



University of Essex



Impact Report

February 2025

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INTRODUCTION: Thank you for supporting Essex

We are so grateful for your continued support. This report reflects on some of the many inspiring stories we have to share on how philanthropy makes a difference here at the University of Essex.

Last year you helped us raise more than £1.1 million to support our students and their futures. This was enough to fund an incredible 192 scholarships, 34 emergency hardship grants and offer match-funding to 22 student projects. Thank you for helping to make this happen.

This year, with your help we want to do even more so our students can continue to thrive at the University of Essex.

Please forward this Impact Report to your network to spread the word about our work.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynsey Dawson'.

Lynsey Dawson, Head of Philanthropy

CATCH UP WITH RASHAY FROM THE UNITED STATES



Just last year, Rashay moved from Seattle to the University of Essex to pursue a Masters in Sociology, driven by a mission to tackle homelessness and bring about a meaningful change in the U.S. Rashay is now proud to share that she has returned to the United States, where she is ready to turn education into action.

Rashay received an Essex Futures Scholarship when she came to Essex, allowing her to be able to study without the added stress of additional debt. The Essex Futures scholarships provides opportunities to students like Rashay who want to make a difference and thanks to generous donations we are able to make this happen.

Rashay is ready to take the next step in her journey where she would like to work within the government sector, focusing on health and social services to address the root causes of homelessness and inequality. After moving back to the United States, Rashay plans to work with the same underserved communities that she used to support as a social worker, using the knowledge she gained from her Masters degree.

Donations to our Essex Futures appeal really do help students like Rashay to thrive and truly make an impact in our society today. You are helping to the shape the future for some of our students by allowing them to focus on their studies without any added financial stress. Essex students are driven by a passion to the make the world a better place.

DREAMS COME TRUE WITH A CLICK



This year we are celebrating our 9th anniversary of Click, our crowdfunding platform. In 9 years, we have helped over 600 East 15 students raise over £168k by using Click. 149 of these students successfully fundraised to take a production to the Edinburgh Fringe. The University, through match funding provided by alumni donations, has given them an additional £69k.

Blue Chrysalis Productions, is a theatre company born on the MA Acting course at East 15 Acting School. Three female London based performers had a dream to take their show 'Look at Me' to Lambeth Fringe Festival in the Autumn. The team successfully raised £2292 with an added £500 match funding for their project and were able to take their show to Lambeth Fringe Festival thanks to generous donations from you.

Rebecca from Blue Chrysalis Productions said: *"We went to Lambeth Fringe with our project created at East 15 which was a huge success. I think it would have been much harder & much scarier to fulfil this ambition without the fabulous support of Click. I think it's an excellent way to support students & alumni to get projects off the ground & encourage them to take the leaps they need to launch themselves into the professional world."*

[Explore our students' projects](#)

CELEBRATIONS FOR OUR NEW SCHOLARS IN NOVEMBER



Our Undergraduate and Postgraduate Scholars came together at a special celebration event, hosted by Professor Larra Anderson, our Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) to celebrate their awards.

Our Essex Futures appeal is there to support the next generation of students by providing scholarships to those whose impact on the world would otherwise be missed. Our first official Essex Futures Scholars stepped onto Campus in October 2023.

These scholarships really mean a lot to our students and each one of them have an inspiring story to share. After catching up with some of our students at this reception, one thing they all had in common is the difference they want to make in the world through their careers. Even though each student is on their

own journey and has their own aspirations in life, the impact they would like to make is really inspiring.

Every scholar is so grateful for the donations that help to support and provide scholarships for students like them as without these donations it would not be possible. Now we want to support even more students who are passionate about change, with help from donors like you, we can double our efforts and make this happen.

[Find out about Essex Futures](#)

TOWERS ACCOMMODATION CLEANING SUPPORTS THREE OF OUR APPEALS



Crystal Facilities Management are dedicated to delivering exceptional cleaning services to the University by cleaning the Towers Accommodation each Summer. As well as their professional commitment, they are passionate about making a positive impact on the community. As part of their social value drive, they implement contract specific projects, ensuring their contributions are tailored to create meaningful and lasting benefits. Their contributions to the University are split between three of our impactful appeals: Essex Futures, the Hardship Fund and the Student Experience Fund. In 2024, they made a donation of £650 towards each of these appeals which has been increased to £940 for 2025.

