



To all our 2019/20 supporters

# THANK YOU



Celebrating philanthropy  
and volunteering at the  
University of Exeter

MAKING THE  
**EXCEPTIONAL**  
HAPPEN

The University of Exeter Campaign



# A message from the Vice-Chancellor Professor Lisa Roberts

As 2020 comes to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support of the University of Exeter.

It is now just over three-months since I joined as Vice-Chancellor, and that period has been dominated by the impact of COVID-19 on all our lives. I have been enormously impressed by the extraordinary hard work and commitment that colleagues, students, alumni and friends of Exeter have all shown to working as one community in response to this challenge.

Our researchers responded quickly and turned their attention to tackling the virus – Professor Lorna Harries on detecting how much live virus an infected person is harbouring, which could help healthcare workers and others know when they are safe to return to work, Professor John Campbell on a major study looking at the effectiveness of BCG as a preventative vaccine and Professor Andrew Shaw developed a rapid antibody test that is now MHRA registered. All these projects have been supported philanthropically and for that I am immensely grateful.

I'm delighted to be able to share a number of highlights from the last academic year with you. Thanks to your support, we achieved our financial goal 12 months ahead of schedule. In total more than £65,000,000 has been given to support teaching and research, and our alumni community has donated more than 90,000 hours to the Campaign since it began in 2012.

In fact, this year was our most successful ever for the number of donors supporting Exeter; more than 4,200 alumni donated, and over 1,100 gave 10,249 volunteer hours.

Thank you so much for your fantastic support. Your support is vital for Exeter's ongoing success, and we are incredibly grateful for all that you have done, and continue to do, to help us be the best university we can be.

I look forward to meeting you in person once we are able to.

With my very best wishes for the future.



*L.O. Roberts*

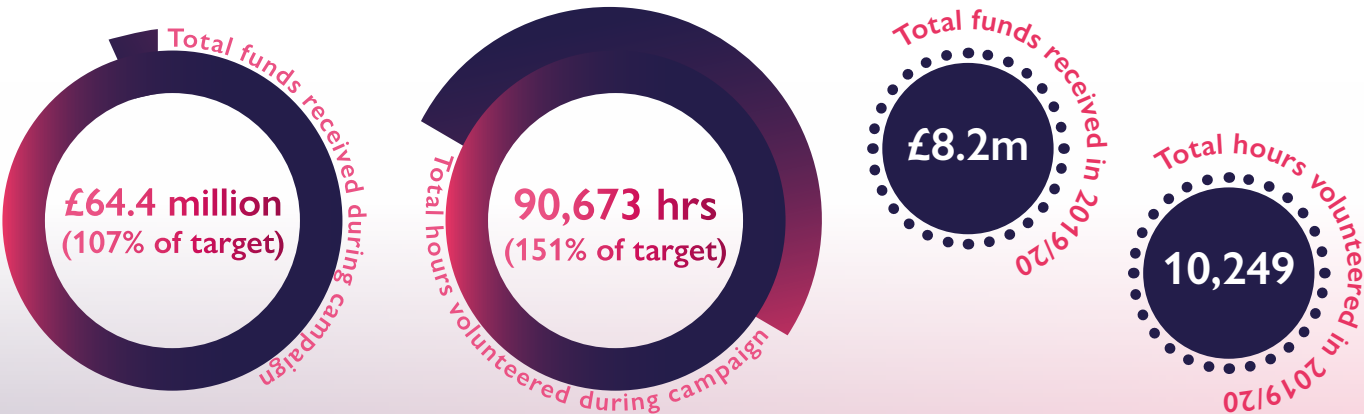
Professor Lisa Roberts  
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer



