



Merton College Urgent Appeals, Summer 2022



Dear fellow Mertonians,

As we come to the end of Trinity, we have had great success providing a near-normal term for our students, welcoming alumni back to College as well as embarking on regional visits, and fundraising for all aspects of what makes Merton so special.

I'm now asking for your help with some outstanding projects (in every sense of the word) which are listed below. Without donations from alumni, we would not be able to ensure we attract the best and the brightest students regardless of background, and below you will find details on some continuing and new scholarships which are particular priorities right now. Merton also enjoys a unique and ancient history, and our first item on this appeal details one way you can help to preserve our heritage. Other items on the menu speak to Merton's priorities around student welfare and equality, and our engagement with the wider community through our talented Girls' Choir and our commitment to the environment.

Whichever aspect of Merton life is most important to you, I hope you will find something of interest, and perhaps something to which you wish to contribute. Many of these projects have already received incredible support, for which all of us here at College are very grateful. Every gift will make a huge difference in allowing us to move forwards with these projects in Michaelmas term, and we hope that with your help we can complete some of these appeals over the summer.

All the best,

Professor Irene Tracey CBE FMedSci

WARDEN

Library Medieval Stained Glass Appeal

In a race against time, the College is embarking upon a project to restore and preserve the unique, ancient and magnificent stained glass in the 14th century Upper (Mob) Library. This effort represents a once-only opportunity to conserve the fabric of one of the world's oldest and most revered library spaces. You will find additional details on how the stained glass is to be protected in perpetuity in a separate enclosed leaflet but the funding requirements, window by window, are laid out below, minus the double-lancet windows which have now been fully funded:

Lancet windows (20 remaining of 33) - £9,000; Tall South Window - £25,000; Great Oriel window - £60,000

Donors will be recognised in a commemorative roll of honour in the Upper Library.

(Raised: £195,083 of £427,000)



Ukrainian Refugee Graduate Scholarship

With the help of alumni donations, the College wishes to provide a transformational opportunity which recognises the acute needs of Ukrainians at this exceptionally difficult moment. This will be a full scholarship for a refugee Master's student, funding meals and accommodation as well as providing a stipend, and covering fees. Total cost: £27,500

Ukrainian At-Risk Academic Sponsorship

We also wish to fund a Ukrainian at-risk academic, in cooperation with the Council for At-Risk Academics (Cara), to spend two years at the College. This will help to ensure that valuable Ukrainian scholarship is not lost as a result of the war, as well as providing a lifeline for those who need our help most at this time. Total cost: £55,000

(Raised: £32,578 of £82,500 for both Ukrainian appeals)



cara

a lifeline to academics at risk



Black Academic Futures Scholarship

As part of the University's Black Academic Futures programme, Merton aims to offer one fully funded scholarship to a Black British postgraduate student starting in 2022. British students of Black African and Caribbean heritage are currently under-represented at Oxford, making up just 1.5% of UK students undertaking doctoral research at the University. With your support, Merton can lead the way in fostering a more diverse academic community.

(Raised: £76,592 of £112,500 for a 3-year scholarship)

Boat Club Appeal – new women's boat

In light of our 40 years of Merton Women celebration and their recent enormous success on the river (winning blades in two consecutive seasons), we believe it is time to upgrade the Women's eight (currently a 19-year-old Men's lightweight shell) (£33,000) as well as their oars (£5,000). There is the opportunity to name the women's shell if the £33,000 required is donated in full. There is also currently no single scull for women to train in, so we aim to purchase a women's scull and a shared scull, complete with new sculling oars (£12,000). This initiative is supported by our Warden, Irene Tracey, who writes, "I am delighted to support this initiative that aims to fill a gap in Merton Women's armamentarium for doing battle on the river! Rowing brought such pleasure and community to my time at Merton. I am so proud of what the Boat Club, especially the women, have achieved – but I know there is more to come. So, to truly show my support I now pledge £5,000 towards their goal."

(Project now fully funded)



Reach Scholarship

The Reach Scholarship was created to ensure that talented students from countries receiving OECD development assistance can access an Oxford education. This scholarship is jointly funded by the JCR, the University and alumni donations. Together, they provide full funding for tuition fees and living costs for one student at any time. We need £902 more to fund the current Reach Scholar, and any extra or ongoing gifts will go towards offering the chance to study at Merton to another deserving student who may not be able to afford it otherwise.

(Raised: £87,698 of £88,600 for the current scholarship)

Meadows Re-Wilding Appeal

We are restoring our meadows to create a flower-rich grassland, playing a valuable role in the current ecological crisis; meadows are particularly effective at sequestering carbon, and these meadows will join a developing floodplain meadow corridor. They will also provide students with a biodiverse habitat on their doorstep, which is already planned to be utilised in studies at the Department of Zoology. Following recent works of transferring 'green hay' from a more than 1000-year-old biodiverse meadow, ongoing hay cutting is essential to give wildflowers the advantage over grasses.

(Project now fully funded for 10 years)



Instrumental Bursaries for Girl Choristers

Learning an instrument is essential to the musical education of a chorister, and pays huge dividends in their singing. Unfortunately, many parents cannot afford the cost of these lessons for their children. We want to ensure that money is not a barrier to choristership, and also wish to acknowledge the commitment that the girls and their parents make to Merton. We aim to start offering each of the 24 Girl Choristers an instrumental bursary during their time as Choristers at Merton, bringing our offering in line with other Oxford colleges, which offer instrumental scholarships for their boys' choirs. Each of our Girl Choristers, and thus our Choral Foundation as a whole, will reap the rewards of these bursaries in the improvement of each Chorister's abilities and confidence.

(Raised: £4,416 of £15,000 per year)