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University of Exeter

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EXCEPTIONAL  
HAPPEN**

The University of Exeter Campaign

HEALTH



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Public launch of the Making the Exceptional Happen Campaign at The Gherkin, City of London, 9 February 2017

# A message from Professor Sir Steve Smith

As 2017 comes to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support of Exeter.

The 2016/17 academic year has been an exceptional one at the University. This summer we officially opened our Living Systems Institute (LSI) – a £52 million investment in interdisciplinary science that will help revolutionise the diagnosis and treatment of disease. We were awarded a Gold rating in the UK Government's first national Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), for our outstanding teaching and learning environment.

Also in February of this year we launched our largest ever philanthropic Campaign – **Making the Exceptional Happen**. Through this we aim to raise £60 million and secure 60,000 volunteering hours by 2020 to support our students and research.

Thanks to your commitment and generosity we have already raised over half of our target to date and we have received 56,172 hours from dedicated volunteers – 94% of the way to our goal. In the last year alone, more than 1,000 of you donated over 11,000 hours of your time to support our students, our staff and our alumni. Over 2,800 of you chose to support the University financially with more than £5.2 million in contributions.

The impact of your support is felt across the University. It helps us to research solutions to global problems such as climate change and dementia; to help support talented students from all backgrounds to attend Exeter and to offer the best possible student experience and well informed careers choices.

Of course, we have ambitions to do more and have identified key priority areas that will help us get to where we want to be. You can learn more about each of these themes via our Campaign website: [exeter.ac.uk/exceptional](http://exeter.ac.uk/exceptional)

Your support is vital for the continuing success of the University and we are all hugely appreciative. I hope that you enjoy reading just a few of the life-changing stories brought about by your generosity. Have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.



Steve Smith

Professor Sir Steve Smith  
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive



Enoch Mobisa (first right) interviewing a pastoralist in Kenya

# Enoch Mobisa Ontiri, Ivan Bond Scholar

Thanks to the generosity of alumnus Neil Harvey (Accountancy Studies 1985), Enoch has been able to fulfill a long time personal ambition to study internationally and undertake a PhD with a focus on conservation in Africa.

The Ivan Bond Scholarship was named in honour of Neil's brother in law, a Zimbabwe born conservationist, who contributed significantly to African wildlife conservation during his lifetime.

Neil's support is not only providing Enoch with a life changing opportunity but it is also supporting a project of enormous benefit to society. 'Wildlife Wars in the Age of the Smartphone' will look at research on the intensity of the conflict between pastoralists and lions from 200 community engagement events throughout Kenya's rift valley. The project will review these focus groups to understand the links between economic development, climate and conflict, and will introduce an innovative smartphone app that will help map the risk of human wildlife conflict using citizen science.

“ Supporting a PhD student from Africa where I am originally from, feels a fitting way to give back to my University. ”

*Neil Harvey (Accountancy Studies 1985) is a founding donor of the Diamond Jubilee Doctoral Scholarship Match Fund.*

“The opportunity to undertake this research will bridge a huge knowledge gap that exists in my society and in the developing world. I was born and brought up in rural Kenya. Following my studies in Nairobi, I was able to work with small scale farmers back in Kenya and it was here I first realised the pressures placed upon farmers to conserve biodiversity, especially the pollinators which their crops desperately need to survive. As a passionate conservationist, I was determined to continue with graduate level study despite the financial barriers, and my aim was to study internationally. I have always dreamed of undertaking a PhD so that I could develop in depth research, to enable a better understanding of the ways in which to tackle the conservation challenges facing Africa. The Ivan Bond Scholarship is a fantastic and unique opportunity for me to do so, and to take my career to the next level. I am truly grateful and excited to be the recipient of the Ivan Bond Scholarship and to pursue my passion and interest in biodiversity conservation. Without Neil's generous support I would not be able to do this – I can't thank him enough.”

