



THE SIR RICHARD STAPLEY EDUCATIONAL TRUST

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2022

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Dr Jane Dancer

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Dr Manali Chitre &
Dr Debbie Marsden

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Mr Christopher Walker

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Mr Paul Trimmer

The Sir Richard Stapley
Educational Trust

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Dr Jane Dancer, Chair to November 2022

Greetings from our outgoing Chair,

Dr Jane Dancer

This will be the last time I write to you as Chair of the Trust, as I am stepping down having reached the end of my term of office. It has been a privilege to serve as a trustee for the past eleven years, during which time the Trust has provided financial support to thousands of postgraduate students. Dr Manali Chitre and Dr Debbie Marsden will be taking over from me as Co-Chairs and we have been working to ensure a smooth transition. I leave knowing that the Trust is in safe hands.

When I wrote to you this time last year, we were still impacted by the Covid pandemic. After two years of running the Trust by video calls, we were finally able to meet in person for our annual grant review in May. Like

Alumni Updates



Dr Sophia Daoudi-Simison,
Primatologist

I submitted my doctoral thesis on *'habitat use, behaviour and social networks in mixed-species groups of tufted capuchin and squirrel monkeys'* in September 2020 at the University of Stirling, and was finally able to attend my graduation ceremony this summer. I am now working at Newcastle University as a staff demonstrator for research methods and statistics in Psychology alongside a part-time post-doc in animal behaviour and welfare.

I have always been interested in working with animals but, if I had to pinpoint it, I would say that it was a month-long conservation volunteer project in Costa Rica during my undergraduate degree that was the catalyst for my current field of study. It was my first time in the tropics and seeing monkeys in the wild, and I just knew that I wanted to learn more about their behaviour and ecology.

Since then I have studied a number of different non-human primate species in captivity (brown and ring-tailed lemurs at the Blair Drummond Safari Park, Scotland; tufted capuchins and squirrel monkeys at the Living Links to Human Evolution

many organisations, the Trust has now adopted virtual working wherever possible. We strive to keep our running costs low so that we can allocate as much of our available funds as possible to our grant giving. The Trust's entire operations are managed by one part-time employee who is home based. Furthermore, our trustees give up their time for free; to understand what motivates them I encourage you to watch the interviews available on our LinkedIn page.

Grant giving

This year we awarded 173 grants totalling £162,750. The statistics for the round are provided on page 6. Demand for our grants is high; each year we close our application round as soon as we have received 300 eligible applications, and this year we reached our limit within three days.

Despite the increase in numbers and short application window, the quality of the applications remained as high as ever. We work hard to select the most deserving applicants and each year face the difficult task of having to turn away many that we would like to help but cannot afford to support. For those who are successful, the impact of our grants is evident from the results of our annual survey which are reported on page 3. At a time when the cost of living is rising at an unprecedented rate, our grants are more important than ever in providing access to postgraduate education.

Trustee Board changes

There have been several changes to the Trustee Board over the past year. Roger Pegum, our Treasurer, retired in May and has been replaced by Christopher Walker. Christopher is a chartered accountant with over 25 years' experience working with both small and large charities. Professor Clive Seale stepped down in June, and in November Dr Mike Mortimer retired from our board along with Dr Tekena Fubara, our Vice Chair. Mike reached the end of his term of office and Tekena is taking up a new job abroad. Thanks go to all of them for their service to the Trust. Two new trustees joined us in November; Dr John Kirkland OBE brings a wealth of experience in postgraduate scholarships, and Paul Trimmer joins us from the charity and education sectors. The Trust will be recruiting two further trustees next year, so if you are interested in learning more, please get in touch with Colin Nee, our Clerk.

Other news

The Trust itself continues to develop and move with the times. Next year, we will be launching an online application process to improve its efficiency for both the Trust and our applicants (see page 10). We will also be making some

Research Centre, RZSS Edinburgh Zoo) and in the wild (yellow tailed woolly monkey and Andean night monkey in the Peruvian Andes; tufted capuchins, squirrel monkeys, bearded sakis, spider monkeys, howler monkey and tamarins, Suriname).

As an early career researcher I am an emerging leader in my field. I am a member of the IUCN SSC Primate Specialist Group (Neotropics Section), review for the American Journal of Primatology, and have presented numerous invited talks for societies, departmental seminars, and conferences both national (such as PSGB, SPRG, SCAB) and international (such as EFP and IPS). In terms of publications, I have two peer reviewed journal articles to date, and I am currently working towards publishing four more first author papers from my thesis. I have also written two articles for the Conversation (one has been read over 200,000 times).

As a part-time and self-funded PhD student I was (and still am) extremely grateful for the support from the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust, which eased my financial difficulties during my degree.

changes to our eligibility criteria in response to our review of the last grant round (see page 8). It is also pleasing to see our increasing presence on social media, thanks to the efforts of our volunteer, Joe Rogers.

I've had the privilege to work with many talented and dedicated people over my time as a trustee and am particularly grateful to Colin, our Clerk, for his support. I wish the Trust every success in the future.