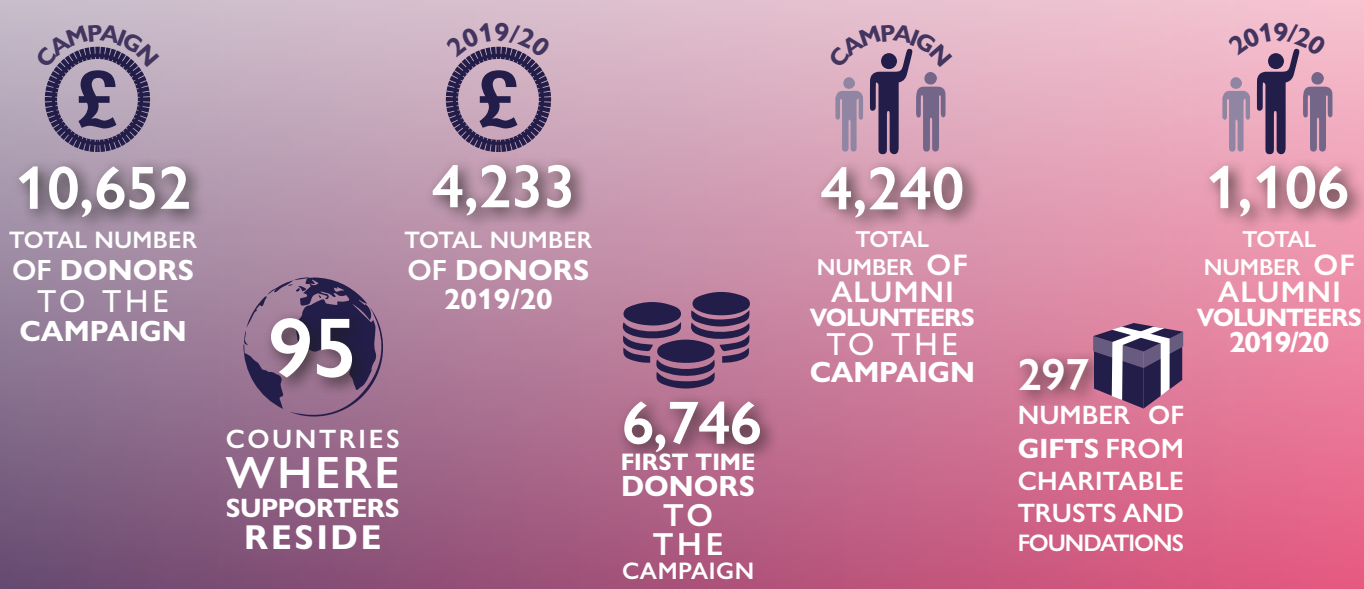


# Your support in numbers

We are incredibly grateful to all our alumni and supporters whose gifts of time and money have made the University of Exeter Campaign ‘Making the Exceptional Happen’ such a success. Your generosity is making a massive difference and will continue to transform lives into the future.



## Supporter numbers:



# Your impact

**MORE THAN £150,000**

More than £150,000 raised from alumni and friends of the University is being used to support COVID-19 related projects across the institution. Some of the projects supported include developing a new test to determine if people with COVID-19 are still infectious, an emergency assistance fund to support students facing hardship in the face of the pandemic, a study of the impact on family carers, and a project to predict the spread of the virus and evaluate the impact of quarantine.



## Alumni honour former Vice-Chancellor with permanent scholarship fund

Following Sir Steve's retirement in August 2020 and with support from more than 240 alumni and friends, the University has created a permanent endowment in an area close to Sir Steve's heart. The Sir Steve Smith Scholars Fund will help talented students from backgrounds similar to his own. Individuals from underrepresented socio-economic backgrounds will be able to achieve their potential at Exeter far into the future.

More than £1.1 million has been raised which will support one scholar in each of the University's six Colleges at any one time, each receiving an award of £6,000 per year for the duration of their studies. The first Sir Steve Smith Scholars will start in September 2021.