“ Without Neil's generous support I would not be able to do this – I can't thank him enough. ”

*Enoch Mobisa Ontiri, Ivan Bond Scholar*



(Left to right) Professor Anne Barlow, Professor of Family Law and Policy,  
Sharon Blake, Shackleton Scholar and Dr Astrid Janssens, Senior Research Fellow

# Understanding the science behind relationships



“ This project will allow us to share that information with a new generation who will one day have families of their own, so they can make good choices. ”

*Dr Jan Ewing, Shackleton Research Fellow*

“ I'm delighted to support this project, which will provide much-needed evidence and resources for people so they can build strong relationships. I have seen first-hand the tragedy of family separation, and I have often observed that divorce might be avoided if people, before they make a life-long commitment to each other, asked themselves more searching questions about how suitable or compatible they are. Of course big change and life events also put strain on relationships and knowing more about what builds resilience in relationships is vital. ”

*Baroness Shackleton of Belgravia, LVO (Law 1977)*

**The Shackleton Relationships project is an innovative collaboration between researchers at the University of Exeter Law School and the Medical School led by Professor Anne Barlow, Professor of Family Law and Policy, and supported by alumnus Baroness Fiona Shackleton (Law 1977).**

The project explores why relationships succeed or fail, and considers what type of relationship educational tools might help young people to build stronger relationship skills and avoid bad relationship choices now and in the future.

The project team includes Dr Astrid Janssens, a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Exeter Medical School, and Dr Jan Ewing, a research fellow at the University of Exeter Law School. The study will build upon existing research by Dr Ewing, who previously interviewed 52 couples three times during the first four years of marriage to examine what drives thriving relationships and what leads to the erosion of marital satisfaction in the first few years after a wedding. She found having a strong friendship, dealing early and effectively with conflict, good communication and the ability to see the best in your partner were key. Dr Ewing will now revisit these couples after 10 years of marriage to see whether this holds true in the longer term.

Funding is also helping to support a one year Masters by Research Studentship. Sharon Blake, Associate Research Fellow has been supporting the project through literature reviews, interviewing divorce practitioners and long-term couples, as well as undertaking analysis of the team's research findings.

The team hope to use their research findings in a practical and meaningful way to inform the development of resources for young people, by way of a short video and app which could form part of the school curriculum, enabling the findings to reach as wide an audience as possible.

The Shackleton Project began in September 2016 and will run for 18 months.



A special event with Professor Sir Steve Smith, Vice-Chancellor, and Matt Hutnell, Director of Santander UK to celebrate Santander's support.





The University was delighted to sign our fourth funding agreement with Santander Universities during a special event held at Reed Hall. The new agreement extends Exeter's long standing relationship with Santander, where philanthropic gifts have exceeded £1 million.

The new agreement saw a fresh wave of support for sport at Exeter, with funding providing vital support for three new initiatives.

Building on existing activity made possible by Santander, Exeter's Sports Park have been able to purchase new innovative performance analysis equipment, allowing sports coaches to edit and share performance video footage directly with students, enabling members to take an active role in the analysis of their performance and tactics.

“ Support from Santander is enabling more of our teams to record training and game footage which can then be used for performance analysis. Students across varied sports have been involved at all stages of this activity, giving valuable real-world experience. ”

*Alison Davidson,  
Director of Sport*

Support also enabled the University's Sport's Park to purchase a new nine-seater minibus. The minibus, is available to all sports teams, from 1st teams performing on a national stage to individual clubs travelling to training sessions and meets. As well as transporting teams to away fixtures, many of Exeter's sports clubs undertake the majority of their activity off-campus and the bus has already proved to be a vital resource.

Exeter is very highly ranked in the inter-university British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) league table, and reached the Championship Final at Twickenham last season. Support from Santander has allowed the team to further enhance its programme, increasing the number of male and female beginners attracted to the sport through a number of new beginner sessions, designed to provide rugby enthusiasts with a fantastic university rugby experience.



Halpin Scholar, Wasin Sukulkoo speaking at the 2017 Thank You reception at the Innholders Hall, City of London, 26 September 2017

# Fighting for food security

The Halpin Scholars, funded by the late Dr Leslie Halpin (Maths 1979) and his wife Claire (Biology 1979), are PhD research students investigating the devastating Rice Blast disease to find a way to prevent it. Seven PhD students have trained to date including scholars from the rice-growing regions of Bangladesh, India, Thailand and Turkey.

