We have a responsibility to use, analyse, develop and apply this data in an ethical way to promote change for good
>
> Peter Bennett

# Harnessing global collaborations to advance pandemic sciences research

Oxford's contribution to tackling COVID-19 has been immense. From the successful development of the Oxford–AstraZeneca vaccine to trialling life-saving drugs, the University has brought its expertise to bear on this devastating global emergency. Donor generosity made a significant impact on Oxford's ability to respond quickly to the virus and, thanks to the ongoing support of visionary benefactors, the University is now working to confront future pandemics.

The Pandemic Sciences Institute, led by Professor Sir Peter Horby, was officially launched on 5 July 2022. Based at Oxford's Old Road Campus, researchers at the institute are exploring collaborative solutions to counter the threat of pandemics. In the past year the University has received vital support for this work through two substantial donations.

A gift of £50 million from the Natasha Poonawalla Foundation, Serum Life Sciences and Cyrus Poonawalla is supporting both an endowed professorship and the Poonawalla Vaccines Research Building, which forms a key part of the institute's infrastructure. The Poonawalla family, owners of the Serum Institute of India, are committed to the development, manufacture and supply of affordable vaccines to low- and middle-income countries. This new facility will focus on vaccinology and enable a rapid expansion of this translational area of research.

The Moh Family Foundation has also made a generous donation to the Pandemic Sciences Institute. Their gift will drive forward several core research strands, provide support for doctoral students and secure the future of a number of academic leadership posts. These include the Professorship of Emerging Infectious Diseases and Global Health, currently held by Professor Horby, and the Professorship of Infectious Disease Epidemiology, currently held by Professor Christophe Fraser.

**Above:** Postgraduate students working at the Jenner Institute

# Furthering our understanding of the history of sexualities

A new post to lead and expand the study and teaching of LGBTQ+ history at Oxford has been created thanks to a £4.9 million gift from Professor Peter Baldwin and Dr Lisbet Rausing, historians and co-founders of the Arcadia Fund. The Jonathan Cooper Chair of the History of Sexualities has been established in the Faculty of History in association with Mansfield College, and is the first fully endowed specialist post of this type in the UK.

The professorship has been named in honour of Jonathan Cooper OBE, a barrister with expertise in international human rights and the role of public law in upholding them, who died suddenly in September 2021. Mr Cooper was an inspiring advocate and activist for LGBTQ+ rights across the globe.

> I am proud that his enduring contribution to the history of LGBTQ+ emancipation will be recognised and celebrated by the post named in his memory
>
> Helen Mountfield KC

Over the last 50 years an increasing awareness of diverse sexualities and genders has been one of the most significant transformations in the discipline of history. LGBTQ+ history has a strong and growing presence in Oxford's curriculum at all levels, and there is a large appetite to study it from graduate and undergraduate students. The Jonathan Cooper Chair will steer the direction of this strand of research and teaching.

Helen Mountfield KC, Principal of Mansfield College, said: 'As an Oxford historian, lawyer and a friend of Jonathan Cooper, I am proud that his enduring contribution to the history of LGBTQ+ emancipation will be recognised and celebrated by the post named in his memory.'

# Providing Oxford's margin of excellence

Professor Dame Louise Richardson in front of the Divinity School

As her seven-year term as Vice-Chancellor comes to an end, Professor Dame Louise Richardson reflects on the substantial difference philanthropy makes to the life and work of the University.

'We often think of philanthropy as something new that's been imposed on us or as a necessary evil occasioned by the times, but nothing could be further from the truth,' says Professor Dame Louise Richardson, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford. 'One has only to look around these fabulous buildings – the Clarendon Building, the Divinity School, so many of the colleges – they were all built because of generous donors and philanthropists. Philanthropy is in our blood.'

Donors have always had a crucial role to play at Oxford and their contributions have only grown in significance under Professor Richardson's leadership. During her tenure as Vice-Chancellor, which began in 2016 and draws to a close at the end of 2022, the University has received a series of landmark gifts, including its largest single donation since the Renaissance. In the 2021/22 academic year more than £249 million was raised in new gifts and pledges, overtaking 2020/21 to become the second most successful year for philanthropy at the University.

'One of the first goals I set myself when I arrived at Oxford was to diversify our sources of revenue,' reflects Professor Richardson. 'We live in a globally competitive environment: we're competing against universities in America, which have far bigger endowments than we have; we're competing against universities in Asia, where governments are investing far more heavily than ours is. There aren't many certainties in the world, but I think one of them is that the public funding of universities, in this country anyway, is only likely to go down. So we have to be creative in devising other ways to fund ourselves.'

For Professor Richardson, growing philanthropic giving has been part of an overall strategy to ensure that, 'having attracted the finest academics and students in the world, Oxford is able to provide the best environment for them to work in.' It sits alongside other key financial decisions she has taken during her tenure: to turn to the capital markets for investment in 2017, with the issuing of a £750 million, 100-year bond (later increased to £1 billion); to forge a landmark partnership with Legal and General in 2019, which will see up to £4 billion invested in the University's estate over ten years; and to increase investment in spinouts, a move that will not only translate Oxford research for the betterment of society, but also generate essential revenue for the University.

As well as working to shore up Oxford's financial footing, another of Professor Richardson's early goals as Vice-Chancellor was to diversify the composition of its student body. Donor-supported access programmes, such as UNIQ, Oxplore and the newly announced Astrophoria Foundation Year, as well as philanthropically funded scholarships and awards, are helping Oxford to make significant progress on this front. Over the previous five years, the proportion of students attending Oxford from state schools rose from 58% to 68%, those identifying as Black and Minority Ethnic rose from 18% to 25%, and those from the most socio-economically disadvantaged areas rose from 11% to 23%.

'Donors have been absolutely extraordinary in their generosity in helping kids from deprived backgrounds and non-traditional backgrounds come to Oxford, and I take enormous pride in the steps that we've taken in my tenure in that regard,' says Professor Richardson. 'We have terrific University-wide programmes like Crankstart and the Reuben Scholarship Programme, but we also have alumni who have wanted to ensure that their own college was at the forefront of this movement. Without a shadow of a doubt, we could not have made these changes without the support of generous donors.'