Sir Steve steered Exeter for 18 years to become one of the UK's fastest growing and rapidly rising research universities before retiring in August 2020

# “I’m where I was meant to be.”

Stephanie Andrews reflects on her aspirations and the impact of her studentship

Thanks to a philanthropic gift from alumnus Roger de Freitas (Politics, 1971), Stephanie Andrews is in her second year of her PhD researching the ecological impacts of microplastic debris in river systems worldwide.

Roger is an active philanthropist, passionate about ecology and practical conservation. He has been working to support water systems and landscapes across the world throughout his life.

We recently spoke to Stephanie to find out more about her project and how Roger’s support helped her with her work.

“My research focus is looking at the ecological impact of microplastics in river systems. To do this I am investigating the presence and distribution of microplastics in the riverine environment and what effects these are having on the aquatic species that inhabit these environments at sites of suspected contamination.

“We currently have a greater understanding about the ecological impacts of microplastics in the marine system, but, as yet, do not understand if the same effects can be seen in river systems. This is largely what my PhD aims to complete, to understand the ecological effects of microplastics in river systems and enable a comparison to be made between two rivers located in different environments. The data from my first sampling campaign will help establish a baseline of microplastics in the non-tidal River Thames waters and species. I hope that my research will contribute towards our understanding of microplastic distributions and abundances in river systems but most importantly what effects contamination has on species and the wider implications that this might have on the environment.

“This PhD offers me a fantastic opportunity to work with an emerging threat to our fresh and marine environments and, as yet, we do not fully understand the effect of microplastics in the environment. This research is on the forefront of an emerging issue that people are only just realising the scale of the threat that our environment is facing. I hope that the research will be of great benefit to our understanding of microplastics and the environments in which we are carrying out our studies.

“Funding from the Roger De Freitas Scholarship has allowed me to focus my research design investigating microplastic contamination in the River Thames and has allowed me to purchase equipment that has been essential for my fieldwork.

“Without this support, my research would not have been possible.”



# Celebrating volunteers: 2019/20

  
**1,106**  
VOLUNTEERS

  
**353**  
ALUMNI  
VOLUNTEER  
MENTORS

  
**131**  
CAREERS TALKS  
DELIVERED  
BY ALUMNI  
VOLUNTEERS

## Volunteering to support current and prospective students

Alumni have given their time virtually this year to support a host of new digital activities. These include answering questions at Online Open Days and Facebook Live events, giving talks to prospective students and hosting social media takeovers. Alumni have also supported virtual employability events to help new graduates entering the world of work and held mock interviews online.

One alumnus, Mark Donald (Law, 1996), tried his hand at both online and face-to-face volunteering, firstly coming to campus in early March for a day of interviews and then when lockdown struck, conducting sessions virtually. Students found the experience extremely helpful.

“Useful to be put on the spot and develop rapport with a person within the profession. Mark created a really calm and positive atmosphere.”  
Student

**10,249**  
VOLUNTEERING HOURS  
TO THE CAMPAIGN  
**THANK YOU!**

Alumnus Mark Donald (Law, 1996) conducting virtual interviews with Exeter students

## Business School alumni pick up the phone to persuade students to choose Exeter

This summer, University of Exeter Business School alumni from around the world dedicated hours of their time speaking to Exeter offer-holders from their home countries as part of a brand new project.

41 alumni from 18 different countries spoke to 143 prospective students over a two week period. The conversations gave offer-holders the chance to speak with an Exeter graduate from their own country about the experiences they had studying in the city – an opportunity which was particularly important this year given the disruption to international study caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Almost 90% of the applicants completed a post-call survey indicated that the call had increased the likelihood of them studying at Exeter. Caller Susan Waithaka, MSc Financial Analysis and Fund Management graduate and Investment Analyst based in Kenya, said “My first phone call was the best, we talked for 40 minutes. I think this is a really good initiative, and if I had got this call before I came to Exeter, I'd be less anxious and at ease.”

