

# The Bridge



Magazine for alumni and friends  
University of Dundee

She may be the golden  
girl of British athletics,  
but Eilish McColgan  
has a secret



2023



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# Welcome from the Principal

The University of Dundee community is one that extends far beyond the campus.



Welcome to this year's edition of The Bridge, our annual magazine focused on the achievements of our alumni, our many supporters and the University itself.

Whether you are one of the thousands of new graduates who recently celebrated with your peers in our summer ceremonies at the Caird Hall, or someone who has been associated with the University for many years, I am sure you will find much in the following pages that helps you feel part of a University community that spans the globe.

Our Strategy to 2027 emphasises that we are a University that places immense value on our social purpose. That applies locally, nationally and internationally, and is contributed to by students, staff, alumni, supporters and partners.

We are a more international institution than we have ever been, both in the partnerships we are building and strengthening in many countries, and in our staff and intake of students from around the world, with over 140 countries represented on campus.

A prime example of this is our Africa Initiative, through which we work collaboratively on research, education and engagement activities in several countries including Malawi, Ghana and Nigeria. Our Blantyre Declaration, signed with all six of the public universities in Malawi, is creating a new, more equitable model of collaboration.

We also continue to drive economic regeneration in Dundee and the surrounding area. The city continues to change as we attract more investment and large-scale projects. Regardless of whether you have been in Dundee in the past six months or not for many years, you will see great developments if and when you return (and we will certainly welcome you at any time and urge you to visit both the city and the University!).

We have recently begun preparatory work on a new Innovation Hub to support spinout companies from our world-leading research in life sciences and medicine. This will sit alongside the recently opened Centre for Targeted Protein Degradation, home to a completely new field of research that is revolutionising drug discovery.

In all of this we receive vital support from you, our alumni and supporters around the world, and I am hugely grateful for the interest you continue to show in our activities. Here in The Bridge, we also take the opportunity to celebrate your successes, and I hope you enjoy the insights into the impact that some of the alumni of Dundee are having across the globe.

The University of Dundee community is one that extends far beyond the campus. Thank you for all your support, and I hope we can welcome you here in Dundee, or see you wherever you are in the world.

**Professor Iain Gillespie**  
Principal & Vice-Chancellor



# Making a difference in Africa and beyond

The University launched its Africa Initiative in November 2022, a new long-term commitment to working in equitable partnership in research, education and engagement, to enrich lives both in Scotland and Africa.

The University's mission is to make a difference and transform lives locally, nationally and globally, with our social purpose as the core driver of all our activity.

Those principles lie at the heart of our Africa Initiative, a ten-year commitment that has already seen us establish exciting partnerships in Malawi, Nigeria and Ghana, building on long-term strengths and creating new opportunities for engagement. Crucially, this is being done on the basis of more equitable ways of working with partners in the continent.

Professor Iain Gillespie, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University, explained, "Our University Strategy to 2027 reinforces our commitment to social purpose through learning and teaching, research, and engagement and enterprise. Nothing demonstrates our dedication to these aims more than our work with our partners in Africa.

"Issues such as climate change and healthcare delivery know no borders, and we have to work together if we are to improve prospects for people everywhere. Our strategy

also focuses on three key themes – population health and wealth; climate action and net zero; and equity and inclusion – all of which are informing our engagement with our partners in Africa.

"We have longstanding relationships in Africa, and have been welcoming students to Dundee from across Africa for decades, particularly from countries like Nigeria and Ghana.

"We are now working to build on what has gone before to change the way we engage with Africa as partners. This is all about co-creating a new agenda and empowering people as agents for change."

A first major step has been the signing, with all six public universities in Malawi, of the Blantyre Declaration, a shared commitment to co-develop research and cultural links with Malawi based on sustainable and equitable principles. As founding signatories, the University of Dundee, Kamuzu University of Health Sciences, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Malawi





Tree planting is a national priority for Malawi as a way of restoring degraded landscapes to improve ecosystem services to create jobs, improve well-being and to address climate change as enshrined in the Malawi 2063 vision.

**Professor Sosten Chiotha**



"We have longstanding relationships in Africa, and have been welcoming students to Dundee from across Africa for decades, particularly from countries like Nigeria and Ghana."

**Professor Iain Gillespie**

University of Business and Applied Science, Malawi University of Science and Technology, Muzuzu University and the University of Malawi have established a group to actively identify opportunities for collaboration and recently came together for a session of the Cross-Party Group on Malawi in the Scottish Parliament.

"The Blantyre Declaration will be the cornerstone of an equitable partnership agreement that demonstrates the commitment of all signatories to empower individuals both in Scotland and Malawi, to build a better future for us all, address mutual challenges and further develop cultural ties," said the Principal.

"The exchange of knowledge and the creation of exciting collaborations and opportunities through these relationships bring mutual benefits and are potentially transformative. We have co-designed and launched a new doctoral scheme to address our shared priorities and look forward to bringing more initiatives online in the coming years."

The commitment to a new way of equitable working has been symbolised with the planting of two Trees of Hope, by the Principal and Professor Sosten Chiotha, the world-renowned Malawian Environmental Scientist who was awarded an honorary degree by the University in November 2022.

The trees – a critically endangered Malawian conifer and a wild sorbus believed to be native to the UK – were planted at the University's Botanic Garden in Dundee. This followed a similar planting in Malawi when the Principal joined Professor Chiotha and Malawian Cabinet Ministers to plant trees symbolising the fight against the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation.

Professor Chiotha said, "These trees are symbols of the growing links between the University and the nation of Malawi, building upon the signing of the Blantyre Declaration. Tree planting is a national priority for Malawi as a way of restoring degraded landscapes to improve ecosystem services to create jobs,

improve well-being and to address climate change as enshrined in the Malawi 2063 vision.

"The University of Dundee's pioneering approach to building truly equitable global partnerships that respond to local needs and fully involve local institutions will make a real difference by contributing to climate action in Malawi, as well as other important developmental challenges facing our country."

Further initial outcomes of the Africa Initiative have already included an exciting Africa lecture series highlighting our collaborations tackling disease on the continent, and launching a Doctoral Fellowship Scheme that will bring African scholars working at African universities to Dundee to complete their doctorates.

Read more about the Blantyre Declaration:  
[uod.ac.uk/blantyre-declaration](https://uod.ac.uk/blantyre-declaration)

# Can food be the ultimate drug?



While taking a holiday from her busy role at Spectrum Geo Ltd in London, Tamara Egbedi visited Nigeria, not realising how she was going to change millions of people's lives across Africa.



Petroleum Law and Policy graduate Tamara was approached by a pregnant woman and asked for money while on holiday in Lagos in 2016. Tamara was much more concerned about her welfare and instead of giving her money, she took the young woman to hospital for an antenatal check, something that the woman had never had before. Tamara and the pregnant woman were told that the child was likely to die of malnourishment.

"I asked if this was normal and if I could help. The doctor took me to a primary health centre in Lagos, where those who can't afford healthcare go. I was told that out of ten babies, five babies die at birth, three die after three months and two survive but are malnourished. Added to this, the mothers are malnourished and can't breastfeed," Tamara explained.

"This was something I was really passionate about and I wanted to help. I spoke with my husband about creating a local product that would help pregnant mothers and weaning babies in the first instance. I had many conversations with doctors in France who were experts in malnutrition in Africa. My idea was to create a local product that mothers and babies

would use to get the required micronutrients and stop malnutrition and ultimately stop infant mortality. I asked myself, can food be the ultimate drug?"

After two years of getting the formula and the taste right, her product, Tom Brown PLUS was launched.

Once the product was certified, it was given to 150 mothers and children through health centres in Lagos State. Within one month, every malnourished infant was better and the weight of pregnant women increased. Soon Tamara was supplying her product to 230 primary health centres in Lagos.

The product and its effect on malnutrition came to the attention of the federal government under its National School Feeding Programme, and Tom Brown PLUS was added to the menu and fed to over 250,000 primary school pupils every month in Plateau State, Nigeria.

The social impact of the business includes a partnership with over 120 small scale farmers who provide 100% natural ingredients, and the creation of jobs, with 70% carried out by women. Healthcare, a creche and daily meals are also offered to staff.





**"I was encouraged at Dundee to network and collaborate and that has certainly helped me launch and develop PachaMama Foods."**

**Tamara Egbedi**

Tom Brown PLUS has also helped reduce infant mortality by 95% and achieved 100% success in combating malnutrition in children less than five years old at primary health centres in Lagos.

Today, PachaMama Foods, Tamara's company, aims to achieve four key Sustainable Development Goals: No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-Being, and Decent Work and Economic Growth. As a result, it has expanded to include other products to improve the health of people of all ages, particularly against non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and high cholesterol, using Africa's superfoods.



On her time in Dundee, Tamara said that her university experience helped her to develop PachaMama Foods. "I was encouraged at Dundee to network and collaborate and that has certainly helped me launch and develop PachaMama Foods. Pachamama means mother nature and I wanted all products to be natural, especially with today's unhealthy eating habits. I also wanted to break the myth that healthy food is expensive."

Tamara has certainly achieved her goal and developed healthy and affordable food products for millions of people across Africa.

More information about PachaMama Foods can be found at [pachamamafoodsng.com](https://pachamamafoodsng.com)

## PachaMama Foods

- PachaMama Foods is an agri-business dedicated to the production and sales of quality natural, healthy, tasty and affordable plant-based products while providing solutions to nutritional problems such as malnutrition.
- Tom Brown PLUS is a blend of three grains and two legumes, developed by nutritionists and chefs to deliver a unique nutritious and affordable all-in-one breakfast porridge.
- Tamara's product is feeding over one million pregnant women and children every month across Nigeria with proven social impact to Nigeria and its citizens.





LONGINES

SCOTLAND

BIRMINGHAM  
2022

MCCOLGAN

LONGINES



# My friends thought I was crazy

She may be the golden girl of British athletics, but Eilish McColgan has a secret.

Long before breaking records and collecting medals became a regular occurrence, it turns out that the Commonwealth Games 10,000 metres gold medallist may not have adopted the sort of lifestyle you would expect of a champion long-distance runner.

"I did all the typical student things," she said.

"Partying, drinking, eating kebabs at 3am. But I still got up for training the next morning.

"My friends all thought I was crazy, but I had some sort of internal drive that was telling me to keep going and to keep training. It was almost as if I knew that further down the line, when I decided to grow up and mature a little, that there was an opportunity waiting for me."

Born in Dundee, Eilish began her degree in Mathematics and Accountancy in 2008. Already touted as a star of the future at that time, enjoying a student lifestyle while training to compete with the world's best would not normally be considered compatible. However, with three Olympic Games behind her, as well as claiming Commonwealth gold in Birmingham last year, it is clear that the odd indulgence has never held her back. "I only really took my athletics a bit more professionally towards the end of my degree," she recalled.

"I often wonder if it's something I regret – not taking my athletics more seriously a little sooner. I feel like I'm only just reaching my peak, and perhaps have only a few years left in top form, but I really enjoyed my time at university.

"I enjoyed a relatively normal student life and perhaps that's why I have had longevity within my athletics, because I don't feel I missed out. I have been very lucky to almost experience both sides."

Regardless of her own doubts, Eilish's talent clearly caught the eye of others. Indeed, it was her abilities on the track that would bring a premature end to her academic career when she was selected to represent Team GB for the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Now 32, and despite a global profile, Eilish maintains close links to Dundee and her alma mater. She remains a member of Dundee Hawkhill Harriers running club, based at the city's Caird Park, though in her student days could often be found running along Riverside and Perth Road. The University's Institute of Sport and Exercise (ISE) facilities also helped keep her competition fit.



"My friends all thought I was crazy, but I had some sort of internal drive that was telling me to keep going and to keep training. It was almost as if I knew that further down the line, when I decided to grow up and mature a little, that there was an opportunity waiting for me."



Today, she travels the globe for competitions and to participate in gruelling training camps. But away from the packed stadiums, press commitments and globe-trotting required of a world-class athlete, the connection between Eilish and her home city remains strong.

That reciprocal affection was displayed at Winter Graduation last year when Eilish returned to the University to receive an Honorary Doctor of Laws. While used to bringing stadium spectators to their feet, the ovation that day demonstrated the immense respect felt for the athlete and ended a marathon wait for the runner, who finally got to cross the Caird Hall stage.

"It was really special coming back to Dundee again and an honour to be alongside the graduating students. It will always be a really special place for me and I was a little overwhelmed with how kind everyone was. It's something I'll remember for a very long time."

