



**QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST**

**QUEEN'S  
FOUNDATION**

# Inspiring Confidence and Changing Lives

2022-23

**Pathway Bursary Fund**  
Impact Report

**SHAPING  
A BETTER  
WORLD  
SINCE 1845**



# WELCOME

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On behalf of the Queen's Foundation Board, and all the students who have enrolled at the University via the Pathway Opportunity Programme, thank you for kindly supporting the Pathway Bursary Fund.

Since the Fund launched in 2017, thanks to your support all students eligible for a Pathway Bursary received £1,000 for each year of their studies. Kilwaughter Minerals generously funds all first-year bursaries, and your gift has meant the students have progressed with their studies through years 2, 3 and 4 with a further bursary. Thank You!

## TO DATE, YOU AND SUPPORTERS LIKE YOU HAVE FUNDED 367 BURSARIES:



As we start the new academic year (2023-24) your generosity will fund 260 bursaries for second and third year students.

Going forward, we aim to raise enough funds to provide students with a bursary during every year of their studies until at least 2030 (excluding placement years).

Thank you for supporting our students in such a positive way.

Ryan Feeney

Honorary Secretary, The Queen's Foundation

Vice-President Strategic Engagement and External Affairs

# PATHWAY OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMME - SUMMARY

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At Queen's we are committed to ensuring that those who are the most able, but least likely to pursue a higher education, have an equal opportunity to do so. We have established a dedicated suite of Widening Participation programmes, designed to raise young peoples' aspirations, and encourage students from all backgrounds to fulfil their potential.

Thanks to donors like you who share our vision, one of our most successful initiatives is the Pathway Opportunity Programme, or POP! The Pathway Opportunity Programme works with schools across Northern Ireland to provide an entry route to Queen's for talented young people who have the ability to thrive at Queen's but need additional support and encouragement to achieve their goals. Young people attend workshops, study sessions, and summer schools and receive mentoring alongside confidence-building activities, over the course of a year, before finishing second level education.

On successfully completing the Programme and arriving at Queen's, we continue to support the students as they navigate university life. The Pathway Bursary Fund is a vital element of this support, helping to reduce financial worries and opening opportunities which otherwise may not have been possible.

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After taking part in POP, Stephen became the first in his family to attend university.

Despite living only a few miles away from Queen's, university was not something Stephen had considered. He first visited campus when he was invited there through POP to explore university life.

With continued support and encouragement through POP, Stephen is now a final year medicinal chemistry student, developing new treatments for illnesses. He serves as a great ambassador to the next generation of young people.



# UPDATE ON OUR PATHWAY STUDENTS



## Cohorts 1 – 4 who commenced their degree at Queen's between 2018 and 2021

### Summary of achievements:

**65\***

young people have graduated with degrees in courses across all three Faculties at Queen's (Engineering and Physical Sciences, Medicine Health and Life Sciences and Arts Humanities and Social Sciences).

\*The majority of the remaining students are still in their degree programme at Queen's on four and five-year courses.

**16%**

have received First Class Honours.

**59%**

have received Upper Second Class Honours (2:1).

**25%**

have received Lower Second Class Honours (2:2).

**13**

of the 65 Pathway Students who have already graduated have returned to Queen's to pursue postgraduate studies.

**25%**

have given back to POP by becoming a Student Assistant at Pathway Summer Schools and day events.

### Cohort 5 – 2022 Entry

From January to December 2021, 255 young people participated in the Pathway Opportunity Programme covering a range of Pathways expanded by the inclusion of a Pharmacy Pathway and a Psychology Pathway.

In September 2022, 133 of these students achieved the grades to commence studies at Queen's.

### Cohort 6 – 2023 Entry

In January 2022, we welcomed our highest number of school students onto our Pathway Programme. Three hundred young people from across Northern Ireland took part in the Programme, which now includes three new Pathways: Mathematics and Physical Sciences, Nursing and Midwifery and Social Work. The programme culminated in November 2022, when students were able to invite parents/families to a celebration event. In September 2023, 139 of this cohort enrolled at Queen's.

# MOVING FORWARD

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For the seventh cohort, who started the Programme in January 2023, we have increased the numbers to 305 students and have maintained the 13 Pathways that cover almost every course at Queen's.

This programme has included two highly successful summer schools delivered on campus. We look forward to these students completing their UCAS forms this autumn and commencing studies at Queen's in September 2024.

# CONCLUSION

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Working with supporters, alumni and friends who share our belief that background and socio-economic status should not be a barrier to success or a higher-level education, is a true privilege. The bursaries you support so generously, not only provide a much-needed financial boost for students to ease the pressure of accommodation, travel, and study costs, but often act as a catalyst to unlock their confidence, self-belief, and aspirations for a better future. They go a long way to remove the barriers that some young people face whilst supporting equality in education in Northern Ireland. Your philanthropy has been truly life-changing for these students and has given them the opportunity to realise their potential and become the leaders of tomorrow. Thank You!



## Ellen McKnight

BioSci Pathway student who studied BSc Food Quality, Safety and Nutrition and is now working in the Food Quality Department of Marks and Spencer in London.



“The bursary has offered a sense of relief knowing I have some money to keep me going in these times with the costs of living getting even higher. Living as a student with limited income is difficult and the bursary has allowed me to feel a bit more secure in paying bills etc as my parents are not in the position to help. **Thank you.**”

## Nicole Beck

AHSS Pathway now studying Politics at Queen's.



“The £1000 bursary has allowed more flexibility in working towards my university degree. In terms of flexibility, it has allowed me to take up less part time work and focus on studies. It has also enabled me to get new devices which further help my studies. Being a part of the Pathway Programme has provided me with so many different opportunities and knowledge of university life which I wouldn't have known before attending university. **Thank you.**”

## Stephen Joyce

Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences Pathway – finishing final year with dissertation for Medicinal Chemistry.



“The bursary was absolutely invaluable to me for several reasons. It helped me cover the cost of travelling to university via car - as a disabled student being able to get to uni comfortably was so important to me. In addition, the bursary helped cover some of the lab supplies I required for my degree such as my lab coat and safety glasses, and in a less academic sense, the money did help with the odd lunch with friends that I wouldn't have been able to get otherwise.”

## Emma Wilson

Fibrus, Bright Future Collective (BFC) member

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“Fibrus have been supporting the BFC for 2 years and is proud to contribute to providing young people with access to a university education where they otherwise may not get the opportunity to do so. Fibrus puts a great focus on giving back to the communities in which we serve so as a local NI based business, the BFC was an obvious choice in supporting young people with their education and helping to build a talented workforce of the future. One of the key highlights is being able to hear from the students who have benefited from the programme and to see the positive impact this has had on their education and future career prospects.”

## Professor Judy Williams

Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students

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“Widening Participation is a key strategic priority for Queen’s University. We are committed to continuing and increasing our efforts in this space, ensuring that those most able but least likely to participate in Higher Education have an equal opportunity to do so. The Pathway Bursary Fund plays an essential role in supporting this and we would like to extend our thanks to all of you, our donors.”



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