The generosity of philanthropists has also played a key role in ensuring that Oxford continues to produce world-leading research for the benefit of wider society. In 2021 the University received a £100 million gift from INEOS to establish a new research centre focused on antimicrobial resistance. 'It is a major public health crisis waiting to happen, and unless we intervene it will happen in fairly short order,' says Professor Richardson. INEOS' gift was the second largest given to the University in modern history, following Stephen A Schwarzman's £150 million (later increased to £175 million) donation in 2019. Mr Schwarzman's support is enabling the creation of a new home for the humanities in Oxford – 'an extraordinary gift, and such an exciting project,' the Vice-Chancellor adds.

> Some of my most enjoyable and gratifying relationships have been with people who hitherto haven't really been involved with the University, and who are just attracted by the extraordinary work that our academics do here and want to help out
>
> Professor Dame Louise Richardson

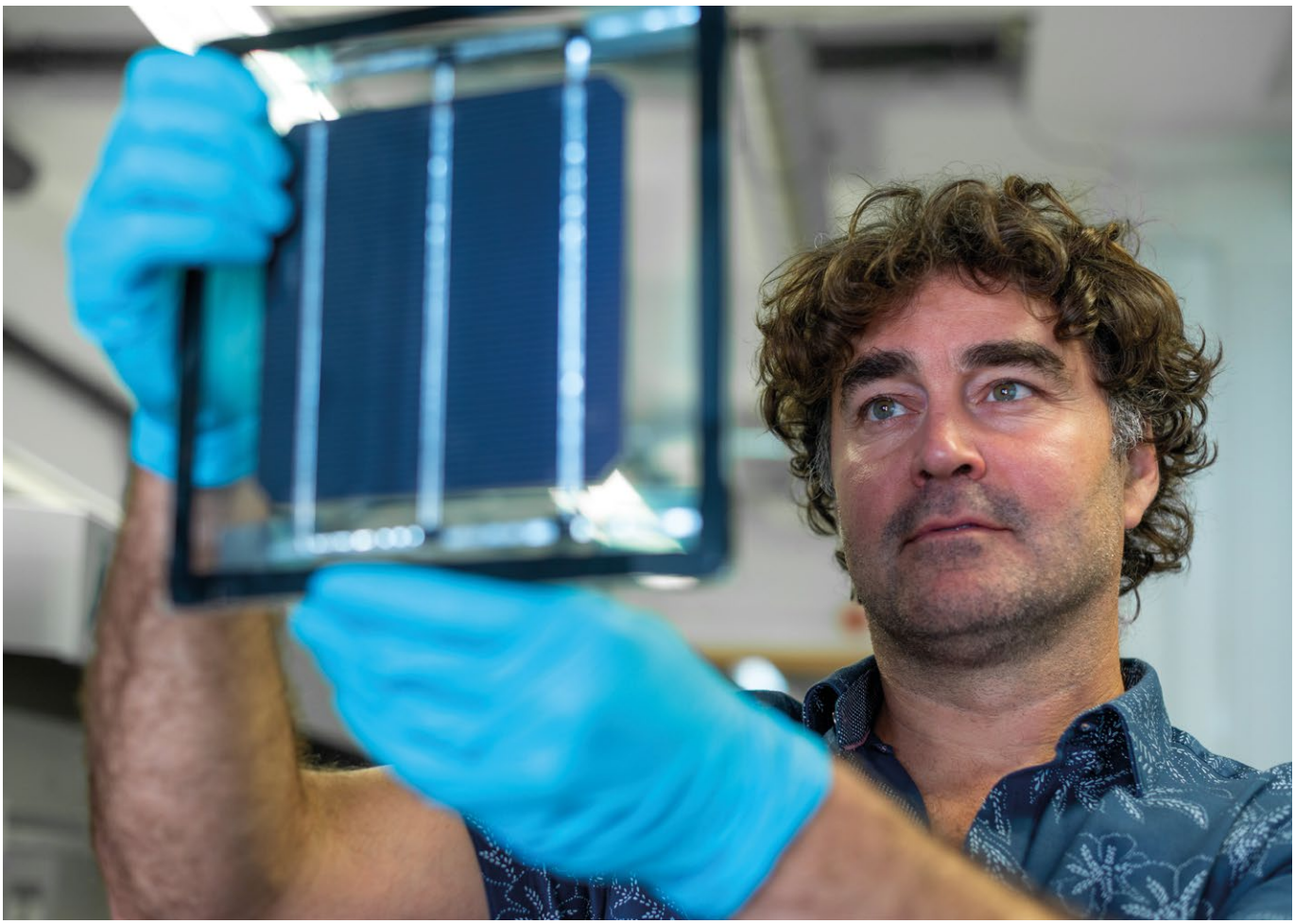
The past couple of years have also seen generous philanthropic support for the University's COVID-19 work, as well as the creation of numerous donor-funded research institutes in fields as varied as nanoscience discovery, applied data science, pandemic sciences, and regenerative and developmental medicine. Despite major global economic uncertainty caused by the pandemic, it is clear that philanthropists are increasingly seeing Oxford as a good place to invest. The reason? 'I think it's relatively simple,' says Professor Richardson. 'It's the calibre of the work that we do here.'

Looking to the future, Professor Richardson believes that donor support will only become more important to Oxford with each passing year. 'We're competing for the top academics, for the top students, and equipment for scientists is very expensive. The kind of education we offer here – the tutorial system – is extremely expensive, which is why so few places in the world actually offer it. And in order to keep it going, we will need philanthropy.'

She singles out two areas of the University's work where future philanthropic investment would be particularly impactful: computer science and climate change research. On the latter, the Vice-Chancellor notes: 'It's a field where we've had some investment but could have a great deal more. Again, another foreseeable major crisis heading our way for which we are not yet prepared. We have introduced a sustainability strategy for the University and that will change our internal behaviour, but it's not going to change the global crisis – it's only research by academics that has any hope of doing that.'

Reflecting on her involvement in philanthropy over the past seven years, Professor Richardson is sanguine. 'I enjoy it immensely,' she says. 'I think it's a huge amount of fun. I really enjoy meeting philanthropists and trying to persuade them of the importance and enduring value of what we do.' With this in mind, her advice for Oxford's next Vice-Chancellor, Professor Irene Tracey, is not entirely surprising: 'Do not see philanthropy as a chore, but one of the most enjoyable aspects of this role.'

# Powering the transition to a clean-energy future



Low-cost, high-efficiency photovoltaic technology being developed in the Department of Physics could hold the key to accelerating the world's shift away from fossil fuels.

Above and opposite:
Professor Henry Snaith in the Clarendon Laboratory

'The prospect is for photovoltaics to produce as much energy as we need,' says Henry Snaith, Binks Professor of Renewable Energy in the Department of Physics. 'There's more than enough sunlight and more than enough space. If we wanted to produce all of our energy from photovoltaics at the current efficiency of modules, we would need only about 2% of our land. And to put that into context, we farm on about 50%.'