**"You only get one shot at being a professional athlete and I knew I could always come back and finish my studies later. I thought I'd be back within a year or two, but it's now been over a decade."**







While 2022 was a special year, 2023 is also shaping up as one to remember. Having smashed the British 10,000 metres record in March, Eilish recorded further success in April by winning the Berlin Half Marathon. Sadly, injury put paid to her taking part in her debut London Marathon in late April, an event her mother Liz won in 1996.

While destiny may have prevented her from completing her Honours degree, it is important to note that her studies have played a crucial role in her professional career. As well as starting her own coaching business, she has co-founded a not-for-profit – Giving Back to Track – that helps Scottish children fulfil their athletic potential.

“Being able to balance a degree and training during my university years has allowed me to time manage my other projects much more successfully,” she explained.

“Giving Back to Track is something that I’m really passionate about. We have five scholarships for young women across Scotland and another five travel grants. All of the British Championships are held in England so finances are a huge barrier for a lot of youngsters to attend – despite them being incredibly talented. So we just want to give them the chance to shine.

“We have also established an after-school club and hope to extend this to more schools in Dundee. My goal is to ensure that no child in Dundee is priced out of athletics. I know first-hand just how much sport can change lives.”

“It was really special coming back to Dundee again and an honour to be alongside the graduating students. It will always be a really special place for me and I was a little overwhelmed with how kind everyone was. It’s something I’ll remember for a very long time.”

## Supporting research

Away from the track, Eilish has hit yet another landmark this year after lending her support to a University initiative.

The Scottish Health Research Register (SHARE) is a unique project which aims to make it easier for researchers to identify suitable recruits to carry out ground-breaking medical research. Utilising blood left over from routine testing, SHARE aims to transform future healthcare delivery by improving treatments for diseases such as cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer’s and asthma.

Eilish became the 300,000th volunteer to join the programme, which has invited members of the public to get involved via invitations received through hospital appointments, being approached in doctors’ surgeries, and through social media.

It takes just a few moments to sign up to SHARE, with researchers saying that the benefits could be felt for generations to come.

“As an athlete, I know the difference that seconds can make,” said Eilish.

“It is incredible to think that in less than 60 seconds a person can sign up to SHARE and help doctors to discover new treatments for conditions like diabetes, cancer and dementia.

“It takes just a few seconds to register, requires minimal commitment, and could help transform outcomes for some of our most challenging health conditions.”

# Innovating for the city



The University's new Centre for Targeted Protein Degradation (CeTPD) is not only raising hopes of treating diseases previously thought to be undruggable but is also part of a range of developments helping to transform the city of Dundee.

Scientific entrepreneurship helps underpin the Centre's mission, aligning with the University's ambitions of commercialising world-class research to power the city's regeneration.

"Targeted protein degradation is one of the most exciting areas of scientific study to have emerged in many years," said CeTPD Director Professor Alessio Ciulli on the process which uses the cell's natural disposal systems to remove diseased proteins. "We are one of a handful of institutions leading the world in this field and our new home will provide opportunities to capitalise on our expertise, accelerate innovation and attract further investment from major partners in the pharmaceutical industry."

The £24 million CeTPD, situated just to the north of the campus, was made possible through extensive support from industrial partners Eisai Ltd and Boehringer Ingelheim, as well as other funders including The Northwood Charitable Trust, Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust and Leng Charitable Trust. The CeTPD is unique in Europe and continued support from investors and funders will help the Centre save lives, create exciting jobs and launch globally leading careers.

**"Targeted protein degradation is one of the most exciting areas of scientific study to have emerged in many years."**

**Alessio Ciulli**  
**CeTPD Director**





An economic impact assessment published last year demonstrated the importance of the University to our city.

The report found that the University supported £449 million Gross Value Added (GVA) and 6,760 jobs in Dundee, and £1.5 billion GVA and 15,090 jobs in the UK, returning £10 of value for every £1 invested by the Scottish Government. One in every 12 jobs in Dundee is supported by the University's activities, and it is crucial that anchor institutions continue to grow the opportunities for people to live, study and work here.

A major step forward in this regard took place in March when work began on the Innovation Hub site, where world-class scientific innovation and entrepreneurial expertise will drive high-growth company formation. The Hub, adjacent to the CeTPD, was partly funded by the Scottish Government through the Tay Cities Deal. It is one of three main elements of the Growing the Tay Cities Biomedical Cluster project that will build on the University's expertise in life sciences and medical innovation. Significant additional support was provided by the Wolfson Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation and the University itself.

The Hub will fill a critical gap – the ability to house new high-growth spinout companies generated from the region's burgeoning research activity. New companies will be powered by inward investment and supported through their high-growth phase to ensure they remain in Dundee, creating much-needed high-value jobs. The development comes at a time when University of Dundee spinout activity is at a record level. Dundee was named as one of the best Higher Education institutions in the UK for producing successful companies in the most recent University Spinout Report, noting that it spawned 1.5% of all the UK's spinouts over the past two decades.

"Growing recognition of our success in commercialising research will help inspire budding academic entrepreneurs," said Anne Muir, Deputy Director of Research and Innovation Services at the University. "We have several high-growth spinouts making real strides commercially and our pipeline has never been stronger."

Read the economic impact assessment at [uod.ac.uk/impact-assessment](http://uod.ac.uk/impact-assessment)

## To the future

The Tay Cities Deal will also enable the transformation of Wilson House near Ninewells Hospital into an innovative and collaborative environment where students, staff, clinicians, designers, engineers and data scientists can develop disruptive technologies for the healthcare industry. An expansion of the Thiel Cadaver Facility at the Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification (CAHID) to meet growing industrial demand for device testing and development is the final element of the project.

An independent economic assessment predicts that 280 new biomedical jobs will be created by 2033, rising to 800 jobs and over £190 million benefit to the local economy by 2053.

Professor Sir Mike Ferguson, co-lead of the Biomedical Cluster project, believes its impact will be felt across the globe. "Companies and collaborations formed in Dundee will influence the future of healthcare by developing new drugs, treatments and medical innovations," he said. "The time is right for us to convert our pre-eminence in research into tangible socio-economic benefit for the region, as well as health benefits for the world."



# Helping students during the cost of living crisis

Rising living costs, the energy crisis and the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic have caused our student community significant challenges in recent years and this continues today.

“When I read the email from Student Funding notifying me of the money awarded to me, I just wanted to cry” shared Sarah\*, one of our students who was helped by the University’s Financial Aid Fund. “I get goosebumps when I think that only three weeks ago, I was practically homeless and how overwhelmed and worried I felt.”

The University anticipates that more of our students than ever before will need financial assistance. Therefore, it is paramount that we can provide vital financial support and a safeguard for students when they need it most.

Ann Gordon, Deputy Student Funding Officer within the Student Services Directorate explained how the University provides support. “As a University, we have a duty of care to our students who are facing increasing pressure throughout their studies.

“Through no fault of their own, many of our students need financial assistance, including students from underrepresented backgrounds who often have no other means of support, as well as many international students whose funds are simply not stretching as they expected due to increased living costs.”

**“I truly cannot thank the Student Funding and Nursing team enough. Thank you very much and I am delighted to be able to pay off my debts and support myself to be able to continue my studies.”**

**Stewart, recipient of Financial Aid funding**



## A challenging start

"On my first night in Scotland, my family and I were affected by the fire in the New County Hotel in Perth. We lost everything and did not have access to food, clothes, medicine and other basic amenities so we had to buy all of these things again.

"We were unable to access the funding we needed to recover from this event. Student Services helped my family and me get back on our feet by providing us financial support, some of which we used to pay the first two months of rent on a new property and the electricity and gas bills. The rest will be used to buy groceries and travel to and from Dundee for classes.

My family and I are incredibly grateful for this help and support during such a difficult time."

Anna\*, recipient of Financial Aid funding

The cost-of-living crisis is deeply affecting students. It is estimated that a student studying at Dundee spends £775-£975 each month on living expenses, £250 of which is for groceries alone. This increase is the result of cost inflation and the exponential rise in prices of certain grocery items. For example, since 2021, milk and bread prices have increased by 50% and 21% respectively.

"The Student Funding Unit administers discretionary funds, which can provide financial assistance to help students with their essential living expenses such as rent, utility bills, access to broadband, and food," Ann explained. "We also offer budgeting sessions to help students keep track of their spending, raise awareness of what they spend their money on, and maximise their income for their benefit.

"In November 2022, the University committed an extra £100,000 to student funding to support international students facing financial difficulties," Ann continued. "The University is also working with Dundee University Students' Association on the newly established Pantry and Breakfast Club, which offer students free non-perishable foodstuffs and toiletries as well as free breakfast in warm surroundings."

The University is also prioritising the Student Financial Aid Fund in its fundraising efforts. "Many of our alumni, staff and friends generously support fundraising for our Student Financial Aid Fund," said Lizzi Nicoll, Head of Development and Alumni Relations.

"We are incredibly grateful to those who made a gift during our Giving Tuesday appeal and our two most recent telephone campaigns," Lizzi continued. "The generosity and collective passion for helping future generations of students at Dundee has enabled Student Services to make more emergency payments, alleviating student stress and worry."

\*Names have been changed to maintain confidentiality.

You can support this fund with a single or regular gift at [uod.ac.uk/financial-aid-fund](https://uod.ac.uk/financial-aid-fund)

# 1800

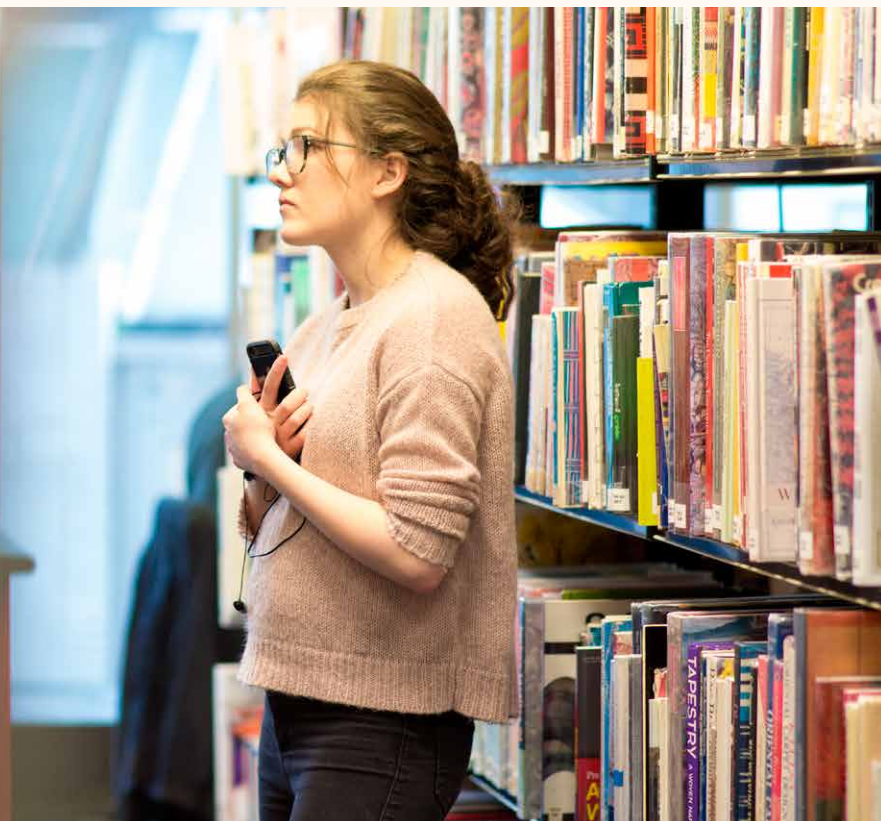
students have used the DUSA Pantry since December 2022.

# £9,950

in Tesco vouchers have been given to students to help with the rising costs of groceries.

# £954,000

in discretionary funding awarded since August 2022.





# Giving back to support the future of others

Scholarships and bursaries are a lifeline for many students who struggle financially during their academic careers. Thanks to the generosity of alumni like David Peattie, students at the University can access these life-changing opportunities.

"It's really important for me to give back to the University that gave me so much. The University of Dundee transformed my life through the education and the skills that I learned there," David explained.

David studied Mechanical Engineering and Economics at the University in the 1970s before going on to a successful career in engineering. "I started the David Peattie Bursary because I wanted to help undergraduate students from challenging backgrounds living in Scotland to access an honours degree in Mechanical Engineering," he continued.