Dr Jane Dancer

Learning from our users

Report on our annual survey 2022

This year, our sixth annual survey, we had a 48% response rate from recipients of our grants for the 2021/22 study period. Typically, our survey has gained a 70% response rate, and the lower-than-expected reply rate this year was we believe mainly due to increased firewall security in universities. Thank you very much to those who alerted us to this problem. We apologise for this difficulty and thank all those who did complete the survey.

Respondents' universities and courses

Students completing the survey came from 32 universities. The highest number of respondents were from Oxford, Cambridge and King's College London universities.

Forty percent of those responding were studying for a PhD, slightly fewer than in previous years. Fifty-eight percent were studying science related subject, and of these 23% were studying medicine. The remaining respondents were studying a diverse range of subjects. Humanity subjects were slightly more represented this year and there was a marked reduction in replies from students studying music related subjects.

Survey responses were from all years of study, but the majority were from later years - 4th and 5th years rather than 2nd or 3rd years.

Financial shortfall, and how managed:

Seventy-two percent of respondents had a financial shortfall of between £750 and £5000. Nine percent had shortfalls over £10,000.

Fifty-eight percent received £1200 in grant funding from our Trust.

Ninety-five percent of respondents said our grants were essential for the completion of the year's study. No one had



James Ransom: final year PhD student, higher education and international development,

UCL Institute of Education

My PhD is looking at the role that large public universities play in the development of their local area in ten African cities, with a particular focus on Kigali in Rwanda. It is widely acknowledged that these universities have played an important role in their country's national development, but I am asking whether they are also helping shape their local communities.

I'm studying at UCL Institute of Education, and I am also a Research Affiliate at the University of Rwanda. I have made two fieldwork visits to Rwanda, and I was fortunate to receive funding to present my early findings to the Human Sciences Research Council in South Africa. My PhD research has also provided a platform to write more widely on the topic of universities in their local areas (including in Europe), and I have published a few pieces in *The Conversation* and for policy organisations and learned societies.

I hope to finish my PhD this year. I believe that universities can play a significant role in tackling many of society's challenges, and my career goal is to positively influence global development

to drop out or reduce to part-time. Two students were unable to complete the year's study, one due to Covid-19 and the other due to lack of access to research documents and other issues. Thankfully, both students are going to finish their courses and one has been successful in gaining ongoing academic work.

The 8 respondents who received our smaller £500 grants reported that funding had been essential for their studies. All managed to complete their year of study, and our support reduced stress, reduced the number of jobs required or amount of money to be borrowed. This confirmed that even our smaller grants make a difference.

Our grants are not expected to remove all a student's shortfall, so students need to take a combination of actions to cover their costs fully. Seventy-seven percent took on paid work to help with expenses; 61% reduced living expenses; 26% borrowed from friends and family, and 7% took out loans from elsewhere. Fifty-six percent applied for grants from other funders, and of those 51% were successful. One student was able to sell her artwork and another sold unwanted clothes to gain finance.

Major benefits

Major benefits gained by respondents included being able to focus more on their subjects (89%) and a reduction in stress levels (75%). The grants benefitted students by reducing the need for extra jobs for 44% of respondents and by reducing the need to borrow for 40%. A similar percentage of students to last year (25%) were able to enjoy extra curricula activities.

Achievements and challenges

Achievements this year have been many for those students completing the survey. Seventy percent gained exam / qualification success. A number said their excellent results, including first class or distinctions, were due to the financial support enabling them to focus more on their work. Fifty-nine percent told us they would be continuing their present courses, with some progressing to even higher educational qualifications. Forty percent gained employment. One student fulfilled her dream to become an Assistant Director at the BBC. Many, 59%, shared their knowledge with others and commented on how rewarding this had been. Some students found helping with teaching had enabled them to gain further funding for their studies. Fifty percent produced publications, presented at conferences or produced posters. Two students influenced policies. We congratulate all our students for their achievements.

Turning to challenges, 63% reported the negative impact of Covid-19 on their studies. Online learning, lack of access

policy to reflect this. However, none of this would have been possible without the generous support of the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust, who provided valuable funding for three years. Thank you for your kind support!



Dr Clea Desebrock, DPhil in
Experimental Psychology,

University of Oxford

I took a rather unusual path to academia. I originally studied music, followed by a career in the music industry. I came to Psychology latterly, motivated by certain life-changing events, and with an aspiration to pursue a career in academic psychology and public outreach. After completing a Master's degree in Psychology, I worked as a Research Assistant at Oxford, gaining invaluable experience, and was subsequently accepted on to the DPhil course.

My project focused on the influence of social associations on our cognition and actions. Alongside my thesis work, I published 10 papers in mainstream peer-reviewed journals, and presented at national and international conferences. I feel very lucky to have been a recipient of a Stapley Trust grant, and glad I could acknowledge such generous

to technical support or research facilities, lack of patient interaction, difficulty travelling abroad and a vulnerability to illness were mentioned. Finances were difficult due to lack of work, stopping of scholarships by some institutions and wider family requirements for financial help.