Although the market for photovoltaics has expanded rapidly in recent years, global energy generation from solar power is still low, amounting to only 1 to 2% of the total energy used today. Silicon, which is found in virtually all commercial solar cells, is costly and energy intensive to produce, and the resulting panels are limited in how much energy they can harness from the sun. In order to facilitate the required growth of the industry over the next two decades, technological advances are needed to fundamentally improve the efficiency and cost of photovoltaic panels.

'Most of the energy input and the environmental cost of manufacturing solar is the production of the silicon,' says Professor Snaith, whose Photovoltaic and Optoelectronic Device Group is primarily focused on developing the physics and technology behind low-cost photovoltaic concepts. 'It takes about nine months for a standard silicon module to start to produce positive energy, so not years, but there is a measurable environmental impact – particularly at the moment while the energy being used is predominantly coming from fossil fuels. If we can move

to materials that don't require anywhere near the same energy input, that would be a massive saving.'

Professor Snaith is working at the forefront of research into such materials. His recent discovery of extremely efficient thin-film solar cells, made from a crystalline material called perovskite, has reset aspirations within both academic and industrial photovoltaic circles. As well as being easy to source, perovskite is cheap to synthesise: high-quality thin films can be processed from solution at low temperatures, making it compatible with existing manufacturing techniques. 'But the really exciting aspect, both economically and scientifically,' he explains, 'is that we can tune the region of the solar spectrum perovskite absorbs.'

While silicon can only absorb light within a set range of wavelengths, perovskite's structures can be adjusted to allow it to absorb any frequency of visible light. By layering perovskite material on top of silicon, and allowing each layer to absorb a different part of the spectrum, it is possible to significantly increase overall efficiency of the solar cell. Using this technique, Professor Snaith's group has already demonstrated efficiencies very close to 30%, and has a clear roadmap to get up to 40%. With today's commercial technologies hovering at around 20%, this could, over the next ten years, double the efficiency of solar modules.

There are challenges to overcome before such efficiencies can be achieved in a real-world setting, however, and work is continuing at pace to address these. One area of focus is stability: will these materials last for 25 years, and how might they degrade in the field? To test this, the group creates accelerated ageing conditions in the lab using, for example, environmental stress chambers to generate very high-temperature, high-humidity environments. 'Within a relatively short time it is possible to get data that starts to give you confidence about how these modules, devices and materials would survive over their lifetime,' says Professor Snaith.

> Perovskite has the potential to accelerate our path towards producing 100% of our energy by renewable sources, getting us away from carbon-producing technologies entirely
>
> Professor Henry Snaith

The work that he and his group are undertaking at Oxford has been significantly enhanced in recent years through philanthropy. In 2021 a gift from the Binks Trust enabled the establishment of a new senior research post in renewable energy – now held by Professor Snaith – as well as funding a DPhil scholarship and biennial conference. The creation of the academic post in particular has 'helped to create greater credibility' around Oxford's work in this area, he says. 'It is a show of commitment for the long-term growth of renewable energy research in physics, and that's something that definitely helps in terms of raising more funds from research grants.'

Equally crucial is the support received, both from the Binks Trust and other donors, including alumnus Nick Greenwood, for graduate students. Donor-funded scholarships have helped to create a 'great consistency' in Oxford's photovoltaic research, says Professor Snaith. 'For a start, if we didn't have any graduate students, we'd have no later-stage researchers. They undertake half the work, and they're not just being trained, they're being creative, they're guiding experiments. We can have everything we need in terms of equipment and facilities, but if we can't fund the best people to come and work with us then our output won't be anywhere near as good.'

Looking to the future, Professor Snaith believes that perovskite has the potential to rapidly accelerate the world's transition from fossil fuels to clean, renewable forms of energy. The technology is already being commercialised by a number of spinout companies, including Oxford PV, which was co-founded by Professor Snaith in 2010. The company's first perovskite-on-silicon tandem solar cells are expected to hit the market next year.

Back in the university lab, Professor Snaith is laser focused on pushing forward his research, and is already working on the next technology up (two layers of perovskite on silicon), as well as ways to replace the silicon in solar cells entirely. His group is also actively investigating other families of materials. 'There may be other compounds that have got better functionality than even perovskite,' he says, 'so we are searching for those too.'

Ensuring cohesive activity across Oxford will be key to driving this work forward. There are a number of research groups based across the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division that work on related areas, and Professor Snaith's hope is to enable greater collaboration across disciplines. This, he says, would undoubtedly be aided by further investment from donors: 'we could really grow the coherence of solar research at Oxford and massively improve our impact going forward – philanthropic support can ensure that we stay at the top and don't rest on our laurels.'

> I can't labour how great it is to have philanthropic support for students because it's a real gap in traditional funding
>
> Professor Henry Snaith

**This page and opposite:**
Professor Brenda Stevenson at St John's College

# Leading the way in the field of women's history

The Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair of Women's History has been established at Oxford, representing a significant step forward in this area of study at the University and across the globe.

The discipline of women's history at the University of Oxford is rooted in the feminist mobilisation of the 1960s and 1970s. During this period, author and Oxford alumna Sheila Rowbotham expressed her frustration at seeing no mention of women in the history that she studied. So, she wrote a book in 1973 entitled: *Hidden from history: 300 years of women's oppression and the fight against it*. Since that time the field of women's history has flourished at Oxford, culminating most recently in the establishment of the Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair of Women's History, made possible with the support of donors.

The first incumbent of this post, Professor Brenda Stevenson, is very clear on the importance, the relevance and the lasting legacy of her new role. 'I've been told that it is the first actual chair of women's history known to exist in the world,' says Professor Stevenson. 'I thought they were mistaken. I began looking around and I didn't find another one. I know many historians of women who have endowed chairs, but this was actually named for women's history, which is just incredible.

'It means that women's history is here to stay, not just at the University of Oxford, but globally. Knowing that Oxford has a chair of women's history brings a lot of recognition and prestige to the subject for young people who are deciding what they want their careers to be like. And it is named for Hillary Rodham Clinton, one of the most impactful women alive in the world today.'

History has typically been seen through the male lens because, in most cultures, men have defined what the world is – from society and intellect to economy and government. However, half of the world's population is female. Sharing their history should not be a radical act, but one that recognises women as the agents of change that they have always been.