David recently extended his support to launch the David Peattie Prize, which is open to all final-year undergraduate students studying Biomedical, Civil or Mechanical Engineering.

"For the last six years, I've been the head of the UK's Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, responsible for cleaning up 17 of our former civil nuclear sites around the UK, in Wales, England and Scotland. I'm especially keen to see student honours projects that strongly contribute to sustainable development," he said.

Kaine Bisset was awarded the first David Peattie Prize in 2022. "Winning was both greatly encouraging and satisfying because it made all the time and effort spent working on my honours project so worthwhile. The award

has a permanent place on my CV and will remain one of the best parts of my university career."

Students receiving the David Peattie Bursary or Prize also have opportunities for mentoring support, where David shares his valuable knowledge and expertise. And he is keen to share his experiences with students more widely.

"In November 2022, I returned to campus for the first time since I graduated in 1976 to give a guest lecture to students at the School of Science and Engineering as part of the Industrial Seminar Series. It took place in the lecture theatre where I once sat as a student over 50 years ago!" he said.

David was presented with The Bridge Alumni Award for Outstanding Support of Fundraising at his lecture. The award recognises his generosity and commitment to supporting students at the University and was presented by the Dean of Science and Engineering, Professor José Fiadeiro.

David said of the award, "It was a wonderful honour and a great privilege to be the recipient of the award because of its recognition of my small contribution to help students who are in a similar situation to that which I was in all those years ago."





"The bursary has really helped with my studies. I have four young children at home and have had to work part-time whilst studying. The bursary enabled me to take some unpaid leave during exam times to allow me to focus on studying."

**Joseph Fordyce**  
**David Peattie**  
**Bursary recipient**



Kaine Bisset and  
his mum Fran Bisset

## David's time at Dundee

"When I was leaving school, I was very keen to study both engineering and economics. The University of Dundee was one of the very few universities in the whole of the UK that offered a joint honours degree in both engineering and economics, and that's why I chose Dundee."

"As well as the excellent education I received, I have to say the mid-70s was a wonderful time for music and the music scene was as vibrant in Dundee as it was across many other UK cities. So, the bands, the music, the people I got to see as a student in the mid-70s were unforgettable and gave me some of my happiest memories of all my life."

**7** students have been  
supported by the David  
Peattie Bursary since 2017

# Changing lives through art

Art can be a real source of therapy for people at any age and stage of life. For 37-year-old Euan Rutter, art helped transform his life and he's now using it to transform the lives of others.

Few students have taken as unconventional a route to university as Euan. After leaving school at 16 with a handful of average standard grades, he struggled to settle into steady employment, spent almost a decade dealing with heroin addiction and was imprisoned on several occasions.

During one of these spells in prison, Euan attended an art education class, an event that would lead him onto his path of recovery, helping him break free of the cycle of addiction and reoffending that had blighted his life until that point.

Having fallen in love with art and the creative process, Euan started building an art portfolio and, after being released from prison for the last time, spent three years studying art at Dundee & Angus College before being offered a place to study Fine Art at the University's Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design.

He is now 11 years free from drug addiction and is studying part time for his Master of Fine Art degree whilst working as a Peer Support Worker at HMP Perth – the same institution where he experienced some of his lowest moments, but also where he decided to take the class that changed his life.

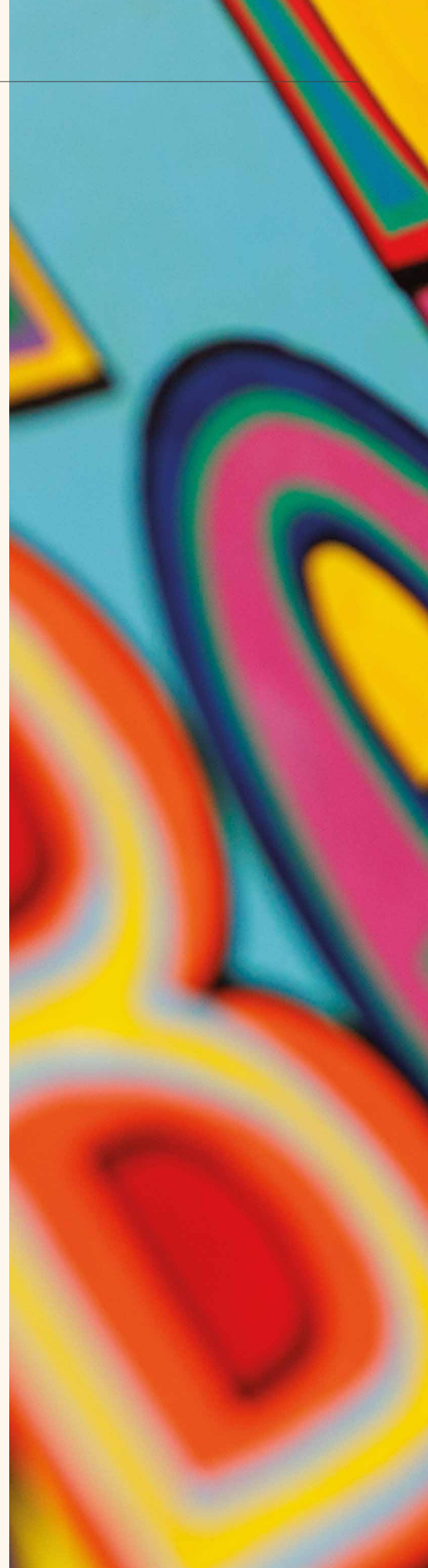
"I have been working here for six months, supporting residents of the prison with mindfulness sessions and art therapy classes, helping to run a recovery café, recovery meetings and coaching, and providing harm reduction programmes for those who have been under the influence of drugs whilst in prison," said Euan.

"Having been in prison before and experienced drug addiction, I know what many are going through, and the help art therapy can provide."

Euan achieved a First Class BA (Hons) in Fine Art in 2022 before progressing to postgraduate level. He had been interested in art since a young age, but the circumstances of his life had prevented him from pursuing this.

"I went through a stage of considering graphic design, but I studied contemporary art at college and once I had completed the foundation course and spoke to my lecturers, I realised I was on the right path. Their feedback spurred me on."

The personal challenges that Euan faced would have made some people nervous about entering the world of higher education, but he says he received, and continues to receive, incredible support at Dundee.







“University has been brilliant for me and a great way to meet people from all over the world.”

He explained, “University has been brilliant for me and a great way to meet people from all over the world. One of the biggest parts of my rehabilitation is around reconnecting with different people and getting back into the community. I remember one of my lecturers saying to me ‘this is your safe place, you can be whoever you want to be here, we’re here to support each other’. It’s been a welcoming and safe environment for me to keep positively developing my art and my own life too.”

Born and bred in Dundee, Euan is juggling family life with work and study. The University has been able to provide financial assistance as well as an alumni scholarship, which provides a discount on course fees.

“There are a number of financial barriers that students face when entering postgraduate study. When you have family, young kids and other commitments, this can be overwhelming. The help received from the University has been great for me and my family, enabling me to work and study at postgraduate level.”

Euan is the first ex-resident to be employed full-time in a Scottish prison to do the kind of work he does, using his lived experience of drug addiction alongside art education as a force for good in rehabilitation and recovery.

“Art has been a big part of my recovery and has helped me to understand more about myself,” he said. “I’m striving to find innovative ways to help improve recidivism rates for people with substance misuse by encouraging engagement in art projects within the prison and on release. Part of my role is to help to bridge the gap between prison release and life in the community, where so many fall through the gaps of basic social needs, housing, and lack of support.”

Euan doesn’t plan to stop studying at master’s level. He also wants to undertake a PhD to continue researching the important role art can play in transforming lives.

“A PhD is all part of the plan, focusing on how peer support, art and creativity can aid recovery. I’m also keen to work with the likes of Scottish Recovery Consortium, Recovery Coaching Scotland and Scottish Drugs Forum to build a template and encourage other lived-experience workers to take on roles to make a difference within prisons.”

## Widening access

Some of the support we provide to help widen access and participation:

- Our Contextual Admissions Policy recognises factors that may have impacted or disrupted an individual’s education and potential, including care experience, unpaid carers, refugees and asylum seekers.
- Discretionary Funds can support students with childcare costs and students facing financial hardship.
- Scholarships and bursaries provide financial assistance to students that meet eligibility criteria.  
Visit [dundee.ac.uk/scholarships](https://dundee.ac.uk/scholarships) for further details.

More information:  
[dundee.ac.uk/student-support-team](https://dundee.ac.uk/student-support-team)

# A touch of tartan

From Dundee to New York, tartan is a hot topic of conversation for the University and V&A Dundee this year with a celebration of the Scottish fabric at home and abroad.



In 1998 the US Senate declared April 6 National Tartan Day, officially recognising 'the outstanding achievements and contributions made by Scottish Americans to the United States'. Twenty-five years later, the annual Tartan Day Parade on Sixth Avenue is the culmination of a week of Scottish-themed celebrations, a spectacular gathering of thousands of pipers, Highland dancers, clan organisations, and adorably, virtually every Scottish and West Highland terrier in New York! And this year, the University of Dundee's Alumni Relations team returned to the city for the first time since the pandemic to join New York-based alumni and friends of the University in the parade.

Bedecked in tartan (and in a nod to a famous Dundonian, a Minnie the Minx stripey sweater for Head of Development and Alumni Relations, Lizzi Nicoll), the team proudly took their place in the parade alongside alumni from many of Scotland's universities.

The team were delighted to catch up with a number of alumni across their short stay in the Big Apple, including Louisiana-born and bred alumnus Damian Broussard. As well as running a nursing practice, Damian's passion for Scotland and its heritage has resulted in a new business, Celtic Endeavours (CE) Kilts, which creates hand-made kilts for Americans.

During Tartan Week, alumnus, honorary graduate and former rector Fred MacAulay headlined the inaugural New York Scottish Comedy Festival and performed a stand-up routine at Craig Weir & Friends' Tartan Week Hoolie, hosted by fellow alumnus Craig Weir.

Musician Craig and his band Gleadhraich brought the week-long celebrations to a close at the Post-Parade Party at Sony Hall.

Representatives from both the Scottish and Westminster governments were in town for Tartan Week, meeting Scottish-American businesses, and University representatives and alumni were honoured to attend a function to celebrate Scottish Alumni on the Global Stage, hosted by the British Consulate General in New York.

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The Alumni Relations team is working with alumni across the globe to establish international networks and associations. If you are interested in finding out more about what's happening in your area, contact [alumni@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@dundee.ac.uk)





## Tartan at the V&A Dundee

2023 sees tartan synonymous with Dundee, as the V&A Dundee's blockbuster exhibition opened in April to rave reviews. Tartan celebrates the global story of a unique pattern – how the rules of the grid have inspired creativity from the everyday to the sublime.

The instantly recognisable symbol of Scotland, a global textile of tradition, rebellion, oppression and fashion, tartan has connected and divided communities worldwide, inspiring great works of art as well as playful and provocative designs.

The University of Dundee is delighted to be a founding partner of the V&A Dundee and the alumni team were pleased to meet up with V&A colleagues in New York to celebrate the exhibition's success. The V&A Dundee team were exquisitely attired in bespoke outfits, created in the new V&A Dundee tartan by Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design graduate, Hayley Scanlan.

The Tartan Exhibition is on at the V&A Dundee until Sunday 14 January 2024. Tickets can be booked on the V&A Dundee's website, [vam.ac.uk/dundee](http://vam.ac.uk/dundee)





# Finding the good in grief

There may be few certainties in life, but one unavoidable experience that we will all deal with is death.

“Dad worked at the Botanic Garden for almost 20 years – he helped during the initial stages of developing this part of the garden. After he passed away, the Botanic Garden has become a place where his family and friends can come to remember him and celebrate his life and work. I sincerely hope that others find the same solace in this space that we do.”

**Amy Paterson, whose father, Dr Neil Paterson, was the Botanic Garden's Education Officer before he passed away during the pandemic.**

While some may reason that it is simply a part of life, for others the heartbreak of losing a family member or friend can have a profound and lasting impact.

Never has our relationship with death been more evident than throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, with the early stages of the virus forcing us to re-examine our own mortality and that of those close to us.

As the number of those succumbing to the virus accelerated, the subject of death became inescapable. It was in those dark days that a concept of a space for those affected by grief was developed by the team at the University's Botanic Garden.

Located in the city's West End, the Botanic Garden has always been a place of tranquillity, and for Good Grief Garden designer and alumna Lorena Weepers, the pandemic emphasised the requirement for a dedicated space to allow visitors to reflect.

