£4.5 million raised
Thank You

Donor Impact Report 2018/2019
UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN DEVELOPMENT TRUST
I am delighted to have this opportunity to thank you for your support of the University of Aberdeen.

We are privileged to enjoy such generous support from our alumni and friends, and this has a tremendous impact on the student community and our very talented researchers and staff.

I’m very pleased to report that the University has had a successful year and was ranked top 20 in the UK for student satisfaction.

The University was also ranked 168th in the world by the Times Higher, and 31st in the world for our contribution to the United Nations sustainable development goals. This is one of many ways in which the institution is modern as well as ancient, and practical as well as academic.

To enhance the education we can provide, we are currently investing in 50 extra academic posts, and investing £100m in our infrastructure in Old Aberdeen, including a new multi-million-pound Science Teaching Hub.

I was very proud to join the University as Principal in August 2018, having been a student at this great institution. I have a deep, personal attachment to our founding principles which were set out by Bishop William Elphinstone in 1495. His stated intention was to establish a University which would be open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others.

These principles will be the cornerstone of our future success and are the foundation of the University’s new 20-year strategy, Aberdeen 2040, which will be launched in February 2020 to celebrate our 525th birthday. Celebratory events to highlight our achievements and success are planned throughout the year which I hope you can engage with or participate in.

We could not achieve all that we do without the support of our donor community. Thank you for the part you play in our shared success.

Professor George Boyne
Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Supporting Our Research

**Requiem: The Souls of The Righteous**

Composed to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War, the first requiem by renowned royal composer Professor Paul Mealor was premiered in September 2018 at St Mary’s Cathedral in Edinburgh. Performed by the National Youth Choir of Scotland and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, it was conducted by Christopher Bell. Professor Mealor worked with poet Dr Grahame Davies to create a ‘reflective and poignant tribute to peace’.

Professor Derek Ogston and Ms Margaret Carlaw, who funded the composition and performance, were in attendance along with HRH The Duchess of Rothesay, Chancellor of the University. Generous audience members helped raise funds on the night for the University’s osteoarthritis research.

**Great War Centenary Remembered**

Also to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War, Professor Steve Heys organised an event in November 2018 in a week when the institution remembered the tragic loss of the majority of its own battalion, U-Company. The event featured actor and director John Bett and acclaimed singer, songwriter and broadcaster Fiona Kennedy as well as music by Professor Paul Mealor, the University Chapel Choir and the pipes and drums of the Officers’ Training Corps. Donations for our Cancer Research Programme on the night helped us reach the campaign’s phenomenal £4.5 million target.
Wedding Day Gift for Chloe’s Fund

The University’s cystic fibrosis research received an extremely welcome boost of £6,300 in October 2018 when Gemma and Duncan Tait asked guests at their wedding to donate to Chloe’s Fund in lieu of presents. The Fund is named in memory of Gemma’s sister Chloe and was established by their parents Professor Tom and Mrs Grace Baxter, who are also long-term supporters of this vital research. We thank the whole family as well as the wedding guests for their generosity.

Baird Family Hospital & ANCHOR Centre Fundraising Launch – Delivering the Difference

October 2018 saw the Development Trust, supported by the NHS Grampian Endowment Fund, join forces with Friends of ANCHOR and Friends of the Neonatal Unit (part of The ARCHIE Foundation) in a collective launch of campaigns in Aberdeen. With the development of NHS Grampian’s new Baird Family Hospital and ANCHOR Centre, patient services in the north east of Scotland will be greatly enhanced. The Development Trust is fundraising for both women’s health research and the Cancer Research Programme, as these will play a vital role in underpinning the success of the two new facilities.

A New Approach to Women’s Health

In March the Development Trust celebrated the first anniversary of the Aberdeen Centre for Women’s Health Research by launching an ambitious £6m fundraising appeal which will help women live healthier, happier and longer lives. Building on the
University’s strong international reputation in this area established by Professor Sir Dugald Baird, Regius Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (1937 – 65), the Centre was launched by Her Excellency Dr Sheikha Aisha Bint Faleh Al Thani in March 2018 and will be based in the new Baird Family Hospital. It has already received hugely generous support from Sir Dugald’s son and daughter-in-law Euan and Angelica Baird as well as from members of the Centre’s team who took part in Run Balmoral.

