

# INSPIRE

THE UNIVERSITY OF BATH SUPPORTER MAGAZINE

08

## CHILDHOOD UNPLUGGED

Is too much screen time bad for our children?

10

## BUILDING TOMORROW

The rise of eco-architecture: why it matters and how you're helping.

12

## UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

From podium to possibility, find out where a scholarship can lead.

06

## Human 2.0

Discover the new tech transforming lives.

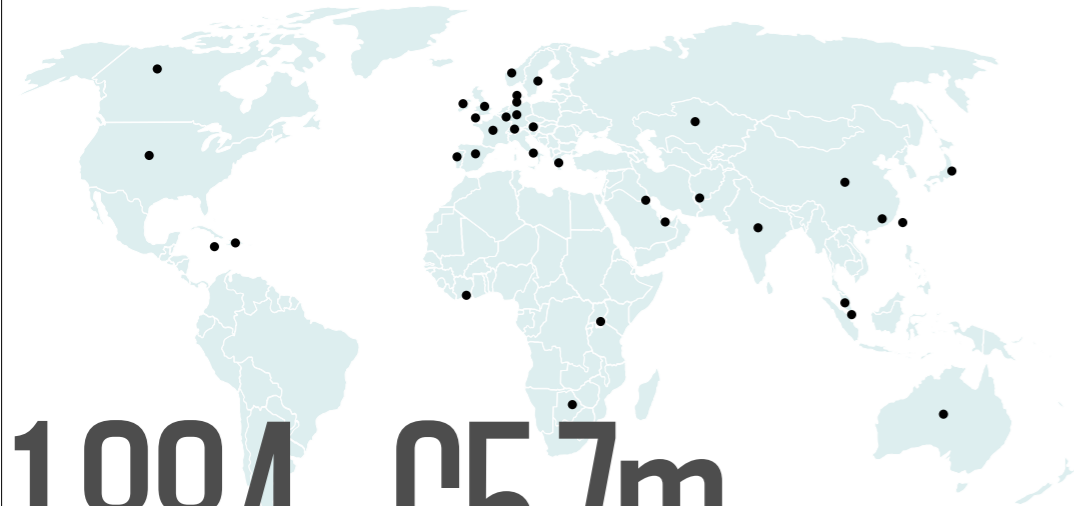


UNIVERSITY OF  
**BATH**



# PHILANTHROPY IN NUMBERS

Your generous contributions in 2023/24 are transforming lives and making a lasting impact.

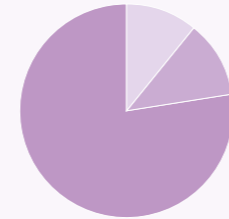


**1,884** **£5.7m**

donors from 36 countries

pledged in total

### WHERE ALL PLEDGES CAME FROM:

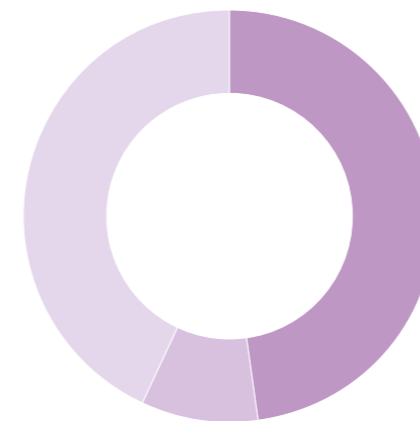


- 11% Corporates
- 12% Trusts and foundations
- 77% Alumni and friends

### ALUMNI FUND: THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE GIVING

**£321,199** donated through the regular giving of **1,808** alumni and friends

### WHAT YOUR ALUMNI FUND SUPPORTED IN 2023/24



- 48% Scholarships for students who may not have otherwise had the chance to attend university
- 9% Students' Union activity to enhance extracurriculars
- 43% Grants for student support, placements, student-led projects, research and campus activities

### YOUR SUPPORT FOR FUNDRAISING APPEALS HAS ACHIEVED:

**252**



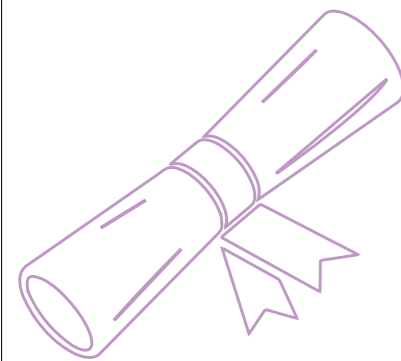
cap and gowns for graduating students from lower income households

More than **£10k** to fund 5 additional placement grants

**1 GOLD SCHOLARSHIP** for a deserving student from a disadvantaged background



UNIVERSITY OF BATH



**44%**

Research in sustainability, digital, and health and wellbeing

#### RESEARCH WITH IMPACT

Across the University and our three strategic themes – health and wellbeing, sustainability and digital – we are growing our research strengths, with your support. Find out more:

- Digital page 06
- Health and wellbeing page 08
- Sustainability page 10

**37%**

Student support and enterprise

#### STUDENT SUPPORT

Your gifts to scholarships support bright students to fulfil their potential.

- Student support page 12

**19%**

Other priorities

These include student awards and prizes, and endowed posts. Find out more about endowed giving on pages 15 – 17.

**337**

scholarships supported

# WELCOME



It's been a standout year for philanthropy at Bath thanks to our alumni and supporters. The numbers speak volumes about the unwavering commitment and generosity of our global community. But it's the stories of impact – the opportunities for education and innovation you've made possible – which are the true measure of success.

In your annual edition of *Inspire*, we share the experiences of our students, researchers and donors and take stock of what we have achieved this past year together. It's been a challenging one, with the cost-of-living crisis affecting many of our community, but your support has eased the financial stress for those hit hardest.

As you'll see over the coming pages, this support comes in many shapes and sizes. Whether it's a single or regular donation, an endowed fund or a legacy – each and every gift makes a real difference to people's lives and the impact of our research.

I joined the University in January 2022; we were still in partial lockdown and much of the activity we had taken for granted was on hold. We used the global reopening to review the ways we work and reengage with our loyal alumni and supporters around the world. This publication is just one example of our renewed approach, and I hope you enjoy reading about the fabulous impact of your support.

