

Funding Future Discoveries

Posted on Thursday 29th October 2009

The University of Birmingham is encouraging everyone to play a part in financing future discoveries with far-reaching benefits, as it launches its £60 million fundraising campaign this week.

The Circles of Influence campaign, which will be launched at a reception at the House of Lords tomorrow [Friday 30 October], will fund a range of projects from research into brain injury, cancer, healthy ageing and practical clean energy, to a targeted scholarships programme, a new concert hall and a centre for heritage and cultural learning.

The projects within the four themes of the campaign - Health and Lifestyle; Society; Heritage and Culture; Creating the Leaders of Tomorrow – reflect areas in which the University is a leader and where its work can make a real impact in a changing world.

£43 million has already been raised towards the target through donations from alumni, friends, companies and charitable trusts. University Vice-Chancellor Professor David Eastwood is so committed to the campaign that he is personally donating £40,000.

Professor Eastwood comments: "Circles of Influence is about much more than just the University. We are aiming to push the boundaries of change at local, national and international levels, which is why we have chosen themes that affect us all. Our £60 million target is ambitious but achievable and we believe it's an exciting opportunity for our supporters to help us change the world for the better."

He continues: "Donations are transformative and work most effectively when added to committed university investment in areas where we already lead the world. Private support brings not only independence from statutory funding but gives us the freedom to explore the cutting edge and to move incredibly quickly into new discovery."

Philanthropic giving has recently funded the University Medical School's new Wolfson Centre for Medical Education to the tune of £2.5 million. It has also funded a Centre for Public Sector Partnerships, research into Global Ethics and Tuberculosis, a new home for the University's Special Collections and the refurbishment of the Barber Concert Hall.

Nick Blinco, Director of Development and Alumni Relations explains why philanthropy has built this University since its foundation: "More than a century ago, our founder Joseph Chamberlain called on the people of Birmingham and the leading philanthropists of the day to help him realise his dream of a university to serve the people of the city that would inspire great future leaders.

"That founding ethos remains at the heart of this institution, and I'm delighted that this campaign has galvanised the whole University community – students, academics and administrative staff – in an extraordinary way, to propose a suite of tangible projects that can genuinely transform lives. The response from our alumni and other supporters has been remarkably generous and we are grateful to them all. We urge anyone who wishes to be part of completing this wonderful campaign to contact us."

The campaign runs until the end of 2011, with £17 million remaining to be raised to meet the £60 million target. Those interested in finding out more can call 0121 414 6682, or visit the [website \(http://www.alumni.bham.ac.uk/circlesofinfluence\)](http://www.alumni.bham.ac.uk/circlesofinfluence)

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Notes to Editors:

Circles of Influence is the University of Birmingham's £60 million campaign to help make a real and lasting impact on global health and lifestyle, society, heritage and culture, and to provide opportunities to the most talented students and staff. For more information, [visit \(http://www.alumni.bham.ac.uk/circlesofinfluence\)](http://www.alumni.bham.ac.uk/circlesofinfluence)

University of Birmingham

From establishing the UK's first university medical school to improving breast cancer survival rates and synthesising vitamin C, Birmingham has been transforming lives for more than a century. Alongside vital research into global health and wellbeing, such as brain injury, cancer, obesity and healthy ageing, the University is also championing practical clean energy and promoting cultural and personal enrichment.

League Table positions – the University of Birmingham recently broke into the top 20 in the Sunday Times University Guide published in September 2009, and rose to 66th in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2009

Further information:

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