Various study or performance opportunities were lost. One student was unable to see her family for the third year in a row. Mental health was an issue for some. However, 88% of all responding students felt their future had not been impacted by Covid-19. The cost of living increase was worrying some students looking ahead to financing next year.

We have been concerned about the impact of Covid-19 on Music and Arts students in particular. It was good to know from those responding that they had managed to mount concerts and exhibitions and a number had gained extra grant support. Experiences were mixed, however; loss of funding due to depletion of savings arising from Covid-19 and loss of work and teaching opportunities impacted some students. However, the majority believed next year should be better.

Feedback on other issues

We added three new questions to this year's survey to assist our trustees in reviewing how our Trust operates. For example, we asked survey respondents' views about whether we should continue to ask for financial details of applicants' spouses/partners if they have them. Sixty-three percent felt it was fair to ask about partners' finances. However, there were some very convincing arguments against; not all cohabiting partners pool finances, and many students without partners nonetheless share accommodation and bills, hence reducing expenditure. Some felt that financial decisions were very personal and their responsibility alone. We hope with your help that we have got the balance right on our application form for 2023/24 by discontinuing asking specifically about partners and instead asking about all sources of financial support as well about contributions to household expenses bills.

The other new survey questions related to our new initiative of providing a free resource via our website about other grant providers, 'Charitable Grants for postgraduate study in the UK'. Sadly, we cannot support all applicants, but we hope that this free resource helps those we have not been able to assist. Forty percent were aware of our new guide and 28% of these used it and found it helpful; others were able to share the resource with friends. Thank you all!

As always, we are delighted that those responding are so generous of their offers to help. Eighty-six percent would

support in my recent paper:

Desebrock, C., Barutchu, A., Spence, C. (2022). The influence of empathy and perceived closeness on self- and friend-bias in arm-movements. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception & Performance*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xhp0001028>

I believe public outreach to be vitally important and an integral part of being a researcher, so during my studies I helped to co-organise a number of initiatives, including a one-day symposium called *Crossing Over: The Art and Science of Multisensory Perception at The Royal College of Art*, Oxford Open Doors; and Stroke Awareness Week. I am also passionate about teaching, and worked as a tutor for the BA in Experimental Psychology at Oxford, as a laboratory demonstrator, a co-supervisor of undergraduate student projects, and as a Waynflete tutor for Magdalen College School, Oxford. In addition, I worked as a tutor for the national Team-up scheme for disadvantaged secondary school pupils, as a mentor for other Team-up tutors, for the peer mentoring schemes in my department and college, and as a study assistant for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Due to my career change, I started my academic career later than is typical. I was surprised to find it hard to bridge my funding gap, sadly due to a still prevalent rigidity about traditional routes into academia. I am happy to say though that such perceptions have been changing rapidly in many fields, not least because of the benefits that heterogeneity can bring. The Stapley Trust has been forward-thinking from the start in this respect, and I am very grateful to them. I successfully defended my thesis this summer, and have begun a lectureship in Psychology, at Oxford University.

consider donating to us in future; over 70% would help with fundraising and 56% would consider serving as a trustee with the Trust. Thank you so much for your offers - they are much appreciated!

We hope that creating a network of our past grant recipients, whom we call our alumni may encourage sharing of ideas for networking, future employment, and research opportunities. To join us, all you need to do is follow us on Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn. We look forward to welcoming you as part of our growing community of alumni.

Thank you to all those who completed our survey! The survey findings validate the Trust's ambition to support postgraduate education for people from all backgrounds who have a financial need. The next year may well be challenging, and we wish all students all the best in their desires to further their education and careers.

Dr Debbie Marsden, Co-Chair

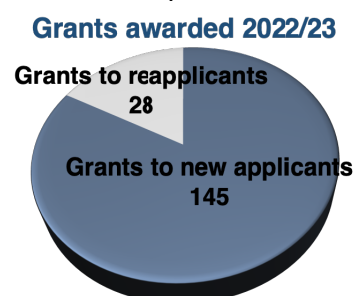
Our 2022/23 annual grant round

Our annual grant round for those studying in academic year 2022/23 opened on the first working day of 2022 and closed later in January. Over a thousand students accessed the application form and 337 applied. After setting aside those judged to be ineligible, 282 applications were scored by our trustees.

Every application is scored by three trustees scoring independently of each other, which meant each of our trustees scored approximately 100 applications this year. A full Trustee Board meeting in May made the final decision on grants to be awarded.

Spending on grants up by 20%

We made grants totalling £162,750 this year, a 20% increase on last year's £135,200. The total number of grants made was 173, of which 145 were awarded to new applicants and 28 to 're-applicants', that is, those who had had a grant from us in the past.