“The Good Grief Garden began as a reflection of my personal grief and an exploration into what it takes to acknowledge it,” she said.

“I decided to spend the final year of my degree exploring grief through my design practice. I explored what grief looked like through history and in different cultures,

and how we are often so out of touch with something that affects us all at some point in our lives.”

Kevin Frediani, Curator of the Botanic Garden, was tasked with bringing Lorena's vision to life. He said, “Visitors have always sought peace and tranquillity here at the Botanic Garden, but the opening of a dedicated memorial garden allows visitors a beautiful, considered space to reflect on a lost relative or friend.”

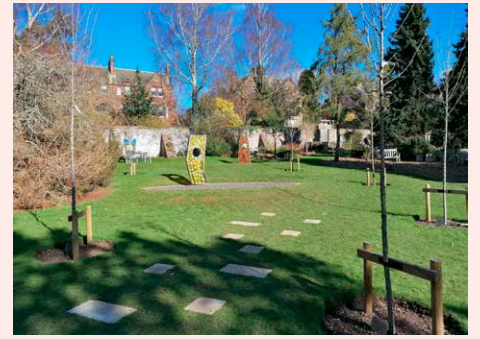
The Good Grief Garden was formally opened on 23 March, coinciding with the UK National Day of Reflection, organised by the charity Marie Curie. Surrounded by trees, at the heart of the garden are four specially-commissioned obelisks, representing the seasons of the year, while nooks have also been created to ensure a quiet place for those wishing to reflect in privacy.

“People seem to see something in this project that they can personally relate to. It has been a pleasure to watch this garden become embedded into the communities of Dundee, uniting us as we all try to find the good in grief. I hope the garden continues to bring people peace” Lorena said.





Lorena Weepers, pictured with Dr Jim McGeorge, University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer



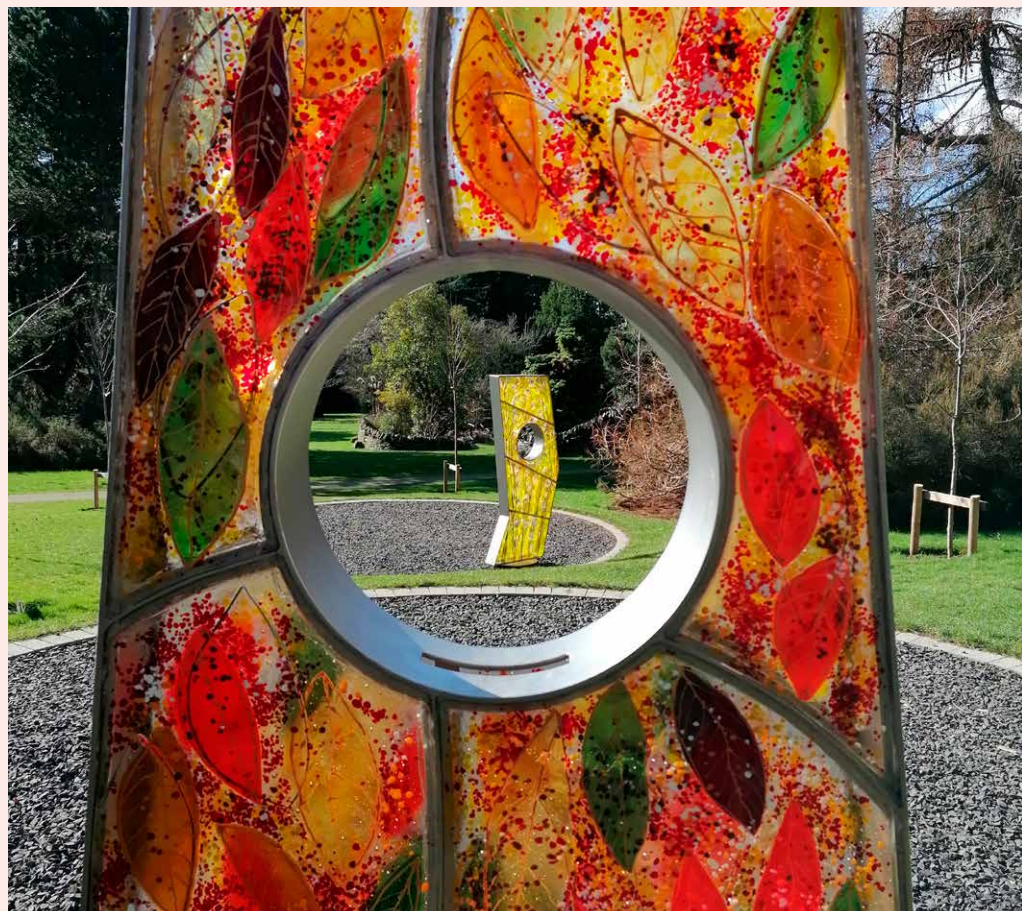
# 80,000+

people visit the  
Botanic Garden  
every year

Yvonne Murray, Development Associate at the University of Dundee, is inspired by the sense of community she feels in the garden. "Individuals, local businesses, and charitable organisations came together and raised nearly £30,000 to make the garden possible," Yvonne explained. "Their collective generosity and willingness to recognise their loved ones created this shared space where people can find peace and comfort. I'm so grateful for everyone who helped make the garden a reality."

Much about university life is focused on the future. Whether that means developing skills for a future career or research aimed at making our world a better place, campuses across the world are undeniably focused on what comes next, rather than what has come before. While the University of Dundee is certainly no different, it is comforting to know that there is now one small corner where we can all take a moment to reflect on those we miss the most.

Opportunities to celebrate the life of a loved one in the Good Grief Garden are available. For more information, contact:  
[botanicgardens@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:botanicgardens@dundee.ac.uk)





# Doubling donations, securing success

As a Robertson Scholar, young Scots can access world-class learning experiences at the University of Dundee with a programme of support based on ability rather than financial capacity.

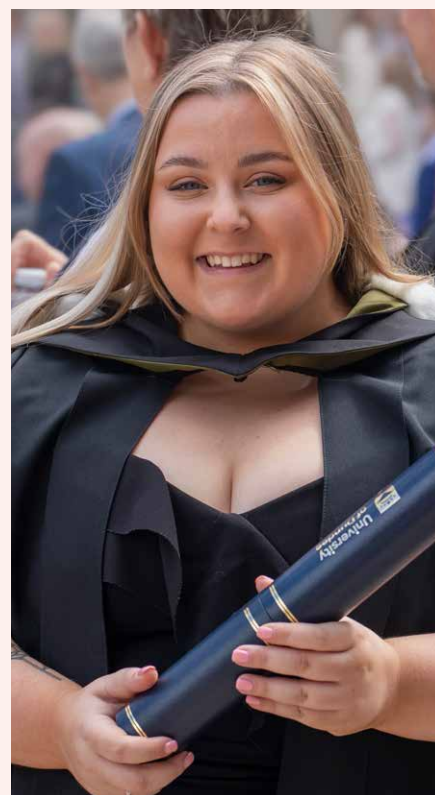
"I would like to say thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to really thrive during university," said Assia Dioudi, one of the University's Robertson Scholars. "The scholarship has fuelled my passion to keep working hard, and hopefully, in the future, I'll be able to give back financially and through my life as a doctor helping people medically. So, thank you again."

The Robertson Trust's Journey to Success programme enables Scottish students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access university education. "The programme is unique because it not only provides financial support to a student throughout their time at university but also bolsters it with an enhanced programme of personal and professional development, ranging from interview skills to supporting placement opportunities," said Thomas Kinney-Nicol, Senior Development Officer at the University of Dundee.

"The Robertson Trust generously matches any donations made to the University's Robertson Scholars programme," Thomas continued. "This means your donation has double the impact and will help more young Scots positively transform their lives through Higher Education."

The University's alumni community has always been passionate about supporting current students, and the Class of 1974 Medics recognise the value of the Robertson Scholars programme. In 2021, they supported the next generation of medical students by raising £29,153, which is match-funded by the Robertson Trust and supports three Robertson scholars. Geoffrey Bedford, Class of 1974 Medics, said, "Anything we can do to help students reduce their debt when they qualify is a big thing."

Amy Crawford is in her second year of Medicine and explains how the scholarship has impacted her. "I'm really grateful for the scholarship and want to give a massive thank you to all of the Class of 1974 Medics who have helped fund this. The scholarship has meant that I can live in Dundee, which I couldn't afford otherwise, allowing me to have a fresh start and meet some of the most wonderful people I know," she explained. "My experience at university would be entirely different without this opportunity, and I'm so thankful for it."



**"Following the completion of my degree in 2021, I have gone on to work with the University of St Andrews Students' Association as a Media and Marketing Assistant. Having the Robertson Trust's support throughout my degree and being able to talk about my Robertson scholarship within my interview process for my current position has made me appreciate all they have done."**

**Erin Chalmers, Graphic Design  
Class of 2021, Robertson Scholar**

You can make a real difference to the lives of young people who might otherwise not be able to attend university. To find out more, visit: [uod.ac.uk/alumni-donate](https://uod.ac.uk/alumni-donate)



## Robertson Scholars at our University

# 46

Robertson Scholars are currently studying at the University of Dundee

# 100%

of donations are matched by the Robertson Trust

# 1000+

young people have gained access to Higher Education since 1992, thanks to the Robertson Trust



# Discover your potential



**ACCESS UP TO £3,000 WITH OUR ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP!**

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- Access up to £3,000 towards course fees in addition to other eligible scholarships

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[dundee.ac.uk/scholarships](https://dundee.ac.uk/scholarships)



# From Dundee to Strasbourg

English Law LLB alumnus Judge Tim Eicke KC, the UK Judge at the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), returned to the University in February to give a lecture on Crises in Europe: a view from the Strasbourg Court.

"I always had an interest in human rights law and I took my opportunities when they arose. The route I have taken to get here has certainly been unusual, but I do know that I owe a lot to my time at Dundee."

**Tim Eicke KC**

Upholding the law is a hefty burden for anyone. Doing so in today's fast-changing legal landscape makes the demands of the job even more challenging. So imagine the weight of responsibility when you are elected as the UK's member of the Court which ensures respect for the human rights of 700 million Europeans in the 46 member states of the Council of Europe that have ratified the ECtHR.

But there is little sign of that strain on the face of Tim Eicke KC when he chats about his life before, during and after studying at Dundee. Indeed, hearing a description of the Dundee sunshine further lights up the face of the King's Counsel, who graduated with an LLB in English Law in 1992.

"I always enjoy visiting Dundee, though it is very different now from when I studied," he said.

"The city centre has changed beyond recognition. It's a very different space now – bright and friendly.

"The V&A Dundee is an obvious hotspot as well and I am really excited to come back to see these changes. It's lovely."

Tim's relationship with Dundee started rather unusually. During his studies in German law at the University of Passau, his curiosity turned to the UK, where he had lived for a year as part of a school exchange programme. Despite never having visited Dundee, he wrote to the University, unique at that time for teaching both Scots and English law.

"I received such a lovely letter back. It made me feel very welcome. I had never been to Scotland before but that letter was what took me across the North Sea to Dundee," Tim said.

Having arrived in Dundee a little older than his contemporaries, Tim acknowledges that his lifestyle in the city was perhaps more sedate than that of students leaving home for the first time. However, he fully embraced university life on the banks of the Tay, gathering with postgraduate students for drinks in the iconic Phoenix Bar, and joining the University volleyball team, with away trips often including a requisite visit to the nearest fish and chip shop for "something fried".



## A degree with global appeal

Dundee has a long and rich history of teaching English Law and like Tim Eicke KC, its alumni have reached the very highest levels of the legal profession. The English Law LLB continues to grow and has become ever more international in its composition, with students from England and Northern Ireland learning alongside students seeking to qualify as lawyers in common law jurisdictions across the world, including Canada, the Caribbean, Kenya and Nigeria.

The launch of the LLB Alumni Mentoring Programme in 2022 brought together 15 mentors, now based in the UK, Canada, Ireland and Nigeria. Solicitors and advocates, as well as a barrister, in-house counsel and government adviser, have been sharing knowledge, experience and advice to assist current students as they prepare to take the next steps in their career journey.



However, having been due to return to his studies in Germany, Tim recalls a pivotal moment in his life, when he phoned his father to ask for his blessing to continue his studies in Dundee.

"Near the front of the Tower Building, I remember the small green next to which there was a phonebox.

"I remember phoning my father from that phonebox – with change in hand – to tell him that I was thinking of staying in Dundee and what he would think of that.