## Alumni Volunteer Awards

After a tough decision making process, the Alumni Volunteers of the Year for 2020 were announced. **Bridget Garrood** (Sociology, 1984) won the Debbie Hill Award for the Exceptional Support of Students for being instrumental in helping set up the LGBTQ+ and Law Exeter student action project. And **Barbara Schudel-Simpson** (French and German, 1968) won the Nicholas Bull Award for the Exceptional Support of the Alumni Community thanks to her passion, enthusiasm and commitment to Exeter's flourishing alumni community in France,

Bridget said: “This award is lovely news. We may be in lockdown, off campus, in furlough, challenging COVID-19 on the frontline or behind it, but as students, staff and alumni of the University of Exeter, we are all connected by our Exeter links. This connectedness holds us together across generations and around the globe.”

Barbara said: “I am a firm believer that you get as much, if not more, out of any ‘investment’, as you put in and as far as Alumni ‘work’ goes, this is very true! Over the years, alumni events have been highlights in my life, not only because I met old friends, from my time, but because I also made new ones – our University was the binding factor. On each occasion, I was made to feel that I was ‘family’ and this is reward enough. This is what motivates me – and this is how I hope others will feel, too. The Nicholas Bull Volunteer Award 2020 came as a surprise, in the midst of the present pandemic and I'm absolutely delighted.”

## Feeling inspired?

If you'd like to get involved, please visit [exeter.ac.uk/volunteer](https://exeter.ac.uk/volunteer) to find our more information.



Bridget Garrood  
(Sociology, 1984)



Barbara Schudel-Simpson  
(French and German, 1968)

# The HT Foundation Masters Scholarship

## helping talented Chinese students to study at Exeter



Norman Ho and Nok Yin Ma meeting for the first time in Hong Kong, this August.

The HT Foundation Masters Scholarship programme established in 2016 is funded by alumnus Norman Ho (Economics, 1976), through the Ho Tim Foundation. It aims to support the most promising candidates from China to undertake Masters level study at the University of Exeter.

### Nok Yin Ma – MSc Global Sustainability Solutions (2020-21)

This year we welcomed the fifth HT Foundation Scholar, Nok Yin Ma to Exeter. Nok Yin is undertaking a Masters in Global Sustainability Solutions, which he hopes will deepen his knowledge of global environmental issues, and further develop his personal interests in seeking resolutions to climate change. Despite the current pandemic, Nok Yin and Norman were able to meet in Hong Kong prior to his journey to Exeter.

### Past scholars have gone on to achieve success in their chosen fields

#### Su Chang – MSc Sustainable Development (2019-20)

“Without this scholarship I would not have been able to move to the UK from my home in China, complete my postgraduate studies at Exeter, and reap the benefits of living in one of the most scenic cities in the UK. It has helped me to set clear goals for my future and to determine my career path.

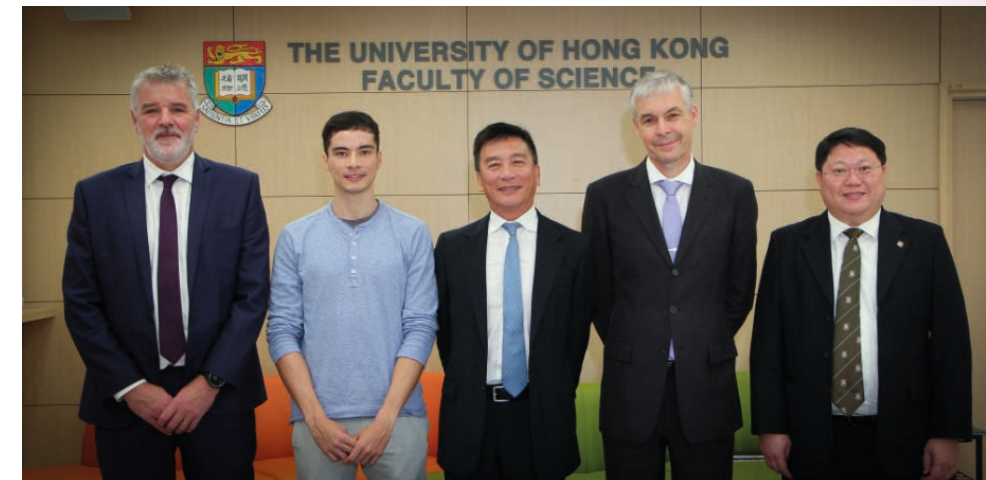
“At Exeter I found myself surrounded by many experts in the area of environment, which provided me a source of rich learning and gave me a strong sense of purpose and mission. It was quite overwhelming at times, and in my first months at Exeter, I felt a strong case of imposter syndrome.