'Women's history really began somewhat traditionally, with people looking at the most important women in our society, for example heads of state, monarchs, the extremely wealthy or what we defined as "elite" in some way,' says Professor Stevenson. 'And, then, as part of social history in general, we began to look at women as we did men and their roles within our societies. Now we've also come to look at other questions: the definition of a woman. Is it a biological designation? Is it something that is cultivated within our society, with people who we designate as "girls" at birth socialised within their particular culture? It's an incredible adventure to think of any aspect of life as we know it and investigate it from a perspective of womanhood or femaleness – even that category itself is something that we can investigate and to which we can bring clarity.'

In terms of historical sources, Professor Stevenson strongly advocates returning to "traditional" archival sources to discover suppressed voices – re-reading and reinterpreting documents to find women who may be hidden there. She explains: 'If you say, for example, 52 men did something, but you know there were 100 people in the room, does that mean 48 women were there? We have to actively build archives that also include "marginalised" peoples. We need to properly use material cultural items that we find in museums, at archaeological sites, in landscapes and in architecture that can tell us a great deal about the lives of people that we don't necessarily think about. Songs, jokes, riddles, folklore, stories of the past, ideas about space and science… there's so much to be found because everything that is recorded about human life tells us something about people of a particular time or place.'

> "It's definitely an exciting time. Whenever you work on people who have been ignored in the past – intellectually, academically, ignored by larger society – that's quite incredible"
>
> Professor Brenda Stevenson

For many generations, women of all ages, girls, and those who identify as female have lived – and continue to live – in societies that are largely patriarchal. There are lessons to be learnt today from the amplification of women's voices in history, not least how people not only survived, but came to carve out fulfilling lives and made valuable contributions. 'We can learn a great deal from simply saying what people have done at the edges of society to make their lives pleasant, important and significant,' says Professor Stevenson. 'And the remedies that women have created for themselves, their families and their communities are remedies that we can use to help us with problems that we have today: being mediators in disputes and using creativity to solve problems, whether small problems within one's family, or large problems within wider society.'

A key priority for the Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair of Women's History now is to create momentum, building on the considerable legacy in this field at Oxford. Already there have been twice as many applications for the Master's in Women's, Gender and Queer History this year than in 2020/21, the course's inaugural year. Fresh, new programming includes a luncheon series through the Centre for Gender, Identity and Subjectivity, which was set up in the Faculty of History in 2014, as well as workshops, talks and events in partnership with other areas of the University and internationally. 'We're bringing more people to the intellectual landscape of Oxford,' says Professor Stevenson, 'sharing their ideas and their work with people. We're building up the synergetic forces, because we want to establish programming that really is going to have impact on women, girls and older women across the globe.'

# Advancing research to prevent stroke and dementia

**Researchers at the Wolfson Centre for the Prevention of Stroke and Dementia are pooling their resources and expertise to combat these devastating disorders.**

The statistics on stroke and dementia make for sobering reading: in the UK alone 100,000 people have a stroke each year, there are 1.3 million stroke survivors and about 850,000 people are living with dementia. As the two most common disabling neurological disorders, they share similar risk factors and frequently co-exist, each increasing the risk of the other – having a stroke brings forward the onset of dementia by about ten years.

Professor Peter Rothwell, Action Research Professor of Neurology in the Nuffield Department of Clinical Neurosciences, is the Founding Director of the Wolfson Centre, a new purpose-built facility at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford. The centre opened in March 2020, thanks in large part to grants of £4 million from the Wolfson Foundation and £3.5 million from the Wellcome Trust. It builds on the work of the Stroke Prevention Research Unit, which Professor Rothwell set up in 2000, and which was awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize in 2014 in recognition of the impact of its research on patient care.

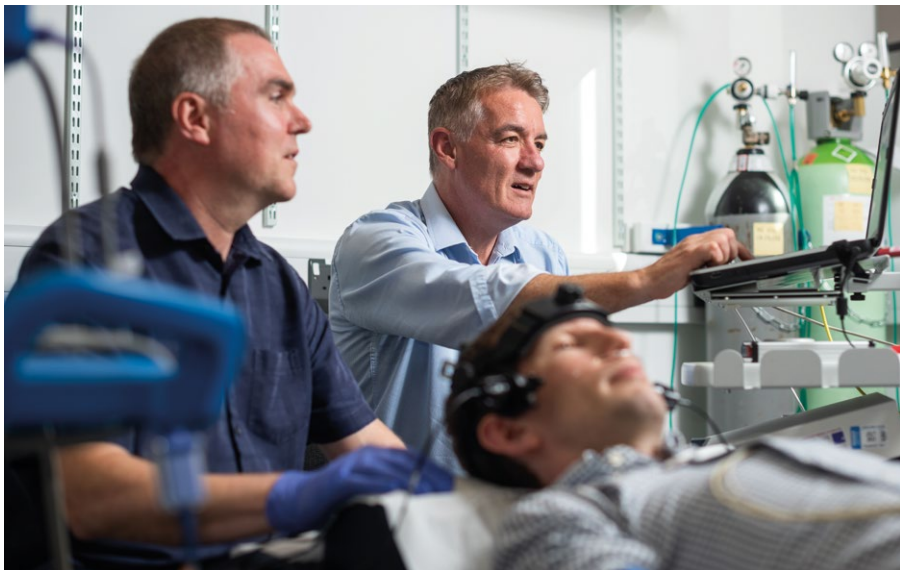
Professor Rothwell believes the very existence of this dedicated research centre – which can accommodate up to 70 researchers with expertise in everything from epidemiology to genetics – is a big step forward for the field in the UK, particularly in terms of how stroke is perceived by potential future researchers.

'Stroke was traditionally rather neglected both by clinicians and researchers,' he says. 'Clinicians had an almost nihilistic attitude to it, partly because of a lack of effective treatments until recently, but having a dedicated research centre in Oxford helps to raise the profile of stroke and vascular dementia.'

The timing is also good because of recent advances in the treatment of stroke, which have necessitated more urgent and detailed investigation of patients in routine practice. However, there is still a great deal of work to do, partly a legacy of a longstanding lack of research funding for stroke. Professor Rothwell cites the enormous disparity between funding for cancer and heart disease versus stroke – a reasonable comparison, he believes, because the three conditions are equally common and equally expensive. 'Around the year 2000, for example, there was about £400 million a year spent by UK cancer charities on cancer research and about £1.5 million spent by stroke charities on stroke research.' This disparity in charitable funding meant there were far fewer stroke researchers who could then submit bids to governmental funders, and so they also neglected stroke.