It is with great sadness I share the news that I will be leaving the University in February 2025 to spend more time with my family in the north of the country. Bath is the sixth UK higher education institution I have worked at, and I can safely say your community is one of the most friendly and welcoming. You are rightly proud of the University and all it has achieved, as our recent alumni survey shows, and so many of you would recommend the institution to family and friends. I am constantly struck by how impressive the students and alumni are that I meet.

Thank you for welcoming me into your community and for the generosity of gifts, time and thought you have given the University. We need your help, and the fact you have stepped up to donate £5.7 million in our last financial year is wonderful. I am particularly proud of the new Research with Impact PhD Scholarships, and that in the past year we have managed to increase the University endowment by 50% – both hugely important to the future of Bath. I hope to see and thank some of you in person.

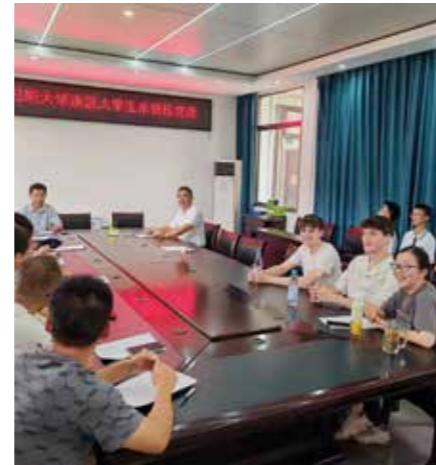
**Gordon Cox**  
Director of Advancement  
Advancement Office

# UNIVERSITY UPDATES



## New partnership takes flight

Bath researchers have joined HyFIVE – a UK consortium working to develop a hydrogen fuel system for aviation – adding to its sky-high efforts to reduce the impact of air travel on our vulnerable planet. The consortium will receive initial funding of £37 million from industry and the government.



## Humanities students go on an EdVenture

Alumnus Mickey Ko provided funding for two Bath students to participate in China EdVenture 2024. The students, both studying international politics and modern languages with Mandarin, spent five weeks at Shexian School as part of the fully funded cultural exchange – immersing themselves in the culture and language while teaching English to local students.

## Funding solutions

Six inspiring projects in the field of life sciences have recently been awarded £20,000 each as part of the Synergy Awards. These awards – generously funded by alumnus and pharmaceutical entrepreneur, Professor Raymond F. Schinazi – support projects addressing global challenges.

The successful ideas include exploration of novel approaches to overcoming drug resistance in skin cancer and harnessing microorganisms for sustainable construction.



## LEAPing into the future

The University has joined the new LEAP Digital Health Hub for South West England and Wales. Funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, the £4.11 million hub will revolutionise the region's digital health landscape.

“We are really excited to be part of an effort with the potential to unlock new avenues for research, innovation and partnership,” says Professor Christos Vasilakis from our School of Management.



## Seaweed packaging innovator receives landmark investment

Kelpi, a firm that uses seaweed to create sustainable packaging, is getting closer to market after securing £4.35 million in investment. Co-founder and Bath bioprocess engineer, Professor Chris Chuck, says: “It has been fantastic to be able to leverage the University’s capability in sustainable technology research and develop an idea all the way through to creating genuinely novel materials on scale.” Chris began his research journey at Bath thanks to a donor-funded Whorrod Fellowship.

Read more about Chris’ sustainability research: [bit.ly/ChrisChuck](https://bit.ly/ChrisChuck)



## Investing in innovation

Four University of Bath budding entrepreneurs have been announced as the winners of this year’s Alumni Innovation Awards – securing £20,000 each to help turn their business ideas into reality.

“Winning the award has been the best accolade and is a testament to the importance of the work I have been doing during my PhD,” says recipient Zoe Jeffrey. Her research on teenage girls’ disengagement in school physical education led her to develop VibeStride, an augmented reality gaming app aiming to transform the experience for all pupils.

The awards have been generously supported by His Excellency Khalil Foulathi and the late Bruce Brain.



## Labs for life science

Local pharmaceutical product manufacturer, Pharmaxo, generously donated a gift-in-kind to the University worth £230,000. This includes vital laboratory equipment and private study booths that will aid research activity and enhance student experience across the University. Pharmaxo is already a valuable research partner of our Department of Life Sciences.

## Engineer’s legacy lives on at Bath

A further seven ambitious mechanical engineering students have received funding for various opportunities as part of the Arthur Clements Awards. These include an internship with Sherpa Mobile Robotics, development of an electronic plane model and a volunteering trip to Madagascar for HoverAid.

The awards are funded by a legacy of the late engineering entrepreneur Arthur Clements CBE, whose Trust kindly gave a further £290,000 in 2023/24.

Read more: [bit.ly/ArthurClements](https://bit.ly/ArthurClements)

## Success at the SPARKies Awards

EnsiliTech – a Bath spinout that makes vaccines safer – won Most Innovative Use of Tech at the SPARKies Awards 2024. Founder Dr Asel Sartbaeva developed this life-saving research thanks to early support from alumni and friends and has recently secured a £1.7 million government contract to develop the world’s first thermally stable mRNA vaccine.

Meanwhile, the Best Mentor Award went to alumnus Laurence James who volunteers his time with the Enterprise Bath team to guide and empower student entrepreneurs.



# HUMAN 2.0

**New technology is enabling us to go beyond our biological limitations. Find out how, with your help, Bath is transforming lives.**

**A** motorbike accident left Owen Collumb paralysed from the chest down. 20 years later, he's won an international athletics competition, Cybathlon, using neurotechnology developed at Bath. It's opened new horizons of possibility for Owen. "I was a keen sportsman before my injury," he says. "[The research] has had a major impact on my life and wellbeing."

To compete in virtual races, Owen wears a headset that measures brain activity in the motor cortex – the area of the brain that coordinates movement. Using sophisticated signal processing strategies developed by Professor Damien Coyle, these are translated into control signals that enable the wearer to interact with a computer using only their minds.

"There are so many applications for this technology," says Damien. "In our ongoing trials it's been shown to treat post-traumatic stress disorder and help people with their rehabilitation after a stroke." Moreover, for those with locked-in syndrome, a condition where individuals are conscious but unable to move, it's hoped this could provide a basic communication channel and eventually enable them to autonomously steer a wheelchair, control a robotic manipulator or use a smartphone.