Nigel Guérin-Garnett, PhD candidate in Design,

Royal College of Art

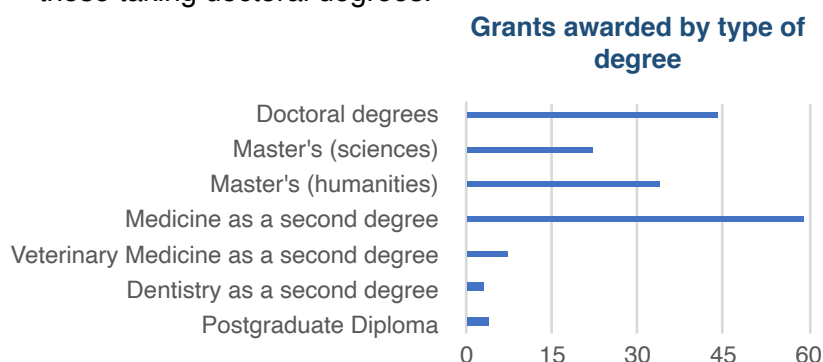
I would like to begin by thanking the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust for awarding me a grant to continue my PhD at the Royal College of Art this past academic year.

Like many, the global pandemic had a considerable effect on my life and my studies. Perhaps because I came from a similar background before returning to academia later in my career, I was fortunate to find an interested design consultancy to fund my PhD. As their Head of Sector, I led projects within the luxury, retail and digital transformation areas. The pandemic ultimately caused a redundancy and subsequent loss of funding. Because it happened so close to the start of the next academic year, I was forced to take a leave of absence, thereby placing any PhD completion possibility in jeopardy.

The flexibility and ease of application process provided by the Sir Richard Stapley Trust was a welcome change compared to the lengthy, sometimes overly complex and limiting criteria of other funding bodies for postgraduate research funding. It was thanks to their award that I was able to reconnect to my PhD in September 2021, which also bought enough time to secure

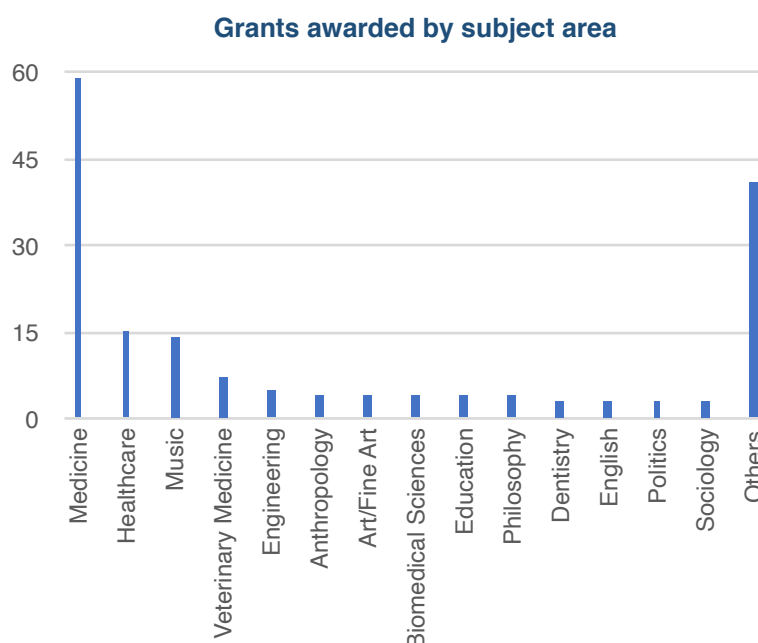
Types of course supported

This year, for the first time, we accepted applications for those studying for postgraduate certificates and diplomas. Only a small number of such students applied, but we realise it will take a while for the message to circulate that we have broadened our eligibility. About a third of our grants for 2022/23 went to those studying medicine as a second degree, and a similar proportion went to those taking master's degrees. Most of the remainder went to those taking doctoral degrees.



Study areas supported

Almost a third of our grants went to those studying medicine, with a diverse range of 46 other subjects areas also supported.



After each annual grant round, our Board of Trustees takes stock of what went well and what could be done better. The trustees have agreed a small number of changes, and you can read about these in the next article below.

further funding for the remainder of the year. The alternatives were grim, and I feel fortunate to have been able to continue into the last term of my PhD this Autumn before I switch to writing up my thesis.

Broadly speaking, my practice-based research draws from my background as a classically trained ex-dancer by using choreography as a context to build and test a creative system that uses algorithms within its make up. The hope is that its performance will serve as an impactful illustration of how recent technological developments designed for data collection may be integrated from an intrinsically human-led perspective. Although this research topic seems to be generating interest regarding industrial, societal and academic applications, unfortunately the funds necessary to pursue it are still disproportionately scarce.

I look forward to being an ambassador for the Trust and interdisciplinary research topics in the future.

Our next annual grant round – for 2023/24

Online application form

Our next annual grant round, for those studying in academic year 2023/24, will open on 3 January 2023. We are aiming to move to an online application process using the Benefactor grants management system developed by The Gallery Partnership Ltd. You can read more about Benefactor on page 10.



Some changes to eligibility rules

Having taken stock of our last grant round, our trustees have agreed a small number of rule changes to take effect for our next grant round for 2023/24.