Gifts in Wills

Throughout the University’s 524-year history, gifts in wills have been crucial to our ongoing development. We would like to thank every single person who has pledged to make such a significant commitment as well as those who support them, including family and executors.

We have received some exceptionally generous gifts in wills over the year, including a £1.6 million legacy from Aberdeenshire farmer, Norman Robertson. This extraordinary gift has already supported the Cancer Research Programme and the Aberdeen Centre for Women’s Health Research. The remainder will also support osteoarthritis research as well as leveraging additional funds from major research grants.

Northern Picts

The Picts are a ‘lost people of Europe’ with an enduring public fascination. They provide some of the most spectacular archaeological sites and, thanks to the support of donors, the Northern Picts research project aims to uncover traces of Pictish society in northern Scotland.

1: Professor Maggie Cruickshank, Women’s Health Fundraising Launch  2: Women’s Health Fundraising Launch  3: Northern Picts at Bennachie
The project has had some spectacular successes which this year have included a new dig at the Mither Tap hill fort on Bennachie, Aberdeenshire. The site provided some amazing finds including a gaming counter, animal bones and a wonderfully well-preserved well which hasn’t been seen since the 19th century. Radiocarbon dating suggests that the fort was occupied in the 7th and 8th centuries AD after which very little is known about the fate of the inhabitants.

Hall Family Support for Medical Imaging

An exceptional grant from the Mary Jamieson Hall & John F Hall Trust will enable the creation of the Hall Family Imaging Suite and the Hall Family Lectureship in Medical Physics, establishing a lasting memorial to the family’s generosity. Over more than 100 years the Hall construction firm built many of the city’s best-known buildings and the family was proud to support a wide range of causes in their community. The grant will establish a new facility to house the University’s world-first Fast Field Cycling MRI scanner. This, combined with the new Lectureship in Medical Physics, will have a major impact on key medical research and treatment and builds on Aberdeen’s position as a world-leader in medical imaging, following our development of the first diagnostic-quality full-body MRI scanner in 1980.

Burgh Records Inspire Research and Gaming

A generous donation from Scotch whisky business Chivas Brothers is funding new research into the history of whisky production in Aberdeen. University historians uncovered the earliest ever record of a still for Scotch whisky while deciphering the city’s UNESCO-recognised Burgh Records. A reference from 1505 suggests the origins of the spirit may lie in Aberdeen and researchers are now delving deeper into the archives to find out more.

The Burgh Records are also providing the inspiration for video games which could bring new audiences face-to-face with life in the Middle Ages. A gift from alumnus Steve Aitken’s Intelligent Plant Ltd enabled initial development work on a pilot game to kick-start potential prototype development.
Supporting Our Heritage and Culture

Chapel Choir Conquer New York

“Scotland took Manhattan, man” – the words of Sir Ringo Starr after listening to the Chapel Choir, conducted by Professor Paul Mealor, perform at the star-studded UNICEF Snowflake Ball in New York in November 2018. They were joined on stage by Sheryl Crow, forming part of an amazing week which was only possible thanks to the generosity of donors. Their trip also saw the Choir perform at the Cathedral of St John the Divine where they were watched by opera star and Aberdeen honorary graduate Dr Jessye Norman who then posed with them for a photograph – a moment made even more memorable for those involved since the death of Dr Norman in September 2019.

Aberdeen Bestiary in Los Angeles

Brilliantly illuminated, the Aberdeen Bestiary is amongst the greatest treasures in the University’s collections and is recognised internationally as one of the finest of the luxury medieval bestiaries. Created in the north of England, the manuscript is one of the University’s earliest legacy gifts, coming to Aberdeen in 1624 as part of the bequest of Thomas Reid, Latin Secretary to James VI and I. In 2019 it took its greatest journey to the J. Paul Getty Museum Los Angeles, where it was a star feature of the major exhibition ‘Book of Beasts: The Bestiary in the Medieval World’.

1: Chapel Choir with Dr Jessye Norman  2: Aberdeen Bestiary
In 2017 we launched a £4.5 million appeal to develop a world-class Cancer Research Programme and in May 2019 we were thrilled to announce that, thanks to the tremendous support of many donors, we reached this ambitious target. We cannot thank you enough.