Complete paralysis after a brain injury can make it difficult to determine if the person is consciously aware, but brain-computer interfaces can help. "We ask them to imagine movements while wearing the headset," he explains. "We can then

read the signals to detect levels of consciousness, which current clinical tests can't do. We carry out several sessions to train the person to get better at using the tech, with a view to enabling them to communicate without movement." Trials are ongoing and Damien hopes this will enable clinicians to assess awareness in patients, as well as empower people with physical impairments.

This is just one of the incredible innovations being developed in our Bath Institute for the Augmented Human (IAH), of which Damien is the Director. The IAH combines disciplines – from robotics, engineering and computer science, to health, neuroscience and psychology – to enhance the physical and cognitive abilities of individuals. They take a holistic approach that considers the technological, ethical, societal and regulatory aspects of human augmentation.

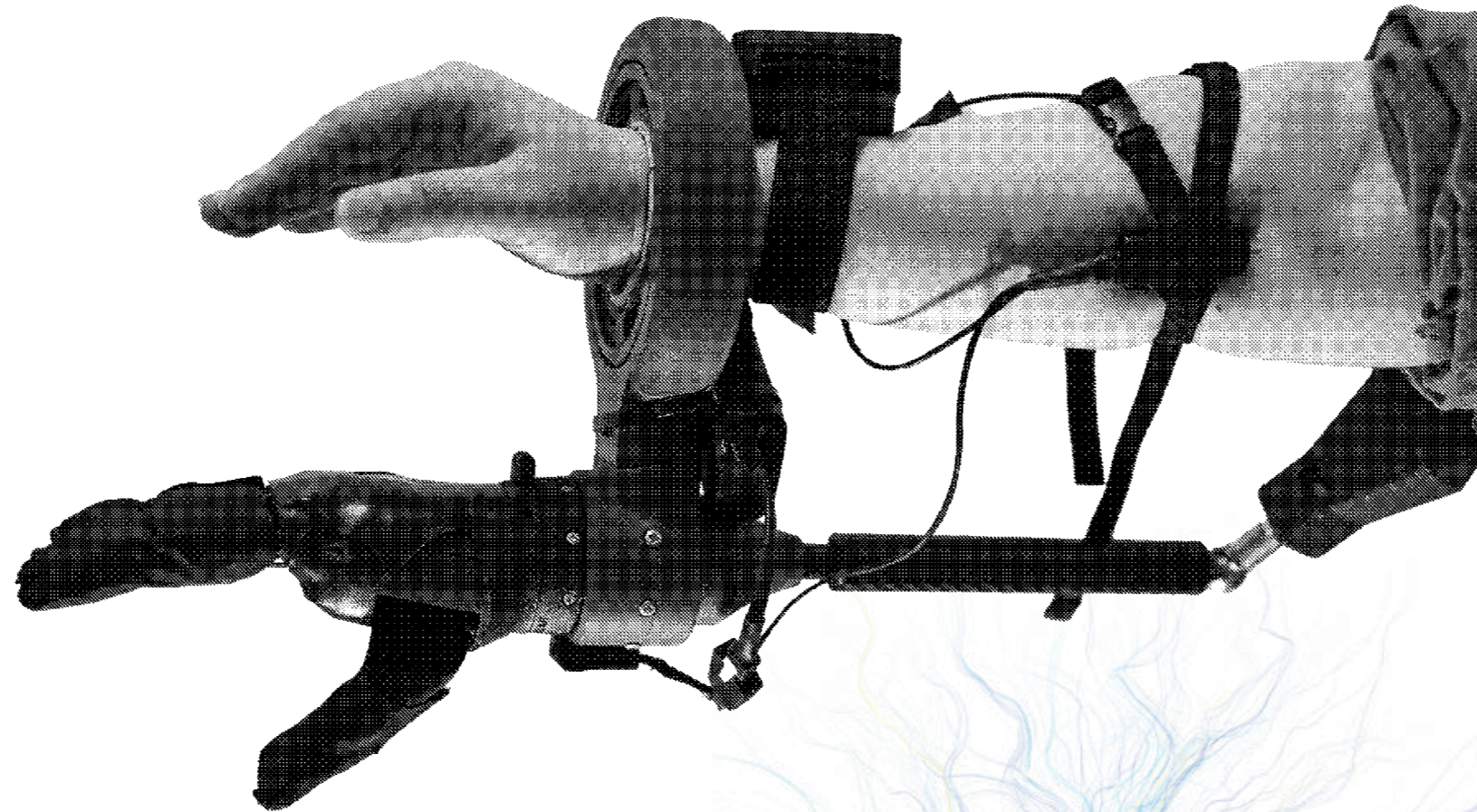
It's a field that excites alumnus and entrepreneur Nick Hynes. After graduating with an Executive MBA from our School of Management, Nick founded numerous digital ventures. He's generously



**I WILL ASSIST SOMEONE TO REALISE THEIR POTENTIAL AND HELP PUSH THE LIMITS OF SCIENCE IN THIS LIFE-CHANGING RESEARCH.**

▲ The brainwave-reading headset is unobtrusive, easy to deploy and can be worn under hats. It can be used to assist people in everyday life, sport and medicine

◀ On this issue's cover is Dr Leen Jabban, a former PhD scholar and current lecturer at Bath. Her research focuses on upper-limb prostheses and sensory feedback



gifted over £109,000 to establish the Hynes PhD Research with Impact Scholarship to support a postgraduate student to complete a PhD over four years within the IAH. Nick says: "My Bath experience helped me to achieve a successful career and I see it as my duty and honour to enable others to reach their potential and focus on original research in an area of immense impact."

Other researchers within the Institute have also benefitted from philanthropic support, such as Dr Benjamin Metcalfe, who applies his engineering expertise to healthcare. Benjamin was the first in his family to go to university, thanks to scholarships supported by alumni. "I'm now leading one of the UK's top electronic and electrical engineering departments, as well as Deputy Director of the IAH," he says. "None of that would have been possible without the seed investment that the sponsors provided me with. The IAH is pioneering, and it demonstrates Bath's commitment to excellence and impact."

