



UK | Malaysia | Singapore

Student Fund Impact Report 2025



I'm Jacob, and I have recently celebrated my graduation from Newcastle University's Medical School.

Growing up in a single-parent and low-income household following the death of my Mum had its challenges, but Dad always encouraged us to aim high and "get on" and made our education a top priority.

Studying medicine was always an ambition of mine, but at times, it felt like a dream that was completely out of my grasp. It is thanks to you, the supporters of the Newcastle University Student Fund, that my dream became a reality. You have given me the vital helping hand I needed to make the most of my time on campus, and I will always look back at my time at Newcastle with a smile.

Today, there are more students in a similar situation to mine, struggling to cover basic living costs and needing support to ensure they can have a fulfilling university experience. You are helping to break down inequalities and ensure everyone, regardless of their background, can access education and have the opportunity to not only learn, but to build friendships, grow their confidence, develop new skills and realise their full potential.

Thanks to the Newcastle University Student Fund, I have never felt that I have missed out on anything, despite my personal circumstances. I will forever be grateful for your support, for my time at Newcastle, and for what promises to be a positive and rewarding future.

Thank you.



Dr Jacob McKenzie
MBBS, 2025



A young woman with dark curly hair, wearing glasses and a light pink sweater, is sitting on a wooden bench. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred indoor setting with architectural details.

Helping students to make the most of their university experience

With cost of living challenges, extracurricular and social activities are usually the first things that students must give up. Extracurricular activities enhance students' confidence in social interactions, expand their social circles, and equip them with new skills and abilities. Most importantly, these activities provide a vital space for enjoyment and relaxation, offering a break from the stresses of university life.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors and supporters, this year the Newcastle University Student Fund has provided 131 Access and Participation Bursaries to students on campus. These bursaries cover the costs associated with joining one of the 260+ societies and sports clubs available at Newcastle University Students' Union, including kit and equipment, so that anyone can get involved no matter what their background.

131

Access and
Participation
Bursaries awarded
to students

Belonging in Engineering Network (BEN)

BEN aims to improve Black and other Global Majority students' experiences and help to reduce the awarding gap faced by this cohort compared to their peers.

The network provides support on topics including study skills, industry networking and managing racism and microaggressions, as well as social events, supported by a dedicated committee of alumni, staff and students.

This year, the Newcastle University Student Fund enabled BEN to join the Association for Black and Minority Ethnic Engineers (AFBE-UK), granting members access to benefits including mentoring with industry leaders, group coaching sessions and targeted talks to inspire the next generation of Black engineers.

AFBE-UK events attended by BEN include the Transition Programme, preparing students for the world of work with interview workshops and networking opportunities, and The Big Idea Challenge, which inspired students to create innovative products to benefit the community – awarding the winning team £1,000 to bring their idea to life!



Student Publication Association National Conference

Newcastle University has a long history of success in student journalism, with The Courier celebrating its 75th birthday in 2023! Starting as a 4-page newspaper costing students 2p, today The Courier is a weekly free publication providing our 28,000-strong student community with the latest news, events and opinions from campus.

This year, donations to the Newcastle University Student Fund helped six students from our media team to attend the Student Publication Association National Conference in Exeter, giving our budding journalists a great opportunity to network with other student publications from around the country and experience a prestigious awards conference.

The Courier was nominated for a number of awards at the conference, including Best Design, Best Culture Section, Best Reporter, and Best Sport Section – which we won!



Student Spotlight Awards

The Student Spotlight Awards celebrate the everyday achievements of Newcastle University students across our three campuses in Newcastle, Singapore and Malaysia.

Each month, one winner is selected to have their success spotlighted by our Students' Union, with the winner also receiving a £50 voucher (funded by the Newcastle University Student Fund). Some of the winners from the last 12 months include:

English Language and Literature student and Founder of The Sticky Note Newcastle blog, Eloise

Eloise has grown a community of student writers on our Newcastle campus, providing a platform to gain hands-on writing experience and produce impactful stories, raising awareness of student-led initiatives like Marrow Society. Eloise is credited for fostering an inclusive space where her fellow students feel empowered to create, express themselves authentically, and grow.