"We had a conversation and I told him that the only disadvantage would be that I couldn't practise law in Germany, but he was happy for me to stay and that ultimately delivered me the career I have had."

After graduating from Dundee, Tim's legal career flourished. Called in 1993, he had a distinguished career at the Bar of England and Wales, taking silk in 2011, and was elected a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn in 2014.

He practised latterly from Essex Court Chambers in the fields of public and constitutional law, human rights law, EU law and public international law, and regularly appeared in the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Court of Human Rights, as well as the domestic courts, including the UK Supreme Court.

Since 2016 he has served as the judge elected in respect of the UK at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. In 2017, he returned to his alma mater, receiving an honorary doctorate in front of a packed Caird Hall.

"I'm not entirely sure how I got this job," he admits, "but I always had an interest in human rights law and I took my opportunities when they arose.

"The route I have taken to get here has certainly been unusual, but I do know that I owe a lot to my time at Dundee."



A sense of court: practising mooting

To find out more on our law degrees visit:  
[dundee.ac.uk/subjects/law](https://dundee.ac.uk/subjects/law)



# A sustainable jewellery business that sparkles

Tara Mansell graduated from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design (DJCAD) in 2020 with a degree in Jewellery & Metal Design amidst the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic. However, the challenges she faced throughout this time did not dampen her entrepreneurial spirit.

We caught up with Tara on a wet and damp morning in Scotland from her sunny conservatory in Gozo, Malta, where she lives and runs her contemporary jewellery design business Tara Lois Jewellery.

Since launching her business in 2020, Tara has enjoyed enormous success; featured in Vogue and Vanity Fair magazines, winning two first prizes in the Maltese Smart and Sustainable Business Awards and recognised as Malta's Emerging Maker.

Tara's foray in the world of jewellery began long before she arrived in Dundee. Originally from the UK, Tara moved to France when she was four years old, and at the age of 14 she had the opportunity to undertake work experience with an artisan jeweller in Toulouse.

Following her A levels, Tara embarked on a pre-apprenticeship course at The Goldsmiths' Centre in London. Taught by leading experts, she gained City & Guilds qualifications in Jewellery Manufacturing. Tara also won a Goldsmiths' Craft & Design Council Award and an Excellence in Craftmanship Award.

Despite this early success, Tara still had a thirst for learning and applied to DJCAD. Her dissertation focused on whether you can put emotions into jewellery, which she finds important in storytelling when designing.

After graduating, Tara returned to Malta where her family are based and began to think of her next steps. With help from her mother, who had previously set up a business, and her brother who was a University of Dundee Computing graduate, she kickstarted her own jewellery start-up.

"My favourite thing is learning about people, hearing their stories and designing pieces based on that. I am also very inspired by where I live in Malta and want to use bold colours with a Maltese influence. It is amazing to be able to represent it in this way."

The first piece of bespoke jewellery Tara created was for a woman of Sri Lankan heritage who had been excommunicated from her family after eloping with the man she loved. As a result, she didn't get to wear her traditional family Hindu wedding jewellery. "For their wedding anniversary I designed a swirl brooch which took the shape of garlands in 3D using filigree, taking the original colours and putting them in an enamelled circle in the centre. She absolutely loved it!"

Following this, Tara made several connections through Instagram and her website and attended various fairs. She then began receiving commissions from all over the world including New York, Hawaii and Australia.





**"This ring uses a celebrity client's great-grandmother's diamonds, which had already been reset by her mother, and an antique amethyst pendant."**

## Sustainability and the University of Dundee

- The University is working to respond to UN Sustainable Development Goals, through our learning and teaching, our impactful research and our engagement and enterprise. Find out more at: [uod.ac.uk/sdg](http://uod.ac.uk/sdg)
- DJCAD has an ethical making pledge with the Scottish Goldsmiths Trust, continually improving working practices to become more sustainable.
- Our ethical student ambassadors promote sustainable ways of working amongst students.
- DJCAD students recycle and reuse precious metals such as copper and silver and are working to transform precious metals recovered from electronic waste into art.

As well as creating stunning bespoke designs and incorporating people's stories and emotions into jewellery, sustainability is also an important part of her craftsmanship, a practice which was reinforced during her studies at DJCAD.

"While at DJCAD, I learned about sustainability, as well as talking to other people about how they promote sustainability in their workshops and businesses. That is when I started getting interested in ensuring sustainability is at the heart of what I do and try to continue to make my work as sustainable as possible."

A growing area of her work is recycling her clients' own jewellery, which keeps the sentimental value while creating new jewellery that they want to wear. A fantastic example of this is a diamond, amethyst and gold filigree ring which is being entered into Malta's People's Choice Award.

"This ring uses a celebrity client's great-grandmother's diamonds, which had already been reset by her mother, and an antique amethyst pendant. She asked me to keep the original diamond ring intact because of the strong memories she has of her mother wearing it. Otherwise, she gave me carte blanche. Since she has lived in Malta such a long time, I designed a broad ring shank in a Maltese filigree style, which I hand made from her gold after melting it down. She has allowed me to keep the ring until the People's Choice Awards exhibition is over, and then I'm sure she will be seen at her public appearances wearing it."

Establishing a successful jewellery business from scratch and working with intricate materials and gemstones to create stunning jewellery, you would be forgiven for thinking Tara has incredible fine motor skills.

"I have dyspraxia. The doctors who diagnosed me when I was young said my fine motor skills were non-existent. My hand-eye coordination is terrible! If you put me in any sort of ball and racquet sport, I will get hit in the face more times than you can count!"

This clearly hasn't stopped her and doesn't look as if it will anytime soon. Tara's future continues to sparkle.

"I'm looking forward to featuring in my first jewellery exhibition at the Line Gallery in Linlithgow, Scotland this year, as well as participating at Malta Fashion Week. I hope that I will get to exhibit at Paris Fashion Week next year. I'm also excited to be working with the new international contemporary art museum opening in Malta, which will be displaying and selling my work.

"I've never wanted to be a huge jewellery designer like Cartier: I'm really enjoying being a niche luxury jeweller and recognised for my sustainability credentials."

You can find out more about Tara's jewellery at [taraloisjewellery.com](http://taraloisjewellery.com)



# News and updates

In our last e-newsletter we asked you, our alumni, to share your news, updates and achievements with us. Thank you to everyone who got in touch.



**Dr. Michael Gordon**  
Medicine, Class of 1966

Dr Michael Gordon lives in Toronto and is an emeritus Professor of Medicine at the University of Toronto. He continues to practise as a physician in a modest medical practice, dealing with dementia, medical ethics and palliative care. His main avocation is writing. Beyond the academic articles, he now writes narratives about his observations and experiences in the world of medicine. His most recent book *Looking Through the Lens: Reflections on Medicine, Ethics and Society* is an anthology of previously published articles over the past fifteen years.



**Saadoun Ismail Mohammad**  
Structural Engineering,  
Class of 1972 and 1974

Saadoun has worked for more than 50 years in engineering across design, construction and supervision. He has experience in a wide variety of civil and structural engineering projects from irrigation and oil and gas fields to high-rise towers and skydiver structures and is now an engineering consultant. Saadoun has published 28 scientific and engineering books and 18 poem books and hopes to publish 50 in total.



**Professor Simon Rogerson**  
Science, Class of 1972

The world's first Ethical Digital Technology Trilogy has been authored by Professor Simon Rogerson and published by Taylor & Francis. It is a ground-breaking synthesis drawing on widespread historical evidence while firmly focused on the future. The trilogy's three interrelated perspectives provide a unique holistic view of how society is becoming increasingly dependent on digital technology and how this dependency must be managed to ensure societally positive, rather than societally negative, outcomes. The contrasting approaches in the three books - *The Evolving Landscape of Ethical Digital Technology*, *Ethical Digital Technology in Practice* and *Imagine! Ethical Digital Technology For Everyone* - allow access to this landscape by everyone: academics, practitioners and the public at large, regardless of age. An associated creative arts exhibition has been staged at the British Science Festival and The Green Man Gallery. Plans are afoot to take the exhibition abroad.

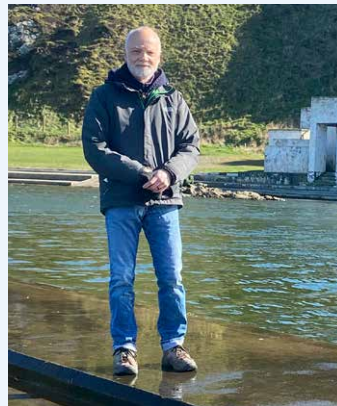


If you have any updates that you would like to share with us for our future communications, please do get in touch by emailing: [alumni@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@dundee.ac.uk)



**Kenneth Wilson**  
Illustration and Printmaking,  
Class of 1975

Kenneth said "After a life of working as a professional artist and illustrator, I am now enjoying my seventies, painting, creating sculpture and wood engravings. I have been entering examples of my portraiture in The Scottish Portrait Awards competition in recent years and have been shortlisted three times. In 2022, I was shortlisted again and my oil painting Her American Cousin and Big George received a commendation by the judges. It shows my stepdaughter and her cousin with our huge old cat, George, scrambling through the branches. Fingers crossed for this year!"



**Wincenty Sosna**  
Architecture, Class of 1980

Wincenty, known as Wicek, is now semi-retired and lives in Macduff, Aberdeenshire, having qualified as an architect in 1980. He runs his own business called SeeHow Designs and in the past five years has written a book about post-traumatic stress disorder entitled The Man with Three Names and invented a new garden plant growing and flowering guide, SeeHow, to help anyone create a garden with year-round structure and colour. Most recently, he has won a commission in Macduff to project-manage the refurbishment of Tarlair Pavilion, a Grade A listed Art Deco lido which is in a tragic state of disrepair. The project is being run by a charity called Friends of Tarlair.



**Bill Kerr**  
Geography, Class of 1985

Bill lives in Glasgow and works as a school librarian. He shared details of how he celebrated turning 60 in 2022. "I try to do something out of my comfort zone while on holiday. In January 2023 I was in Australia and had two firsts in one week – a tandem skydive over Airlie Beach in Queensland and a helicopter flying lesson over Brisbane. The skydive was from 8,000 feet and it was intimidating to jump out of a perfectly OK aeroplane but I had paid for it, so was definitely doing it. Following this, the experience of taking control of a helicopter was a piece of cake! Both were great fun."



**Joan Sumner**  
MBA, Class of 1993

"I am now settled in retirement in Bonnyrigg, Scotland, closer to family and friends. Some may remember my classic red MGB GT parked Tuesday and Thursday evenings on Perth Road for three tough years. It is still with me. Post-Covid, I drove to Jura mountains in eastern France. A wonderful treat – recommended! Writing historical fiction has been another apprenticeship. My first book The Thieftaker's Trek was a sharp learning curve, traditionally published as an eBook in 2018, then I did a lot of travelling. My second novel Repercussions, self-published on Amazon and Paperback, is out now."

## News and updates continued



**Liam M Connelly**  
Law, Class of 1995

Liam is Barrister and Solicitor Bar of Alberta and will be finishing his second three-year term as a member of the Board of Governors of Athabasca University in December 2023. He has been teaching for the past 17 years at Athabasca University, Canada's National Open Online University, which is committed to open access and digitally enabled lifelong learning.



**Kris Grant**  
Architecture, Class of 1998

"A beautifully considered design for enjoying life. Rescobie Pavilion is an exquisite celebration in detailing, executed to perfection," was how the Dundee Institute of Architects described the garden building designed by Kris, awarding it their Supreme Award for the Best New Building in the Region 2022. The light filled building overlooks Rescobie Loch in rural Angus, with walls that slide open to allow family life to be lived in the garden.



**Donald McKenzie**  
Master of Fine Art, Class of 2001

Donald graduated in 2000 from Gray's School of Art (Drawing and Painting) before completing a Master of Fine Art at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design in 2001. Following a solo exhibition of Donald's work in Sgoil Lionacleit Museum, Benbecula, during 2018 (which was extended due to popular demand), it was shown in Museum Nan Eilean on Lewis. Covid restrictions delayed the exhibition until summer 2022. His inspiration is drawn from his family connections and Hebridean heritage combining a conceptual approach with traditional techniques and materials. The exhibition included paintings, photographs, collages, writings, and objects collected during the renovation of his grandparents' house on Benbecula. One of the paintings in the exhibition was shown in the Scottish National Museum of Modern Art's annual report as one of the responses to COP26. The Hebridean exhibitions were important exhibitions for Donald as they were dedicated to the memory of his wife Jane, who died in 2016. They had been married for 43 years.