> "I think stroke is probably 90% preventable with the drugs and the other treatments we've got already. We just need to work out how best to use them and which patients are going to benefit most"
>
> Professor Peter Rothwell

'The situation is a little better now, but these disparities cast a long shadow,' says Professor Rothwell. 'A lot of the very simple research that could have been done 50 years ago still needs to be done, on such things as the mechanism whereby high blood pressure causes stroke. Long-term average blood pressure is an important risk factor, but short-term




peaks can also trigger stroke. The highest peaks tend to occur in the morning, when the risk of stroke is also greatest, and so we are working on simple ways to monitor and stabilise blood pressure and on trials to determine which types of blood pressure-lowering tablets are best taken in the morning or the evening. There's also so much that we don't know about other drugs, including aspirin, which is usually prescribed life-long after stroke. We have shown that aspirin is highly effective at preventing early recurrent strokes, but there are some signals of adverse effects in the longer term on other complications of stroke.'

The main focus for the centre is, of course, prevention: developing better tools to identify which people are at risk of stroke or dementia and the interventions that are most likely to prevent that. The research is therefore firmly embedded in clinical practice. Professor Rothwell explains: 'In one of the studies we run, called the Oxford Vascular Study, we try to recruit all patients with stroke and other acute vascular events in a population of just under 100,000 people registered with nine general practices in Oxfordshire. We provide a dedicated clinical service for GPs to refer to, we see patients urgently, and we do all of the investigations that they'd normally get on the NHS, as well as additional tests that allow us to treat patients more effectively and to collect data for research.'

> We are the only purpose-built centre in the world dedicated to doing the clinical research needed to prevent stroke and vascular dementia
>
> Professor Peter Rothwell

Above and opposite:
Professor Peter Rothwell outside the Wolfson Centre and observing in a clinical setting

The economic argument for the centre is strong and is best exemplified by the EXPRESS Study, a previous project that showed how effective urgent investigation and treatment were in preventing major stroke in patients who had transient stroke-like 'warning' symptoms. 'We reduced the early risk of major stroke by 80% just by seeing patients urgently and using existing treatments more effectively,' says Professor Rothwell. 'Most medical interventions increase costs, but this one actually saved money, because the cost of caring for the strokes prevented would have been greater than the cost of providing the service.' The model was subsequently adopted across the UK as part of the National Stroke Strategy and is estimated to prevent about 10,000 strokes and save the NHS around £200 million per year.

Clinically embedded research is clearly key to this kind of success and there are numerous other examples at the centre. Among them is Professor Sarah Pendlebury's research on confusion and dementia in acute medical admissions under her clinical care. There are also studies of home telemetric blood pressure monitoring, where people who have had a recent stroke measure their blood pressure daily at home and researchers monitor the readings in order to prescribe the right doses and combinations of tablets as quickly as possible. Patients receive better care and researchers can assess whether the approach is cost-effective in preventing stroke.

Oxford is an exceptional location for the centre because of the critical mass of collaborative researchers. 'The new building has allowed us to bring together about a quarter of all clinical stroke researchers in the UK under the one roof,' says Professor Rothwell. 'It allows collaborations to develop and it provides the space for our younger researchers to build their own teams and to pursue the new ideas that will make a difference in the future.'

# Developing the next generation of African leaders

**Standard Bank Africa Chairman's Scholarships are helping talented graduate students develop the skills they need to contribute meaningfully to Africa's future.**

Oil is big business in Nigeria, one of the largest producers of the commodity in Africa. According to intergovernmental organisation OPEC, the country had more than 37 billion barrels of proven crude oil reserves in 2021, with the petroleum industry accounting for roughly 88% of Nigeria's total export value. But despite the enormous sums of money being generated by the industry, for many, oil has been more of a curse than a blessing. In the Niger Delta, where nearly all extraction takes place, widespread oil contamination has caused extensive environmental damage as well as significant harm to local communities.

'Nigeria is a country that really depends on crude oil extraction,' says energy and finance lawyer Crystal Chika Okwurionu. 'I grew up in southern Nigeria, which is where these activities happen, and I started to see the impact they were having on the environment around me. I knew that there was a commercial element, in the sense that the government relies a lot on oil export proceeds, but growing up in those surroundings, I began to think: is there a better way to do this? Why do we have to let this happen?'

Crystal's early experiences led her to study law at university, where she wrote her undergraduate thesis on environmental law – 'basically, how it is a violation of human rights when companies do these sorts of activities

and don't fear the consequences,' she says. Crystal graduated second in her departmental cohort and went on to join a leading Nigerian law firm, advising multilateral agencies and syndicates of lenders on landmark energy projects. This included acting as a legal consultant on several World Bank-funded renewable energy projects in Nigeria and Ghana.

'The overarching theme for me was that whatever I did, it needed to have impact beyond the boardroom or my computer, where I was working and putting together advice,' Crystal explains. In order to maximise this impact, she decided to return to university and undertake further study, hoping particularly to boost her knowledge of finance – a subject in which she had no formal training. Crystal identified Oxford's MSc in Law and Finance as the course to pursue, and was thrilled to be accepted into the 2021/22 student cohort.

Taught jointly by the Faculty of Law and the Saïd Business School, the MSc is designed to give students with a prior background in law the chance to develop an advanced interdisciplinary understanding of relevant economic and financial contexts. 'I wanted a degree that would give me a grounding in core financial components,' explains Crystal. 'When you're working with a company or a state government, it's the commercial team who are eventually going to translate your work into financial policy, so the idea that you're able to really understand what it is they're saying is a good value-add.'

To enhance her financial knowledge even further, Crystal also joined the Oxford Saïd Finance Lab, which offers students the opportunity to understand key theoretical concepts, processes, instruments and models that are required to be successful in financial services. The programme invites leading banks and firms to present case studies to students – an approach that Crystal found invaluable: 'It really puts the things you're learning into practice. It lets you leave the concepts behind and understand how it works in reality.'

Completing a joint degree was both challenging and rewarding for Crystal. She describes it as 'like being part of two homes'; it was demanding, but she felt surrounded at all times by an extremely supportive community. 'Because the class is really small you develop a family-like bond with your classmates, and there's a certain level of camaraderie that tends to form,' she explains. 'We also appreciate our differences because we're really very diverse – we're from six continents – and in fact that brings us together, because we're all alone here.'