The aim of the programme is to enable students from rice-growing countries in the developing world to come to Exeter to train in molecular plant pathology.

Alice Bisola Eseola will become the eighth PhD student to take up the Halpin Scholarship and benefit from a life-changing opportunity. Alice joins a prestigious group of outstanding young scientists, including Wasin Sakulkoo, who recently completed his PhD at Exeter.

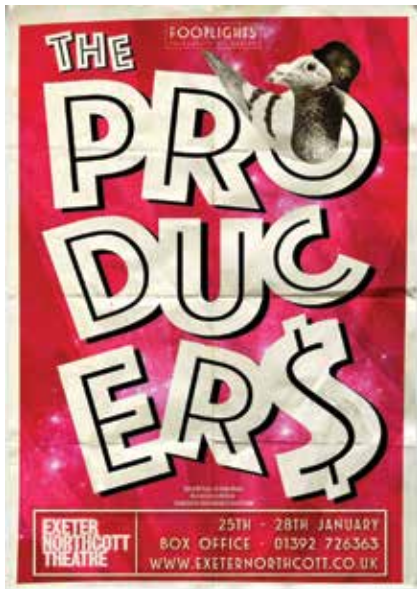
“The scholarship has certainly changed my life for the better, but I hope that when my research is complete it will also have changed the lives of many others too.”

*Wasin Sakulkoo,  
Halpin Scholar*

Wasin said “Every year rice blast disease destroys enough rice to feed more than 60 million people. My research aims to understand this disease and to help develop a solution so that farmers do not lose their crops and people do not suffer from food shortages. I hope that one day, my research will help rice farmers around the world, including in my home country of Thailand.

I have been able to pursue my dream thanks to a Halpin Scholarship. Receiving the scholarship has made such a difference to me and the work I am able to do. It has meant I've been able to study at a world-class university with renowned scientists, and employ a wide range of molecular biology techniques. I have been able to attend global conferences, meet other academics and present my findings to the wider scientific community.”

# The Alumni Annual Fund in action



92

projects

supported through the  
Annual Fund

The Alumni Annual Fund is an ongoing appeal which seeks the philanthropic support of its alumni and friends to invest in the University and its students, and supports projects that otherwise wouldn't receive funding.

## Exeter students put on a dazzling performance

This year the Alumni Annual Fund student society Footlights were able to seek the help of local professional set designer, Jason Denvir for their 2017 Northcott Theatre production of Mel Brooks' *The Producers*.

The funds proved hugely beneficial for students involved with the project, instilling a confidence and a determination within the students to strive for professionalism in future theatrical endeavors.

The production was a huge success, both creatively and financially and would not have been possible without alumni support. Footlights' members were invited to perform to University donors and volunteers at the 2017 Thank You Reception in London.

## Enhancing Student Wellbeing

The rise of eating difficulties across the student population is a growing concern in the UK. With the help of the Alumni Annual Fund, Exeter's Student Guild has established the 'Eating Difficulties Support Group' offering increased support for students with eating difficulties, including peer to peer support for those struggling with any form of eating difficulty.

It will provide a safe space to discuss issues and promote recovery and support. The group will be run by facilitators recruited, trained and supervised by Student Minds, the UK's student mental health charity. The 'Eating Difficulties Support Group' is fully supported by the Guild Advice Unit and the University's Wellbeing Centre.

## Supporting innovative ways to keep fit

Funding from the Alumni Annual Fund has enabled the Sports Centre on Exeter's St Luke's Campus to purchase nine new Aquaboards, in addition to training two members of staff to deliver a new and exciting exercise class, Float Fit. The Float Fit class is a 30 minute high intensity interval training workout with a difference, this low impact, cross training class on water gives attendees a fun full body workout, helping to strengthen aerobic stamina and improve muscular endurance. With thanks to support from the Alumni Annual Fund, this new class has proved to be real hit, and enhances further the health and fitness offers available to staff and students across the University.

The class was launched with a number of free taster sessions and is included in the Athletic Union's 'This Girl Can' campaign supported by Active Devon.

