Behind each door at Churchill is a story of success

Every gift made in support of the Campaign, however modest, can make a difference.

For example, 12 people giving £20 a month for a year, with the addition of Gift Aid, funds a full bursary for an undergraduate experiencing financial hardship.

“If I were to sum up what this bursary means to me in one word, it would be freedom – freedom to explore my interests in College and the academic freedom to work as hard on my degree as I possibly can without having to worry about how I will pay my next bill or eat my next meal.”

Abubakar Moallim (U15)

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Want to know where the doors are located and what happens behind them?
Go to www.chu.cam.ac.uk/opening-doors

Churchill College doors –
Matthew Smith Architectural Photography
You can help open doors at Churchill College

Student Support

The cost of attending Cambridge is daunting; the average debt after a three-year undergraduate degree is now an estimated £55,230. Many students are faced with expenses that outstrip the money they can borrow: most self-fund a gap of £3,000–£4,000 annually, in addition to their loans. Not all families can support this extra cost. While our poorest students are able to borrow much of the money they need, this exacerbates the debt they face. Debt aversion is a factor that deters some students from considering university altogether.

Churchill has an exceptionally proud tradition of access to higher education – 77% of offers to UK students in 2018/19 were to state school pupils. We can also point to the remarkable success story that our most disadvantaged students thrive here because of the individual support and targeted top-up bursary funding they receive. These bursaries have only been made possible because of generous alumni support:

24% of undergraduates (111) currently receive a means-tested Cambridge Bursary
68% of this group receive the maximum award of £3,500 per year, awarded to those with annual family incomes lower than £25,000

Postgraduate Studentships

Postgraduate students are a vital part of Churchill College and have been since its foundation. With over 370 graduates from all over the world, Churchill’s graduate students are valued members of the College’s diverse and exciting academic community.

The rising cost of postgraduate education coupled with cuts in available funding is causing a major barrier to entry for many exceptional graduate students. It is also increasingly assumed that PhD candidates will have a Master’s degree, even though there are severe limitations on the funding available at this level. As students now graduate with more debt, postgraduate study (especially in the arts and humanities) is becoming unaffordable for all but the most privileged. Challenges around funding have further implications for the College since competition for the very best graduate students is now truly global.

The College is committed to supporting a small number of graduate studentships, but funds are limited. Building a Graduate Studentship Endowment Fund that will address these challenges and help bridge the growing funding gap is now a major priority. The College must be able offer the necessary funding that our extraordinary candidates deserve. We want to keep our doors open to the world’s best minds and talents, enabling them to benefit from what Churchill has to offer, and for us to benefit from their rich range of insights and talent in return. We can only do this with your support.

"Studentships are vitally important to ensuring the College can retain its invaluable and enriching mixture of students from different disciplines, different socio-economic groups and culturally diverse backgrounds."

Kathrin Wunderlich (G16) current PhD student, German Studies

Students in the greatest need also receive a top-up bursary of £2,000, mostly funded by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust (WCMT), but the funding previously received for this initiative from the WCMT is ending.

Sam Mercer (U17) never imagined he would go into academia – no-one in his family had gone to university, his family could offer no financial support and he just wanted to get out of school as quickly as possible – but he really liked puzzles and slowly discovered and developed a deep enjoyment for maths.

It was in Year 11 that his aptitude for maths and physics was finally noticed and he was encouraged to consider Cambridge, but it was only the discovery that he would qualify for bursary support that gave him the confidence to apply.

Sam is now in the second year of his maths degree at Churchill. He achieved a First last year, remains passionate about mathematics and is ‘hugely grateful to have received the funding support I needed to access this amazing environment’.

We invite you to make a gift in support of student bursaries and open the doors of opportunity to students like Sam who may otherwise never realise their full potential. You hold the key to a promising tomorrow, a life changed, a world improved.

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Unrestricted Annual Funds

Donations to this unrestricted fund are used as soon as they are received to directly help student projects and other discrete funds that directly benefit students. For example, if a student society wanted funding for a speaker it could request a grant.

Examples of unrestricted Annual funds in action:
- The provision of additional supervision and tutorial support
- Funding for clubs, societies, the JCR and the MCR
- Improving IT facilities in College for both undergraduates and postgraduates
- Refurbishing current student accommodation

Endowment Funding

The College’s endowment, which stands at over £90 million, contributes approximately £3 million to fund College expenditure each year. The more this can be grown over the next few years, the more financial stability we can provide to achieve our educational mission. The endowment is managed by the Investment Committee, which has internal and external members, some of whom are alumni of the College.

As we face uncertain economic times and uncertainty over future university funding, including continual changes in policy in terms of funding Higher Education through taxation, having our own invested assets helps us to guarantee that we will be able to continue funding education and research for future generations of Churchillians.

“Every student really appreciates all the opportunities they have through the College and Societies - this simply wouldn’t be possible without the funding that exists”

Ali Bayliss (U16) JCR President

Churchill’s newly formed lacrosse team at the 2019 Cuppers Final