

Charitable donations to the University of Birmingham almost double in a year as giving to UK universities reaches record high

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Gifts to the University of Birmingham are continuing to transform lives as charitable donations have topped £10 million in a record year for philanthropic giving to UK universities, according to a new report.

Despite the tough economic times, the annual Ross-CASE survey, a comprehensive report on higher education philanthropic giving in the UK, has revealed that UK institutions received £774 million in donations in 2011-12, an increase of 14% on the previous year. The University of Birmingham has followed this trend with gifts rising by almost 50% over this time period.

The University has a long history of charitable giving and is continuing to change lives as a result of the generosity of alumni and supporters who gave more than £10.4 million to the University's Circles of influence fundraising campaign in 2011-12, surpassing the £5.8 million mark received the previous year.

To date, £121 million has been raised towards the £160 million target through collective giving from alumni, staff, students and friends. Together we have:

- Awarded 338 scholarships to exceptional students who would otherwise not have been able to attend university via our Access to Birmingham (A2B) scheme which forms part of our sector-leading widening participation programme
- Improved breast cancer survival rates by 30%
- Funded more than 200 children to take part in the trial of a Burkitt's Lymphoma treatment (Africa's most common childhood cancer) that has little or no toxicity, unlike chemotherapy, yet ensures maximum impact. Our trials have had very exciting preliminary results. In every one of the children tested, the tumour growth was halted within a week and in two thirds of cases, the cancer had begun to regress
- Completed a new £16 million state-of-the-art home for the University's world-class music department. The new Bramall Music Building completes Joseph Chamberlain's original vision for campus, completing the iconic red brick Aston Webb semi-circle

Vice-Chancellor and donor, Professor David Eastwood said: 'Without philanthropy, the University of Birmingham would not thrive; our supporters are truly woven into our DNA. We are grateful to every one of our alumni and friends who have played their part in our history, and will continue to be a part of our future.'

Circles of influence continues to support the University's life-changing research and is currently fundraising for a groundbreaking clinical trial using a new combination of technology and existing therapies to improve life expectancy for prostate cancer patients and has plans to build a library to fit the needs of higher education in the 21st century and a brand new sports centre.

Director of Development, Alumni and Business Engagement, Nick Blinco said: 'It is fantastic that charitable support for higher education is continuing to grow. More than a century ago, we were founded on philanthropic giving and this vision remains at the heart of our institution.'

'The generosity of our alumni and supporters continues to transform lives with every gift making a real difference. We remain incredibly grateful to the many individuals and foundations whose investment helps us to continue towards our ambitious target of £160 million. The Circles of influence campaign is about enabling people and because of our donors, we will have far-reaching and long-lasting impacts.'

Overall, almost 170,000 alumni made a donation in 2011-12 to their university, an increase of 5% and non-alumni donors rose by 11% to almost 44,000. These gifts include donations, pledges, legacies and gifts in kind. More than 3,000 donors supported Birmingham during 2011-12.

To get involved or to find out how you can change lives through Circles of influence, please contact Nick Blinco, Director of Engagement, Development, Alumni and Business Engagement via alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk, 0121 414 6953, or visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/circlesofinfluence.

Notes to Editors

About Circles of influence

Circles of influence supports research that saves the lives of children and adults in the West Midlands and around the world. It funds scholarships that open the University to talented young people who might otherwise feel university is not for them. It ensures internships are available to hundreds of students. It provides fellowships to outstanding researchers who will become the next generation of academic leaders. It provides outstanding facilities that attract the best students and staff to the region, and that open our campus to the communities in which we live. It will shortly help us to provide a 21st-century Library, and an outstanding new Sport Centre that will contain the region's first 50m pool.

About the Ross-CASE survey and NatCen

The Ross-CASE survey is carried out annually by the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) on behalf of the Ross Group and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) in Europe. The first Ross-CASE survey was carried out in 2002 and has been repeated annually since then.

143 institutions took part in the Ross-CASE survey 2011-12, including eight further education colleges. Of the higher education institutions surveyed, 117 were based in England, 7 in Wales and 11 in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The survey of gift revenue and fundraising costs has been carried out each year since 2002 to measure the philanthropic performance of higher education and further education institutions. It is the only source of information on this subject in the UK, enabling institutions to compare themselves with their peers. It also provides an estimate of the overall impact of philanthropy on the higher education sector.

For further information and for a full version of the Ross-CASE report, visit www.rosscasesurvey.org.uk.