This new PhD scholarship will enable more bright minds like Ben to thrive at Bath. Nick adds: "Through my donation and support, I will assist someone to realise their potential and help push the limits of science in this life-changing research." ✨

## DIGITAL

Our digital research helps make the world safer, smarter and more connected – from developing ways to predict the future of the climate and improving the efficiency of supply chain technology, to protecting people online and more.





# CHILDHOOD UNPLUGGED

The Norland Foundation supports important research on the impact of screen time on preschoolers.

Between tablets, phones and TV, most of us now spend hours gazing into one digital screen or another. There are questions over how much screen time can be healthy or harmful, but for preschoolers, whose brains are at a critical stage in development, it's moved from a parental concern to a vital research topic. Is there a cost on cognitive growth, social skills and emotional wellbeing, or does screen time have surprising benefits? That's what PhD scholar Abigail Bradley is investigating, thanks to support from The Norland Foundation.

The renowned early childhood higher education centre, Norland, has generously donated more than £105,000, spread over four years, to fund Abigail's PhD within the Department of Psychology's Babylab. The lab provides facilities to study what goes on in the minds of little ones. Using specialist eye-tracking software and two-way mirrors, our researchers explore how young children see and interact with the world around them and the factors that influence their development.

"I've always wanted to go into research but never thought it would be possible due to finances," says Abigail, who gained a master's from Bath in applied clinical psychology before applying for her dream PhD scholarship. She continues: "I feel so privileged to receive this opportunity and dive into a topic I'm so passionate about. So much development happens in those preschool years that shapes who you become as an adult. I want to help people and have an impact, and this research is a brilliant opportunity to do that."



I WANT TO HELP PEOPLE AND HAVE AN IMPACT.

Both the University and Norland have done much in the way of recognition and research in support of neurodivergent communities. The Foundation funded the development of the Transforming Autism Project and a local 'stay and play' provision for children with special needs. Meanwhile Bath's Centre for Applied Autism Research (CAAR) is advancing knowledge of the strengths and challenges experienced by autistic people, as well as delivering events such as the Bath Employment Support School for Autism, in partnership with JP Morgan, to ease the transition from university to work. Autistic university students from CAAR also organise the University Transition Autism School to support school leavers.

Our Head of the Department of Psychology, Professor Mark Brosnan, adds: "We are very grateful for Norland's generous support. PhD students are essential to driving research forward that will benefit current and future generations, as they, in turn, become the future innovators and educators the world needs. It's a cycle of opportunity and societal impact."

Abigail will focus on how screen time affects neurodivergent preschool children specifically, as PhD supervisor Dr Michelle St Clair explains: "Neurodivergent children may be more drawn to screens because of the pace or predictability of stimulation – it may even be beneficial. It's key that we understand the impacts so parents, educators and health professionals can make informed decisions as they navigate the digital landscape."

This scholarship is part of Bath's Research with Impact PhD programme, made possible by philanthropic donations to support students over four years with a UKRI-pegged stipend and some study costs, while the University funds the fees.

Principal of Norland, Dr Janet Rose, says: "Part of the Foundation's mission is to promote the advancement of education in the early years, including supporting children with additional needs. This important and topical research will undoubtedly contribute to our growing understanding of the impact of digital technology and its special focus on neurodivergent children is of particular significance."

▲ Our Babylab explores how infants and young children see and interact with the world around them

▶ PhD scholar Abigail will research the effects of screen time

◀ This eye-tracking device measures how quickly babies can switch their attention

## HEALTH & WELLBEING



Our research leads to improved health and wellbeing. We create technologies that tackle disease, help sportspeople reduce injury and improve performance, and support systems to deliver better healthcare for all.



# Building a better world

How Bath architects are working to preserve our past and protect our future.

**D**id you know more than 40% of global greenhouse gas emissions come from buildings? In a bid to tackle this, sustainable architecture plays an important part in minimising the ecological impact of buildings, while enabling communities to thrive.

▼ Alumni and friends are creating opportunities for education and innovation in sustainable architecture

At Bath, we're applying our expertise in architecture and civil engineering to develop solutions – from strengthening ageing concrete structures, to designing better shelters to improve living conditions for refugees in Jordan. Closer to home, our unique surroundings provide the opportunity to set the standard for sustainable heritage conservation and regenerative design.

"We use Bath as a teaching resource because we have over 5,000 listed buildings and historic landscapes," says Professor Marion Harney from our Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering, and Chair of the Bath World Heritage Site Advisory Board. "We should aspire for excellence in design. It should be so much more than functional, low maintenance and inoffensive, which is what could happen in the absence of good design guidance."

A collaboration between the University and Bath and North East Somerset Council (B&NES) aims to deliver just that. A generous £60,000 donation from the Medlock Charitable Trust will fund the city's first Architect in Residence. The trust is led by Bath honorary graduate and entrepreneur David Medlock D.L., a longstanding supporter of the

University and former Pro-Chancellor from 2003 to 2014. Our first endowed chair, the Medlock Chair in Engineering, was created in 2008 with a gift of £1 million. "The city and the University mean a great deal to me," says David, who grew up here. "I'm proud to support this initiative, which will protect the Outstanding Universal Values of this double-inscribed World Heritage Site."

Our Head of Architecture and Civil Engineering, Professor Andrew Heath, says: "It is a privilege to appoint award-winning and internationally renowned architect, Professor Bob Allies, as the first Architect in Residence, something that would not have been possible without this generous support." Marion adds: "For architects and developers, designing in Bath should be an invitation to excel, and Bob's appointment will help us to achieve that."

In this role, Bob will develop guidance to ensure design excellence in the city. He will also carry out research and teaching for our acclaimed architecture course, which is ranked top five in the UK league tables and in the top 100 QS World University Rankings by Subject.

To help create more opportunities for bright minds to benefit from a Bath education, BLDA Architects has generously pledged more than £50,000\* to support three promising architecture students. The company established these scholarships in 2018, and this latest pledge includes enhanced pastoral support, including mentoring and the opportunity to undertake a placement with the firm.