**Dr Ananda Deshapriya Medagoda**  
PhD in Civil Engineering, Class of 2004

Ananda graduated with his doctorate in concrete technology in 2004, and this year has been awarded a Fellowship by the Institution of Civil Engineers, UK, the highest grade by the oldest civil engineering society in the world. This was in recognition of his significant contribution to Civil Engineering and to the society. Ananda currently works for National Highways and is based in Birmingham.





**Adam Balfour**  
Law, Class of 2005

Adam now lives in Nashville and will be publishing his first book this year entitled *Ethics And Compliance For Humans*. The book helps describe how to design and build an ethics and compliance programme that resonates with employees by connecting with people in a very human way. He said "Ethics and compliance programmes are not about getting organisations to comply with the law - it is about how to influence the behaviour and decision making of people acting on behalf of the organisation. When we design ethics and compliance programmes with people in mind, we can make programmes much more effective."



**Cynthia Murray**  
Nursing, Class of 2008

Between 2019 and 2021, Cynthia held the position of 1st Clinical Nurse Advisor of Primary Care for the Office of Nursing Services US Veterans Affairs (VACO) in Washington DC. In 2022 she was elected to the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nurses (AAACN), the first Veterans Administration Nurse and University of Dundee graduate to hold this office. Cynthia also served as Co-Chair and Editor of the 10th edition of the *Scope and Standards of Practice for Professional Ambulatory Care Nurses*. Currently, Cynthia is appointed to VACO Office of Primary Care as lead nurse implementing The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxins (PACT) Act Section 603, the largest health care and benefit expansion in US Veterans Affairs history.



**Dr Claire Swan**  
PhD in History,  
Class of 2010

In May 2023, Claire became a Trustee for The Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland. Claire was a beneficiary of a PhD Scholarship from the Trust that allowed her to research *The Origins of the Scottish Investment Trust Industry*. The Carnegie Trust offers grants and scholarships to support study and research at universities in Scotland. Claire has gone on to enjoy a career in finance, working for Baillie Gifford & Co. in Edinburgh.



**Professor Hesham I. Almujaed**  
PhD in Accountancy and  
Finance, Class of 2011

Professor Hesham I. Almujaed is currently a faculty member at the College of Business Studies at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training in Kuwait and is a distinguished academic with expertise in accounting and finance in the Middle East. He was recently awarded the prestigious Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Prize for Research Excellence in Administrative Sciences and Economics 2021 by KFAS, recognising his noteworthy contributions to research in his field. He actively participates in professional organisations like the Kuwait and Gulf Cooperation Council Accounting and Auditing Organisation. Aside from his academic pursuits, he also provides consulting services to various private and public organisations and served as an adviser to the Deputy Prime Minister and several Ministers of Commerce and Industry in Kuwait.

## News and updates continued



**Lekel Asonganyi**  
Economics, Class of 2012

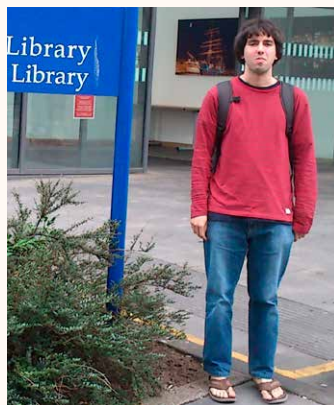
"I am proud to say that my journey started at the University of Dundee. I met great friends, found love and was inspired to start my own business. During my education in Dundee I learnt to be patient, hardworking and consistent and because of these attributes, I am a proud founder and CEO of Taaply, a digital solutions company currently operating in the US, Europe and Africa. We recently raised half a million USD from US investors and have partnered with MTN, the largest mobile network operator in Africa to provide digital solutions to SMEs. I studied economics and have applied my skills in the business world."



**Diane Gardner**  
Professional Development,  
Class of 2013

Diane graduated in 2013 and her focus has always been in further education and community-based adult literacy.

To help address ongoing literacy issues in Scotland and globally, in collaboration with colleagues she has set up a Community Interest Company (CIC) called Citizen Literacy. The company features online and face-to-face resources for adult and ESOL literacy students and their tutors. Resources include a free learner webapp, learner workbooks, tutor handbooks and an online tutor hub. Their programme is structured, adult-centric and learner-centred.



**Pedro Ramos**  
Information Technology  
and International Business,  
Class of 2015

"After graduating in 2015 I returned to Portugal, my home country. I had a difficult path to where I am now but a blessing came in 2021 when I started working at Deloitte Luxembourg. I have recently started a new role in a new department. By summer 2023, I will have visited my Scottish friend, Mr Gordon Ramsay, for whom I built the Dundee Botanic Garden Endowment Trust website nearly eight years ago."



**Tim Widden**  
Forensic Art, Class of 2016

Tim is currently a National Crime Agency listed forensic artist. Up to three children each day are kidnapped in Egypt and Tim was recently commissioned to produce age progressed images of three missing children. The images will form part of an Arab Fund for Arts and Culture exhibition by photographer Lamees Saleh, who is working to raise awareness of the plight of families whose children have been taken.





**Eugenia Obeng-Akrofi**  
International Energy Law  
and Policy, Class of 2020

Currently a PhD student at the Department of Politics and the Department of Environment and Geography at the University of York, Eugenia's research focuses on the Political Economy of Energy Transitions: the Role of Fusion on the Climate Change Debate. She also works part-time as a Business Support Officer at North Yorkshire Council and her work aims to impact beyond the scholarly community, governments and international organisations. Prior to completing her LLM at the University of Dundee, she achieved a BA in Political Science with Archaeology, and worked at the Parliament of Ghana from 2018 to 2019. Eugenia said "Dundee has always felt like a home away from home. The people, the culture and its landscape compare to no other city. The University gave me access to extraordinary opportunities, and I will always be grateful. Dundee will always have a special place in my heart."



**Kenny Raharison**  
International Business  
and Strategy, Class of 2021

One year after completion of his master's degree in International Business and Strategy, Kenny now works as the Senior Country Representative for Madagascar and Lesotho on a four-year programme funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) called Africa Trade and Investment Southern Africa Buy-in Activity. Passionate about international trade, through this programme he contributes to the promotion of trade between Madagascar and South Africa and the US. He works directly with export firms specialising in agriculture and agribusiness and with private sector organisations. Back in 2021, his dissertation focused on the internationalisation strategies of Malagasy firms.



**Panagiotis Jones**  
Mathematics, Class of 2022

"I have been awarded the MEXT Japanese government scholarship for graduate studies and am undergoing a research-based master's programme in mathematics at Nagoya University. It is applied for through the Japanese embassy in my home country and is intended to foster relations between Japan and other countries around the world. The opportunity this scholarship has provided is a perfect fit for me because my goal is to become a successful researcher in mathematics, and I also happen to absolutely love Japan."



**In memoriam  
Jim Smith**  
Zoology, Class of 1972

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the death of Jim Smith. Jim began his education at Dundee in 1969 and graduated with a degree in Zoology in 1972. He completed his PhD in Freshwater Ecology under Professor William Stuart. During his time at Dundee he played for the University badminton team and was President of the Sports Union for two years during which time he served on BUSF (BUSA) committees. He met his wife Kay (Catherine), the first female Sports Union President, in 1972. When Jim left Dundee he worked for the Open University and then Newcastle University from 1986 until 2017. He continued his involvement in badminton as a player, a coach and an organiser of tournaments, particularly for the juniors at local, county and national level. Jim was ill for some time but lost his battle with cancer and died peacefully on 10 October 2022 surrounded by his family in St Oswald's Hospice, Newcastle. He is survived by his wife and two children.

# Lab-designed love

A 'smelly old chemistry lab' might seem an unpromising location for romance, but it was in such a place that Professor Sir Philip Cohen met his future wife, Tricia. The couple would go on to develop what was an underappreciated field of research.





Tricia and Philip met at University College London in 1965. After marrying, the couple worked as postdocs at the University of Washington before returning to the UK to take up positions at Dundee in 1971. Tricia would go on to become Head of Molecular Biology at the Medical Research Council Protein Phosphorylation Unit (MRC-PPU) and was awarded an Honorary Professorship in 2001. She published more than 120 papers on protein phosphatases, which she was the first person to clone. Sadly, Tricia died in August 2020 after battling lymphoma for two-and-a-half years.

The Tricia Cohen Memorial Trust was constituted to fund biomedical research in her memory. The Trust has so far raised around £300,000 from more than 80 donors worldwide. When its £500,000 target is reached it will fund six PhD studentships to run consecutively from 2022 until what would have been Tricia's 100th birthday in 2044.



"Tricia was passionate about helping young scientists to make their mark in the world," said Philip, Founding Director of the MRC-PPU and one of the UK's most distinguished biochemists. "I can't think of anything she would have enjoyed more than Pritha coming here to start her research career. We are delighted to welcome her, but it is tinged with sadness that Tricia is not here to see this for herself."

Pritha Dasgupta (25) was awarded the inaugural Tricia Cohen Prize Studentship ahead of more than 100 applicants from around the world after impressing the Trust's Scientific Advisory Board with her academic aptitude and clear sense of purpose.

"I feel very privileged and grateful to have been chosen from such a wide field," said Pritha. "It was intimidating to be interviewed by such successful scientists, but they all gave me very constructive feedback. Tricia is known for her contribution to biochemical research, and I feel inspired by her story and by the work she did. After finishing my PhD I dream of ultimately becoming an independent investigator using what I learn in Dundee."

**"Tricia was passionate about helping young scientists to make their mark in the world."**

**Professor Sir Philip Cohen  
Founding Director of the MRC-PPU**



## Scientific stars

In addition to Philip and the other internationally acclaimed scientists at Dundee, Pritha can also draw inspiration from those who have pledged their support for the Trust. In addition to Tricia's colleagues, family and friends, many of her former PhD students and postdocs have donated to the fund in recognition of the part she played in shaping their careers. The list of donors also includes two Nobel Laureates – the late Edmond Fischer, Philip's former mentor in the USA, and Joseph Goldstein, who worked alongside Tricia in the same lab when they were both postdocs in Seattle more than 50 years ago.

Philip explained, "Many of our former students and postdocs have gone on to do great things in their professional lives and that is why they have been able to make such generous donations. They also wanted to recognise the role that Tricia played in their success."

"When we started working in protein phosphorylation, the idea that it would ever lead to anything of medical significance never crossed our minds. For 25 years, no pharmaceutical company had the slightest interest in anything we were doing but, over the past couple of decades, more than 75 drugs have been developed. Amazingly, they became the pharmaceutical industry's most popular class of drug target and have transformed the clinical care of multiple cancers. Sales of kinase-inhibiting drugs worldwide are approaching £100 billion a year."

"I have no doubt that the researchers who benefit will go on to achieve great things and have a positive impact on the world."

You can donate to the Tricia Cohen Memorial Trust by visiting:  
[tcmt.org.uk/donating](https://tcmt.org.uk/donating)

If you are based in the USA and would like to make a gift please contact:  
[development@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:development@dundee.ac.uk)

# Student success stories



## Celebrating entrepreneurial spirit with Venture

Venture celebrates the entrepreneurial spirit found within the University and supports those taking their first steps with their new business ideas. Recent graduate Stephanie Graham and current PhD student Ricardo Moreno Ballesteros each took away £12,500 of prize funding, yet despite this personal success, they both view this as an opportunity to help others.

After completing an MSc in Product Design in 2021, Stephanie is on a mission to make Dundee the city of recovery. She founded Dundee Community Craft CIC, which offers jewellery, teaching, and design workshops as a way to halt poverty, trauma and addiction.

Stephanie and Dundee Community Craft CIC have been making a difference in Dundee by providing a safe space to nurture the needs of people that do not get to go to university and master new skills. "All I am trying to do is make people feel happier about themselves and create an identity that is in favour of themselves," she said.

While Stephanie focuses on improving people's lives locally, Ricardo hopes his business, GenProTex, will have a global impact.

"Something that I have always wanted to do is to somehow give back to all those countries and places that supported me along the way," Ricardo explained. Born in Colombia and raised in Spain, Ricardo then completed his bachelor's and master's degrees in Chemistry in Poland. He is now studying for a PhD at the University of Dundee, expanding his knowledge in biochemistry, genetics, and tissue culture.

