

University Student Trust Fund Report 2023



We are extremely grateful to you and all of our donors, for your generous financial support of the University Student Trust Fund this year

Our students are curious, energetic and committed, and well over half of them take on part-time work to fund themselves through study. You will be aware that ongoing increases in the basic costs of living are particularly impacting those students who are dependent on a maintenance loan to live. Your donations help those students who are in most need to weather the impact of rising costs. Recipients tell us that the funds distributed via the Student Hardship Fund keep them studying, as they alleviate financial worries that can lead to them to withdraw from university.

Helping students in hardship is intrinsic to fulfilling our promise of 'powering potential' and helping to transform lives - but this is not possible without your help.

The primary source of concern for students over the last academic year is the cost of living crisis. As we all know, prices are rising significantly, which is having a direct impact on students whose maintenance loans have not increased and causes significant financial stress. The support we give our students from this Fund is therefore more important than ever. Thank you so much for your continuing support of the University and its students. Below is a summary of the impact of donations from the Herts community in the last academic year.

In 2022-23, the University Student Trust Fund supported:

- The University Financial Assistance Fund
- Student Research



The University Financial Assistance Fund

The University Financial Assistance Fund (UFAF) provides grants for students facing real financial hardship which, without help, could force them to withdraw from their studies. In addition to direct financial support, advice and mentoring is given to all applicants regarding financial management and budgeting, with individuals required to complete online training modules prior to their application being assessed.

Whilst the Financial Assistance Fund aims to help all eligible students with an unexpected financial need, it is not always able to provide support for everyone that applies. The University's professional guidelines give priority to certain groups of students when deciding how to allocate the fund.

Thank you. This award is a great help as I've been really struggling over the summer

Each year, the University receives applications from a wide range of students, including mature students, many of whom have dependants, as well as single students endeavouring to complete their degrees in challenging circumstances. A large proportion of students having cited either the cost of living and/or debt as the main reason for their application.

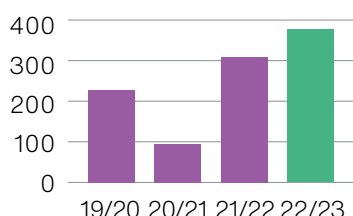
You are indeed a fairy godmother! What with the energy prices and petrol - being a single mum is quite tricky at times and so please know that I appreciate the help so much

In 2022-23, we helped 379 students through UFAF, providing almost £475,000 worth of support. 83% of students applying to the fund were undergraduate students, with 28% of those being in their first year, 34% in their second and 38% in their final year. The vast majority of students applying (97%) were full time students. 61% of our student applicants were living in private accommodation, and 35% were living in university halls. 4% of applicants were in temporary accommodation or were homeless at the time of their application.

We have continued to see an upward trend in applications to UFAF during the year 2022-23. With an increasing shortfall between statutory student funding and the cost of living, we are seeing less unexpected hardship and more students applying to provide additional income for their studies. Most of the students who applied during the opening weeks are those that have applied in previous years and are using it to fund their studies.

With the maintenance loan often not covering students' basic costs, we expect to see the demand for UFAF continue to rise. The University increased its contribution to UFAF by 63% in the 2022-23 year in recognition of the enormous financial challenges faced by many of our students.

Applicants



Student Research

As part of the University's Doctoral College support, donations to the University Student Trust Fund were also used to contribute to the funding pot that enabled 38 postgraduate research students to attend conferences around the world. As conferences have become almost entirely physical (as opposed to virtual) events once more, demand continues to grow. Some of the feedback provided by students who benefitted from the funding is below.

I achieved the objectives of the conference on competence in the retrieval and analysis of X-ray data. I also presented my work, received a certificate for the presentation, and started conversations with lecturers on possible projects which will lead to collaborations.

X-vision conference, South Africa, February 2023

The conference helped me to disseminate my work with the colleagues in the combustion field. This networking opportunity opened a door to new collaborations with researchers from Belgium, France and Germany.

The European Combustion Meeting (ECM2023), France, April 2023

Participation at the conference was an invaluable insight into the current tics and Tourette research landscape and was very beneficial for framing and identifying gaps to which my evolving PhD can contribute. It also gave me my first chance of presenting my research to a specialist audience.

European Society For The Study Of Tourette Syndrome Conference (ESSTS), Brussels, June 2023

Attending FDG offered me a valuable opportunity to test out my research ideas and practice explaining them to others.

Foundations of Digital Games Conference 2023, Lisbon, April 2023





**Our sincere thanks to everyone
who has helped support our
students in the last year**



If you have any questions or would like to discuss your donations, please contact Hollie Rendall, Head of Development: h.rendall@herts.ac.uk

University of Hertfordshire
Hatfield, UK
AL10 9AB

+44 (0)1707 284000
herts.ac.uk

 /uniofherts
 @UniofHerts
 @UniofHerts