

One Year On

The Newcastle Student Fund



From Newcastle.
For the World.

The Campaign for Newcastle University

On behalf of us all at Newcastle University, I want to thank you for supporting our students over the past year.

Our students are at the heart of all that we do, and we do all we can to help them make the most of their talent.

We don't want any student to miss out on what makes belonging to Newcastle University so special. With the help of our supporters like you, we can create opportunities for everyone to succeed, unlocking education for the next generation of future leaders - regardless of their background - and ensuring they are prepared for the working world.

The Newcastle Student Fund was established in June 2021 as a legacy of the kindness, hope and belief in the power of education shown by our alumni and donors at the height of the pandemic. Our students needed us more than ever during this time, and you helped us be there.

The pandemic taught us that we need to be able to respond to whatever situation students face and the Newcastle Student Fund exists to do just that. Thanks to your far-sighted generosity, we have already been able to distribute significant funding to student causes. Next year we hope to be able to do even more.

I hope this report gives you an insight into the difference you are making.

Thank you so much.

Naomi Oosman-Watts
Director of Student Life

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How you've made a difference

We're celebrating the one-year anniversary of the Newcastle Student Fund and want to reflect on how donations from our alumni and supporter community have made a real impact on student causes.

As a university, we are dedicated to fostering a culture of welcome and inclusion for all. We believe that ability, not circumstance, is what counts. Our aim is to give highly motivated and enthusiastic students from all backgrounds and contexts the benefit of a Newcastle University experience.

We know how important it is for you to be confident that your donations achieve the greatest possible impact. This is why we placed students, and those who work most closely with them, at the heart of the process of distributing your donations. The Fund is chaired by our Director of Student Life and overseen by a team of staff and students who play a critical role in ensuring your donations are spent effectively.

Thanks to your generous support, the Newcastle Student Fund has been used to offer assistance to four key areas of student life:

Getting into Newcastle University

By offering a suite of scholarships and bursaries for students who have overcome the greatest barriers to reaching higher education.

Making the most of student life

By giving students the freedom to enjoy all aspects of life at Newcastle without the fear of financial hardship.

Supporting students in times of greatest need

By providing immediate financial aid if things go wrong.

Getting ahead in the graduate job market

By funding opportunities and programmes which boost student employability and support our promising entrepreneurs.

£370,000

has been raised so far for the Newcastle Student Fund



"Tackling inequalities is a hallmark of Newcastle University. From our establishment in 1834 when our medical research helped to address the health inequalities that blighted the industrial city of Newcastle, Newcastle University has enjoyed a long tradition of championing social justice – it's in our DNA. I am proud to support the Student Fund myself and thank each and every one of you for your commitment to our students"

Professor Chris Day
President and Vice-Chancellor,
Newcastle University



Supporting students to get into higher education

One of the aims of the Newcastle Student Fund is to ensure that university is open to the brightest, most motivated students, whatever their background.

The North East is the region in which young people are least likely to access higher education, and this gap is widening. The region has the lowest application rate to higher education (33.7%) and the second lowest entry rate (29.6%) in England. We know that with the right help and support, a university education has the ability to transform the fortunes of less-advantaged young people and open up a world of opportunities.

This year, the Newcastle Student Fund has been used to support two exceptional programmes to help future generations access higher education – a partnership with the national educational outreach charity **IntoUniversity** and our Sanctuary Scholarships programme, offering support for refugees and asylum seekers. We have ambitions to offer more access scholarships and with your help we can continue to support initiatives that alleviate barriers to accessing a world-class education.

IntoUniversity Newcastle East

Your donations enabled us to open the first IntoUniversity Education Centre in the region in collaboration with Northumbria University. IntoUniversity is an educational charity which has over 30 centres in disadvantaged communities to help students aged 7-18 realise their ambitions and achieve.

IntoUniversity has proven evidence of impact with 66% of its students progressing to university, compared with 26.6% of students from similar backgrounds nationally in 2021. Our centre, in the heart of Walker, was opened in Autumn 2021 and aims to work with over 1,000 students each year.

Sanctuary Scholarships

Newcastle University is proud to be a University of Sanctuary, providing a safe community for students and academics affected by war, conflict and persecution to learn and thrive.

Sanctuary Scholarships have been designed to enable students from asylum-seeker and refugee backgrounds to progress to higher level study. With your help, we have provided 5 Sanctuary Scholars in 2021-22 with full tuition fee support and a bursary for living expenses. This for an undergraduate student amounts to £21,950 per year.



Joe is a Chemical Engineering student and a recipient of the Sanctuary Scholarship, he said:

"I'm very grateful for the Sanctuary Scholarship because, without it, I wouldn't have been able to study at all. I can't access mainstream funding for university, so I was very lucky to be successful in my application. Thank you."

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Supporting students to make the most of their university experience

We believe all students should be able to enjoy the full Newcastle University experience.

Even after students overcome obstacles to get into university, they often face financial barriers and need additional support to succeed whilst studying. At Newcastle, over 20% of our students come from families with low incomes.

With your support, we have been able to help more students fully embrace their university experience and have been able to further invest in student-led initiatives to widen access to travel, sport, culture, innovation and enterprise.

Below are some examples of how the Student Fund has been used to support vital projects:



Participation Bursaries

These bursaries help remove financial obstacles that prevent students from accessing the activities offered by the Students' Union. The bursary contributes to the cost of getting involved, such as club and society membership fees, trips, as well as sports kits and equipment. This year, an additional 97 bursaries were awarded thanks to donations to the Student Fund.