Singapore-based student Syaerhan Fareez, who is supporting at-risk youth



Syaerhan Ramadhan Bin Mohamed Fareez has overcome a string of struggles in his university journey and has gone on to achieve two consecutive years on the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) Provost's List Honours, consistently demonstrating resilience. He also leads on events for SIT Project YOUTH, which provides support for at-risk youth. Syaerhan has truly inspired his peers with his growth mindset and determination.



Helping students by making Higher Education accessible to all

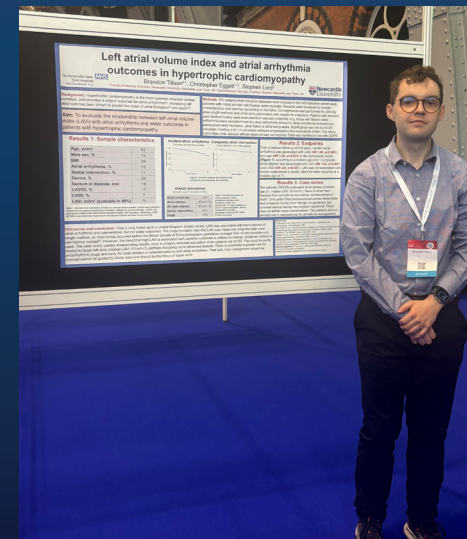
Newcastle University is committed to improving access to education and creating equal opportunities for all students. We are proud of the support we give to students from socio-economically challenged backgrounds and the part we play in levelling the playing field.

Brandon moved into a care home when he was 15. Coming to university without the emotional or financial support of a family was daunting, and this was compounded further with an autism diagnosis, which made building new networks extremely challenging.

Driven by his personal experience of heart surgery, Brandon was determined to overcome these barriers and take the first steps towards his dream of working in cardiology.

Brandon was supported every step of the way by Newcastle's generous alumni and supporter community. He joined our Medical School via the PARTNERS Supported Entry Programme and has received financial support from the Newcastle University Student Fund throughout his time with us, along with a legacy gift from the Dianne and Brian Arkley Fund.

In September, Brandon started his placements at the RVI and Freeman Hospital in Newcastle and has a bright future ahead of him thanks to you, our donor community.



There are many hidden expenses, in addition to the basic day-to-day living costs that you must cover for yourself when you don't have family support. For me, the main things have been medical costs, no guarantor for rentals, moving digs, accommodation costs over the holiday period... to name a few.



Offering a helping hand when it's needed most

Worries about money can be invasive and can severely impact our students' educational outcomes and wellbeing.

With the ongoing economic crisis affecting us all, and some students struggling to cover basic household costs, your donations have helped Newcastle students most at risk of poverty, homelessness and falling behind in their education.



Calculator library

Calculators are perhaps the most used equipment in university examinations; however, many students were arriving at exams without the correct calculator – or no calculator at all.

The Newcastle University Student Fund has helped establish a bank of 100 scientific calculators available for loan to students through the university library to ensure everyone has all the equipment they need to succeed during assessment periods.



GRAB & GO



17,220

hot meals
provided

Tackling food poverty on campus

Our donors have enabled the Newcastle University Student Fund to finance a **'Free Pasta Pot'** scheme during assessment periods this academic year, ensuring students in the thick of revision and deadlines could access a hot meal on us. The free meals were available from five locations on campus, and overall, 17,220 hot meals were provided from September 2024 – June 2025.

Additionally, 47 students experiencing hardship were given a university catering food fob pre-loaded with £50 of credit to ensure they weren't going hungry.

It has had such a positive impact on my student experience, being able to grab food with friends. I have been struggling financially and sometimes I skip lunch as I don't have the extra money to buy food on campus, and dinner is more of a priority. The pre-loaded fob has been so good, in the winter months especially.

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Helping students to take the first steps on the career ladder

In a crowded job market, employers are increasingly looking for ways to distinguish between candidates. Our students must have real-world experiences to boost their CV and help them get ahead in the graduate job market or to pursue their dreams of further study.