Crystal has been supported throughout her studies by a Standard Bank Africa Chairman's Scholarship. Established at Oxford in 2015, the scholarship programme enables African scholars to study at postgraduate level, covering students' full course fees as well as living, accommodation, travel and visa costs. It is part of the Africa Oxford Initiative and funded by Standard Bank, which, through its generous gift, aims to create a network of African leaders who will influence and champion the continent's development and sustainability.

> The scholarship didn't just pay my fees; it came with a community that I could rely on when I needed to. And I did need them sometimes!
>
> Crystal Chika Okwurionu

'I think the Standard Bank Chairman's Scholarship has really helped me to focus on my studies and not have to worry about how the funding for the programme would be sorted,' explains Crystal. 'And beyond that, what I've really enjoyed about the scholarship is that it is housed in the Africa Oxford Initiative and they have been a really welcoming family for me. When I arrived here, it felt good to have people who looked like me and people who really understood the fact that I was in a new country, trying to find my bearings. I could lean on them when I was going through imposter syndrome; they were just there to lend a helping hand and I really appreciated that.'

As she approaches the end of her course, Crystal is exploring opportunities for her next career step. She is hoping to find a job at a London-based law firm with a significant focus on Africa, where she can continue her work in clean energy project finance. Her longer-term career plan, however, is to join a multilateral agency that provides financial aid to developing nations – 'somewhere I can work beyond borders and in countries where I can have an even greater impact,' she says.

Reflecting on her time at the University, Crystal is acutely aware of how it has changed her, describing the experience as 'intense, but invaluable.' She continues: 'If I look back, I'm not the same person now as I was nine months ago. It was a really challenging time for me but ultimately, I wouldn't trade it for anything. It has been an enriching experience and I'm just really grateful to Standard Bank for helping to make it happen.'

> The fact that the scholarship is focused on Africa and people doing Africa work was really important for me. It felt good to have that recognition
>
> Crystal Chika Okwurionu

**Below and opposite:**
Crystal Chika Okwurionu at the Saïd Business School

# Bringing the ancient Middle East to life

> It's extraordinary to have material to be able to tell these fundamental stories of humanity
>
> Dr Paul Collins

**Through imaginative storytelling and innovative design, the Ashmolean Museum's new Ancient Middle East Gallery creatively connects the ancient past to the present day.**

'The ancient Middle East is incredibly complex in its own right,' says Dr Paul Collins, who held the Jaleh Hearn Curatorship of Ancient Middle East at the Ashmolean Museum until October 2022. 'There were multiple languages and multiple peoples, different traditions and religions. Trying to reveal that to the uninitiated… it's difficult enough for the initiated. The uninitiated just couldn't find a way in.'

Dr Collins is reflecting on the museum's former Ancient Near East Gallery, which had been installed as part of the major redevelopment of the museum in 2009. Although the location was excellent (ground floor, just inside the entrance), the space was not without challenges: low ceilings, poor lighting, little for visitors to interact with, and bookended by two enormous lightwells. 'It became a passage from one brightly lit area to another,' he says.

Individually, these issues might have been manageable, but when combined, they helped to create a space that, as Dr Collins puts it, 'just couldn't do what it needed to.' Research revealed that people were commonly spending as little as 30 seconds looking at the displays – a particularly unfortunate finding given that the museum is one of the few places in the world where it is possible to trace, through objects, the stories of many of the ancient societies and cultures of the Middle East.

The Ancient Near East Gallery might have remained like this for many more years had it not been for the Sarikhani family, whose generosity enabled a major redesign of the displays last year. With their support the gallery has been transformed into one that finally does justice to the incredible artefacts it showcases, and enables visitors to understand the lives – and deaths – of those who owned them.

'I wanted every case to start with the idea that these objects were created by humans living in a real world, not isolated for artistic appreciation, but actually fundamental to their lives,' explains Dr Collins. 'It's no longer about saying: you're looking at a pot from this date. It's now about saying: these objects were part of these people's lives, this is what they did with them, this is how they thought about them… little windows, we hope, into those worlds.'

For Dr Collins, the Sarikhani family's gift was an opportunity to totally rethink the rules of permanent exhibition design. 'All of the exciting things that happen in museums around display, interpretation, design and engagement are very often with temporary displays,' he says. 'I wanted to learn from those experiences and find a way in which permanent galleries could be as exciting, dynamic and reflective as the temporary ones.'

The new displays focus on the peoples of ancient Iran, Iraq and the Levant, drawing on the latest scholarship, as well as innovative approaches to museum design and audience engagement, to tell their stories. Some of the changes that have been made to the space are instantly noticeable: gone are the traditional 'tombstone' labels listing object type, date and accession number, and in their place now sit narratives guiding visitors through some of the most fundamental developments in human history, from the origins of writing to the growth of organised states. New interactives have also been installed, giving visitors the opportunity to roll a cylinder seal or have a go at writing in cuneiform.

There are other, more subtle, changes too: magnetic labels and mounts have been used throughout, ensuring the displays can be easily updated to respond to changes in contemporary thinking or current events. And some are still being planned: while the labels in the gallery appear in English, in time they will also be made available in languages of the Middle East through visitors' smartphones.

To guide this transformation, Dr Collins drew on the expertise of colleagues around the world, as well as of those at the Ashmolean and across the wider University. He also spoke with local people. 'When it became more than just conversations and thinking, then we could engage with our audiences and actually ask them what they wanted,' he says. One small but significant change to result from this approach was a new name: the Ancient Middle East Gallery – 'much more meaningful to a contemporary audience,' he adds.

> Every story we tell in the gallery starts with an image of a human
>
> Dr Paul Collins

This direct audience engagement continues today, with visitors invited to respond to the displays and stories told through them. Some of the feedback received has already led to changes, particularly in the 'collecting and colonialism' case, which explains how objects came to be in the museum. 'We hadn't got some of the language quite right,' says Dr Collins. 'It hadn't been sufficiently critical in areas and so we've changed it, and that conversation we hope will continue.'

Equally crucial in the redesign has been the opportunity to provide visitors with a place to consider the relevance of the ancient Middle East for the modern world. There is now a dedicated space in the gallery for co-curated displays, which will enable the museum to highlight not only the latest research from Oxford, but also reflections on the importance of heritage within the modern societies of the Middle East. The museum's ongoing engagement work with local people, including those in the Kurdish community, will feed directly into this.

For Dr Collins, the transformation of the gallery was a leap into the unknown. 'All these things, the magnetic labels, the storytelling with objects… would they work? We had no idea. But it was wonderful to be in a place that was willing to the take the risk,' he says. The risk has clearly paid off. Recent analysis shows that people are now spending, on average, between seven and ten minutes looking at the displays. 'It's early days,' notes Dr Collins, 'but what I see today is what I hoped it would be, which is a fantastic place to be.'