- *Students will no longer be required to be living in the UK on the date they apply to us.* However, they will need to be planning to be live in the UK throughout the academic year applied for, unless required as a condition of taking the course to be living overseas for some or all of the academic year for the purposes of study or research.
- *Clarifying acceptable places of study:* Students will need to have been accepted on to or be applying for a course of study at a UK university (not including overseas branches of UK universities). Please note that we are unable to accept applications from those accessing courses remotely from outside the UK.
- *Costs arising from electives and placements no longer excluded:* As long as they are required for the proposed course of study, then the costs of fieldwork, electives and



Dr Nathaniel Baurley, Postdoctoral Research Associate

University of Southampton

I finished my PhD at the University of Southampton in July 2022, passing my viva with very minor corrections, capping off a challenging but incredibly rewarding three and a half years as a doctoral student.

Growing up in Wales, I have always been interested in the natural environment and how different processes have shaped and continue to shape the world around us. As such, I studied Geography at university, where I became interested in the field of Glaciology. After passing my degree with first-class honours, I decided to further my knowledge and interest in the subject by undertaking a master's degree. This was a fantastic experience which only increased my passion for the subject, especially after passing with distinction.

I knew I wanted to stay in academia so that I could continue my studies and undertake research in the subject that I was passionate about, and began my PhD in October 2018. My research involved using new, airborne surveying techniques to investigate the different processes that can influence glacier retreat and response to climate change

placements – whether undertaken in the UK or overseas – will be allowable.

•*Changes to the financial assessment:* We will no longer request details of any cohabiting partner's income and expenditure. Instead, we will ask the applicant to declare in the Income section any financial support received by a partner or other member of the household. Turning to Expenditure/Outgoings, we will no longer ask about any cohabiting partner's expenditure, but we will ask the applicant to deduct the contributions made by any members of the household (including by co-habiting partners) when estimating their own living expenses.

Taking these changes into account, our main eligibility rules will be as follows:

To be eligible to apply, applicants need to be:

•graduates with a First Class or Upper-Second Class honours degree (2:1), or a master's or doctoral degree, or final year undergraduate students expected to achieve a 1st or 2.1;

•accepted on to or applying for a course of study at a UK university in 2023/24 (not including overseas branches of UK universities or accessing the course remotely from outside the UK);

•The course of study will need to be for

-a degree in medicine, dentistry or veterinary medicine taken as a second degree,

-or a higher degree (master's, PhD, or their equivalent) in any subject,

-or a Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma in any subject

and the forthcoming 2023/24 academic year must officially begin on a date between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2023 and be officially scheduled to last for at least 8 months;

•planning to remain living in the UK throughout the academic year applied for, unless required as a condition of taking the course to be living overseas for some or all of the academic year for the purposes of study or research;

•facing a financial shortfall in the academic year 2023/24.

As last year, we will be explicit about the qualities we are looking for in those seeking our support. Assuming they meet our basic eligibility criteria, the attributes listed below will be used to gauge whether an applicant fits the desired profile. They will not be required to meet each one separately; rather the whole 'package' will be assessed

at high resolutions.

Throughout my PhD, I have been involved in high-quality research, contributing to and writing several academic papers (as both lead- and co-author) which have been published in leading journals in the field. I have also presented my research at several international academic conferences, which was a fantastic experience, despite these being online due to Covid.

Alongside this, I taught on many undergraduate and master's modules, both in lectures and out in the field, with the fieldtrip to the Swiss Alps being a particular highlight. These efforts led to me being awarded the "Most Loved PhD Student" by the university Geography Society in 2020, while recently I was highly commended for my contribution to teaching in 2021/22. I was also an academic representative for my fellow PhD students, giving them a voice at departmental and faculty level, and a mentor for new PhD students. In July, I started my new research position at the University, which I'm incredibly excited about.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust for their generous support across my PhD. As a self-funded student, this support significantly eased my financial worries, enabling me to focus on my studies and my achievements. Without this, things would have been considerably more difficult, and as such I will always be truly grateful for their kindness.

overall:

- The student is undertaking a course to better achieve their ambition regarding career path or personal development
- has the potential to make a contribution to wider society
- may have had to overcome - or is facing - particular challenges such as disability or family, social or economic barriers
- demonstrates real passion and commitment to the chosen area of study
- is in real financial need but has a strategy for addressing this and has made an effort to access other sources of funding
- has shown evidence of academic ability, taking into account their background when assessing past performance
- has the support of an informed and competent referee.

Colin Nee, Clerk to the Trustees

Our new online application process from January 2023 – Benefactor TM

Our application process will look very different when we open for applications for the 2023-24 academic year on 3 January.

Working with The Gallery Partnership Ltd, who developed and own the Benefactor grants management system, we now have a more automated grants application process with an online application form.



What will be the same?

Students wishing to apply for one of our grants will still need to visit our website when we open. Demand for grants will be as intense as ever, so the best advice we can give is to apply quickly once we open. The maximum number of applications we can consider each year is 300. In 2022, we reached that maximum number after only a few days.