“However, being a recipient of the HT Foundation Scholarship taught me new skills and knowledge that will serve me well in my future career and reminded me that someone believed in my capacity and my place at Exeter. Upon graduating earlier this year, I was delighted to have been awarded a PhD position at King's College London to further my academic career, after which, I hope to return to China to work in a research institution or think-tank engaged in development policy research. I appreciate the incredibly valuable year I have had at the University of Exeter, which would not have been possible without the HT Foundation Scholarship.”

### Dominic Brettell – Masters by Research in Biological Science (2016-17)

“My time at Exeter left a deep impression. I was very appreciative to have been selected as the first recipient of the HT Foundation Scholarship. It had long been an ambition of mine to study a postgraduate research programme, and the generous support of the HT Foundation enabled me to fulfil these ambitions.

“Four years on, I'm happy to say that many of my ambitions are being fulfilled. For the past two years, I have been working as a sustainability consultant in Hong Kong involved in providing environmental, social and governance consulting and advisory services for clients spanning various industries.”



Norman Ho (centre) and Dominic Brettell (second left), HT Foundation Scholar 2016-17 with representatives from University of Exeter and the University of Hong Kong





Toni Clark, The A.G. Leventis Foundation Doctoral Scholar

## Number of funded doctoral and postdoctoral researchers at Exeter supported by The A.G. Leventis Foundation reaches new high

**Funding from The A.G. Leventis Foundation continues to play a central role in supporting a range of different teaching, research and public engagement programmes within the Department of Classics and Ancient History.**

Despite COVID-19 disruptions, researchers and students supported by the Foundation have had another busy year in the field of Hellenic Studies. In December 2019, the University of Exeter was delighted to host the latest Leventis conference, on the subject of *Technological Animation in Classical Antiquity*. This event, organised by Dr Maria Gerolemou, Leventis Postdoctoral Research Fellow, brought together an international collection of scholars working on many different aspects of the study of automata in the ancient world. More recently many Leventis scholars have been involved in a series of virtual conferences and seminars, while continuing to be very actively engaged in publishing their research and ensuring that it reaches a wider audience.

The Foundation's continuing generosity to the Department of Classics and Ancient History has resulted in an unprecedented number of Leventis doctoral and postdoctoral researchers currently working at Exeter. The existing team of Leventis Research Fellow's and Leventis PhD Students were joined in September 2020 by Toni Clark, whose PhD thesis will explore the social and cultural importance of portable ivory artefacts in late antiquity.

“I am sincerely grateful to the Leventis Foundation for supporting me in my doctoral research and for giving me the chance to join the University of Exeter's vibrant research and teaching community. My aim is to relate the materiality of ivory artefacts to their form, social functions and cultural meanings, including examining the evidence for contemporary beliefs and associations concerning elephant ivory. I believe that my research will contribute to and enrich our knowledge of the social and cultural history of late antiquity and of the historic ivory collections in museums today.”

Over the past twenty years, generations of early-career academics, graduate students and undergraduates have benefitted enormously from funded research and teaching at Exeter, thanks to the A.G. Leventis Foundation.