GenProTex aims to revolutionise the world of drug discovery by providing services that will promote the development of new medicines. The platform is designed to demonstrate the impact of targeting specific proteins on disease development and/or progression by mimicking the effects of drugs without actually using them. "Pharma spends trillions every year on testing new drugs, and most of the time, it fails," he explained. "If we can provide them with tools that are more effective, we would avoid wasting an incredible amount of time and resources," he continued.

Coordinated by the University's Centre for Entrepreneurship, Venture is a three-stage new business idea competition open to University of Dundee students, staff and recent graduates, split across different prize fund categories. Thirteen winners across all academic disciplines were selected from an initial 89 applications following a rigorous application and pitching process.

Stephanie and Ricardo are the first recipients of the inaugural McGhee Award, which recognises businesses with the potential to make a significant change locally and globally. University alumnus Christopher McGhee, founder of Current Health, and his wife, Dr Jo-Ann Nugent, generously donated £25,000 to the award, which was split between the two worthy winners. Their support helped the Venture competition swell to a record-breaking £68,000 worth of funding that will help emerging business ideas.



## Worthy winners

The Dundee University Rugby Football Club (DURFC) Men's 1st XV are this year's British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) National Trophy Winners beating Brunel University's 2nd XV, 50-33.

The club's first piece of silverware since the 1980s, and first final since 2014, was the culmination of a brilliant cup run, seeing off teams from Edinburgh, Loughborough, Doncaster, Leeds, and Strathclyde.

This was the final game and the end of their university rugby journey for nearly half the team, who are approaching the end of their degrees. For their fantastic BUCS achievement, the team won the well-deserved Team of the Year at this year's Sports Union Blues and Colours Awards Ceremony.



## School of Business success

Undergraduate and postgraduate teams from the University's School of Business made it to the finals of their respective categories in the 2022-2023 Universities Business Challenge (UBC).

The competition sees teams of students from universities across the UK compete in a series of business-focused challenges, including leadership, problem-solving and communication tasks. The finalists competed in a full day of challenges, which tested their creativity and analytical skills.

While Dundee's teams didn't come home with trophies, they made the University proud with their determination and professionalism, while developing their employability skills along the way.



# A trip down memory lane

The University's Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification has a long and rich history, dating back to 1889. Join us as we look back on how teaching Anatomy has changed over the years.

"Anatomy initially supported courses such as Medicine. The department was a small, hastily converted facility in the University's Carnelley building before moving to the first Medical School building in 1904," said Vivienne McGuire MBE, Centre Manager.

"Despite its humble beginnings, Anatomy quickly established itself as a core discipline, and the University became a leading centre for anatomical research."

The Anatomy department moved into the newly built Medical Sciences Institute (MSI) in the 1970s, where it has remained ever since.

The Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification, as we know it today, was formed in 2008 however, it has since grown and expanded.

"A successful £1 million fundraising campaign in 2014 created a much larger mortuary on campus, enabling the University to become the first to use revolutionary Thiel embalmed cadavers, which give students invaluable learning opportunities," Vivienne continued.

"We are very grateful to those who donate their remains to the University. Their selfless gift so that others may learn is never taken for granted."

Anatomy has come a long way from a quickly converted workshop. "Today we are known as a place of innovation," said Vivienne. "Here, we teach the next generation of medical experts, and our researchers are at the forefront in their fields of human anatomy, forensic science, and medical imaging."

Professor David Dow, Cox Chair of Anatomy 1925-1958, was a memorable lecturer known for making even the most complex topics interesting. One of his most popular lectures was on the body snatchers, Burke and Hare, and he once invited a contortionist to demonstrate to his class. ➔







→ Department of Anatomy, 1978-79. At this time, Professor David Dick headed the department. Under his guidance, the department grew substantially, and specialised research groups were established. Nowadays, the Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification is home to a community of teachers and researchers working in the fields of anatomical sciences, forensic anthropology, biomedical engineering, craniofacial identification, medical research, surgical skills development, medical and forensic art, and augmented reality medical and anatomical educational products.



↓ A dissection class in the 1980s. Up to 100 people each year donate their bodies to help to train aspiring doctors, scientists, dentists and surgeons. These 'silent teachers' are vitally important, with over 1,000 students benefitting each year from full-body dissection.

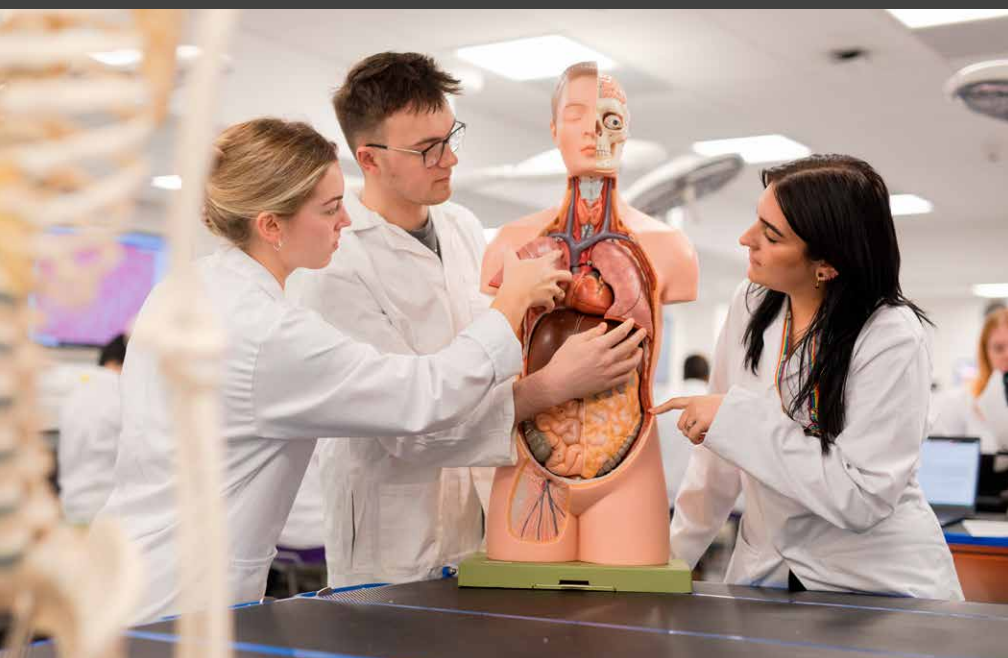


↓ Anatomy students learning from textbooks, x-rays, anatomical models and specimens in the 1980s. Students still use these resources today however, technological advances have enabled more realistic and interactive learning experiences.

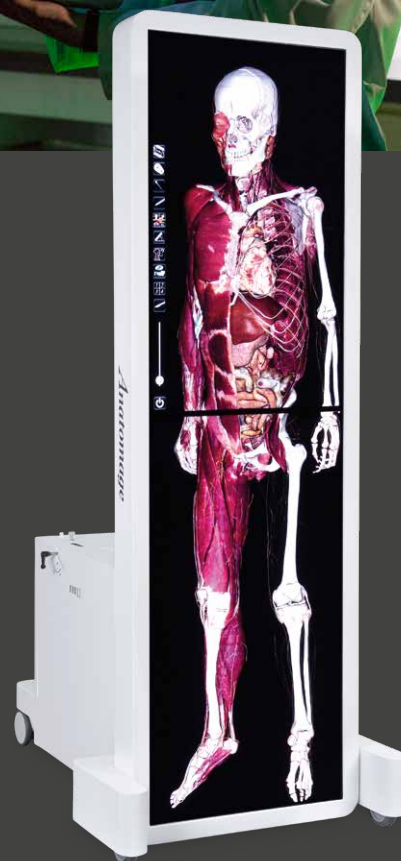


↓  
An Anatomy lecture in the 1980s using projectors and acetates. Technology has since evolved to include interactive whiteboards, tablets, and laptops.

A collaboration between the Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification, the School of Humanities, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design and Museum Services saw Professor Dame Sue Black performing an Alien Autopsy in 2016! The event was part of the nationwide Being Human festival of humanities and celebrated the 150th birthday of H.G. Wells, author of War of the Worlds.



↓  
Professor David Dow and his wife, Dr Agnes Dow, established the Dow Memorial Trust in 1998. Today, the Trust keeps the couple's memory alive by supporting projects that reflect their passions. Generous support from the Trust enabled the creation of the Dow Anatomical Suite, a multi-purpose facility with state-of-the-art equipment where students can practise their skills in a safe and supported environment.



↓  
Thanks to a generous gift from the Binks Trust, students can explore human anatomy using a 3D interactive Anatomage table. This technology allows students to virtually dissect full-sized human bodies with the swipe of a finger.



# Graduates' Association and University Court

Building a sustainable and exciting future for our students, staff and community.



Fellow alumni may share my perception that time passes more quickly than it used to! It seems no time at all since I was writing at the beginning of the new academic year last September. For Court members, the year is punctuated by formal Court meetings, Committee meetings, special events such as the public meeting and the Court Retreat, and regular engagement with the University Executive Group and other colleagues. Picking highlights from all this activity is difficult. The key is recognising where Court's efforts help benefit our students, staff and community and build a sustainable, exciting future.

The Court met formally in November, February and April, and next meet in June. The February meeting was followed by the Court Retreat, an opportunity to consider critical issues in more depth than is possible within normal Court business. Our discussion focused on the decisions needed to implement the new University Strategy launched last year. We confronted the implications of growth, identifying exciting opportunities as well as the impact on people, the University and the city.

For the first time in some years our discussion was not dominated by our financial position, and this was very welcome. There has been disappointment across the higher education sector, however, at the most recent financial settlement proposed by the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council, where a gap seems to have emerged between policy objectives – widening access and upskilling the Scottish workforce – and the resources to pay for them.

We are proud of our success in both delivering our educational and social objectives and paying our way by diversifying income streams, but we cannot do it alone. Court discussed how we might develop an informed public conversation about appropriate priorities for the higher education sector, something on which we will align with our fellow universities.

The University Strategy envisages an outward-looking institution, attracting a wide diversity of students and staff who are fully engaged with the local and wider communities. To support that ambition, we have refocused our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, and ensured that Court has the tools to turn words into deeds.

There is a growing sense of purpose and ambition as Court works with senior management on detailed plans to implement the strategy, and places greater emphasis on communication within and outside our community.

**Jane Marshall is a nominated member of the University Court and member of the Graduates' Association, who acts as an intermediary between graduates and the University Court.**

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Jane provides regular Court updates which are published at [dundee.ac.uk/alumni](https://dundee.ac.uk/alumni) and she can be contacted at [courtadmin@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:courtadmin@dundee.ac.uk)

# Love Dundee

With its friendly people, vibrant culture, and beautiful scenery, it's easy to fall in love with Dundee. But for some, it's even more special. Here, we share heart-warming stories from couples who didn't just fall for the city, and left the University with more than a degree!



## Mike and Christine Pacione

"I met my future wife Christine at the University in September 1972. Our first meeting was entirely serendipitous. I was coming from the University gym while she was heading towards the Students' Union. I thought she was the most beautiful girl I'd ever seen. I invited her for a coffee, she agreed, and as the saying goes, the rest is history.

"Christine graduated with her MA Honours degree in Geography in 1973 and at the same ceremony I received my PhD in Geography. Christine then went to Leeds University to obtain her postgraduate teaching qualification while I took up a Lectureship at Queen's University Belfast.

"We were married in Alnwick, Northumberland in July 1975. Two days later, before going on honeymoon, I interviewed successfully for a Lectureship at Strathclyde University in Glasgow. Although we are both from the east coast, we have lived for most of our married life in a village to the north of Glasgow, Christine as Principal Teacher of Geography and me as Professor of Geography at Strathclyde University. We have two children, Michael, who is a derivatives trader in London, and Emma, who is a veterinary surgeon in Sutton Coldfield."





### Stuart Thomson and Chloe Boyles

"Chloe and I first met in July 2020 in Dundee after we realised that we had some mutual friends. On our first date we went for ice cream, and it went from there.

"I had recently graduated in medicine from the University of Dundee in 2019 and Chloe was completing her paediatric nursing degree.

"Although we were both based in Dundee at the same time, we are yet to work together. We got engaged in August 2022 and are getting married in July 2024."



### Hannah and Rogan Thomson

"We met in 2015 after both joining the University archery club. Rogan had been shooting for a few years but I only joined the sport to try it out and make new friends. We grew interested in each other at the Archery Christmas dinner and started dating pretty quickly after that. Over the years we've gone to competitions together and still enjoy shooting together. We got engaged August 2019 and married October 2021, incorporating small touches of our mutual love of archery. Rogan now coaches the University archers. We are both still living in Dundee and looking forward to a big archery reunion in summer '23 of past and present DUAC archers."