Nausheen Hoosein, PhD Student
researching art and architecture in
medieval Iberia

University of York

Thanks to the generosity of the Stapley Trust, I have made significant progress in the first year of my PhD in the History of Art department. My thesis is titled *From Umayyad Madinat al-Zahra to Almohad Seville: The Reuse of Architectural Spolia in al-Andalus during the 12th century*, and is supervised by Dr Richard McClary. My work explores the reuse of marble capitals in two significant medieval sites, the Giralda and Alcázar, in Seville.

I have been involved in a number of research-related endeavours over the first year of my course, including language training, field work, and presenting at academic conferences. I have completed the Arabic for Medievalists language course, offered through the Centre for Medieval Studies, as well as Spanish in the summer term. These will help me access relevant primary materials important for my research.

A significant component of my research involves cataloging the architectural material, mainly marble capitals that are dispersed in various international collections as well as in situ at various sites in Spain. This has led me to a number of site visits, both locally

What will be different?

To start the application process, students will need to register with an email address and password. They will then need to log into the Benefactor system to gain access to the application form.

Once an application has been started, it will be possible to save and return to it to finish it off, but it will be necessary to log in again each time.

Most applicants will just need to complete and submit the online application form. However, those relying on degrees awarded outside the UK to show their eligibility to apply to us will need to upload one further document, a letter from their UK university confirming that it considers their degree to be equivalent to at least a UK Bachelor's degree, class 2:1. The system will allow this document to be uploaded as part of the application.

Colin Nee, Clerk to the Trustees

Remembering the Trust in your Will



Dr Sarah Other, Trustee

Hello! I'm Sarah Other, one of the trustees of the Trust. I joined in 2019.

I have remembered the Trust in my own Will to repay a debt of gratitude. I would not have been able to achieve my professional successes without my highest qualifications - which the Trust supported financially back when I was a student. Including the Trust in my Will means I can support the Trust but without the anxiety about affording the

and internationally. Thus far, I have been able to study the capitals in London at the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum, at the Louvre Museum in Paris, and several collections in Spain including the archaeological museums in Malaga and Cordoba. I am recording the findings and photographs from these field visits in a digital database, which will serve as an integral component of my research process, allowing me to compile relevant information on each object and site.

Finally, I have had the exciting opportunity to present my research at various academic conferences including the Postgraduate Research Conference at the Department of History of Art at York, the Association for Art History annual conference (virtual), and the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean in Crete. Participating and presenting at these conferences has allowed me to not only disseminate my research to interdisciplinary and international audiences, but also to network with colleagues and students in the fields of art and architectural history.

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to The Stapley Trust for their generous support, without which this progress would not have been possible. I am already looking forward to beginning Year 2 of my course which will include submitting initial chapters of my thesis, more fieldwork and language training, and graduate teaching within the department.

commitment within my lifetime.

I hope that you too will consider whether to leave a legacy to help support future postgraduates. We can do so much more with your support!

If you decide to include the Trust in your Will, you can ask your solicitor or professional adviser to do this by giving them the following details:

The Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust

Registered charity number: 313812
PO Box 76132, London E8 9HE

What to leave?

You could choose to leave the Trust a specific cash sum or alternatively a percentage of your estate. Depending on your circumstances it is possible that your estate will save up to £400 inheritance tax for every £1,000 you leave us.

What to tell us:

It is entirely up to you whether you tell us that you are remembering the Trust in your Will. We will never ask you to share information about the value or type of gift you have chosen to leave to the Trust. That is a private matter for you. You simply have to tell your solicitor or professional adviser how much, or alternatively what percentage of your estate, you would like to leave to the Trust.

Your Gift, our Promise

We recognise that when you prepare your Will, your family and close ones must come first. We know that personal circumstances change and there might be a time when you decide you need to take the Trust out of your Will.

If you want the Trust to dedicate your gift to an area of our work that's special to you, we are happy to discuss this with you.

Finally, if you do choose to remember the Trust with a gift in your Will: thank you - we will use it wisely!

Any queries?

If you have any questions about making a donation or remembering the Trust in your Will, please contact our Clerk at admin@stapleytrust.org



Emily Vincent, PhD researcher in English Literature

University of Birmingham

I am researching late-Victorian women's ghost stories. This year I have been able to finalise my 80,000-word thesis, undertake an archival research trip to the National Library of Scotland, and teach and assess my first undergraduate seminars. 2021/22 was an exciting, productive, and rewarding year which has continued to develop my passion for my subject and the skills for my future career as a postdoctoral researcher and Literature lecturer.