Whether you gave £10 or £1 million, it has made a difference. It has allowed us to expand our team of researchers with Professor Valerie Speirs joining us as Chair in Molecular Oncology. Thanks to our partnerships with Friends of Anchor and The NHS Grampian Endowment Fund, both of which have donated substantial funds, the research that you support will help ensure that cancer patients at the new ANCHOR Centre and Baird Family Hospital will receive the finest care. We also thank Professor Steve Heys for his very important role in these achievements.

During this campaign a vast number of individuals, companies and organisations have supported us, including our community fundraisers. In February Neil Robertson-Murray began an epic challenge to cycle 5,000 miles, which he took up in tribute to his wife Naomi’s late parents and to Naomi herself, who has fought and survived cancer.

Former member of staff Elaine Shallcross was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2018 and has raised almost £5,000 by knitting beautiful ‘Bressie Beanie’ hats and other items, after being inspired by Professor Valerie Speirs’ research.

In April 70 members of staff and volunteers joined us for Run Balmoral. In total over £16,000 was raised by the team which included 30 runners from local firm Anderson Anderson & Brown and volunteer Irene Black, who took part for the seventh year.
Development Trust Fundraising Manager Lisa Chilton took on an epic challenge in May by cycling the North East 250 (in horrendous weather) with her sister Bel and raising £1,600. Nearing the end of her challenge, Lisa cycled into our Donor Discovery Day at which we welcomed dozens of our donors and friends to announce the completion of the £4.5 million appeal.

Jill Moir and Rachael Hay of ‘Think Pink’ tried a new event format this year in Mintlaw with ‘Get Loaded’ in June. Funds raised at the mini festival contribute to an overall total from them of more than £20,000 while Wilma Bruce of Peterhead has raised over £17,000, also through various fun events.

Also in June, 400 people took part in a new and unique event organised by the Bailies of Bennachie. The participants climbed to the top of Mither Tap and joined hands around the summit to give Bennachie its ‘biggest bosie’ and raise funds for various charities including £1,300 for our breast cancer research. Earlier in the month walkers took part in the Aberdeen Kiltwalk to raise more than £5,000 for the appeal.

Our Ladies’ Lunch in September 2018 raised funds for the Cancer Research Programme. Featuring enlightening presentations on their current research by Professor Zosia Miedzybrodzka, Professor Valerie Speirs and Dr Raif Yuecel, guests donated £7,500.

There is, of course, so much more to do. We want communities across Scotland to benefit from our research for generations to come and we want to help beat cancer once and for all. We are in this for the long term and we would love you to join us.

We cannot thank enough all our cancer fundraisers, as well as their families, friends and colleagues. You truly are helping to save lives.
Supporting Our Students

Joe Officer Gift to Support Medical Education

Sadly one of the University’s generous supporters, and long-term patient partner, Joe Officer passed away in 2017. The patient partner programme is a vital part of medical student training and involves volunteers presenting with symptoms, enabling the students to practice identifying these symptoms and interacting with the public. Joe had many interests in life, including a passion for medical education, and generously left a gift in his will to support the development of education at the Medical School. He also supported students in many other ways during his lifetime, including initiatives to promote GPs in remote and rural areas. We are extremely grateful to Joe for everything he did to support medical education and he is greatly missed by his many friends at Foresterhill.

The Mitchell Barclay Trophy for Footballer of the Year

A new Footballer of the Year trophy established in memory of an Aberdeen alumnus was awarded for the first time to Exercise & Health Science student Ross Clark. The trophy has been generously donated by the family of Mitchell Barclay, a 1958 Engineering graduate who was a keen footballer. His wife and daughter visited the University and were delighted to attend the game in which the University team, featuring Ross, won their league, becoming Scottish BUCS 2A champions. They went on to complete a memorable double by winning the Scottish Student Sport Conference Cup.

1: 1955/56 football team with Mitchell Barclay back row, 2nd from right
2: 2018/19 football team with Ross Clark kneeling, 3rd from right
The Impact of Scholarships

Widening participation in higher education is a key priority for the University as we strive to fulfil Bishop Elphinstone’s aspiration to be “open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others”. Scholarships are key to harnessing the talent and potential of young people who are considering higher education but deem it unachievable without financial support.