Bath alumnus John Perry is Senior Director at BLDA. He also supports students through his personal philanthropy to Gold Scholarships. "My profession has provided me with great enjoyment and satisfaction, all due in no small part to my years at Bath," says John. "The seven years needed to study architecture leads to a huge personal financial investment and I see it as important to do what little I can to help those who would otherwise be unable to study. I am delighted to be involved with the University in this small way."

As the demand for green buildings grows, so does the need for fresh minds equipped with the knowledge and passion to drive this transformation. Thank you for furthering this important research and nurturing future talent. ✨

\*Pledge was made in the 24/25 financial year

## IT'S IMPORTANT TO HELP THOSE WHO WOULD OTHERWISE BE UNABLE TO STUDY.



## SUSTAINABILITY



Our research is leading to low-carbon living. With your support, we're exploring how we travel, build, manufacture, heat and eat more sustainably, bringing together innovative technological solutions with insight into human behaviour, policy and society.



# Life-changing scholarships

Your support is unlocking more opportunities for bright students.

Scholarships are key to ensuring students can overcome barriers to education, and our Gold Scholarships enable 50 new undergraduates to excel every year. Now, we're building on its success by offering even more enrichment opportunities for other low-income, talented students.

The new Bath Bursary Enhancement Programme has launched thanks to a generous donation\* of more than £58,000 from an alumnus. It's designed to equip students with the funding, skills, knowledge and social capital to succeed. This is a welcome addition to the variety of support on offer at Bath. Here, we shine a light on just some of the impactful scholarships and bright students you so kindly support.

\*Gift was made in the 24/25 financial year

**THANK YOU FOR EMPOWERING ME AND SO MANY OTHERS. EDUCATION IS A BEACON OF HOPE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE FACED MASSIVE CHALLENGES.**

**Gold Scholarships** provide students from disadvantaged backgrounds with a holistic package of support, including bursaries, mentoring and skills training. In a recent appeal, you raised £9,000 – enough to support a Gold Scholar in 2024/25.

“

The scholarship has meant having a community to support me in pushing myself further than I ever dreamt of otherwise. I've been able to expand what I can give back to the community by joining the disabled student committee, helping to shape the higher education experience for those with disabilities, as well as outreach opportunities, such as being a student ambassador at university open days.

The training sessions, as part of the scholarship, have helped equip me with the skills needed to apply myself both within and outside of academia. I'm taking an integrated master's course because I know the support I receive, both financially and mentally, is there to help me through.

”

**Alumni Fund Gold Scholar,  
Oliver Conibere  
(MBiol Biology 2025)**

**Sanctuary Scholarships** support UK asylum seekers who, unlike refugees, aren't eligible for student loans. These scholarships remove barriers to education, thanks to individual philanthropy and donations to the Alumni Fund.

“

My academic journey as a pharmacist in Syria was derailed by the war. It destroyed my dreams and forced me to flee my country. The Sanctuary Scholarship changed my life and reignited my aspirations.

I am now excited about my future. My aim is not only to succeed in the pharmaceutical industry, but also to give back and help other vulnerable students to access life-changing opportunities. To all who support scholarships at Bath, thank you for your incredible generosity and for investing in a future where education is a beacon of hope for those who have faced massive challenges. Thank you for empowering me and so many others.

”

**Appleton Sanctuary Scholar,  
Furat Al Yafi  
(MSc Drug Discovery 2024)**

**Sports scholars** benefit from a winning combination of tailored support and access to world-class facilities. The Alumni Fund also provides essential grants for competition entry, travel and kit.

“

This scholarship has been an incredible help. As the Paris Olympics drew closer, the pressure was on to ensure I was on top form. The scholarship helps me afford essential training equipment, higher quality food to fuel my body and travel expenses for university and training. It allows me the privilege of not needing a part-time job, which means I have extra time to study.

I am working hard to ensure I am performing to my full potential and this scholarship has facilitated this immeasurably. I am so grateful for this support, without which I wouldn't have been able to achieve my sporting or academic goals to the same capacity.

”

**Bill Whiteley Sports Scholar  
and silver medallist in artistic  
swimming at the Paris 2024  
Olympics, Kate Shortman  
(BSc International Management  
and Modern Languages 2025)**



## STUDENT SUPPORT

Talent knows no boundaries and should never be constrained by circumstance. With your support, the University provides scholarships and packages of support so talented students of all backgrounds can afford to come to Bath and thrive while they are here.

## THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE GIVING

Your gifts to the Alumni Fund and fundraising appeals add up to make a big difference. Here are highlights from 2023/24.



### Telethon raises £159,513 for the Alumni Fund

Over the summer and autumn Telethons, students engaged in meaningful conversations with alumni, fostering connections and raising vital funds. Donations are directed to scholarships, research and wherever the need is greatest. Last year, for instance, the Alumni Fund supported initiatives to help students with the cost-of-living crisis, such as establishing a community larder on campus to reduce food waste. The success of these campaigns is a testament to the power of connection and community here at Bath.

#### Alumni and students reflect on the Telethon...

“It was such a fun chat! It's great Bath has ways of connecting students with alumni like this.”

“Amazed by the kindness and brilliant service with the call and the video!”

“[The student] was really thoughtful and engaged on the call. It was a very good conversation.”



“Hearing alumni stories and sharing the successes of the Alumni Fund was so fulfilling.”

“People were so willing to help with career advice – it's lovely how supportive Bath alumni are.”

“Every donation, large or small, makes a big difference to students' lives, and we really appreciate it.”

### Gowns Appeal makes students' day

Thanks to alumni, almost 252 students from lower income households, care leavers and adult carers didn't have to worry about affording graduation gown hire. The appeal raised £10,289.50, which included gifts from 96 donors, plus £5,000 from the Alumni Fund.

“The free cap and gown were a reminder to us graduating students that the Bath community were supporting us from the start up until our final day.”  
**Jemma (MSc Chemistry 2024)**

### Placement Appeal raises over £10k

A growing number of students cannot afford to go on placement. They miss out on a valuable step in their development and important sectors like health and education are deprived of their talents, too. You raised over £10,000 to make an additional five placement grants possible. Psychology student Libby says: “Hearing that more students like me are going to receive grants has made me so proud. I know how worthwhile and ultimately life-changing a donation will be.”



# LEAVING A LASTING LEGACY

Isobel Michael and her brothers honoured their parents by creating the Bob Michael Gold Scholarship using a gift from their mother's Will, setting in motion a life-changing opportunity for three future Bath students.