**Opposite:** Dr Paul Collins in the Ancient Middle East Gallery
**Below:** Inside the gallery
**Above right:** Some of the objects on display

# A legacy for the future of Chinese at Oxford

**Chinese Mandarin language teaching at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies has been significantly enriched by a generous legacy gift.**

'The courses we offer here are run in small groups,' says Bo Hu, lecturer in Chinese Mandarin. 'It's all student-centred, communicative and intensive, with plenty of time to practise due to that special Oxford tutorial-based teaching system. Because everything is very small, personal and attentive, we can get to know our students well, and provide a more tailored learning environment. It's how we attract the best students – but it's also expensive.'

Bo has taught Chinese Mandarin at Oxford University for more than 15 years, but the variety of temporary, often part-time, contracts under which she was previously employed were dependent on grants and gifts that guaranteed funding for posts only in the short term. Bo explains: 'In 2012, for example, there was a lot of change in how funding worked at universities, and some large government grants supporting non-mainstream language teaching, which had been in place since 2007, came to an end.'

A philanthropic gift saved the instructorship in Chinese Mandarin just at the right time. Mary Lackey OBE was Under Secretary of State for Trade and Industry during the 1980s. Even before taking on that role, she recognised the emergence of China's influence, which ultimately led to her support of the teaching of Chinese at Oxford. 'I couldn't believe that the gift was earmarked for languages and specifically for Chinese,' says Bo. 'Mary didn't want any fuss or publicity about the gift so I wrote a letter to her with pictures of me teaching, just to say thank you and to tell her what was happening.' For around five years, an initial gift from Mary covered the costs of the instructorship post. Then, in 2014, Mary bequeathed her entire estate to endow the post, providing long-term security.

'There are not many full-time Chinese language instructor posts in the UK,' says Bo. 'I think the whole situation is very precarious in terms of language teachers so I am incredibly grateful to have this post from a personal perspective.'

The content and scope of teaching Chinese and East Asian languages have evolved significantly at Oxford over recent decades. The Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies has introduced a range of MPhils since the turn of the century, as well as a variety of subsidiary languages for undergraduate students – by the end of their course they might be fluent not only in Chinese, but also Japanese, Tibetan or Korean.

The MPhil in Traditional East Asia was introduced in 2013. '"Traditional" because there is a basic component in classical languages like classical Chinese, classical Japanese,' says Bo, 'but with the opportunity to study other languages as subsidiaries. In fact, there are more than 25 languages taught in the faculty and 12 degrees, would you believe? Chinese, Japanese – both in their modern as well as classical form – Arabic, Persian, Egyptian, Hebrew, Turkish, Korean, Tibetan, Sanskrit, Yiddish and Akkadian… Having more language teachers and resources is very important for all these courses to keep on running.'

Crucial to the success of the courses offered are the content and the methods of delivery, which need to be developed to meet students' changing backgrounds and expectations. 'It was interesting when I started to work here,' says Bo. 'The students all had quite similar reasons for studying Chinese: they had a Chinese neighbour or classmate or friend and thought: "this is interesting – I'm going to learn it." The level of Chinese and their familiarity with China is so different now, proving how popular China has become and how much information people can find out about China – and demonstrating exactly what Mary Lackey could see happening years ago.'

> When they join us, students now speak Chinese well. They watch Netflix to help them learn Chinese! This proves China's soft power. It's like the pop culture of America influencing the world
>
> Bo Hu

Without Mary Lackey's donation, Bo does not think they would have the resources to cater for students' needs. 'It's all about the digital age for young people. And the backgrounds of the MPhil students, of which we have eight to twelve each year, are particularly interesting. Previously, they might have come to Chinese from a first degree in politics, economics or international relations so that they could use their degree for job opportunities in China. Now we have more people from different backgrounds and pathways – people who did music as a first degree, or English literature or Classics, who then go on to work anywhere from think tanks, consultancies and academia to journalism, translation, or even the art industry, as well as in the public sector.'

Bo recognises that the world is changing – that the students are changing – and language instructors need to keep up. The security offered by more endowed language tutor posts will be key to making teaching sustainable in the long term. The development of digital learning materials is also key: Bo's most recent research in this area has been based on YouTubers talking about Chinese art and film.

'I definitely learn a lot from my students,' says Bo. 'They tell me anecdotes about their experiences in China and about things that I have not heard of. My teaching methods have changed so much – I have started to be more open-minded, and that is the right thing to do. My students are such interesting people – I do feel quite privileged teaching them. Being inspired by the students is my favourite part of my job.'

Bo Hu outside the Dickson Poon Building in the grounds of St Hugh's College

# Thanks to your support…

## …refugee scholars can pursue their studies at Oxford

Equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of Oxford's academic mission, and in recent years the University has taken great strides to address under-representation within its student body. To maintain this momentum, earlier this year the University launched the Refugee Academic Futures Programme, the second strand of a series of new graduate scholarship programmes established under Oxford's Academic Futures initiative.

Millions of people have been forcibly displaced by war and persecution, yet refugees are significantly under-represented in higher education across the globe. Talented students of refugee and asylum seeker status are confronted with a multitude of barriers to education, often due to disruption and socio-economic deprivation. As a world-class institution and with a rich history of supporting academics and students seeking asylum, the University of Oxford is well placed to improve this situation.

Following an appeal this summer, almost £20,000 was raised from over 60 donors towards the Refugee Academic Futures Programme. This will support the cost of providing full scholarships to students on either a one-year full-time or two-year part-time master's course in any subject area at Oxford. Scholars will also be given opportunities to receive mentoring and a bespoke programme of pre-arrival and on-course support.

Lam Joar, a refugee who received a Dulverton Scholarship to study for an MSc in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies at St Anne's College, said: 'Education is the one component of empowerment that has the potential to transform the lives of the underprivileged in our societies.'