Student treks in London

This year, donations to the Newcastle University Student Fund enabled 50 students from our Business School and School of Arts and Cultures to visit some of the UK's leading employers, including HSBC, Dentsu, BNY Mellon, IPSOS, PwC, Santander and Bloomberg.

Students had the opportunity to travel to London to speak to employees and alumni working in these organisations, hearing their industry insights, information on graduation schemes and general advice for entering one of the world's leading global business hubs.

Engaging with industry professionals and gaining firsthand insights into the world of finance was truly inspiring.

Soundarya

MSc Accounting, Finance and Strategic Investment student

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A photograph of the Newcastle University Malaysia building, a multi-story structure with a mix of red brick and grey panels. The building features a prominent entrance with arched doorways and a sign that reads "Newcastle University Medicine Malaysia". To the right of the entrance, a sign for "Bell's Court" is visible. In the foreground, there is a long, narrow water feature with several small fountains. To the left of the building, there is a covered walkway with a blue metal frame and glass panels. The background shows some tropical trees and a clear sky.

Providing access to global opportunities

Newcastle University prides itself on being a globally inclusive institution. There is an increased demand from students to gain a global education as part of their degree programme and stand out in an ever-competitive job market. The Newcastle University Student Fund also supports projects at our international campuses in Malaysia and Singapore.



Inspiring medical students in Malaysia

In April 2025, the Newcastle University Fund enabled 32 fifth-year MBBS students to attend a workshop delivered in partnership with Monash University at our NUMed campus in Malaysia, aiming to equip our medical students for clinical practice.

Throughout the half-day workshop, students had hands-on training to develop essential orthopaedics skills such as cast application, reinforcing their theoretical knowledge with practical application to better prepare them for real-life clinical scenarios during foundation training.



Also this year, fourth-year medical student Samran Shahid was supported to make the journey from NUMed to London to attend the 2025 European Society of Paediatric Neurosurgery conference.

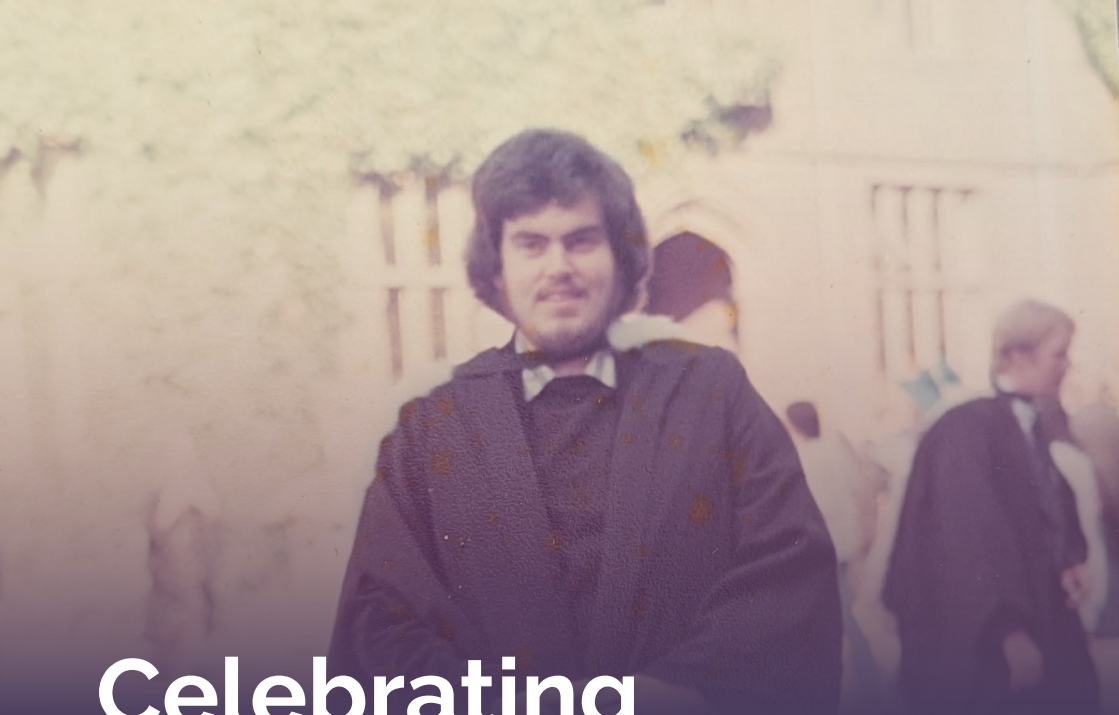
During his trip, Samran attended lectures and case-based workshops covering the full spectrum of paediatric neurosurgery, engaged with world-renowned leaders in the medical field and presented a clinical case on a Spinal Neurenteric Cyst, a particularly high-stakes spinal condition.