A gift in your Will, no matter how large or small, can have a huge impact – whether that's through creating life-changing scholarships or by funding research that addresses global challenges.

Isobel Michael and her brothers used a deed of variation on their mother's Will to set up the Bob Michael Gold Scholarship, named after their father, an early Bath graduate, as a way of remembering and honouring their parents.

"We were looking at ways of remembering Mum and Dad, and we learned we could dedicate a scholarship; it just seemed a really great opportunity," says Isobel.

The University of Bath runs in the Michael family. Bob was one of our first graduates with an engineering degree in 1966, and Isobel and her younger brother are also alumni. Isobel cites the support her father received from an apprenticeship as the very reason he could study.

"Giving in this way means there's something in Dad's name creating opportunities for other people, like he had," says Isobel. "The Gold Scholarship will help people who might not have considered university or might struggle without additional support to access everything university life offers."

The first Bob Michael Gold Scholar began their studies in September 2024, with two more scholars beginning each consecutive year. ✨

▲ Isobel's father Bob Michael was one of our first graduates in 1966



## THANK YOU

A big thank you to the six individuals who pledged a gift to the University of Bath in their Will this past year.

We now have 83 members in our 1966 Society, which recognises those who pledge a legacy to Bath. The impact of a legacy gift will be felt throughout the University and beyond – from the students and researchers to the local and global community.

Physics alumnus Floyd Lazare kindly pledged an unrestricted gift:

"I chose to leave an unrestricted gift because I feel it is important for the University to have freedom regarding its funds, and I am confident that they will put it to good use where it is needed most."

No matter how you choose to include a gift to the University of Bath in your Will, we thank you.

**"The Gold Scholarship gave me the opportunity to attend university. Without the support network in place, the financial bursary and the available advice for or career progression, I would not be able to afford, let alone thrive, at university."**



Will Lutley, Brigid Memorial Gold Scholar (MEng Aerospace Engineering 2026)

# Supporting excellence in education

The Yew Chung Education Foundation honours Bath Emeritus Professor Jeff Thompson with a £1 million gift.

"Pioneering a new approach to education is never easy," says Dr Betty Chan Po-King, Chair of the non-profit Yew Chung Education Foundation, "as one inevitably challenges the existing paradigms. It can be a lonely journey."

Betty has challenged the status quo with her approach to Early Childhood Education and International Education. As CEO of the extensive network of Yew Chung and Yew Wah international schools, she has developed a distinctive bilingual (Chinese and English) and co-cultural (East and West) educational philosophy, pedagogy and leadership model.

Over the years, Betty found kinship with a fellow innovator in the field – a friend and colleague who shares her passion for developing new and impactful approaches to nurturing future leaders. "I feel incredibly blessed to know Jeff as a dear colleague and friend," she says, speaking of Emeritus Professor Jeff Thompson CBE.

In honour of their longstanding collaboration, the Yew Chung Education Foundation has made a £1 million endowment and a £55,000 gift to

▼ (L to R) Emeritus Professor Jeff Thompson CBE with Dr Betty Chan Po-King and Dr Mary Hayden

fund an academic post in our Department of Education. The endowed donation will provide a permanent source of income to fund the position, which will have a focus on International Education and be named The Yew Chung Jeff Thompson Lectureship/Senior Lectureship.

Jeff joined Bath in 1979 where he's held numerous senior leadership roles and spearheaded the international dimension of the MA in Education and the University's first professional doctorate, the Doctor of Education. During his distinguished career, Jeff has also been centrally involved in many innovations both nationally and internationally, notably the development of the national curriculum in the 1980s, and the International Baccalaureate from the early 1970s onwards.

"His world-class scholarship speaks for itself," adds Betty, "but it is his deep passion and enduring commitment to promoting progressive International Education that has revolutionised the field, and given educators like myself a voice on the global stage, as well as a like-minded community."

Betty's links to Bath have endured for nearly 30 years. Department of Education academics have been keynote speakers at international conferences that Betty has hosted, and she has supported Yew Chung teachers and leaders to study on Bath's MA in Education programme.

Dr Mary Hayden is Professor of International Education at the University and gave the orations for both Betty and Jeff at their honorary degree ceremonies in 2015 and 2014 respectively. "This generous gift acknowledges the long-standing links between two major contributors to the developing field of International Education," says Mary. "We are grateful to Dr Chan and the Yew Chung Education Foundation for recognising in this way the seminal contribution that Jeff has made to the field, and to relationships with valued colleagues worldwide."

Jeff adds: "I am delighted with this wonderful award, which is testament to the collaboration we – and colleagues from both our organisations – have shared for many years. I look forward to the continuing strengthening of our shared endeavours in International Education that this generous gift will help to support in future." ✨







ENDOWMENT

# Strength in numbers



## University Treasurer Calum Mercer on the impact of endowment giving and how the University manages these vital funds.

### Can you tell us about your background?

I'm Group Finance Director of the Institution of Civil Engineers and previously held numerous executive and non-executive roles in major organisations – everything from infrastructure and utilities to telecoms. I raised over £4 billion in finance from the bank and capital markets, before moving into the not-for-profit sector in health, social care and housing. What really inspires me is how you can use your skills to help make a real impact in people's lives, and the University is a great place to do that.

### What does your role as University Treasurer involve?

I'm a member of Council, which is the governing body of the University, made up of staff, students and lay members. As Treasurer, I chair the Finance Committee, which is responsible to Council for the University's finances, including budget setting, strategy and so on. I also chair the Investment Sub-Committee, made up of alumni and donors, who bring their expertise and commitment to the University to support us in making sure we're getting the best value from our assets.

### What are the benefits of making an endowed gift?

There are different ways of donating. You can give smaller amounts on a regular basis to the Alumni Fund, as I do, and that regularity means there's a consistent income to commit to supporting students and research projects. Others wish to endow their gift, either in their Will or during their lifetime, and the income generated makes a long-lasting impact. That could be establishing an endowed chair or academic post, scholarships, research or buildings. There's so much that can be done.