*To read Lam's story visit: www.development.ox.ac.uk/Lam*

**Above:** Celebrating graduation outside the Clarendon Building

## …legacy giving will provide vital opportunities

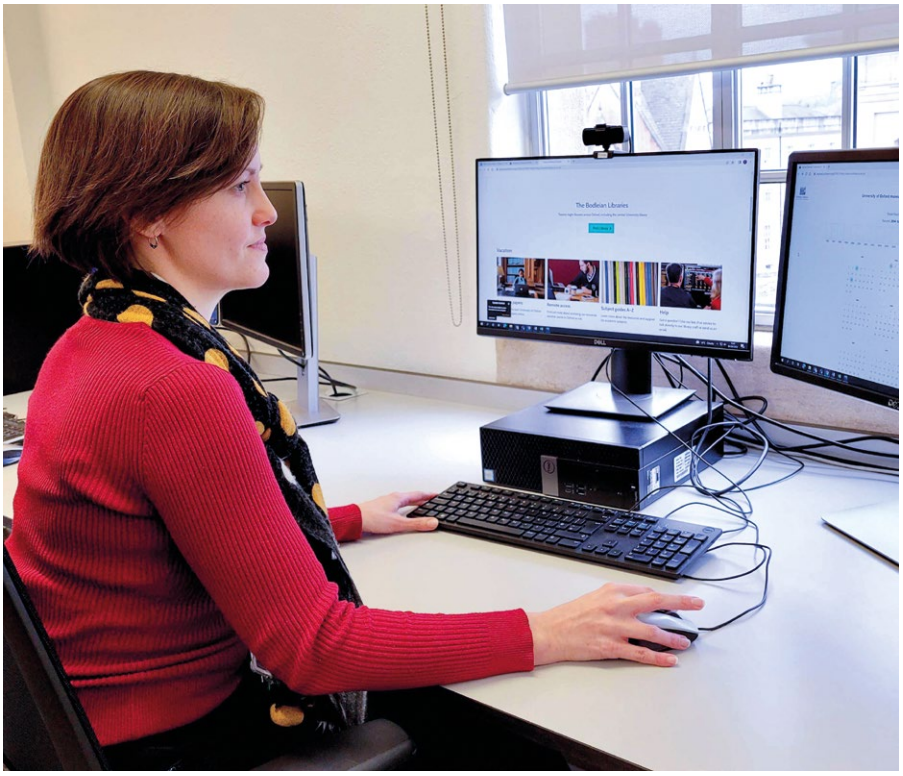
Gifts made in wills have had a tremendous impact upon the work of the University and colleges over the centuries. Legacy giving enables donors to support an aspect of research or teaching with which they have a particular affinity, including projects that address major global challenges and scholarships for disadvantaged students. Gifts in wills, no matter how large or small, can greatly enhance the University's ability to improve access, drive change and find solutions.

The process of making a gift in a will can often appear complicated, particularly if someone has a specific interest that they're keen to support. To address this, the University recently reached out to a number of alumni to help demystify legacy-giving to the collegiate University, and to ensure that people who have already made this provision can forge a closer relationship with Oxford. The legacies communication received a very positive response and has enabled the University and the colleges to establish relationships with a number of individuals.

Professor Sam Howison, Head of the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division, said: 'There are many alumni and friends who care passionately about making a difference by investing in education. It enables people to make a contribution, big or small, that will be enduring, with impact for generations to come. We hope that reaching out with information and support will help people to feel better placed to make an informed decision about legacy planning and will also enable them to engage in a meaningful way with the University during their lifetime.'

*For more information about legacy giving visit: www.development.ox.ac.uk/legacies*

> Investing in education enables people to make a contribution, big or small, that will be enduring, with impact for generations to come
>
> Professor Sam Howison



# …the Bodleian can train the digital archivists of the future

The archives of the future will look very different to today. While books, manuscripts and other physical items will continue to be a valuable resource, research will also necessitate access to a range of digital records such as websites, emails, social media posts and text messages. For digital collections such as these, entirely new approaches to data handling and accessibility will be required.

With support from donors, the Bodleian is leading the way in ensuring that archivists develop the necessary know-how to capture, secure and make accessible digital resources for future students and researchers. The libraries' flagship Trainee Digital Archivist Programme enables individuals to undertake a two-year paid traineeship. Through this they can acquire the skills required to assist students, researchers and the public to access these materials, many of which are incredibly fragile.

In the past seven years, the programme has supported 14 trainees and there are ambitions to train many more. This aim has received a boost in recent months thanks to the generosity of 150 donors, who have given over £38,000 in support of the Bodleian's digital archivist appeal. These gifts will provide vital funding for the training programme, enabling an expansion of this specialist archiving expertise through the current workforce.

Bodley's Librarian Richard Ovenden, OBE, said: 'By securing crucial evidence of life in the twenty-first century for future researchers, the Bodleian can carry on its mission of storing and transferring knowledge down the generations. We are enormously grateful to everyone who has supported our digital archivist training programme.'

**Above:** Trainee digital archivist Francesca Miller

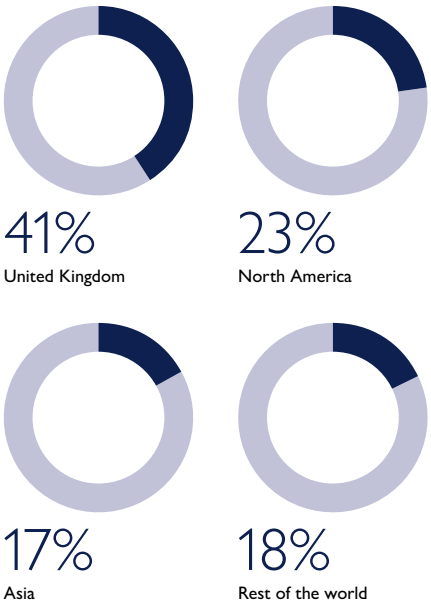
# Philanthropy statistics 2021/22

Amount raised this year (University only)

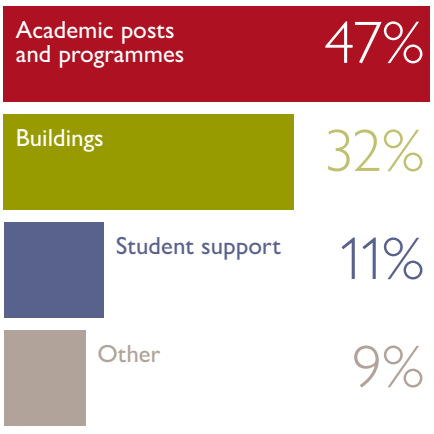
**£249 million**

1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022

Where donations come from (University only)




Destination of gifts by area (University only)



For further information please contact:

University of Oxford Development Office
University Offices
Wellington Square
Oxford OX1 2JD
United Kingdom

enquiries@devoff.ox.ac.uk

www.development.ox.ac.uk

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oxfordgiving.medium.com