

Giving to non-UK universities by the UK's top 200 philanthropists

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Key findings

The scale of the giving to by the UK's leading philanthropists points to the increased internationalisation of university philanthropy.

- Funding by the UK's 200 most generous philanthropists, as identified by the Sunday Times Charities Aid Foundation 2020 Giving List, shows that £640m has been given to non-UK universities over the past six years (2014-19).
- 66 out of the top 100 philanthropists have given to universities and higher education institutions over the past 6 years – both in the UK and overseas.
- 33 out of the UK's top 100 philanthropists have given to non-UK universities over the past six years.
- Giving by the UK's top philanthropists to non-UK universities has risen from £38m in 2014 to £279m in 2018.
- 28 percent of the Top 200 philanthropists (55 in total) have made 578 donations to 228 non-UK universities in 39 countries over the past six years.
- US institutions are the preferred destination for UK giving to foreign universities. 107 American universities received £376m between 2014-19, representing 59 percent of all donations to non-UK overseas universities.
- 63 European universities received £187m or 29 percent of giving. Norway and Germany are the preferred destination for UK giving to European universities.
- The biggest individual donor to non-UK universities in the past six years is the Anglo Ukrainian billionaire Sir Len Blatvanik who has made 45 donations to 16 universities in Ireland, Israel and the US, totaling £220m (Sir Len has also been a generous benefactor of UK higher education, notably Oxford University).
- Harvard University is the biggest beneficiary of giving to a non-UK university. It has received nearly £192m from the UK's leading philanthropists since 2014.

About UniversityPhilanthropy.com

UniversityPhilanthropy.com is the dedicated research arm of The Cape Partnership, the London-based public affairs and policy advisory firm. Our research looks exclusively at trends in UK philanthropy and giving to non-UK universities. Contact: office@capepartnership.com

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Key facts

The Sunday Times Charities Aid Foundation Giving List index ranks major donors according to the proportion of their wealth that they give away. It is not necessarily an index of giving by the most wealthy philanthropists but it is an important measure of UK philanthropic giving.

Top 5 donors to non-UK universities over the past 6 years

Philanthropist	Recipient countries	Donations (2014-19)
Sir Len Blavatnik	US, Israel, Eire	£220.3m
Trond & Marit Mohn	Norway	£167.4m
Marit Rausing & Family	US, Germany	£56.4m
Sir Michael Moritz	US	£43.4m
Sir Chris Hohn	US	£35.4m

Top 5 recipients of giving by the UK's top 200 philanthropists over the past 6 years

University	Country	2014-19 funding
Harvard	US	£192.3m
Bergen	Norway	£129.9m
Chicago	US	£40.0m
Yale	US	£38.2m
Tel Aviv	Israel	£29.3m

Analysis: Higher education on the rise

Higher education featured significantly in this year's index which is published jointly by the Sunday Times and the Charities Aid Foundation. According to the compilers of the report, higher education – both UK and internationally – is benefiting from a steep rise in giving from philanthropists. 61% of the top 200 philanthropists are reported by the Sunday Times to prioritise their giving to education, including higher education.

Mark Greer, head of private clients at the Charities Aid Foundation reports there is a clear increase in philanthropists giving to higher education, saying that the *"American tradition seems to have taken hold here as universities adjust to an environment with significantly less public funding. Given the challenges that universities will no doubt face following the coronavirus pandemic, this move to supporting higher education with significant gifts could not come at a better time for so many of the UK's institutions."*

This conclusion is borne out by our analysis of leading philanthropists. At least 66 out of the top 100 in this index are known have given to universities – both in the UK and overseas – in the past six years, of which at least 33, we know, have given to non-UK institutions.

About our research

The purpose of this research was to identify giving to non-UK universities by the UK's leading philanthropists. Our study drew on the Charities Aid Foundation Sunday Times 2020 Giving List as a basis for the research. The Giving List indexes generosity proportionate to income. The List doesn't necessarily represent overall levels of philanthropy. We identified reported giving to universities either by individuals directly or by means of a charitable trust which channels their philanthropy. Many but not all individuals in this survey disclose giving. For more information, contact: office@capepartnership.com