It creates a legacy – a lasting reminder of your contribution to the work of the University. For us, endowments enable us to attract other matched funding and leading academics. It means we're not dependent on fluctuations, such as student numbers and research grants. That security gives people the confidence that this is the place you want to be involved with.

### What can an endowment gift benefit?

A lot of thought goes into what kinds of activities make a difference and align with the donor's interests. It's a two-way process and starting that conversation [with the Advancement Office] can help bring out those ideas of what can be done. Similarly, if people are looking to leave a gift in their Will, it's worth having a discussion to ensure how it's described will make the most impact, even though it will hopefully be years down the line. It means people can leave something in the world that will benefit generations.

## AN ENDOWMENT CREATES A LASTING LEGACY.

### What rates of return can a donor expect?

We're currently working to a 4% return above inflation averaged over time on permanent endowed funds. That means a significant amount of income to spend each year to support activities, while maintaining the real value of the endowment.

A benefit of endowment is you can take more risk to generate higher returns. One example of how these gifts grow over time is an endowment gift we received in 1986 of £500,000 to support a Chair in the Faculty of Science. The value in 2023 was £1,148,542 – an increase of 130%.

In the 2023/24 academic year we had generous pledges of £3.75 million to endowed activity that will be paid in instalments over the coming years. Thank you to all those who contributed!

### What is Bath's approach to managing investments?

We recently consulted with alumni and supporters who have investment expertise to inform our approach. Following this, we changed our investment manager for endowment funds to CCLA. They specialise in universities, charities and churches. They have a long history of delivering very good returns in a way that considers ethical standards, ESG factors and sustainability. They are in alignment with the University's philosophy.

### What are the future plans for endowment?

It's an area we want to expand because it adds so much to our capacity to deliver. That's why we looked at our investment approach. As the endowment grows, it will support extra activities, students and research, and potentially buildings, to maintain and develop our position as one of the leading universities. ✨

## ENDOWMENT FAQ

### What does it mean to endow a gift?

Endowing a gift means it is invested for the long-term, although not always forever. The return on this money provides a regular income stream to support the University's objectives. There are endowed gifts at older institutions that have existed for centuries. Bath might be young, but academic institutions typically transcend global changes, shifting borders, wars and prosperity – making them perfect places for philanthropists to feel secure when considering their legacy and long-term impact from their gifts.

### Why are endowed gifts valuable to the University?

- Financial planning and security.
- Continuity of important work such as research.
- Alternative type of funding that diversifies income streams.
- Attracting talent through the prestige associated with endowed chairs and academic posts – faculty positions paid for by income from an endowment.

### What is the minimum gift?

The minimum donation to establish an endowed fund is £100,000. Gifts of less than £100,000 can be added to the University's pooled endowment fund – an expendable and unrestricted fund for purposes such as providing scholarships for students.

### Can an endowed fund be named?

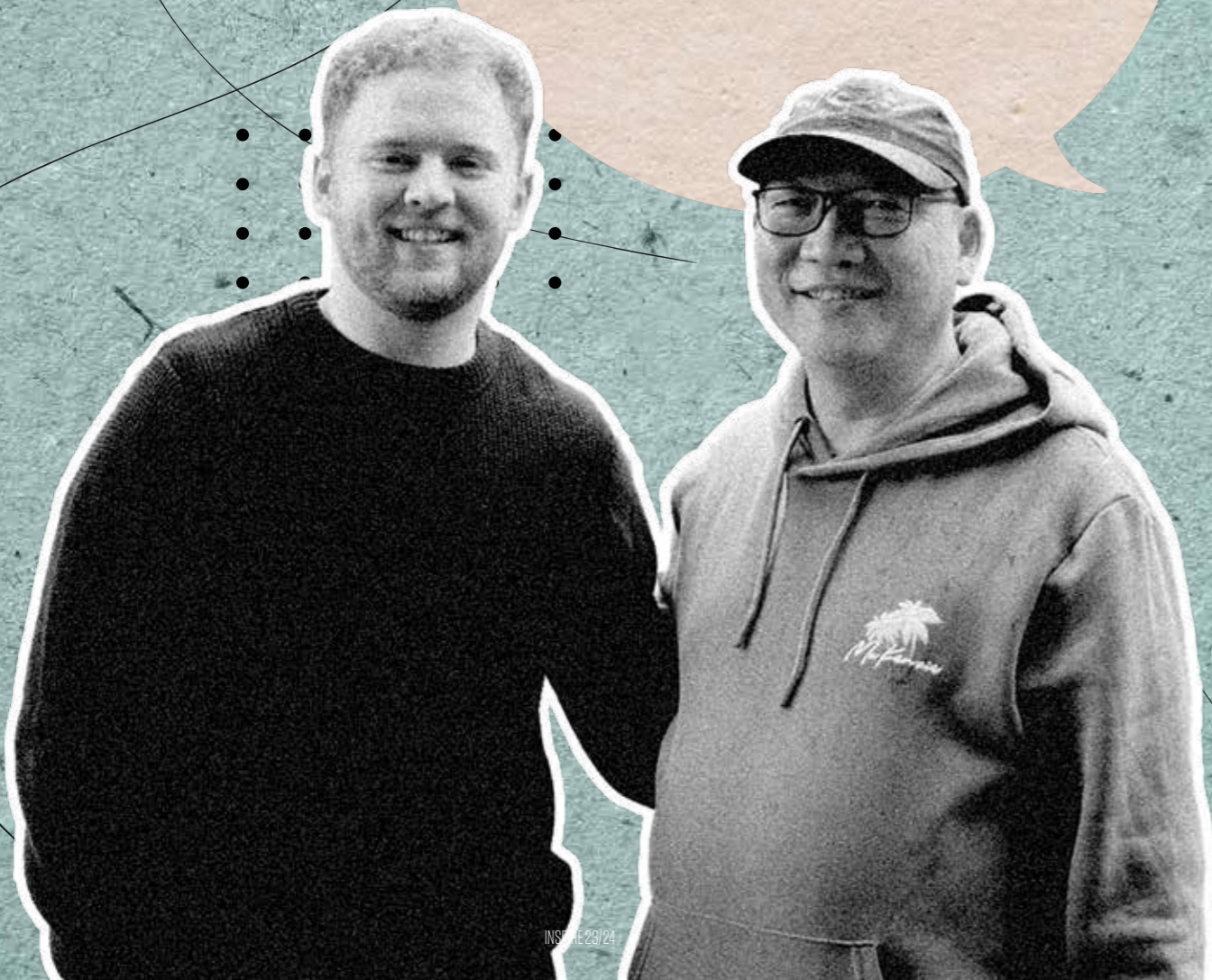
Absolutely. Endowed funds are typically named after the donor or a person they wish to honour. They can also be named more broadly, such as the discipline they support. It's the perfect way to create a long-lasting legacy.