The Development Trust’s annual Corporate Scholars’ Reception celebrates the crucial support our corporate partners provide. This year’s reception was hosted by Senior Vice-Principal Professor Karl Leydecker who welcomed speakers Rachel Elliot from OPITO and Kyle MacKay who benefited from an OPITO scholarship whilst studying for his MSc in Safety & Reliability Engineering for Oil and Gas.

Another long-term supporter of the University scholarship programme is the Swire Charitable Trust through the James Henry Scott Scholarship for talented students from China and Hong Kong. This year’s scholar was Leung Wing Shun (Sally), who without the scholarship would have been unable to study for her MSc in Environmental and Ecological Sciences at Aberdeen. She said “This year in Aberdeen was honestly like a gift to me, so I treasured every second of it. I was awarded with an MSc degree with Commendation but what I learned was far more than just academic knowledge. I want to give a heartfelt thanks to my dear donor, for giving me such an amazing, fruitful and rewarding year.”

Regular Giving – The Difference You Make

Every year the Development Trust receives significant support from donors around the world who give generously and regularly to enable life-changing opportunities for students. Forming a life-long relationship with our graduates and providing them with the opportunity to give back is vitally important to the Development Trust and contributes to the ongoing success of the University.

In the last year this support has helped a wide range of student experiences.
including The Gaudie (the UK’s oldest student newspaper), the Student Show, the Torcher Parade, the Taekwon-Do Club, Nightline and the Electrical & Electronic Engineering Society (EEESoc).

“The editorial team of The Gaudie would like to sincerely thank the donors that helped us improve our newspaper. With the funding we received we were able to make our fellow students aware of the events we organise. The funding also helped us improve the quality of the newspaper, both its journalism and its design. We could not have made many of our recent changes without your help.” The Gaudie

“The funding enabled students from the AU Taekwon-Do club to attend an annual training camp in Moffat. If the members could describe their experience at the camp in one word it would be ‘inspirational’. By the end their techniques had noticeably improved and their motivation was boosted.” Michelle Truong, AUTKD President

“This year the EEESoc has run workshops for fellow classmates aimed at improving skills and gaining practical experience by building a Robot Sumo. Thanks to funding we were able to attend ‘Robotic Day’ in Prague to compete against teams from all over Europe. We gained invaluable experience for our studies and the development of the Society which was only possible thanks to your support.” EEESoc

issues including mental health, relationships and stress. A total of 31 volunteers were successfully trained helping to increase volunteer numbers to 108.” Laura Irvine, Nightline Coordinator

“Nightline is an information and listening service run entirely by students for students. The Development Trust has supported Nightline by assisting with the costs of extensive training for volunteers. In the last year the service received 905 calls totalling 9,972 minutes. Students called in relation to a wide range of issues including mental health, relationships and stress. A total of 31 volunteers were successfully trained helping to increase volunteer numbers to 108.” Laura Irvine, Nightline Coordinator

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1: Student Show  2: Jazz Afternoon Tea  3: EEESoc  4: Taekwon-Do Club
Jazz Afternoon Tea

In March our alumni team, in conjunction with members of the former Alumnus Association, hosted a Jazz Afternoon Tea which raised £1,300 for the Alumnus Association Scholarship which supports students in financial need each year. Music was provided by University students and current scholar, Erik Rosljajev, who began studying towards an MA in Politics and International Relations in 2017, spoke on the difference the Scholarship has made to him.

Saltire Energy Support for Sport

Thanks to an exceptionally generous donation, Saltire Energy, in partnership with the University and Aberdeen City Council, has enabled the installation of a world-class Performance Swimming Analysis system at the Aquatics Centre at Aberdeen Sports Village. The system, only the second of its kind in the world, will attract international athletes and put ASV on the global stage as a centre for sporting excellence. In addition to providing support for high performance swimmers, it will be a valuable resource for Sport Science students and others in relevant areas of study.

Further support from Saltire Energy comes through their Saltire Sports for Schools Programme which was established in 2010. It continues to support local primary schools enabling pupils from primary 1 through 7 to access coaching and facilities at the Aberdeen Sports Village. In the course of the year, this far-sighted initiative has enabled 1,300 children to take part in swimming, water safety and water-polo lessons, allowing them to acquire important life skills, build confidence and enjoy sport to the maximum.