# Supporting talented students

“Without Graham’s support I wouldn’t have been able to pursue a PhD in my area of interest. It is a life-changing opportunity for which I am incredibly grateful for.”

*Jessica Rundle, Graham Cole PhD Studentship recipient, began her studies in 2017.*

“I am deeply grateful for the opportunity that the John Oldacre Foundation has provided. It means so much that they have put their trust in me to pursue a PhD in sustainable livestock and I will do my very best to make the most of this generous support.”

*Elisa Becker, The John Oldacre Foundation Scholar began her PhD in 2017.*

## This year, the University launched the Diamond Jubilee Scholarship programme, a new £3 million match funding scheme to bring more of the brightest and the best research students to Exeter.

Your support is really making a difference. Donations to date have supported 17 new studentships to the value of £1.23 million, which is supporting talented aspiring researchers to take their study to the next level with a research PhD at Exeter.

### The Graham Cole Scholarship supporting vital research into Dementia

The Graham Cole Scholarship is funded by supporter and Honorary Graduate Graham Cole, CBE. Graham’s support has provided an opportunity for Jessica Rundle to join the expanding team of leading dementia researchers at the Medical School as part of the team looking into improving care for people with dementia living in care homes. The studentship will examine the role of non-drug treatment approaches for people living with dementia, with the aim of improving our understanding of how they could be used to improve pain management.

Graham said “I am proud to be involved in this great initiative to bring the best PhD researchers to Exeter. Supporting a PhD student to undertake vital research into dementia will hopefully bring us one step closer to new treatments and a better quality of life for those living with the disease.”

### The John Oldacre Foundation Studentship is helping talented students to study at Exeter

World-leading research teams are underpinned by PhD students who drive innovation, foster collaboration and deliver impact to tackle some of the biggest global challenges we face. Elisa Becker has been doing just that, with thanks to support from The John Oldacre Foundation.

The Land, Environment, Economics & Policy Institute (LEEP) specialises in bringing academic research and tools to inform policy-making and implementation in areas such as; food production and sustainable agriculture, urban environments and wellbeing, and the impact of climate change on farming and land use. Support for PhD studentships enables this innovative academic research to flourish and inform management, policy-making and implementation. The John Oldacre Foundation has funded generously two studentships within the Institute, and their latest support seeks to build on that partnership to develop a critical area of research into the sustainability of livestock systems.



The Annual Students' Guild and FXU Teaching Awards 2017, May 2017

# Students' Guild rewards its student superstars with a night of glamour

“ I am extremely grateful to have been nominated and presented with this award. Exeter is a University which empowers individuals to make change, and quite simply, I am one of many. The Students' Guild was an invaluable part of my three years at University, and I'm proud to be able to leave behind something that will support students for years to come. ”

*Leah Fuller, Psychology (2016)*

“ We are very lucky to have such a wonderful alumni volunteer community who donate their time to help, not just students, but across the University. It's amazing to have reached the 1,000 volunteer milestone – we are incredibly grateful to each and every one of our volunteers, we couldn't do what we do without their support. ”

*Emma McFadyen, Head of Volunteering at the University of Exeter*

**Each year, the Students' Guild holds its annual gala awards to celebrate and recognise the incredible work and effort of its student members in helping to create an amazing student experience Exeter.**

A new category for this year's awards was the Alumni Contribution Award; recognising a group or individual who has made an exceptional contribution to support others associated with the Guild. Many of the nominations for the award included those who had regularly returned to help former societies or campaigns that had meant a great deal to them during their time at Exeter.

The very first winner was Leah Fuller (Psychology 2016), founder and ongoing supporter of the 'Eating Difficulties Peer Support Group' who was awarded the prize following her constant dedication and passion to help maintain and boost the group that helps to support vulnerable individuals at the University.

## **Volunteers make the exceptional happen**

**More than 1,000 alumni have volunteered with the University of Exeter during the 2016/17 academic year – the first time this milestone has ever been achieved.**

Volunteers make a huge difference in a number of ways: helping us enhance the student experience and improve career prospects, bringing industry expertise and insights to the curriculum, supporting the alumni community, and providing valuable strategic advice and guidance to University staff.