Crystal Facilities Management said: *"By supporting Essex Futures, we invest in fostering opportunities for individuals who will go on to create positive change in the wider world. We understand the financial challenges some students face during their academic journey. The Hardship Fund offers essential support to those experiencing unforeseen financial difficulties, ensuring they can continue their education without compromise. We recognise that a fulfilling university experience is crucial for students' personal and professional development.*

"These initiatives resonate deeply with our organisational values of social responsibility and community engagement. We take pride in empowering students to overcome barriers, access quality education, and thrive in their university experience. We are honoured to partner with the University of Essex in these impactful initiatives and look forward to continuing our support in driving positive change."

ESSEX BLADES PLAYER THANKFUL FOR THE SUPPORT



Abby Fung, a 21-year-old post-graduate student from Hong Kong and former President of the Women's Tennis Club received a scholarship this year to allow her to continue her studies whilst shining on the tennis court. Having served as club president and now working for Essex Blades, Abby has seen first-hand how transformative your donations can be for our sporting teams. Donations made to the 'Back the Blades' fund make a huge difference to the student experience by continuing to allow them to thrive in what they do best.

Abby says: "Your generous donations support students like me by allowing us to focus on both our studies and training without financial worry. The impact of this support is evident in my achievements and the Women's Tennis Clubs achievements as well. I reached the National Finals in the BUCS league and was awarded the "outstanding achievement award" after playing as second seed in the women's first team with no losses on league singles."

The University reached its highest-ever position in the BUCS league this year, finishing 29th in the UK. Twelve of our Essex Blades teams won their leagues, a testament to the strength and potential that your support unlocks.

ALUMNI VOLUNTEERING INSPIRES OUR CURRENT STUDENTS

There are many ways you can give back to the University and volunteering is one of them. We have had lots of alumni volunteers that have supported our students, applicants and fellow alumni over the past years and this year was no different.

In 2024, over 250 alumni volunteered to support the Essex community in a variety of ways, and we are so grateful. 2024 saw the return of our *After Essex* event series in central London. Not only were we joined by graduate guest speakers at these events, but we were hosted by an Essex graduate as well.

Alumni guest speakers have joined us at a variety of events and activities over the last year, including a wide range of online and in-person departmental activities for current students. In fact, in 2024 nearly a thousand students benefitted from hearing the insight, advice and expertise of our alumni guest speakers. There are many ways you can give back to the University and volunteering is one of them. We have had lots of alumni volunteers that have supported our students, applicants and fellow alumni over the past years and this year was no different.

Our current students love to hear from our alumni about their journeys since graduating, last year nearly 100 alumni took time to share their story of studying at Essex, life beyond graduation and career journey by completing a graduate profile. These stories really help to inspire our future graduates.

[Find out about volunteering opportunities](#)



A GLIMMER IN THE ART EXCHANGE



Glimmer, an exhibition which has been in the Art Exchange from 15 November 2024 to 1 February 2025, curated by Jess Twyman, and supported by funding from Arts Council of England and University of Essex Alumni and Friends.

The generous funding of £18k from the Arts Council of England and University of Essex alumni and friends has meant this community led project has allowed artists to explore transient moments that fleetingly enter our lives.

Often sparked by something that returns us to familiar childhood memories, the artists who have been selected to feature in Glimmer reveal the inner worlds and safe spaces we return to. From YouTube dreamscapes of enchanted bedrooms, to utilising AI to recreate childhood memories, the works in this show reveal the complexities of our inner worlds and how glimmers of them interact with our everyday lives.

The impact of the initial funding from the Arts Council of England has allowed this exhibition to come to life and allowed the artists to share their artwork.

[Find out more about the 'Glimmer' exhibition](#)

Final thank you

We hope that you have felt inspired reading the latest edition of our Philanthropy Impact Report. It is the support and generosity of our community of donors that helps makes what we do possible.

To continue your support for Essex, [make a donation here](#). Thank you.