If you'd like to find out more about endowment giving or the changes to the way they are managed, please get in touch by emailing [advancement@bath.ac.uk](mailto:advancement@bath.ac.uk).



# FACE TO FACE

Alumnus and donor  
**Wilson Wong is a long-standing supporter of the Gold Scholarship Programme. On a visit to Bath from Taiwan, Wilson met with one of the first students he supported, Kian Cotton.**



**W**ilson Wong (MSc Social Policy Analysis 1996) has been involved in humanitarian and relief work for 20 years. As Deputy Secretary General of the Hong Kong Red Cross, he worked in Rwanda during the genocide period and was responsible for the worldwide coordination of the 2004 tsunami relief operation. He was also a member of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Kian Cotton studied pharmacology at Bath thanks to a Gold Scholarship supported by Wilson. Kian was raised by his aunt after his mother passed away from cancer and was the first in his family to go to university. He's now studying for a PhD in cancer research within our Department of Life Sciences, investigating the progression of medulloblastoma, a paediatric brain tumour and a major cause of mortality in children.

**Wilson Wong:** I came from Hong Kong to study at Bath [in the '90s] and after graduating, I joined the Red Cross. At the time I was the only Asian person and they wanted to recruit people from all over the world. Eventually I had the chance to join the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Switzerland.

I coordinated international relief for conflicts and natural disasters, such as the Rwandan genocide, the Sri Lankan Civil War and the Indian Ocean tsunami. It was such a meaningful job. I travelled to 35 countries and saw places not many people ever get to see.

My time with the Red Cross gave me good life experience but of course, it was dangerous and harrowing work. I suffered from PTSD and after 20 years, I decided it was time to retire. I still love to travel, and I've visited 87 countries. The experiences and opportunities I've had have enriched my life and that's why I wanted to give opportunities to others.

**Kian Cotton:** I can't thank you enough for your support; I wouldn't be here without it. My mother died when I was 11 and my aunt raised me and my three brothers. I was always academically gifted and knew I wanted to go to university. The Gold Scholarship gave me that opportunity.

**WW:** I'm honoured to support the Programme. [In 2015] I called the University and asked if there was a chance to sponsor students at Bath with the heart to further their studies but with financial constraints. The Gold Scholarship Programme was the perfect match.

◀ Gold Scholarships provide bright students like Kian with the financial and pastoral support to succeed

**KC:** All the scholars I've met are students that, like you say, have heart. They didn't get the opportunities that others may have had – they're people like me who have lost family members, or they're young carers or parents – and they have so much work ethic because of where they've come from.

The Gold Scholarship levels the playing field and provides the opportunities that every student deserves. They've given us skills training in how to network, how to write a CV and do interviews. I was the first in my family to go to university and I had no one to give me advice on these things. Now I volunteer as a Gold Mentor and help new students.

**WW:** I'm really happy to learn about your experience. Do you have any ideas of what direction you'll go in after graduation?

**KC:** I'll definitely stay within cancer research because that's my passion. It's also the focus for my PhD. I want to make a difference in this world. In the long term, I'd like to become a lecturer to give back and pass on what I've learned to the next generation.

**WW:** I'm pleased to hear that. Both my parents had cancer and the first gift I gave to the University was to support cancer research.

Can I ask why you chose to study at Bath?

**KC:** I went to three different university open days and when I came to this campus, I just loved it. I didn't want to go anywhere else after that.

**WW:** Exactly! At the time I was looking at universities we didn't have the internet, but I saw the pictures in the brochure of the lovely campus and the lake and thought 'wow'. The lake looked a bit smaller in real life [laughs], but I have no regrets. I am so proud to be part of the University and support students like you. ✨

**THE GOLD SCHOLARSHIP LEVELS THE PLAYING FIELD AND PROVIDES THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT EVERY STUDENT DESERVES.**





# THANK YOU

Your generous support and philanthropic example make such a difference here at the University of Bath. Your donations really do change lives, and we thank you on behalf of all those whose lives are touched by your kindness.

A list of everyone who supported the University in 2023/24 can be found at [go.bath.ac.uk/donors](https://go.bath.ac.uk/donors)

Our commitment to you, the University's donor community:

- Swift acknowledgement of your pledge, gift or instalment.
- Invitations to relevant student support and research-focused events, where you can hear more from beneficiaries on the impact of your donations.
- The annual donor magazine, *Inspire*, including specific reporting relative to your giving.



## GIVING CIRCLES

A refreshed programme of annual and lifetime giving circles, recognising your generosity, was launched in August 2024.\*

NAME	LEVEL OF GIVING**	INFORMATION
<b>Woodlands</b>	£1 million+	Donors of one-off or cumulative gifts
<b>Founders'</b>	£500,000+	Donors of one-off or cumulative gifts
<b>Chancellor's</b>	£250,000+	Donors of one-off or cumulative gifts
<b>Vice-Chancellor's</b>	£100,000- £249,999	Donors of one-off or cumulative gifts
<b>Minerva</b>	£25,000- £99,999	Donors of one-off or cumulative gifts
<b>Sulis</b>	£3,000+	Previously £1,000, the Sulis recognition programme is now for those who have made a gift of £3,000+ in a financial year
<b>1966 Society</b>	Any level	This giving circle honours those who are leaving a bequest to the University in their Will

\*These giving circles will be reflected in our reporting of the 2024/25 financial year.

\*\* Level of giving includes Gift Aid, and is based on Pounds Sterling when exchanged and received by the University should the donation be made in a foreign currency.



For further information about leaving a gift that will always honour your time at the University of Bath, please email [advancement@bath.ac.uk](mailto:advancement@bath.ac.uk)

or call **+44 (0)1225 386824.**

