

# Funding to non-UK universities by the UK's top 100 foundations

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## Key findings

The Association of Charitable Foundations (ACF) publishes each year its *Giving Trends* survey of the UK's top 300 foundations.

The *Giving Trends* survey of the top 300 foundations is important because they contribute two-fifths (42%) of the total amount of grant spending carried out through all UK charitable foundations.

Our study of Britain's top 100 grant-giving foundations and trusts, as listed in the ACF's *Giving Trends* 2019 reveals that:

- 188 non-UK universities have received £400.9m between 2014-19.
- British foundation funding to international universities is dominated by the UK's largest foundation, The Wellcome Trust. It gave £206.4m (51% of all international funding to non-UK universities) to 140 non-UK universities over the past six years.
- Funding from the top 100 foundations to non-UK universities has steadily increased over the past six years. In 2014, £43.4m was shared between 51 universities; by 2019, that figure was £56.1m shared between 73 non-UK universities.
- While overall disbursements have declined in 2019 compared to the previous two years (2018: £79.4m; 2017: £99.0m), the number of non-UK universities receiving funding is at its highest, pointing to the increased internationalisation of UK university philanthropy.
- The decline in non-UK university giving in the past three years reflects a reported decline in giving by the ACF.
- North America is the preferred region for UK foundation university giving (37.7%), followed by Africa (18.5%) and Europe (16.7%).
- The most popular destinations for UK giving are all English-language countries. US universities receive the largest amount of UK university philanthropy followed by Australian, South African and Irish universities.
- Europe is the home to the largest number of institutions receiving UK philanthropy. 49 universities shared £66.8m.

## About UniversityPhilanthropy.com

UniversityPhilanthropy.com is the dedicated research arm of The Cape Partnership, the London-based research firm. Our research looks exclusively at trends in UK philanthropy and giving to non-UK universities. Contact: [office@capepartnership.com](mailto:office@capepartnership.com)

# Funding to non-UK universities by the UK's top 100 foundations

## Key facts

The Wellcome Trust dominates UK giving to non-UK universities. The table below sets out giving of the five biggest donors to non-UK universities over the past six years.



Top 10 country beneficiaries of UK foundation funding

Country	2014-19 funding
US	£148.1m
Australia	£40.4m
South Africa	£34.3m
Eire	£29.0m
Pakistan	£24.3m
Singapore	£19.7m
Israel	£12.7m
Kenya	£12.2m
Belgium	£9.9m
Germany	£8.1m

Top funders	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
The Wellcome Trust	£23.0m	£55.3m	£18.7m	£55.1m	£27.5m	£26.8m	£206.4m
Arcadia Fund	£8.5m	£0.5m	£0.7m	£27.8m	£7.8m	£7.9m	£53.2m
Children's Investment Fund	£3.6m	£11.4m	£4.0m	£5.6m	£2.6m	£8.2m	£35.4m
Aga Khan Foundation	£2.3m	£2.5m	£2.7m	£3.3m	£12.0m	£3.6m	£26.3m
AKO Foundation	£1.0m	£0.08m	£1.2m	£0.8m	£17.8m	£1.7m	£22.5m

## Analysis

Overall giving to international universities has declined since 2017, reflecting a wider decline in foundation funding that the Association of Charitable Foundations attributes to “*tensions in international trade, UK economic uncertainty due to the decision to leave the EU, and the destabilising effect of global politics*”. The most popular destinations for UK giving are English-language countries. Apart from American universities, Commonwealth universities also do well when seeking funding from British foundations. 56 percent of UK university philanthropy lands in just three countries - the United States, Australia and South Africa.

However, a curious pattern characterises the years since the Brexit referendum in 2016 - a marked rise in funding for European universities. In 2014, 10 European universities received £4.1m. By 2019, 19 European universities shared £14.5m in funding. Moreover, Europe is also the home to the largest number of institutions receiving UK philanthropy. Between 2014-19, 49 European universities shared £66.8m.

## About our research

The purpose of this research was to identify giving to non-UK universities by Britain's biggest grant-giving foundations and trusts. Our study drew on the Association of Charitable Foundations *Giving Trends 2019* top 100 list as a basis for the research. Data over the past five years used to compile this study is available at the website of the charity regulator. Most but not all large foundations disclose beneficiaries. For more information, contact: [office@capepartnership.com](mailto:office@capepartnership.com)