As a self-funded full-time PhD researcher with no institutional support and course limits set for the amount of part-time work I can undertake, the Stapley Trust grant has given me the additional time to research and achieve professional development goals as I have not needed to undertake additional part-time jobs to fund my studies. This is a huge benefit for my overall financial stress levels and mental wellbeing as I can concentrate solely on excelling on my course and achieve related academic goals, while maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

I taught my first in-person seminars for the 'Decadents and Moderns' module as a Teaching Associate in Birmingham's English department, focussing on how formal techniques of decadent literature anticipated the works of

Stapley Trust guide

Grants from other charitable funders

Much as we would love to help every student in financial need, Sir Richard Stapley Trust's funds are very limited so sometimes we can't help or can't help enough. Our short guide, 'Charitable Grants for Postgraduate Study in the UK' aims to offer some alternatives to UK-based students seeking charitable grants to finance further or higher degrees.

Part 1 provides information and links to print and online searchable directories of UK grant makers. Part 2 provides links to some specific UK grant makers that we know have helped students seeking support.

You can find it [here](#).



Insights from our trustees

Video interviews available now on our social media channels

If you've ever wondered what it's like to be a trustee of the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust, our social media pages now give an insight into what several of our trustees enjoy about the role.

In a series of short video interviews, five current and former trustees explain what they look for in applications, what they enjoy about being a trustee, and how the work of the

modernists. I was responsible for building student confidence on their transitions from online to classroom-based learning due to COVID-19. As a result of my teaching experience, I achieved Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA), important recognition for my academic career. I was also selected as a Student Ambassador for the largest annual conference in my field (The British Association of Victorian Studies).

I am currently editing and proofreading my thesis and I am due to submit it and undertake my Viva examination by the end of 2022. Following this, I will apply for postdoctoral jobs and Higher Education teaching roles in English Literature – I am excited at where my research will take me next and look forward to keeping in touch with The Stapley Trust.

Trust helps to benefit postgraduate students.

Our former Chair, Dr Jane Dancer, highlights the impressive quality of applications, and while all are a pleasure to read, having such a high standard means that every year it is difficult to turn down some applications. New Co-Chair Dr Manali Chitre explains how it is an honour to play a small part in supporting students in their postgraduate journeys, and that hearing about the successes of our alumni is hugely rewarding.

The opportunity to read about the wonderful work of postgraduate students, their contribution to their field of study and their plans for the future is, for William Glover, a genuine joy. Former trustee Professor Clive Seale liked seeing applications for studies which would bring a benefit for society more widely, and said that a grant from the Trust could provide a morale boost to students. That motivational boost is similarly highlighted by alumnus and trustee Dr James Jones, who also notes that the applications which stand out for him are those which show a real passion for their subject.

Everyone agrees that being a trustee and having the chance to read all of the applications is a great privilege. The videos can be found on our all of our social media profiles, including [Twitter](#), so do take a look!





Aimée Elizabeth Taylor, MMus graduate

Royal College of Music

Photo credit: Chris Christodoulou

I had a fabulous second year at the RCM, graduating as a Master of Music in historical performance with distinction. This success means the world to me and I could not have done it without the support of the Trust.

This past year was a very different experience to my first year, being based in the College in London, rather than at home on Zoom/Teams....! Getting to have in-person lessons and the opportunity to play in all of the faculty classes really helped me to improve my instrumental skills.

I also had the chance to play in various exciting and memorable concerts, including in a performance of Jean-Marie Leclair's Deuxième récréation de musique in the RCM Chamber Music Festival in Spring. For my final recital in June, I researched and performed a programme of works by French and Scottish baroque composers exclusively, playing repertoire which was mostly very unknown. I particularly enjoyed interpreting a

Introducing our new Co-Chairs, Dr Manali Chitre and Dr Debbie Marsden



Dr Manali Chitre



Dr Debbie Marsden

Our trust is governed by its 10-strong Board of Trustees, all of them unpaid volunteers. Former Chair Dr Jane Dancer completed her term as trustee and Chair in November. Jane has been succeeded by two Co-Chairs, Manali Chitre and Debbie Marsden who will share the role for the next few years. Both Manali and Debbie have been members of our Board of Trustees for some years. We asked them to introduce themselves...

a piece by the Earl of Kellie (1732—1781), which is currently in the archives of the National Library of Scotland.

We had more independence with our research this year and I chose to indulge my passion for French baroque music. In particular, I decided to study, in detail, the intriguing breathing marks written in the music of French composer Michel Blavet (1700—1768). This led to giving a lecture recital on this topic in May, illustrated by musical examples which I pre-recorded.

During the summer months, I enjoyed some time in the East of France at a wonderful baroque music course conducted by the eminent Italian baroque violinist Enrico Gatti, and in September I travelled to Arundel to perform Bach's Trio Sonata in G major, BWV 1039.

Looking to the future, I am delighted to have received a scholarship to return to the Royal College next term as a student on the Artist Diploma course. I have been able to accept my place on this challenging course thanks, once again, to your very generous funding.

I really cannot thank you enough and I will be sure to keep including the Trust in my biography in the coming years. Please don't hesitate if I can ever come to play for you and support the work of your wonderful Trust.