The feedback I received from globally-renowned surgeons and the kind offers I got for future electives were deeply encouraging. This experience truly validated the path I want to take.

Samran Shahid

MBBS student at NUMed Malaysia



A photograph of a young man with dark, wavy hair and a mustache, wearing a dark graduation gown with gold buttons. He is standing in front of a light-colored building with arched windows. Other people in graduation gowns are visible in the background.

Celebrating the remarkable contributions of our legacy supporters

Hundreds of students' lives have been transformed by the generosity of supporters who have had the foresight to leave a donation in their will. Class of 1976 graduate Mark Scrimshaw is one of these people.

Mark graduated from Newcastle University with a degree in History in 1976, yet he remained committed and connected to our students throughout his entire life.

He had a great affinity for the North East, a desire to improve education and social justice, and a passion for the cultural scene, and both Mark and his wife Jill felt it fitting for him to support these areas after he was gone.

Mark left a legacy gift of £10,000 to Newcastle students in his will, establishing the Mark Scrimshaw Memorial Scholarship to support local students studying in our Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences.

Mark and I went to university in the 1970s, the Golden Age; I received a full grant, and we knew, even studying the Arts, we were still guaranteed a job as graduates.

Sadly, young people face even greater challenges now. I have spent my entire career in teaching, especially with vulnerable people. I know it is consistency that counts; removing small setbacks that can enable people to thrive. Empowering people through education has been my lifelong mission and I see this bursary as the next phase of this.

Jill Scrimshaw

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Thanks to Mark and Jill's gift, current Sociology student, April and Education student, Abigail can make the most of their time at Newcastle University and reach their potential.

While living at home in her first year, April plans to use some of her scholarship to gain independence and rent her own accommodation next year, as well as contributing to the cost of supplies needed for her course.

I am so grateful for the generosity of the Scrimshaw family and their contributions towards my student experience. I cannot express how appreciative I am to receive this scholarship – thank you!

April
Sociology student



Thank you to the Scrimshaw family for their generous support of Newcastle students!

Free will writing service

By committing a legacy donation to Newcastle University, you can make a lasting difference by helping future students, future research and a future of positive change in our city and around the world – just like Mark.

All alumni and donors to Newcastle University have access to a free will writing service provided by The Taylor Lucas Partnership. **Scan the QR code to find out more.**



Newcastle University is proud to have a diverse community of almost 27,000 students from over 145 countries across our three campuses in Newcastle, Singapore and Malaysia.

Your generosity this year has ensured that all students arriving at Newcastle University receive the warm welcome Newcastle is famous for. Thanks to you, students get to experience what makes belonging to Newcastle so special and can make the most of their time at university, whatever their background or circumstances.

Donations from our alumni and supporter community in 2024/25 have helped remove financial barriers to getting involved with all aspects of university life: from joining societies and sports clubs to develop new skills and make new friends; to securing internships that will set them on the right path for their future.

Many of the students who benefit from your generosity are the first in their family to attend university. Thank you for being the helping hand these students need to reach their potential.

Reading this booklet, I hope you feel proud to be part of the alumni and supporter community at Newcastle. We are certainly proud to have you.

Lucy Backhurst

Academic Registrar and Director of Student Services,
Newcastle University



Get in touch with us

If you would like to find out more about the Newcastle University Student Fund, or to make further donations to this important cause, please get in touch via the contact details below.

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