Students' Union activities

Support has also been provided to several clubs in the Students' Union to help ensure there are no barriers to accessing these activities, such as the Wheelchair Basketball Club and the Student Media Conference.



Research and Expedition Scholarships

These awards allow students to spend a summer overseas conducting field research. The opportunity to experience research-led learning and to develop key skills through a wide range of activities is an important part of the university experience and equips our students for life after study. 39 groups of students will receive scholarships this summer thanks to you.



Jin-De Lin is a postgraduate Biomedical Engineering student and a recipient of the Participation Bursary, he said:

"As an international student I think it is a hard mission to come here and learn. Every single payment in my normal life, such as grocery shopping, I really have to budget for and can't waste money. I found out there was a Sport Centre during my first month here, but I knew I couldn't afford to allocate money towards a membership. "It is thanks to the Participation Bursary that I was able to fund my membership for the Sports Centre. It has really helped me because learning and studying all day for a full year without exercise is not sustainable. I really appreciate that the donations have allowed me to be able to exercise, to do something that I enjoy but also to provide me with the opportunity to take a break from my studies."

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"The funding given to the Wheelchair Basketball Club is monumental and to a large extent life-changing for our players. We've bought 7 wheelchairs for the university with the funding provided, which allows us to put on sessions and set up a team to compete in BUCS next year. That said it's more than just a competitive club, it's an opportunity for sport to have able-bodied and disabled players competing on the same court, same team, same tactics together as one with no barriers in-between. Thank you for the funding, the difference it's going to make is going to be an amazing thing to witness."

Jack, President of Newcastle University's Wheelchair Basketball Club

Supporting students in times of greatest need

The last year has seen an unprecedented need for emergency financial and welfare support as a result of both the pandemic and the terrible consequences of global conflict.

The Newcastle Student Fund stands ready to respond to urgent need. This year, the first awards were made to offer financial relief to our students in the aftermath of political unrest, following the invasion of Ukraine. Your donations were quickly deployed to support students whose lives were turned upside down by the conflict and will continue to help members of the Newcastle University community when they need it most.

We also know that our students closer to home experience financial hardship through no fault of their own. This year we have seen a rise of over 30% in applications for financial support, and this will no doubt continue to grow as the cost-of-living crisis worsens. Thanks to your support, we were ready and able to quickly respond to our students no matter what difficulty they faced, making emergency funds available through the Student Fund.

Students affected by political unrest

The Newcastle community has come together to offer support for people who have been directly affected by the events in Ukraine. 22 students have been helped so far, with £32,000 allocated from the Newcastle Student Fund, and we continue to work with our partners across the city to identify other ways in which we can provide support for all those seeking sanctuary and support.

Student hardship

Your generosity has helped 26 students avoid homelessness and exceptional financial hardship this year. £40,000 from the Student Fund has contributed to emergency accommodation and financial aid to support students at times of great difficulty. Our Student Wellbeing team provided pastoral support and counselling to these students during this difficult time.



"I was the first person to go to university from my family. My father was a very proud man, and he wouldn't take subsidies so everyone in my family had to sacrifice to buy what I needed. A bursary would have helped me enormously, and that's why I'm so passionate about supporting girls in similar positions now."

**Dame Teresa Graham,
Donor and alumna**

Supporting students to get ahead in their chosen career

We want to help prepare students for their future after university, by providing them with the opportunities and experiences necessary to get ahead in their chosen career.

We know it is vital to give our students that crucial competitive edge in the crowded job market. Employers are increasingly looking for ways to distinguish between candidates and we want to make sure Newcastle graduates shine.

With your help we have been able to fund crucial initiatives in partnership with our careers team, helping students as they take that first step into their career. Whether it's financial support to take part in internships with some of the biggest companies in the country, or providing start-up funding for our young entrepreneurs, your donation has helped our students get ahead.

START UP support

Newcastle University's award-winning careers service supports hundreds of students and graduates to grow their business ideas from concept to reality, through our dedicated START UP team. There are currently 203 START UP-supported businesses trading worldwide, creating 947 full-time equivalent jobs and with a combined annual turnover of close to £88 million.



"I chose this internship because I am planning on starting my Master's in Data Science this year and felt that this would be a valuable experience. During the internship we have been working on handling data and creating infographics to use in the university's Race Equality Charter Application. This internship has hugely expanded my knowledge of data analysis in Excel as well as my problem-solving abilities by forcing me to think outside of the box to produce a variety of informative figures. I feel that this internship has really boosted my confidence in my data science skills and has made me feel excited to begin my Master's in September."

Hanna Souter, Student Data Internship

Thank you

Thank you for your support over the past year. Your donations and ongoing commitment to our student community truly makes a difference.

"We launched the Student Fund to the backdrop of a global pandemic when applications for financial support from our student community increased by a third.

Now, with the cost-of-living crisis and changes to student loans, it can often feel financially impossible to be a student, let alone enjoy your time at university! Thanks to donations in the past year, we at the Students' Union were able to offer Participation Bursaries to students struggling to afford the costs associated with clubs, sports, and societies.

The Student Fund is truly changing lives and helping us make university life more accessible. There are so many students who would have missed out on memorable experiences if it hadn't been for alumni support. It's heartening to know that we have a wider community around the world who care for our students.

You should know it has brought happiness and a sense of belonging to students in what continues to be a challenging time both academically and personally.

Thank you!"

Abbie Hutchinson
Newcastle University Student Union
President 2021-2022

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