Intelligent Plant Inform Prize

Created in 2014 and funded by Intelligent Plant, the Inform Prize is awarded for the best presentation and demonstration by a team of 3rd year Software Engineering students. This year the event was held in King’s College Conference Centre for the first time and was opened up to both industry partners and 4th year students who were able to showcase their senior honours projects and dissertations. The 2019 winners were Team Hotel for their very impressive ‘Mesh Viz’ presentation and they were awarded £800. Founder of Intelligent Plant, Steve Aitken, is an alumnus of the University having graduated in 2001 with BSc Computer Science (Hons) and he encourages innovation and entrepreneurship in students in a variety of ways.
Established in 1994 by a dedicated group of alumni, the University of Aberdeen Foundation is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit corporation, (EIN#52-1970587) dedicated to charitable and educational purposes. Donations to the Foundation are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law (US). Thanks to US donations to the Foundation, the University has benefited by receiving many generous grants in the past year. The Foundation actively works with the University’s development team to advance University interests. This includes events such as the Aberdeen Bestiary featuring prominently as part of the ‘Book of Beasts: The Bestiary in the Medieval World’ exhibition at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles. Such special events do so much to raise the profile of the University in the USA.

The Findlay Walker Scholarship Program continues to support American students studying at Aberdeen and the first Professor David Carey Miller scholar began their studies here in 2019.

#ABERDEEN IN AMERICA, Join us on the journey…

The University of Aberdeen is woven into the history of the United States. Aberdeen doctors, clergy, scientists and philosophers were a rich source of inspiration and ideas for the Founding Fathers and many others. Today, with over 15,000 students from 130 countries, Aberdeen is welcoming more American students to Scotland than ever before, partnering with a record number of US universities and organisations.

#ABERDEENINAMERICA aims to connect and strengthen ties with US alumni and friends through imaginative US partnerships. To sign up for more details, email aberdeeninamerica@abdn.ac.uk, and follow us on Facebook (@AberdeenUniversityAlumni), Twitter (@AbdnUniAlumni) or Linkedin.

There are many ways to give in the US and to discuss your options please contact Brendan Doyle at brendan.doyle@chapel-york.com.

University of Aberdeen Foundation, 708 Third Avenue, 6th Floor, Suite 34, New York, NY 10017. Telephone (646) 374-2197 www.abdn.ac.uk/giving/usa
I am delighted to thank you for your continuing support of the University of Aberdeen Development Trust. I am both grateful and astounded at the incredible generosity of our global community and the impact which this continues to make on the University, the city and beyond.

I would like to congratulate everyone involved in our Cancer Research appeal, launched in 2017, which raised over £4.5 million, and to thank our donors and academic colleagues including Friends of ANCHOR, NHS Grampian Endowment Fund and particularly Professor Steve Heys, who retired this year. I also want to acknowledge the remarkable donation from the late Norman Robertson, which will support our Cancer, Women’s Health and Osteoarthritis appeals. His gift will not only provide direct support for vital research but it will also help secure major research grants from other medical funders. The impact of Mr Robertson’s gift is truly profound.

The fundraising total for financial year 2018/19 from donations and legacies was £4.5 million.

In closing, I will repeat my grateful thanks to every one of our donors. Here at Aberdeen we can do incredible things, but we can’t do them without you.

Ms Anne Minto OBE
Chairman

The full report and latest financial statements can be found on our website at www.abdn.ac.uk/giving/about.
WAYS TO GIVE

The University of Aberdeen has ambitious plans for 2020 and beyond and you are our way ahead. There are many ways to give including donating securely online, leaving a gift in your will or raising funds through your community.

We’d be delighted to speak with you about what you’d like to do or to give you more information about our ambitious plans so please contact us:

visit www.abdn.ac.uk/giving
telephone +44 (0)1224 272281
or email giving@abdn.ac.uk

Please look forward and give back to help shape the future of one of Scotland’s greatest pioneering institutions.

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To find out more about the stories in this Report visit www.abdn.ac.uk/giving/difference

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