Tell us a little about your background and why you decided to join the Board of Trustees

MC: I have been involved in medical training throughout my career, including in my current role as a paediatric neurology consultant in Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge. I am currently completing a Master's degree in Medical Education. Having completed medical training in India and then specialist paediatric neurology training in Canada and the UK, I am inspired by the stories of others who are committed to further education; this is my opportunity to support them through the fantastic work of this charity. I joined the Board of Trustees in 2014. It has been extremely satisfying to be able to help students achieve their goals through education.

DM: Like Manali, I joined the Trustee Board in 2014. I have always been interested in education and how best to make sure everyone reaches their potential. I've been delighted to be involved with the Trust as I am aware from being a mother as well as my past work as a GP, as a parenting consultant, and governor in two schools that education is the gateway to knowledge and possibilities. Supporting a student can make an immense difference to their life which may then make a massive difference to society.

What are the biggest changes you've witnessed during your time on the Board so far?

MC: I have seen an exponential increase in applications over the last few years, with a rising level of need due to lack of part-time work opportunities during the Covid-19 crisis and the rise in the cost of living. We have tried to take social pressures into account, increased the types of courses we support, streamlined the Trust's processes, improved the Trust visibility through social media and increased diversity on our Board of Trustees. We continue to work towards maximising the use of Trust funds to support education.

DM: We now support academic achievement from a wider variety of courses at a broader range of universities. Future employment opportunities are more global, and skillsets required are diverse. A wider mix of trustee ages and backgrounds, including some alumni, means our Board has a breadth of experience enabling a better understanding of a modern student's requirements. It's also helped the Trust to develop a clear five-year strategy. Social media has been embraced, our website developed and - from next January - online applications. The development of an annual survey provides valuable feedback and verification of the impact of our grants, providing a better understanding as to why the number and

financial needs of applicants are increasing.

Having two Co-Chairs is a new development for our Trust. What challenges do you foresee in this way of working?

DM: Manali and I look forward to working together. We both have busy lives; however, we are aware that communication between us is going to be essential to make joint chairing work. We will need regular conversations to work through different personal views so we can agree strategies to discuss with the Board as well as to keep informed and up to date. Each of us will take responsibility for specific projects or areas. This will enable the other trustees and Colin, our Clerk, to know who best to contact if there are queries. Working closely with the trustees will ensure they are comfortable with joint chairing and to feel their voices are heard in any discussion and decisions.

MC: I see having two Co-Chairs as a major advantage for the Trust as we will divide work and support each other. The joined-up working will allow both Debbie and I to shoulder other commitments alongside the Trust duties. Potential challenges would include ensuring clarity regarding each Co-Chair's role, availability, accountability, and resolving any differences of opinion. We believe, these can be easily overcome through good regular communication, forward planning, assessment of risks, division of tasks and by putting robust processes in place.

Have you seen any changes regarding financial pressures on postgraduate students?

DM: Our annual surveys have revealed just how difficult the last two years have been. Many postgraduate students rely on our grants as well as part-time jobs in retail, hospitality and universities. These jobs have become scarcer. Grant funding especially for art subjects has been reduced. Performances and exhibitions have often been cancelled. Covid-19's impact on families means more are unable to support their student children, indeed some families have been forced to rely on students to support the family. Mental health problems have increased, hindering study, employment and student opportunities. The financial impacts are still ongoing and will be for several years.

MC: I have seen students struggling to meet costs, often holding multiple part-time jobs which then impact on their study time. Many have already deferred their courses to ensure enough savings are in place. We have received

feedback from students saying that even the small grants they received from us have made a significant difference. While the financial awards from charities have remained more or less similar over the years, the cost of living has increased much more in comparison.

Finally, for our student readers, what do you look for in a strong grant application to our Trust?

MC: I usually look for a narrative that assures me that the candidate has passion for the subject, high academic potential, and has clearly thought about and planned their study period and how it will allow them to achieve their career goals. I find stories of applicants who have continued to make efforts despite encountering difficulties to be particularly moving and inspiring; it makes me want to support them. I then consider their level of financial need in deciding the amount to be granted.

DM: A strong application is one that shows a defined path. The application form enables the sharing of a student's ambitions and how they have managed to get this far, and what they hope to do in the future. Successful applicants are devoted to their study area, have shown resilience and been inspirational to others. All applicants have worked hard to fulfil their ambitions and to make a difference. A strong application looks for opportunities in spite of sometimes difficult environments or personal circumstances.

We'll be recruiting two new trustees during 2023...

In early summer 2023, our Trust will be recruiting two new trustees to fill vacancies on our Board.

We will advertise the recruitment through our social media channels and other outlets.

If you think you might be interested in applying, or know someone else who might be, please contact our Clerk, Colin Nee, at admin@stapleytrust.org and he will email you when we commence recruitment.

The trustee role:

- Contributing actively to giving clear strategic direction to the Trust, setting overall policy, defining goals and evaluating performance
- Scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance
- Scoring grant applications each spring
- Networking, acting as an ambassador and winning support externally.

Our trustees are unpaid, but we pay travel and other out of pocket expenses and provide an induction into the Trust's work.

For further details about the Trust, please see our website: www.stapleytrust.org