### Debbie and Calvin Orr

"I first met Calvin outside Belmont Hall when I was signing up people for the Savoir Faire society. I must have been attracted by his long, flowing locks! In the days before texts, I popped a post-it note under his door asking him to my birthday party at my family home in Edinburgh. He keeps it in his wallet!

"After uni, we moved to the south of England and married in 1995. I worked as a senior editor for indexes of the Financial Times, The Times, etc. for 17 years in Reading before going full-time with my yarn dyeing business. After 12 years and many adventures, the time came to sell up and move over to Northern Ireland during the pandemic. I'm now back working as an editor, this time of subtitles for Hollywood studios and streaming services. Calvin started as an accountant with Berkshire County Council and has been assistant director of finance for Bracknell Forest Council for many years."



### Cameron and Aleks Heenan

Cameron and Aleks met each other in 2014, once Aleks had returned from her academic year abroad in the Netherlands. While friends first, it wasn't until early 2017 that they started dating. After spending many nights in the library doing assignments together, they quickly realised how much they had in common, particularly with their goals for the future. Securing work in Edinburgh, Aleks and Cameron moved there in 2017 and got married in 2022, before moving to Calgary for Aleks to take up a postdoctoral position at the University of Calgary.

# Get involved!

As a graduate of the University of Dundee you will always be part of the alumni community. There are many benefits, and you can get involved in various activities across the globe – there is something for everyone.

Take a look at how you can get involved.

## Events

We are delighted that our in-person events programme is back in action after the challenges of the last few years, with plans for a calendar of events for alumni in Dundee, across the UK and across the world.

Joining your fellow alumni at a University of Dundee event can help you grow your networks. These are accessible and enjoyable social gatherings and can offer professional development opportunities.

Over the first few months of 2023, the Alumni Relations team has had the chance to catch up with alumni at events in Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou, a professional development and networking event in London with support from alumnus Paul Ryan, and at Tartan Day celebrations in New York.

The Alumni Relations team works closely with governments and agencies across the globe to ensure that University of Dundee alumni are offered opportunities to engage with events. So far this year, Dundee alums have attended the Singapore Food and Drink Festival, St Andrew's Day gatherings in Vancouver, Singapore and Jakarta and the Study UK Alumni Awards in Vietnam and Singapore.

For all our latest events visit:

[dundee.ac.uk/alumni/events](https://dundee.ac.uk/alumni/events)

We can only invite you if we know how to reach you! Update your contact details and preferences at: [uod.ac.uk/alum-stay-in-touch](https://uod.ac.uk/alum-stay-in-touch)



## Alumni Networks

Wherever you are in the world, you can connect with fellow alumni and keep in touch with the University, grow your professional network, get to know a city or country better, volunteer to support University recruitment or stay in touch with news and plans. We have active alumni networks in Indonesia, Singapore and Nigeria, are developing networks in London and New York and will release plans for more soon!

If you'd like to find out more about Alumni Networks in your area, be connected with alumni leading those networks, or volunteer to coordinate a network where you are, get in touch via [alumni@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@dundee.ac.uk)





## Volunteering

Our alumni have kindly dedicated over 1,170 hours to volunteering projects, from providing content for testimonials and sharing their experience with prospective and current students, to taking part in mentoring programmes. There are many ways you can get involved.



"I have always been a very proud alumna and still take a keen interest in University activities. I thought the Ask Alumni sessions would be an excellent way to give back a small part of what the University has given me. I hadn't been on campus for a while and it was great to see how it never stops evolving, ever striving to become a better place for students. While I am by no means the most established alumna around, I felt really fortunate to speak with students and share my experiences."

**Indre Urbanaviciute, BFin Finance, Class of 2015, now working at JP Morgan commenting on her Ask Alumni session**



"When I first heard about Dundee's exciting and insightful mentoring programme, I was very keen to be involved. The opportunity to interact directly with students and to help them develop and navigate their life choices is uniquely rewarding. It really is something that everyone should experience and a role in which each of us has a valuable contribution to make."

**Nick Buckworth, LLB Law, Class of 1983. Honorary Professor, University of Dundee and Founding Partner Altius Advisory commenting on our LLB Mentoring Programme**



"Attending the event was a great opportunity for offer holders to speak to a graduate such as myself and see the proof of how the University of Dundee could propel them into an exciting career. It's important for the university community to support each other and that starts with past students sharing their experiences with prospective students."

**Callum Hogan, BEng (Hons), Class of 2017, Mechanical Engineering commenting on our offer holder event**

If you are interested in volunteering, let us know by emailing [alumni@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@dundee.ac.uk)



Dentistry reunion, Class 1972



Architecture reunion, Class 1998

## Reunions

The friendships forged at university are strong – and a reunion to reconnect with classmates from your time at the University of Dundee is a wonderful way to find joy in shared memories, revisit the University to see how the campus and city have changed over the years and look to the future together.

The Alumni Relations Team would be delighted to welcome you back, help you reconnect with classmates and support you with organising your reunion. We are looking forward to reminiscing with you soon.

"Our reunion was originally planned to mark 50 years since graduating, but had to be postponed due to Covid, and so became 50+1. We were an exceptional year, and have had many reunions, but this one was special. The University has changed considerably, but I am sure it still offers the same springboard to the future. Our reunion was a resounding success."

**Paul Spokes, BDS, Class of 1971**

If you'd like to enquire about a reunion, email us at [alumni@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@dundee.ac.uk)

# The Bridge Alumni Awards

In August 2022, the Development and Alumni Relations Team hosted the second The Bridge Alumni Awards event. Held virtually and attended by alumni located across the globe, the event recognised University of Dundee alumni who generously give back their time to support current students and the wider University community.

Staff from the University joined the event to celebrate the contributions made by our worldwide alumni community in supporting the University's commitment to transforming lives locally and globally.

## Join us for this year's event!

Tuesday 29 August 2023 13:00 BST

If you are interested in attending this year's event, please visit our event webpage to register.

We'll be delighted to see you there!

To register, visit:

[uod.ac.uk/bridge-alumni-awards](https://uod.ac.uk/bridge-alumni-awards)

## Our 2022 award winners!

Congratulations to all those shortlisted and award winners!

The dedication and commitment of our alumni is vital to the work we do within Development and Alumni Relations.

Whether it's inspiring the next generation of students, providing advice to prospective and current students, or supporting our fundraising efforts – our alumni help to make a difference.



### Outstanding Alumni Ambassador Award

Giving exceptional support as an Alumni Ambassador, helping to enhance the University's reputation across the world through regular volunteering.

**Winners:** Feso Bright, International Oil and Gas Management, Class of 2010 and Cait Bradley, International Business and Marketing, Class of 2020





#### Outstanding Support of Fundraising Award

Going above and beyond to support the fundraising efforts of the University of Dundee, facilitating campaigns and inspiring fellow alumni and their networks to give.

**Winner:** David Peattie, Mechanical Engineering and Economics, Class of 1976



#### Outstanding Support from a Recent Graduate Award

This award is for a recently graduated alumnus or alumna who has gone above and beyond to support the University after their graduation, sharing their experience and advice with students, offer-holders and applicants to help the University community flourish.

**Winner:** Andrea Benitez Rojas, Management and Entrepreneurship, Class of 2020



#### Outstanding Support of Alumni Community Award

Going above and beyond to support the alumni community, inspiring other alumni to keep connected with Dundee and significantly contributing to the advancement of the international community of University of Dundee alumni and friends.

**Winner:** Crystal Tao, International Business, Class of 2021



#### Outstanding Support of Students Award

Going above and beyond to support the student experience, inspiring current students and providing them with invaluable guidance to contribute to their success.

**Winner:** Crispin Reed, Administrative Studies, Class of 1984



#### Outstanding Support of Student Recruitment Award

Going above and beyond to support the recruitment of students to the University, going the extra mile to share their experience and skills as well as giving invaluable advice and guidance to applicants and offer-holders.

**Winner:** Helen Chen, International Business and Human Resource Management, Class of 2016



#### Outstanding Reunion Organiser Award

Going above and beyond to organise and bring together fellow alumni for a reunion event.

**Winner:** Paul Spokes, Dentistry, Class of 1971

# Stay connected!



Whether you are new to the University of Dundee family or have been a stalwart of the community for many years, we value your support and we want to make sure we keep you up to date on the things that matter to you.

While The Bridge magazine is an annual highlight, celebrating the successes of our students, staff and alumni, there are lots of things happening year-round that might interest you.

The best way to ensure you don't miss out is to subscribe to our emails and keep us informed of any changes to your contact details.

## By keeping in touch, you can find out more about:

- University news
- Networking and professional development events, in Dundee, Scotland and the UK
- How to access the global Alumni Ambassador network
- How to join an international Alumni Network or Association and attend exclusive events where you are
- Opportunities for you and your immediate family members to enjoy discounted fees for taught postgraduate courses
- Volunteering, including mentoring and guest speaker opportunities
- How to access the University's careers service – you can enjoy personalised support at any stage in your career
- Opportunities to promote internship and work experience placements within your organisation
- Discounted access to the Institute of Sport & Exercise and access to University facilities, including Dundee University Students' Association

## Reconfirm your contact details for a chance to win £500 in travel vouchers!

By reconfirming your contact details, we'll be able to send you news, activities and events that are most relevant to you and where you live. If you don't already, you can also select to receive an annual copy of The Bridge Magazine.

Simply complete our digital form by scanning the QR code below or visit our website through the address below by 30 November 2023 to be entered into a prize draw to win a £500 travel voucher.

[uod.ac.uk/alum-stay-in-touch](https://uod.ac.uk/alum-stay-in-touch)

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"I was privileged to join colleagues in New York for the Tartan Week celebrations – what a treat to meet alumni and friends there who still have such strong connections to Dundee and the University!"

**Lizzi Nicoll**  
**Head of Development**  
**and Alumni Relations**

L-R: Leah McLaren, Lizzi Nicoll and Pam Lawrence in New York

## Hello from the new Head of Development and Alumni Relations

Being a Dundonian, after 12 years living and working in Australia, I was delighted to return to my home city and join the University of Dundee in the autumn of 2022 to lead the Development, Alumni Relations and Major Events team. It's been a busy six months learning more about the exceptional work undertaken here, in research, teaching and engagement, and meeting alumni and friends from all over the world. As you have read earlier in the magazine, I was privileged to join colleagues in New York for the Tartan Week celebrations – what a treat to meet alumni and friends there who still have such strong connections to Dundee and the University, whether they've been stateside for five years or 50.

A recurring theme when meeting alumni and supporters, locally, nationally and globally, is the deep sense of pride in the University that radiates through conversations, and how connection to our University of Dundee community is so important. Time spent at university is formative in so many ways, but it's just the start of our journey with you and you will always be part of the family!

Over the next year, we look forward to a conversation with you – we will keep you informed of what's happening on campus and look forward to hearing from you regarding your successes, what activities you are interested in, and how we can work together. You can email us anytime at [alumni@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@dundee.ac.uk)

I very much look forward to meeting more of our community in the coming weeks and months and hope that I have the chance to catch up with you in person at an event here in Dundee, across the UK or the world. And please don't forget you are welcome back to the University anytime: just get in touch. We will be sure to give you a warm welcome!

**Lizzi Nicoll**  
 Head of Development and Alumni Relations

### Privacy notice

Your relationship with Dundee as a graduate or supporter is very important to us. We aim to be transparent and trustworthy in how we maintain and protect your data. To find out more on how we do this please visit:

[uod.ac.uk/privacy-notice-alumni](https://uod.ac.uk/privacy-notice-alumni)

The Bridge is produced by the Department of External Relations, University of Dundee.

### Development & Alumni Relations Office

Lizzi Nicoll, Rebecca McSherry, Pamela Lawrence, Sheryl Morris, Kerry Drysdale, Stefan Riddock, Leah McLaren, Thomas Kinney-Nicol, Suzanne Paterson-Black, Yvonne Murray, Mariel Symeonidou, Kirsty Irons, Sourya Roy, Ross Shepherd, Kim Malherbe, Aileen Ross

### Corporate Communications

Roddy Isles, Grant Hill, Claire McDonald, Jonathan Watson

### Creative Services

David Gilchrist, Kenneth Malcolm, Emma Alexander

### Alumni Relations Team

[dundee.ac.uk/alumni](https://dundee.ac.uk/alumni)  
[alumni@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@dundee.ac.uk)  
 +44 (0)1382 381184

@dundeeuni

University of Dundee