Anna Stevens (English 2005), who has donated her time as part of the eXpert programme and also as a career mentor, was the 1,000th person to volunteer for Exeter in 2016/17, taking us over this tremendous milestone. She said: "I really enjoy volunteering, I got such inspiration and encouragement from my mentors in the past that it's great to be able to give this back to a new generation of students".



Chris Williams (BA Business and Management with Industrial Experience 2014), Jo Goodall (BA Business and Management 2012), Professor David Boughey, and Hannah Walker (BA Business and Management with Industrial Experience 2014)



# Alumni inspire the next generation of Business School students

This summer alumni, Jo Goodall (BA Business and Management 2012), Chris Williams (BA Business and Management with Industrial Experience 2014), and Hannah Walker (BA Business and Management with Industrial Experience 2014) volunteered their time to support the Business School Open Day, providing advice and support to prospective students and their parents.

Both Chris and Hannah also gave presentations to packed lecture theatres about their experiences as students at Exeter, the Business and Management programme, as well as tips and advice on maximising time in industry since graduating.

The feedback from Open Day visitors was extremely positive with attendees praising the 'enthusiasm', 'energy' and 'brilliant, engaging presentations'. One student even said: "The quality of the presentation made me want to study at Exeter. It was enthusiastic, informative and practical. I was very impressed that an alum came back to speak!"

Professor David Boughey, Business School Associate Dean for Education, added: "Having Hannah, Chris and Jo return to participate in the last open day was a wonderful addition. Of course it was great to see them again, but to do an event with recent alumni who exuded measured confidence gave us all a lift".

“ I had such a fantastic all round experience at Exeter that I love the opportunity to give something back to the University. Helping motivated and ambitious prospective students to understand more about university life and more specifically the business school is a rewarding experience in itself. ”

*Chris Williams  
(BA Business and  
Management with Industrial  
Experience 2014)*



Professor Niklaus, first row, eighth from the left, with the French Department, 1968

# Legacy donation supports PhD studentships

The University of Exeter recently held the first Niklaus-Cartwright lecture in honour of two academics, one of whom left a generous legacy to French at Exeter.

The first Niklaus-Cartwright lecture was held on the University's Streatham campus in March. The lecture was named after two eminent academics, Professor Robert Niklaus, former Head of French at Exeter and his student Michael Cartwright, an eminent academic in his own right who generously bequeathed funding for French at Exeter. Visiting speaker, Dr David McCallam from the University of Sheffield, spoke at the event about "The Volcano: A Tool for Thinking in Eighteenth-Century France".

The Niklaus Fund, originally set up in memory of Professor Robert Niklaus to support French at Exeter, received a generous legacy donation from Professor Michael Cartwright which has since had various positive impacts on the Modern Languages department at the University of Exeter. As well as providing funding for travel bursaries and the Niklaus-Cartwright lecture, the legacy donation has provided funding to support three PhD scholars, including French Literature student, Edward Mills.

“ Completing a PhD has long been my dream. The study of languages and literature continues to open my mind in many ways, and by pursuing a career in academia I am able to share this knowledge with others. ”

*Coline Blaizeau,  
2017 Niklaus-Cartwright  
PhD Scholar*

Edward said "I'm thrilled to have the opportunity, to investigate various French literary texts and to make an original contribution to knowledge in a subject that I have loved for many years"

Edward met the Niklaus family who also attended the lecture to express his gratitude and convey just how this funding affected his studies positively.

If you'd like to find out more about leaving a legacy and the profound impact it can have, please contact Clare Pearce at [legacy@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:legacy@exeter.ac.uk).

## How you can show your support

If you would like to make a gift to support the University of Exeter please visit: [www.exeter.ac.uk/donate](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/donate)

To learn more on how you can leave a gift to Exeter in your Will please visit: [www.exeter.ac.uk/legacy](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/legacy)

To volunteer your time and expertise please visit:  
[www.exeter.ac.uk/alumnisupporters/volunteering](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/alumnisupporters/volunteering)

## Contact us:

Campaign website: [www.exeter.ac.uk/exceptional](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/exceptional)

Online: [www.exeter.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/alumni)

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