# How the Alumni Annual Fund was spent in 2019/20

Thank you to the thousands of supporters who gave to the Alumni Annual Fund this year.

**TOTAL OF  
£207,799  
FUNDS RAISED  
IN 2019/20**

**85  
STUDENT  
PROJECTS  
SUPPORTED  
ACROSS THE  
UNIVERSITY**

**20,800  
STUDENTS  
INVOLVED  
IN PROJECTS  
SUPPORTED  
BY YOU**

**100  
STUDENT  
CALLERS**

**SHARED OVER  
2,904  
CONVERSATIONS  
WITH ALUMNI**

**THROUGH THE ALUMNI  
ANNUAL FUND'S  
TWO CALLING  
CAMPAIGNS  
DURING 2019/20**

## Highlights of the year

### Countrywide travel now possible for promoted Sports Clubs thanks to funding from the Annual Fund

Two new mini buses have been purchased and are now based at Exeter Sports Park. With Exeter's Mens and Women's Rugby and Hockey teams promoted to National Leagues, the travel requirement increased significantly and the Athletics Union could show that purchasing their own minibuses would cut travel costs. Unable to fund all the costs of these mini buses from their own budgets they made a successful application for assistance from the Alumni Annual Fund. The minibuses have since been used by 1,224 students travelling from National Competitions to the French Alps and they have helped staff travel to recruitment and BUCS events, such as the Henley Regatta.



New minibus funded by the Alumni Annual Fund

“ I cannot quite express how much of a difference this is going to make. All I can say again is thank you so much. It is so wonderful that the University has put these measures in place – I was quite scared about how I was going to manage financially over these next few months, but this grant will allow me to survive whilst I figure out my next steps. ”

*Anonymous*

### Students facing hardship during pandemic helped with Alumni support

The University of Exeter's Emergency Assistance Fund, was set-up to provide financial support to students facing hardship due to the coronavirus crisis in April. And its funding was doubled thanks to long-term supporter Santander Universities and alumni donations from the Alumni Annual Fund.

A total of £250,000 was added to the fund so that students could be supported during the early months of COVID-19 pandemic. In the first month alone after its launch on 1 April, 299 applications for assistance were received with £146,000 disbursed to students suffering unexpected financial difficulties due to the Coronavirus outbreak. Claimants reported hardship due to a variety of factors such as job losses, additional accommodation pressures relating to travel bans or isolation requirements; and the impact of illness on themselves or family members. A new fund 'Success for All' is now available to help with student hardship.

### Support made available for student recruitment at Penryn

The costs involved in attending open days is often prohibitive for some students wanting to travel to the campus in Cornwall. The majority of visitors need to stay overnight and the cost of this plus transport can make it prohibitively expensive for many potential students. Alumni donations to the Scholars Fund subsidised travel and accommodation for those students with the greatest need, helping them to attend open days and make the best decision about their education.

### Christmas shoebox gifts for the homeless project

Students of the YMCA Society Exeter wanted to provide some Christmas cheer for the residents of YMCA homeless hostel in Exeter. The project, supported by the Alumni Annual Fund, was a big success. Shoeboxes were filled with gifts mainly purchased from local retailers and the local Christmas market. And Christmas cards were hand written by students to go into every box for that personal touch. Over 50 students were involved in a night of wrapping boxes with a speaker from the YMCA talking to the group about the impact the project would have on local vulnerable people. The boxes being emphatically received by the staff later that night.



Students preparing Christmas boxes for local residents of YMCA Exeter



# Planning to Succeed

Ben and Sheena Parker Scholar, Zain Ahmed, reflects on his time at Exeter and the impact of his scholarship

“I had a wonderful time at Exeter and it really helped me kick-start my career post-graduation. I am delighted to support the Exeter Scholars programme to ensure more talented young people can have the same experiences and opportunities as I did.”

*Alumnus and donor Ben Parker (BA Music and Modern Languages, 2000)*

Zain is the first member of his family to go to university and his scholarship is helping him take his first steps towards achieving his ambition to become a doctor. From funding travel to hospital placements to enabling him to enjoy medical society events, Zain's scholarship has been a great help. He is now in his second year and taking another step towards his lifelong goal.

“Before university I attended the ‘Exeter Scholars’ programme which was essentially a summer programme where I got to experience what life would be like on my course and at Exeter. This was very helpful for me as none of my family members had been to university before.

“Getting a scholarship is something I am really grateful for, not for the additional financial independence but the freedom it has given me. There are aspects of university life that would have been much harder for me financially, and I may not have taken part in activities on the basis of not being able to afford it.

“Academically, I found the first year of medicine very interesting and challenging in many ways, and I think the style of teaching was well suited to me. Outside the classroom I attended various events put on by Med Soc and the other medical societies (e.g. Anatomy Soc). I also got involved in the Islamic society, where I played football weekly and attended events.

“I intend to become a doctor but I am yet to decide on the exact specialty I want to go into – I have an interest in Plastic Surgery and Sports and Exercise Medicine. I will do my foundation training for two years after my degree. Then I might take a year out to either work abroad or travel before specialty training. But I am not a rigid person, I think holding yourself to 5/10 year plans means you might lose out on opportunities that come out of randomness. However I imagine my life to be a fulfilling one after graduation.”

“Getting a scholarship is something I am really grateful for, it has given me freedom. There are parts of university life that would have been much harder for me without it.”





Former Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Steve Smith and Matt Hutnell, Director at Santander Universities

## Santander's support for students during the pandemic sees their total giving at Exeter surpass £1.9 million



Graduates received a hamper filled with small gifts and a note thanking them for their work during the pandemic

Matt Hutnell, Director at Santander Universities, visited the University of Exeter at the start of the year to attend a celebration event of our partnership and sign a new three year funding agreement. The event celebrated 10 years of collaboration between Exeter and Santander Universities.

Former recipient of a Santander SME internship, Entrepreneurship grant, and 2017 winner of the Santander Universities Entrepreneurship Awards, Kalkidan Legesse (BA Politics, Philosophy and Economics with Industry, 2014) spoke at the start of the event about the impact of her support from Santander Universities and how that led to her successfully opening an ethically sourced clothing store in Exeter. She said: "The support has been the difference between finding success, being competitive in the market, accessing networks that have amazing experience or trying to figure things out in our bedrooms by ourselves! The support from Santander is valuable for all sorts of things including social mobility."

In addition to this new agreement, Santander Universities awarded the University additional funding to support students affected by the COVID pandemic.

The funding was split between the Emergency Student Support Fund created to support a number of student entrepreneur start-up awards, and students facing unanticipated financial challenges as a result of the pandemic. Students received awards to cover essential supplies including, food, rent, household bills and IT equipment to aid study remotely.

Graduates in medicine-related subjects at the University of Exeter received hampers over the summer thanking them for their work during the pandemic. Recent Medicine and Medical Imaging final year students and graduates from Exeter who chose to graduate early to support the NHS received a hamper filled with small gifts and a note from a senior staff member at their institution.

James Farquhar, early graduate, said: "It's been both challenging and rewarding to be part of a busy clinical team during the pandemic. I've learned so much and gained incredible experience. It was a wonderful surprise to receive the hamper, I wasn't expecting such a gift. It really cheered me up after a long shift at my new job."



## How you can show your support

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

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

To volunteer your time and expertise please visit: [exeter.ac.uk/volunteer](https://exeter.ac.uk/volunteer)

## Contact us:

@ [alumni@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@exeter.ac.uk)

+44 (0)1392 723141

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

@exalumni

/exeteralumni

exeter\_alumni

/company/university-of-exeter-alumni

Global Advancement, University of Exeter,  
Northcote House, The Queen's Drive, Exeter,  
Devon EX4 4QJ, United Kingdom.

